



Virtual Service Centre Pilot

Evaluation Report

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All appendices to this report have been removed in compliance with GDPR for the purposes of web publication.

Executive Summary

This evaluation report documents the impact of an innovative service model developed by Enable Ireland in response to the closure of Adult Service centres in March 2020 as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Virtual Service Centre (VSC) is an online model of service developed by Enable Ireland and Microsoft in partnership with 35 adults with disabilities who use Sandyford and Dun Laoghaire services. Using Microsoft Teams, an online video conferencing and collaboration platform, staff and *Service Owners** have worked in partnership to design this new online service model. It is characterized by a daily menu of 6 hour-long group sessions and a parallel provision of 8 hours of one to one chat sessions (9am – 5pm) by rostered staff, as well as some evening one to one chat sessions. Each Service Owner therefore has access to 30 hours of group sessions and 40 hours of one to one chat sessions every week, as well as evening one to one sessions (the latter on request). This new model of service seeks to address the gap resulting from service closures, recognizing the fear, social isolation and stresses impacting on Service Owners as a consequence of the pandemic.

NOTE

**Service Owners is the term which the men and women who use the Sandyford and Dun Laoghaire Adult Services have chosen for themselves during their participation in a self-advocacy programme over the past year. They are now embarking on a consultation process with local service user representative groups and with the National Service User Council to ascertain whether this term might be considered by other Service Users.*

The evaluation findings indicate a consistently high satisfaction rating among Service Owners, staff, families and Microsoft staff and volunteers. All stakeholders indicate a desire to ensure its sustainability, with many of its benefits reflecting an emerging sense of shared ownership and collaborative working between Service Owners and staff.

The evaluation findings also indicate that this Virtual Service Centre is envisaged by stakeholders as one component of a three part service delivery model, alongside one to one sessions with key workers in the community and some centre-based services.

The significant positive impacts identified by Service Owners suggest that a Virtual Service may form a component of service which could be purchased by those who have access to Personalised Budgets funded by the HSE. That is, that it has the potential to exist as a standalone service, as well as a component of a wider range of service options.

To date, the Virtual Service Centre has been funded from within current training budgets, with additional support from Microsoft. A high level of interest in expansion of the VSC nationally, to potentially benefit all of the 370 adults whom Enable Ireland supports has been expressed by front line staff and management. However, its future sustainability will require an increase in investment to enable an expansion and evolution of the VSC programme content in order to support Service Owners to gain maximum benefit, and to facilitate access to the technologies, training and supports (both IT and Assistive Technology) that are a prerequisite to its successful implementation.

Introduction/Background

What is the Virtual Service Centre?

Enable Ireland's Virtual Service Centre commenced in April 2020, as a direct response to the closure of our Adult Services Centres nationally due to Covid 19. The need to offer a service remotely, to adults who found themselves at home, and who reported via phone conversations with staff a pervasive feeling of isolation and stress, was recognized as urgent by Enable Ireland. Thanks to a longstanding and flourishing partnership with Microsoft, the Virtual Service Centre was conceived as a possible solution to address the void in people's lives left by the closure of day services. Microsoft Teams was the online video conferencing/collaboration platform adopted by the Virtual Service Centre. Surface devices, previously donated by Microsoft, were provided to those Service Owners who needed them, and AT training laptops were re-purposed for some staff to allow them to access Teams. There was a significant shortfall in the availability of laptops for staff however.

The Virtual Service pilot was featured on RTÉ Radio 1's Morning Ireland on April 25th and can be heard [here](#).

Participants of the VSC (Service Owners and staff) presented a pre-recorded session on our Foundations in AT Course on May 27th. This illustrates the Virtual Service Centre more effectively than any text description and can be viewed [here](#).

Virtual Service Centre Model

The Virtual Service Centre consists of two components: 6 daily hour-long online group sessions, delivered 5 days a week, with a total of 17 different session topics, ranging from Yoga to Music, Art, Cooking, Games, Quizzes and Physio. (See [Appendix 1](#) for full activity menu). 30 weekly group sessions are facilitated by 6 Enable Ireland staff, 3 Microsoft staff and 4 external trainers.

One to one chats between service owners and staff are facilitated through a 9am-5pm roster, whereby service owners can contact their staff member of choice at their available times. Some evening chats are also facilitated for those who request them.

Service Owners receive a weekly menu of online class options, and choose which ones they wish to participate in. They join the Teams session(s) of their choice by

clicking on the hyperlink in the menu. There, they meet with their friends, and actively engage in a variety of activities.

