



**INVITATION TO TENDER
FOR**

Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for Registered Nurses leading to Registration as a
Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability [RNID]

**This document should be read in conjunction with the
Expression of Interest Response Document
and
HSE Competition Rules Document**

Invitation To Tender – Open Procedure

Tender Title	Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for Registered Nurses
HSE Ref	HSE 29058
Tender Description	The Health Service Executive (HSE) (on behalf of all Publicly Funded Health Agencies) invites proposals from suitably qualified Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for the provision of a Higher Diploma Programme in Intellectual Disability Nursing for 12 Registered Nurses for the academic year commencing September 2027 to September 2028 and the option to extend x 2 years up to December 2030. The HSE funds the payment of programme fees on behalf of candidates approved to undertake the programme. The services required by HSE (Education Services) are classified as services listed under Article 74 and Annex XIV of EU Procurement Directive 2014/24/18/EC. This procurement process is fully compliant with the EU Directives. The requirement of the programme is outlined under Section 1 of this document, Specification of the Requirement. The Evaluation Process in Section 2 sets out the Selection and Award Criteria against which proposals are to be evaluated. HSE Tender Competition Rules are provided as part of the Invitation to Tender documentation.
Contract Duration	The provision of a Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for twelve (12) candidates commencing September 2027 to September 2028. Option to extend x 2 years up to December 2030.
Completed Tenders must be returned to:	Using the etenders facility www.etenders.gov.ie
Closing Date	12 Noon on the 16th of September 2026.
Queries Deadline	12 noon on the 9th of September 2026.
HSE Contact	Patrick Monahan via e-tenders messaging system
CPV Code	8000000 – Education and Training Services

Note:

- It is imperative that all questions in the Tender Response Document are completed in the format provided as the Tender Response Document will be used as the basis for evaluation of selection and award.
- If you have any queries or problems completing Tender Response Document please email the HSE contact identified above.
- For general information on HSE refer to www.hse.ie
- Defined terms used in this Invitation to Tender (**ITT**) include defined terms contained in the Tender Competition Rules available at www.hse.ie. This Invitation to tender should be read in conjunction with the Tender Competition Rules.

1) SPECIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT

1.1 PROFILE OF HSE

The Health Service Executive (HSE) is Ireland's publicly funded health service. Established under the Health Act 2004, it is responsible for delivering health and personal social services to people living in Ireland, including hospital care, disability services, primary care, mental health services, social care, and health promotion. Six regional areas are in place to improve integration of hospital and community services.

MISSION

The HSE's mission is to ensure that people in Ireland are supported by health and social care services so that they can:

- Access safe, compassionate, and high-quality care when they need it
- Achieve the best possible health outcomes
- Have confidence that public resources are used effectively and responsibly

VALUES

The HSE operates according to four core values that guide its culture and behaviour:

Care

Providing high-quality, evidence-based healthcare while listening to service users' needs and experiences.

Compassion

Treating people with dignity, kindness, respect, and empathy, and communicating openly and professionally.

Trust

Acting with honesty, integrity, transparency, and accountability to build public confidence.

Learning

Supporting continuous improvement, innovation, and staff development while learning from experience.

GOVERNANCE

The HSE operates within a statutory governance framework designed to ensure accountability and transparency.

1.2 CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

Disability Services in Ireland are provided through the HSE, Section 38 & Section 39 Organisations. The majority of services are provided by Section 38 and Section 39 organisations.

Currently 1/3 of Registered Nurses working in intellectual disability services do not hold the specialist qualification as a Registered Nurse in Intellectual Disability (RNID) and are registered under the General, Children's or Mental Health division of the register. The absence of this qualification to underpin practice, results in restrictions in applying for promotional posts within intellectual disability. Undertaking an intellectual disability nursing post-graduate qualification leading to registration on that division of the register opens opportunities for career progression,

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through promotional posts, fostering leadership or specialised roles otherwise out of reach, consequently supporting service demand and improving retention of experienced nurses.

The first priority for allocation of places on the proposed Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing will be for nursing staff currently employed in the funded disability service.

A number of policy documents and regulatory publications support the provision of a Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for Registered Nurses leading to registration as a Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability [RNID]

Sláintecare strategic actions:

Provide high quality, accessible and safe care that meets the needs of the population; support the health and wellbeing of the population; design, establish and launch an integration fund to test and scale up new models of care on a significant scale with a focus on community care and integration of care across all settings; build a sustainable, supported, resilient workforce that is enabled to deliver the Sláintecare vision. (www.slaintecare)

HSE National Service Plan 2026:

Section 4 Disability Services Receiving Right Care, Correct Care, & Right Time.

