

Early Education and Training Centre (EETC)

Introduction

EETC is the first stop for parents in a range of pre-school services for children with disability or children at risk of becoming disabled. The centre provides early education and training programmes for these children, where particular emphasis is placed on the caring and training role to be played by the parents/guardians/family members.

Purpose and objectives

The objective of EETC is to maximise the developmental functioning of disabled children by supporting and enabling parents/guardians/family members to accept, understand, care for and train their children.

Nature of service

EETC provides a range of services for parents/guardians/family members focused on helping them to learn to accept and care for their children, by working jointly with them. The following services are included:

- (a) Developmental assessment and individualised educational programmes
Each child is assessed upon admission and periodically thereafter. The results of the developmental assessment are used to plan an individualised training programme which sets learning goals for the parent and child.
- (b) Centre-based individual and group training and/or therapy
The child and parent attend centre-based programmes together, on an individual or group basis, at least once a week and then practise the skills in daily life. Occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech therapy services are provided. Toys are available for parents to borrow in order to facilitate home training.
- (c) Parental support and education
Guidance, counselling and support are provided to educate parents/guardians/family members and enhance acceptance and understanding in order to facilitate the overall development of their disabled children.
- (d) Outreach service
The service described above may be provided on an outreach basis in the children's own home where the parents/guardians/family members experience difficulties in bringing their children to the centre.

Target group

The major target groups are:

- disabled children from birth to 2 years of age

- disabled children from 2 to 6 years of age meeting the eligibility criteria for EETC only

The other group that may be catered for where vacancy exists is: disabled children from 2 to 6 years of age on a waiting list for Special Child Care Centre services.

Eligibility criteria

Referral eligibility criteria for children from birth to 2 years of age are those who are assessed as experiencing:

- physical disabilities (including cerebral palsy)
- mental handicap
- visual impairment
- other congenital abnormalities
- developmental delay
- risk of becoming disabled

Referral eligibility criteria (for EETC only) for children from 2 to 6 years of age are those

who are assessed as experiencing:

- global delay (including speech delay)
- borderline intellectual delay
- a mix of physical disability and social behavioural problems
- inadequate teaching or training from parents/guardians/family members

Referral channel

Referrals can be made by medical social workers, family caseworkers or via them by child assessment clinics, paediatric departments of general hospitals, private practitioners of relevant specialties and pre-school rehabilitation centres to the Central Referral System for Rehabilitation Services – Subsystem for Disabled Pre-schoolers.