The combination of group sessions and one to one chats (both within standard hours and in the evenings) means that a total of 1055 hours of online supports are offered weekly to 35 adults with disabilities by Sandyford/Dun Laoghaire services.

Purpose of the evaluation of the Virtual Service Centre Pilot

This VSC evaluation comes 8 weeks after its inception by Sandyford and Dun Laoghaire Adult Services and Rathmore House Respite Service. This pilot phase involved the participation of 35 service user participants and 28 staff and external trainers from Sandyford and Dun Laoghaire Adult Services and Rathmore House (including service managers and directors), along with 22 Microsoft staff and volunteers, supported by Enable Ireland's Assistive Technology and IT teams.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the impact of the Virtual Service Centre pilot and to inform further service development initiatives for adults to whom we provide services in Dublin and across the country. The evaluation will also seek to identify learning which may benefit other aspects of Enable Ireland's services nationally, across children's services, respite and residential services, the National Assistive Technology Training Service and the IT Department.

Virtual Service Centre Evaluation Model

The evaluation consisted of the following:

1. Online surveys* of:
 - Service Owners
 - Staff and External Trainers
 - Families
 - Microsoft staff and volunteers

*Survey Monkey was the online survey tool used.

2. External evaluator facilitation of a live Teams session with 16 Service Owners and 6 staff

The evaluation took place between the dates of June 8th – 12th 2020.

A total of 72 people took part in the evaluation, the results of which can be viewed in the Appendices.

Data Analysis

The data collected will be analysed according to each surveyed cohort. The external evaluator's analysis of the Teams session will be incorporated within the Service Owners' and Staff/External Trainers' sections below.

Service Owners' responses

See [Appendix 2](#) for full report on survey responses.

29 Service Owners responded to the survey, an 83% response rate. Of those who responded, 85% reported that they enjoy the Virtual Service Centre, with 7.5% reporting a neutral view of it, and a further 7.5% reporting that they disliked it. 60% of respondents participate in three or more sessions per day. The most popular sessions were: music (61%), cooking (50%), Zumba (46%) and video chats (43%). The next most popular activities were quizzes, theatre and physiotherapy sessions, all ranked at 39%.

When asked to compare the VSC with their centre-based service: 56% stated that they preferred their centre-based, while 30% said they found the VSC much more

enjoyable than their day service and 14% said they preferred the VSC to their day service.

A significant benefit of the VSC is that it is accessible to people while on respite in Rathmore House and as it is independent of location, also proved to be beneficial to someone who had to go into hospital. The additional benefits of the camaraderie offered to a Service Owner whose grandfather died, were also cited as unexpected. Participants didn't lose out on accessing services while in respite and in hospital and in fact, in one instance, a Service Owner accessed the VSC while on respite, when he had not previously done so from home. As a result of this positive experience, he is now being supported to access it on an ongoing basis from home.

Another unanticipated benefit of the VSC has been the upskilling of Service Owners, to the extent that some have taken a lead role in mentoring and supporting their peers to maximise the benefit of the service. This challenges services to examine how to recognise and reward such contributions by way of remuneration and to promote a more inclusive employment culture across the organisation, and in particular in front line service delivery.

The main benefits of the VSC identified by service owners were: that it occupied their time (67%), gave them a sense of purpose (59%) and introduced them to new forms of entertainment (44%). 59% reported that it enabled them to be more involved in shaping their own service. 76% reported that they would like to see the VSC continue after the pandemic is over. They suggested the following additions to the choice of sessions offered: art, family days, beauty tips, keep fit classes and a recurring request was that they would like to be able to contact one another independently through Teams outside of formal service hours and on weekends.

The need for further training on how to use Teams, how to use the Internet and how to connect with their friends was also highlighted. Service Owners also reported an interest in learning how to use apps to support their reading and vision.

Qualitative responses were consistently supportive of the VSC and included the following:

"I don't be any suggestions, all of you are an amazing. I'm just hoping one day I will be back to normal. I'm missing my day centre as was before. Many thanks for your support 😊😊"

"It's improving every time I use it"

“Open up to other centres around Ireland”

When asked whether they felt that the VSC was interactive, 56% said that yes, they feel their voice is heard. 27% said that it depends on the session as to whether or not they feel heard and 12% said that no, it is difficult to voice their opinion.