- Develop targeted retention actions and innovative recruitment campaigns. (www.hse.ie)
- Workforce diversification and pipeline development

Shaping the Future of Intellectual Disability Nursing:

This report recommended strategic investment by the HSE to provide funding to build the workforce and develop new roles. It stated that the implementation of RNID workforce development strategies consistent with the thrust of general health and disability specific policies including disease specific recommendations as outlined in the National Dementia Strategy are vital.

The report recommended the expansion of the skills of the RNID and new nursing roles in providing lifespan approaches addressing peri-natal and end of life concerns should be implemented. (McCarron *et al.* 2018)

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland:

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland maintains the Register of Nurses and Midwives and a Candidate Register for student nurse and midwives. It sets the standards for the education of nurses and midwives.

NMBI Statement of Strategy 2023-2025 sets the standards for nursing and midwifery education in Ireland

Intellectual Disability Nurse Post Registration Education Programmes Standards and Requirements (NMBI, 2021)

The Registered Nurse Programme Standards (NMBI 2025) define the standards for curriculum delivery, curriculum content, student experience, assessment, as well as standards for supervision and assessment in practice placements.

The documents outlined confirm the service need for the provision of a Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for Registered Nurses leading to registration as a Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability [RNID] (NMBI 2021)

Geographical context:

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Potential applicants for this programme will be from a wide geographical area and this must be factored into the programme delivery. In the context of a wide geographical spread of potential candidates optimisation of direct contact days must be demonstrated within an innovative blended programme delivery.

1.3 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (Failure to meet minimum requirements in section 1.3.2 to 1.3.7 shall result in your tender being eliminated from this competition).

1.3.1 Objectives of this Procurement Process are:

- The provision of a Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for Registered Nurses leading to registration as a Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability [RNID] (NMBI 2021)
- To select a provider (HEI) to meet the geographical spread of the candidate pool across the funded disability services.
- To agree formal agreements between the HEI and the HSE for the provision of this education programme (if successful)
- On successful completion of the education programme successful candidates must be eligible to register as a Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability (RNID) with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)

1.3.2 Specification of Requirements for HEI proposal for the provision of a Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing for Registered Nurses. Level 8 Major Award National Qualifications Framework.

Tenderers must demonstrate:

- Detailed knowledge of the strategic and operational delivery of disability services in Ireland
- Comprehension of the current Irish Legislation in disability services
- Expertise of the role of international organisations in terms of disability inclusion strategies
- Knowledge of national and international issues pertaining to evidence based healthcare systems for assuring the delivery of safe quality person centred health & social care
- A comprehensive understanding of the Irish health care sector and in particular, the role of nursing in Intellectual Disability Services delivery and development of health services
- A track record of delivering quality intellectual disability nursing education programmes at undergraduate level and other nursing postgraduate level programmes
- A commitment to maintaining the highest standard of excellence, professionalism, integrity and ethics in the provision of the service to the HSE
- That the programme shall enable Registered Nurses to achieve an educational award to meet the Requirements and Standards for Education Programmes for Nurses, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI 2025) Intellectual Disability Nurse Post Registration Education Programmes Standards and Requirements (NMBI, 2021)
- That the programme shall enable successful candidates to be eligible for registration as a Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability with the NMBI.

Higher Education Institutions must provide the following information with their proposals

1.3.3 Education Programme Delivery:

- a) Provide an overview of the education programme curriculum including programme philosophy, aims, learning objectives and outcomes
- b) Outline the modules covered and assignments to be undertaken to support the successful completion of the education programme

