



One in Six Living with Neurological Conditions: NAI Calls for Budget 2027 Investment to End Regional Inequality in Care

UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL Wednesday, 24th June 2026 — The Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) is calling on the Government to make targeted investments in neurology and neurorehabilitation services in Budget 2027 to address growing waiting lists, regional inequalities and gaps in specialist care affecting the more than 860,000 people living with neurological conditions across Ireland (one in six of the population).

In its Pre-Budget Submission 2027, *The Right Care in the Right Place*, the NAI is seeking investment of €2.2m to strengthen neurology services nationwide and to deliver a long-promised community neurorehabilitation team for the South East, the only region in Ireland that has yet to receive funding for such a service.

The call comes just months after the publication of NAI's landmark report, *Towards an Equitable Integrated Neurology Service for Ireland*, which highlighted critical shortcomings in neurology services a decade after the National Model of Care for Neurology was published.

The report, which was supported by Sanofi, found that demand for neurology services continues to grow rapidly, with neurology waiting lists doubling over the past decade to more than 24,000¹. It also highlighted significant regional inequities in access to specialist services, with a number of Model 3 hospitals still lacking dedicated neurology services despite recommendations that such services should be available in all Model 3 hospitals.

Patients reported lengthy waits for diagnosis and treatment, long journeys to access specialist care and significant gaps in ongoing support following diagnosis.

Investment Needed to Deliver Timely Access to Specialist Care

The NAI is calling for dedicated investment in Budget 2027 to support the continued rollout of sustainable neurology services in regional hospitals and to strengthen specialist pathways that enable timely diagnosis and access to appropriate care.

Magdalen Rogers, Chief Executive of the Neurological Alliance of Ireland, said:

“One in six people in Ireland is living with a neurological condition, yet far too many are facing long waits for diagnosis, travelling significant distances to access care, or struggling to access the specialist supports they need after diagnosis. Our research has shown that people are experiencing a postcode lottery when it comes to neurology services.

Budget 2027 provides an opportunity to address these inequities by investing in regional neurology services and specialist care pathways. Early diagnosis and timely intervention can have a profound impact on quality of life, independence and long-term health outcomes. We need to ensure that people can access the right care in the right place, regardless of where they live.”



South East Left Behind on Neurorehabilitation

The NAI is also calling on the Government to complete the national rollout of community neurorehabilitation teams by funding a dedicated team for the South East.

Community neurorehabilitation teams provide access to specialist therapies and support for people living with neurological conditions in their local communities, helping them maximise independence, prevent avoidable deterioration, and reduce pressure on acute hospital services.

A national survey conducted by the NAI in 2025 involving more than 600 people living with neurological conditions found that 73%² of respondents in the South East reported being unable to access neurorehabilitation services in their community.

The organisation says investment in a South East community neurorehabilitation team would address a major regional inequity while helping to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions and delayed discharges.

Orla Hardiman, Professor of Neurology and Head of the Academic Unit of Neurology at Trinity College Dublin and Consultant Neurologist at Beaumont Hospital, said:

“Neurological conditions are among the leading causes of disability and complex healthcare needs worldwide. We know that early intervention, multidisciplinary care, and access to rehabilitation services can significantly improve patient outcomes.

The evidence is clear that demand for neurology services in Ireland is increasing rapidly. Investment in specialist neurology services and community neurorehabilitation is essential if we are to deliver equitable, effective and sustainable care. These investments will not only improve patient outcomes but will also help reduce longer-term pressures on the health system.”

NAI Pre-Budget 2027 Priorities

The Neurological Alliance of Ireland is calling on the Government to:

- Invest in sustainable neurology services in regional hospitals and nationally to improve access to specialist care and timely diagnosis.
- Continue the rollout of neurology services to address regional inequities in access.
- Invest in specialist pathways for neurological conditions.
- Fund a community neurorehabilitation team for the South East and complete the national rollout of neurorehabilitation services.
- Strengthen access to rehabilitation and community supports for people living with neurological conditions.

With 50,000 new neurological diagnoses each year and demand for services continuing to grow, the NAI is urging the Government to make neurology and neurorehabilitation a priority in Budget 2027.

ENDS

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Notes to Editor:

About Neurological Alliance of Ireland:

The Neurological Alliance of Ireland brings together 40 non-profit organisations to advocate for the rights of the over 860,000 people throughout Ireland living with a neurological condition. Neurological conditions affect the brain and spinal cord and now represent the leading cause of disability worldwide. Founded in 2003, the NAI advocates for the development of quality services for people living with neurological conditions. Our campaigns are rooted in the experiences of our members and the individuals and families they work with. We provide a united and expert voice on neurological care through advocacy, policy development, and awareness-raising. More information can be found at www.nai.ie.

References

1. Source: Outpatient Waiting Lists by Speciality www.ntpf.ie
2. Source: NAI The Right Care in The Right Place report https://www.nai.ie/sites/www.nai.ie/files/universal_attached_files/Survey%20Report%202025.pdf