The purpose of the external evaluation was to understand more about the experience of participating in the online service and what it has meant for Service Owners. It reported across five key areas following a one hour session with Service Owners and staff: effectiveness in meeting immediate needs, efficiency in delivering intended service, efficacy, elegance and ethics of online service.

Key observations were that when the service closed, service owners felt shocked, sad, disappointed and scared. One person also expressed concern about being at home all the time. Each of the five areas of evaluation will be briefly summarised here.

The full external evaluation report is in [Appendix 7](#).

Effectiveness: the VSC was described as a life saver, enabling participants to stay in touch with friends and peers, as well as meet new friends and connect with old pals. One person said:

“this helps me to be good form, keep me smiling and I look forward everyday”.

The evaluator reported that “It has gone some way towards addressing isolation and loneliness: one person who lives alone, said that they was still lonely and they really missed the centre, but that it was better than nothing.”

The capacity for participants to make new friends through the Virtual Service Centre was also noted: this would not have been possible in the regular Day Service, in that Service Owners did not tend to cross paths with their peers in other centres. The potential for Service Owners to meet online with others, regardless of geographical location, was seen as an unexpected and significant benefit.

The evaluation detailed the manifestation of effectiveness in the following ways:

Staying well: the VSC had a positive impact on their day. One Service Owner said

“It keeps you busy so you don’t feel down”.

It has also helped alleviate frustration at losing the routine of attending the day service.

Expanding horizons: the opportunity to try new things such as quizzes that they did not have in the day service. More practical activities such as pottery and boccia were missed.

Increasing capacity and confidence: Service Owner resilience has increased: they have adapted to the change and some have developed better computing skills, tried new things and said they feel more confident. One person said:

“I have learned new skills online and for me, being my own boss with the new programme”.

Increased Control: Some Service Owners expressed a greater sense of having more control over their day, more choice, being able to dip in and out of sessions, and there was a strong sense of ownership of the VSC.

Efficiency: The positive atmosphere, and strong communication indicates that the VSC was an effective way of keeping cohesion and connection while centres have been closed. However, the technology which made the service possible in the first place, was also where efficiency was compromised. One service user found being online very busy, with people talking over each other.

Accessibility: There was an acknowledgement that there is a need to also make activities and programmes as accessible as possible, including the provision of Assistive Technology where needed.

Efficacy of online services:

Efficacy refers to a broader question around the power of an intervention to produce the desired effect. There have been factors which have enhanced and others that have hindered the efficacy of the online service. The change in service model has demanded clear communication in order for it to proceed. It raises questions around how Service Owners opt in and out and also asks who is not being served by this service and who else might benefit. It also prompts wider questions about staff who have not had the training, skillset or mindset to engage in online service.

Elegance

The external evaluator noted that ‘the evaluation session pointed to an upbeat mood and sense of cohesive community, where the sense of belonging and commitment was tangible. There was an easy atmosphere and it seemed that everyone was welcome just as they were.

There was an atmosphere of freedom to be as you are and speak for self and for that to be accepted.

What made it “clunky” is everyone talking over each-other, and the limitations of technology, but none of these interfered with the mood or atmosphere of inclusivity.”

Ethics

The evaluator noted that the conception and piloting of the Virtual Service Centre “has been part of an ethical response to support services users, who may otherwise have struggled with isolation and wellbeing. It has also added greater transparency and been an equalising force between staff and those who attend the service.”

She also noted that “it has also enhanced relationships between staff with families and brought a transparency and a new sense of people’s home lives into play.”

The evaluator noted the possibility of ethical challenges in delivering clinical services online which were requested by Service Owners, as well as addressing a key concern around “how best to support those who struggle with engaging online, as this way of accessing services does not work for everyone.”

This external evaluation session reinforced the views expressed by Service Owners in their survey responses that while the virtual service can’t replace a physical service long term, it could enhance it and provide different and alternative options. “What it can do, is open new doors, and stretch expectations, and potential for all beyond the 9 to 5 bounds of an in-situ day service.”

The consistent message from Service Owners was that they would like to see the Virtual Service Centre continuing, along with opportunities to get out and about in their own communities with their key workers and the option to access their day service, when it re-opens.

Staff & External Trainers’ responses

See [Appendix 3](#) for full report on survey responses.