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- c) Detail the theoretical and practice placement requirements of the proposed programme
- d) Provide information on the duration of the programme and the timetable for candidates. The proposal must clearly demonstrate how, where and when candidates will receive the education programme
- e) The programme must demonstrate compliance with the NMBI' Requirements and Standards for Education Programmes for Nurses' and Intellectual Disability Nurse Post Registration Education Programmes Standards and Requirements (NMBI, 2021)
- f) Provide a breakdown of core modules and European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) awarded
- g) The proposal must detail teaching methodologies to be employed for each module
- h) Outline blended learning approaches in terms of access to programme information, knowledge construction, and development & assessment methods.
- i) Provide an estimate of proposed ratio of lecturers to participants for skills demonstration and assessments where relevant
- j) Given the wide geographical location of potential applicants for this programme it is a requirement to detail the consolidation/optimisation of direct contact days required per module to ensure time efficiencies for participants.
- k) Detail the learning contract for the candidates
- l) Detail the supports available to the candidates for the duration of the education programme
- m) Outline the assessment and marking processes in order to successfully complete the education programme
- n) Identify the awarding standard for the programme
- o) Provide copy/confirmation of the accreditation/approval for the education programme from the NMBI
- p) Detail the arrangements for replacement days if any college days are cancelled or candidates have not achieved full attendance (clinical and/or academic)
- q) Detail the quality assurance processes in place for the delivery of the education programme
- r) Identify a collaborative process for the HSE to meet with the HEI for engagement and consultation purposes
- s) Detail the candidate entry and accreditation of prior learning criteria for the programme
- t) Identify suitable accommodation where the education programme will take place if your proposal is successful
- u) Detail the attendance criteria for candidates to be eligible to successfully complete the education programme
- v) Detail the maintenance of attendance records for all HSE funded candidates and supply this information to the HSE on request
- w) Include a detailed plan of how essential information (attendances, results etc.) will be provided in a timely manner to the HSE. This must be done in full compliance with GDPR.

1.3.4 Application Process:

- a) Detail the process for promoting and advertising the education programme
- b) Describe the registration process that ensures that HSE funded candidates do not incur a registration fee
- c) Detail the applicant registration process to ensure each candidate has successfully registered with the HEI on commencement of the education programme.
- d) The application process must be free of charge, clear and specific and available online.

1.3.5 Deferral / Supplemental / Examinations/ Attrition:

- a) Detail the options and timeframes within which supplemental assessments can be undertaken by the candidate
- b) Provide timely and comprehensive progression, supplemental, deferral/attrition reports on candidates for each education programme to the HSE
- c) Detail the arrangements for candidates who have deferred from the education programme and timeframes in which they can recommence the education programme
- d) Detail supports available for candidates who defer or require supplemental examinations/modules
- e) Detail the number of opportunities each candidate will be given for supplemental examinations/modules.

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1.3.6 Communication Processes:

- a) Provide a detailed database of all HSE funded candidates for each education programme within 30 days of commencement of the education programme in compliance with GDPR requirements. The dataset as determined by the HSE, must include at a minimum;
 - HEI
 - HSE Area
 - HSE or funded agency at entity level or blended entities
 - Cohort (e.g. September 2028)
 - Student First Name
 - Student Surname
 - NMBI Personal Identification Number (PIN)
 - Nursing Discipline (e.g. R.G.N.)
 - Clinical Area
 - Health Service Provider(Employer) Name
- b) Provide assurance that an education programme will not be cancelled; an acceptable assurance will include mitigation of risk to continuity of service.
- c) Present an overview of the education programme to the HSE if required
- d) Detail how communications with HSE&HSE funded agencies will be managed to enhance the education experience for candidates
- e) Arrange an end of year meeting and provide an annual report on the Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing programme and status of candidates, i.e. progression rate, number of deferrals, attrition rates, supplemental examinations and other relevant academic indicators /information
- f) Agree to invite representation from HSE Access and Integration, National HR, Section 38 & 39 organisations, ONMSD and representatives from clinical placement areas to attend conferring ceremonies.

1.3.7 Administrative arrangements & invoicing:

- a) Agree to a standardised administrative system to coordinate funding arrangements, including the provision of a named individual within the HEI for all communications relating to invoicing matters.
- b) Agree to a standardised invoicing system

The invoice should only include HSE funded candidates who are undertaking the Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing Sponsorship programme for Registered Nurses, Level 8 Major Ward National Qualifications Framework

- c) Minimum invoicing dataset:
 - Purchase Order
 - Invoice date
 - Unique invoice number
 - Supplier name and address
 - Purchaser's address: Health Service Executive, Disability Services, Access & Integration, Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8
 - Description of service supplied: Higher Diploma in Intellectual Disability Nursing programme for Registered Nurses
 - Intake: e.g. September 2027 intake
 - List of students by First name, Family name, NMBI PIN, HEI student number and name of employing agency
 - Unit Cost
 - Total Cost
- d) Provide the HSE with invoices ideally within 30 to 60 days of commencement of education programme
- e) Candidates from private organisations must not be included on invoices issued to the HSE.

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2) EVALUATION PROCESS

The methodology for evaluation of Tenders is outlined in the following **3 stages**:

2.1 Exclusion Criteria

Note: Tenderers who fail to sign the **Tenderer Declaration** at the end of the Tender Response Document (without amendment or qualification) will be excluded from the Tender Process.