28 staff and external trainers responded to the survey, which is a 100% response rate. All who responded (N=27) said that the VSC is addressing Service Owner needs. The majority of staff/external trainers (61%) are engaged with the service many times a day, with 7% engaged once a day. 17% are involved every now and again, and 14% involved once or twice a week

When asked how the VSC compares to the day service, 46% said that they think it is as good as the day service, while 11% reported that they found it more enjoyable to work in than the day service. 43% reported that they much prefer the day service.

This cohort rated the key benefits of the VSC in a manner which closely mirrored those of the Service Owners in that they cited the fact that it offers something to occupy their time (100%) and gives a sense of purpose to the day (96%). Staff rated equally the benefit of getting a break from families and its provision of a form of entertainment (85%). They also rated the VSC's provision of more choice to Service Owners regarding how they access their service (78%) while also highlighting that it puts a lot of pressure on service users to be able to use technology (32%).

56% reported that it gives them a new sense of purpose in their working day and 74% said that it forces them to step outside their comfort zone in their role. 52% reported that it gives them a bigger say in how services are delivered and the same number of staff reported that they are working more effectively with their colleagues.

58% reported that the VSC has strengthened their connection with families.

Qualitative responses were consistently supportive of the VSC, while still naming the challenges of not having access to sufficient technology, upskilling in the use of new technology, and trying to support Service Owners with their own IT and AT needs. One staff member reported that *"I feel I am a little better using technology than I believed I was....It has challenged me to use technology more in my role and I am enjoying it....I look forward to learning even more and improving my skills."* [note: '...'are the respondent's own. This quote is unedited].

Staff members' openness to learning new skills in order to be able to support the VSC was clearly articulated:

"I have learned a lot since this started and I am excited to learn more and improve upon what we have all achieved so far, both professionally in terms of improving the virtual service and personally in improving my IT skills."

Staff expressed a desire to progress this VSC beyond its pilot phase to benefit adults who use services nationally:

"It would be great to get funding to set this up nationally as an alternative to going into a centre, offers more choice for SU's and families, no longer has to be 9-5"

Monday to Friday. SUs can use the platform to contact other SUs that you know is safe.” [SU = Service User]

Many staff are using their own personal devices (laptops/PC’s/tablet devices/smart phones) which limit the functionality of Teams, as they are operating outside of the Enable Ireland IT network. This limits their capacity to see more than one Service Owner at a time, and prevents them from managing sessions (e.g.: inviting in and admitting participants, ‘pinning’ participants to the main screen when contributing, etc.). Access to networked laptops was cited as a pressing need to optimise the impact of the VSC for both Service Owners and Staff.

The commitment by staff to do whatever it takes to successfully support Service Owners remotely was clearly articulated in the survey response: *“I have put many additional hours training myself with Teams. I have also helped mold (sic) and structure a functional service, that can now be copied by many different organisations and charities.”*

Another staff member took the time to offer the following observation via e mail: *“On a personal note I have enjoyed every minute. Getting to see everyone on a daily basis, connecting with the Service Owners and getting to know them better. I've enjoyed working as a team and with Microsoft staff. Everyone pulling their weight and doing over and beyond their duties.”*

The external evaluator’s report paid particular attention to staff learning, and how it is occurring in tandem with Service Owner learning:

“Stepping into the unknown and learning-in-practice has been a huge part of this journey for staff as much as Service Owners.”

The importance of getting the VSC off on the right footing was also noted, in terms of the overall tone of what takes place on line:

“Staff experience is critical to the success of this service as they set the tone for the emerging culture.”

Once again though, the reality of being online with only a small number of key worker staff being in a position to meet in person in the community, takes its own toll, as noted by the external evaluator: *“A staff member was surprised at how “trying” it was to run a service in the virtual world.”* The need to make programming content more accessible was also recognised, along with the need to provide ways by which Service Owners could independently access the VSC and reduce their reliance on family members to set them up/log them in.

The necessity to reflect and innovate as a result of service closure was noted also by the external evaluator who stated that “it has also enhanced the collective reflective practice of staff, fostered greater purposefulness, and supported the question about how to develop services further.”

Consistently, staff expressed the view that they would like to see the Virtual Service Centre continuing as part of a three pronged approach to service delivery, alongside one to one sessions with key workers in the community and a centre based day service.

Families' responses

See [Appendix 4](#) for full report on survey responses.

11 families responded to the survey, a 31% response rate. 82% rated the Virtual Service Centre as great while 19% rate it as okay. 55% of families reported that they valued both the group sessions and one to one chats, while 27% stated their preference for the group sessions and 18% preferred the one to one chat facility.