2.2 Qualitative Selection Criteria

Main Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Minimum Requirement
Economic and Financial Standing (Art 47)	Overall Turnover	<i>€1.5 Million per annum for each of the past three years</i>
Technical and Professional Ability	Tender specific company references similar to those required	<i>At least 3 relevant examples of successful delivery of Level 8 Nursing Programmes provided within the last 3 years.</i>
	Capacity (Manpower)	<i>Availability of core Lecturers with experience in successfully delivering at least one programme in intellectual disability nursing education at level 8 within the last 3 years. At a minimum each module shall be overseen/delivered by a programme director with experience in successfully delivering at least one programme in intellectual disability nursing education at level 8 within the last 3 years.</i>
	Administrative Support & Management Reporting	<i>Demonstrate satisfactory administrative support facilities including ability to provide management and candidate information reports</i>

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Main Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Minimum Requirement
Quality Assurance Standards	Internal Quality Assurance Procedures	<i>Demonstrate satisfactory internal quality assurance procedures in place and in operation</i>
	External Quality Assurance and Accreditation	<i>For Information Purposes only</i>
	Staff Training & Vetting Procedures	<i>Demonstrate satisfactory staff training and vetting procedures in place and in operation</i>
	Data Protection	<i>Demonstrate satisfactory policies and procedures in relation to maintaining data protection and security of information</i>

Note: Tender proposals must meet the minimum requirements in all criteria above to qualify for the next stage of the evaluation process.

2.3 Criteria for Award

Tenders that achieve the minimum requirements set out in the Qualitative Selection Criteria will be evaluated to determine which presents the most economically advantageous tender. Tenders will be evaluated using the criteria and associated weightings outlined below:

Main Criteria	Weighting	Sub Criteria	Weighting	Marks Available	Minimum Marks Required
Quality and Technical Merit	60%	Demonstrated Merit of the Programme Delivery	50%	5,000	3,000
		Communication Processes	5%	500	N/A
Sustainability	5%	Sustainability Management	5%	500	N/A
Cost	40%	Costing of Education programme	40%	4,000	N/A
Total	100%		100%	10,000	

2.3 Guide to Award Evaluation Process

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For Non-Cost criteria identified in this Invitation to Tender, (including sub-criteria), the specific measures and scoring ranges are outlined below. Tenders will be scored in increments of a tenth (1/10) of the total marks available as set out below under each of the sub-criteria.

2.3.1 Quality and Technical Merit - Professional Knowledge & Practice

Sub-Criteria	Weighting
(a) Demonstrated Merit of the Programme Delivery	5,000 Marks
Requirement	
Tenderers must provide a comprehensive response under the headings provided under Programme Delivery as outlined in Section 1.3.3 of the Specification of Requirement. Any supporting documentation provided as an Addendum in support of the response provided must be clearly referenced.	

Sub-Criteria	Weighting
Communication Processes	500 Marks
Requirement	
Tenderers must provide a comprehensive response under the headings provided under Communication Processes as outlined in Section 1.3.6 of the Specification of Requirement. Any supporting documentation provided as an Addendum in support of the response provided must be clearly referenced.	

Guide to Award Evaluation Process

Scoring of Non-Cost Criteria will be based on Tenderers response and the full provision of information requested. The Evaluation Group will assess the information provided and attribute scoring using the following methodology specific for each group.

Weighting	Meaning
90% - 100%	A response that demonstrates an excellent level of quality and understanding of requirements and provides comprehensive and convincing assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to an excellent standard.
80% - 89%	A response that demonstrates a very good level of quality and understanding of requirements and provides assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to a very good standard.
60% - 79%	A response that demonstrates a satisfactory level of quality and understanding of requirements and gives reasonable assurance of delivery to an adequate standard but does not provide sufficiently convincing assurance to award a higher mark.
30% - 59%	A response where reservations exist. Lacks full credibility/convincing detail, and there is a significant risk that the required services would not be delivered.

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1% - 29%	A response where serious reservations exist. This may be because, for example, insufficient detail is provided, and the response has fundamental flaws, or is seriously inadequate or seriously lacks credibility with a high risk of non-delivery.
0%	Response completely fails to address the criterion under consideration.

Sustainability Management 5% or 500 Marks.