When asked to compare the VSC to the day service, 45% stated a preference for the day service, with 27% stating that the VSC is more enjoyable and 27% stating that the VSC is as good as the day service. In total, 54% of families reported that the VSC was as good as/more enjoyable than the day service.

While family responses mirrored those of Service Owners and staff in rating a sense of purpose as the most important aspect of the VSC (54%), the second most rated aspect was entertainment (45%) while the VSC's provision of something to occupy their family member and its empowerment of family members attracted the same number of responses (36%).

In the qualitative responses, one family stated that *“the Virtual Service Centre is very good for what it is & has been a great help during this pandemic. However, for our family member, it in no way replaces the actual centre.”*

Another parent (featured in the radio interview) highlighted the importance of her son having a focus for his day, which ensured that he got up, showered and dressed early in the morning, all of which he had neglected during the period between service closure and when the VSC commenced.

Struggles with connecting with the Teams sessions, and with managing both the IT and AT needs of family members were also noted that as their family member is:

“non-verbal, uses an app on iPad for speech most of the time sometimes things happen very fast on team and also they can feel not heard at times because it takes them time to input on the app.”

It is noteworthy that many Service Owners are facilitated by ageing parents and that many of those parents adopted the technology willingly, as they recognised its importance in the current climate. The digital skills that they rapidly acquired and are acquiring may potentially offer parents the chance to explore the online world for their own benefit also: an unexpected ancillary benefit of the VSC.

73% of families stated that they would like to see the VSC continue after the pandemic and 78% stated their preference for it to be one of three options offered to Service Owners, along with outings in the community with key workers and a centre based service.

Microsoft staff and volunteers' responses

5 Microsoft staff responded to the survey from a total of 22 staff and volunteers, a response rate of 23%. Microsoft have provided access to Teams for all, and have provided 1000 hours of support to both staff and service owners as well as €21,000 towards funding for external trainers and purchasing of new laptops for staff (who have been using their own personal devices). They have played a key role in driving the VSC, having originally proposed the model shortly after services closed. Their Philanthropy Lead was instrumental in designing the project plan, motivated by an understanding of the negative impact that service closure was likely to impose on Service Owners. Microsoft's insight has been built on a 20 year partnership with Enable Ireland, and in that time, they have engaged both strategically and operationally, providing direct supports to the Sandyford and Dun Laoghaire Day Services.

The key motivations for Microsoft to become involved in establishing the Virtual Service Centre were to contribute to a solution that would reduce Service Owners' isolation, following centre closures. They were keen to understand the challenges faced by Service Owners and staff, but worried that they were putting excess pressure on Enable Ireland resources and driving the initiative too hard. They anchored support through 3 key staff members who committed – and continue to commit themselves extensively to the project.

They reported an awareness of the challenge of *“balancing the importance of impact vs. achieving within realistic & achievable time frames.”*

Microsoft were keenly attuned to the challenges of bringing technology solutions to a disability service where not all staff are comfortable with IT. *“Covid-19 has everyone being a tech expert however, not everyone is ready for that.”*, said one respondent.

Access to funding and ensuring that all Service Owners are on line was cited as a key challenge. One respondent stated that the main challenge for Enable Ireland was that *“funding, training resources & a decentralised approach to Adult Services. From an external perspective this should be more centralised with shared best practices.”* This observation may be key as the VSC is rolled out nationally.

The importance of each service sharing best practice (e.g.: complex AT requirements of individual Service Owners) with one another in order to maximise learning was also highlighted.

Some of the benefits cited by staff included the following:

“Seeing the joy some of the activities bring to service users and watching them connect with other Enable Ireland service users, some who they may not have met.”

“Hugely rewarding to see the impact we are having on service users lives.”

Microsoft have committed to continuing to support this Virtual Service Centre beyond Dublin based services, with a view to supporting as many of the 370 adults who use Enable Ireland services who would like to access it, over the coming months.

Summary

It is clear from the evaluation that the Virtual Service Centre has addressed a major and urgent gap in service delivery during this pandemic. It has enabled the service to pivot towards home, offering an innovative and unprecedented degree of service on a daily basis. Service Owners, staff and families have all expressed a desire for the Virtual Service Centre to continue as one of a three part service model:

- Virtual Service Centre
- Key worker support in the community
- Centre based service

Gaps in technology: a shortage of laptops for staff and Assistive Technology hardware and software for Service Owners reduced the impact of the VSC, as was the clear need for the provision of technology training to all.

Recommendations

The evaluation has highlighted both the strengths of the Virtual Service Centre and the gaps which need to be addressed if it is to become a sustainable and impactful part of a long term solution to service provision beyond the pilot phase.

The potential for Service Owners to play a more active role in designing the VSC is significant. The parity of esteem that is evident in the description of 'tone' highlighted by the evaluator, points to something that is key to how it evolves. Service Owners can shape the content to include, for example: a resumption of peer mentoring sessions to enhance self-advocacy skills, using their own personal interests to inform session themes such as: keep fit, photography, gaming, etc.

Access to external training and education courses via the Virtual Service Centre is also being considered by service trainers and co-ordinators.

The Director of Service is working to ensure that the programming of the Virtual Service Centre is sustainable using the current training and evening social programme budgets along with underspends on transport, to year end. However, investment in technology is key to its longer term success, as is investment in programme expansion. If the VSC is to innovate further, then consideration will need to be given to enhanced budgets to achieve maximum impact for Service Owners and families. It is also noteworthy that the benefits, impact and potential of the Virtual Service Centre model can address many of the key elements of New Directions, supporting people to realise their own life goals and live the lives of their own choosing:

1. Extend reach of Virtual Service Centre to other Enable Ireland Adult Services who are interested in it: Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Clare, Crumlin and Rialto.
2. Extend reach of Virtual Service Centres to other Enable Ireland Residential and Respite Services nationally.
3. Invest in laptops for staff and IT/AT devices for Service Owners to enable them to fully benefit from the Virtual Service Centres.
4. Investigate how to deliver IT supports beyond current model of intensive support provided by Microsoft.
5. Strengthen online presence of Virtual Service for external audiences: eg: build dedicated web content on Enable Ireland website.

6. Upgrade the Communications infrastructure in Adult Services Centres: ensure that the IT network connection can accommodate multiple staff running Teams sessions from the centres when they return to work.
7. Identify/source appropriate IT training for staff, many of whom are new to using technology as a core component of their role.
8. Source and provide training in digital literacy for Service Owners and their families.
9. Enable Service Owners to drive their engagement with one another, both within services, across services and in the evenings/at weekends, with support from IT.
10. Investigate how the VSC can evolve its programme to accommodate:
 - a. Service Owner-led sessions
 - b. Self-advocacy and peer mentoring skills development: enabling self-advocacy to address challenges in transport/accessibility with external bodies such as County Councils, Transport providers, Public Services, etc.
 - c. Expansion of evening supports and extension to weekend provision
 - d. Untapped staff expertise beyond core job descriptions/roles
 - e. Increased training/education content (e.g.: partnership with Education and Training Boards, CIB, Community HSE Services, etc.)
 - f. Volunteering Ireland resources to support IT and/or other trainer skills
 - g. Support transitions to further education and access to work
 - h. Cross service collaboration: sessions accessed by all services.
11. Foster and promote skills development among Service Owners with a view to recognition of their potential to be paid for their contribution to designing and delivering services.
12. Explore how to accommodate service reporting obligations within VSC model: e.g.: using iPlanit/other digital resources as a person centred planning tool.
13. Review the length/intensity of the online programme and the balance between group sessions and one to one chats.
14. Consider smaller groups and some bookable sessions to facilitate greater engagement by those who struggle to contribute in larger groups.
15. Investigate how online services can support engagement with other mainstream activities such as personal leisure interests.
16. Investigate how clinical services can be delivered online.

17. Increase involvement of respite and residential services staff in shaping the daily programme.
18. Investigate introduction of Virtual Services Centre to school leavers as part of their transition to Adult Services with a view to addressing any IT/AT issues in advance of transition.
19. Investigate offering Virtual Service as a standalone service to adults with Personalised Budgets in the future
20. Review current use of term 'Virtual Service Centre' and consider alternatives which may closer reflect its impact.
21. Agree a standard rate for external trainers nationally.

Recommendations for other Enable Ireland Services

1. Share model with PDS teams nationally and consider elements which may benefit children and families
2. Investigate how to resource IT supports and optimise AT supports to all adults and children who attend Enable Ireland services to enable them benefit from online services and supports.

All of the above has been achieved through a unique partnership between Enable Ireland and Microsoft. Consideration should be given to how the learning from this model of engagement could be documented and shared with other service providers and funders, as it has the potential to inform the evolution of services that are sustainable over the longer term.