No response or an unsatisfactory response shall score 0

A satisfactory response shall score 500 marks

2.3.2 Cost

Sub-Criteria	Weighting
Costing of Education programme	4,000 Marks
Requirement	
The highest cost that will be considered by the HSE will be 12,000 euro per sponsored candidate. This maximum figure is to be inclusive of all costs including VAT and no further fees, charges or expenses whatsoever will be payable by either the HSE or by the candidates who participate in this programme. Please note that no extra charges will be applicable to the HSE for repeat examinations. The price tendered will remain fixed for the first two calendar years. Any price adjustments after the first two calendar years will be at the discretion of the HSE and applicable from year three onward and limited to demonstrated and unavoidable increases in costs incurred by the service provider. No other charges unless detailed in this schedule will be entertained by the HSE. Individual candidates will not be charged any additional fees whatsoever (for example Registration Fees, Recreational, Ceremonial, Contribution etc).	
Scoring of the above criteria will be as follows:	
The highest mark for cost is assigned to the tender with the lowest overall cost per candidate-that is deemed to meet the minimum requirements identified in this document. The score assigned for cost, for all other tenders, is calculated pro rata in relation to this score.	

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3) TENDERER DECLARATION (EXCLUSION CRITERIA)

Tenderers who fail to sign the declaration below (without qualification or amendment) will be excluded from the Tender Process.

The undersigned as an officer of the stated Tenderer:

1. Agrees to the HSE's Tender Competition Rules available to download on: www.hse.ie
2. Accepts that the Contract, without material variation as judged by HSE, will form the basis of the contract.
3. Confirms that the Tender fully meets or exceeds those (minimum) requirements as specified by HSE.
4. Agrees that the Tender Documents and Tender will, at the option of HSE, become legally binding and an essential portion of the Contract, if awarded.
5. Declares that the Tenderer has no material conflict of interest affecting the scope of the Contract.
6. Declares that the Tender takes account of the obligations relating to employment protection and working conditions that are in force in the place where the works are to be carried out or the service is to be supplied.
7. Is prepared to put in place additional levels of insurance, if required and requested by HSE.
8. Agrees to the HSE's Supplier Charter available to download on: www.hse.ie
9. If awarded the Contract agrees to provide such management reports and other information as may be required by HSE, HIQA or other relevant bodies from time to time.
10. Declares that the tenderer has not been the subject of any of the offences set out in Article 57 of Directive 2014/12/EU.
11. Certifies that this is a bona fide Tender, intended to be competitive, and that the Tenderer has not fixed or adjusted the amount of the Tender by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person(s).

Authorised By:

Signed	
Print Name	
Position/ Role	
Tenderer Name	
Date	

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Provision addressing obligations and responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015

36.1 Where any of the successful Tenderer's Personnel and/or sub-contractors carry out any work or activity, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the successful Tenderer's Personnel or sub-contractors having access to, or contact with children in any of the types of establishments listed in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015 (which for the avoidance of doubt includes any hospital, hospice, health care centre or other centre which receives, treats or otherwise provides physical or mental health services to children), the services provided by the successful Tenderer shall be regarded as "Relevant Services" for the purposes of the Children First Act, 2015 (the "Children First Act") and the successful Tenderer shall comply with all applicable obligations arising under the Children First Act and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

Where Clause 36.1 is applicable, the successful Tenderer shall:

- 36.2.1 carry out a Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment in accordance with Section 11 (1) and (2) of the Children First Act;
- 36.2.2 ensure a Child Safeguarding Statement (reviewed in last 24 months) is in place, is displayed in a prominent place and is furnished to all staff, as per Section 11 (3-10) of the Children First Act;
- 36.2.3 ensure that a procedure for maintaining a list of Mandated Persons (as per Schedule 2 of the Children First Act) is in place;
- 36.2.4 ensure that Mandated Persons (as per Schedule 2 of the Children First Act) have been identified and informed of their role ;
- 36.2.5 ensure that a Child Protection & Welfare Policy is in place;
- 36.2.6 ensure that all staff and relevant volunteers have completed the HSE e-Learning Module "An Introduction to Children First"; and
- 36.2.7 ensure that the HSE Children First Implementation and Compliance Self-Audit Checklist has been completed and is available on request.

Without prejudice to Clause 36.1 above, upon request from the HSE, the successful Tenderer shall, irrespective of whether the Services it provides are regarded as "Relevant Services" within the meaning of the Children First Act, provide reasonable assistance to the HSE so that the HSE can undertake appropriate risk assessments and put in place appropriate controls to safeguard children from harm as part of the HSE's Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement, which controls may include requiring the successful Tenderer's Personnel and/or sub-contractors to be Garda Vetted in accordance with the relevant clause of the Contract Agreement, undertake assigned Children First training and adhere to applicable HSE Child Protection and Welfare policies (as applicable).

Contact Details for tender :

Patrick Monahan , Contact via e tenders messaging system