Dear [Insert TD’s name here].

I live in [insert town/village here] and I need your help.

My child, [Insert name here], is [insert age here] years old and has a condition called Dyspraxia, which is also known as ‘developmental co-ordination disorder’ (DCD). Affecting more than one child in every Irish classroom, Dyspraxia/DCD is a lifelong condition which is characterised by difficulty with thinking out, planning and carrying out sensory/motor tasks.

In [insert child’s name here] case, they have difficulty with [some symptoms] and often find it challenging to [symptoms] and [symptoms].

Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland is the only dedicated HSE funded charity in Ireland which provides support and assistance to those living with Dyspraxia/DCD and their families yet they receive only €50,000 from the government each year. Other organisations who deal with similar neuro-diverse conditions receive considerably more funding than Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland. They are clearly under resourced.

Their recent application to the HSE for funding for an Education Officer and Information Officer was refused without any formal reasoning behind this decision. It is deeply unfair that Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland receives such feeble support from the government considering the thousands of people they assist each year by providing basic services such as helpline support, low cost counselling, events and activities for children, teens and adults as well as workshops that empower parents to help their children. They also provide expert advice to educators and medical professionals on how best to support people with Dyspraxia/DCD.

Just because Dyspraxia/DCD is a hidden disability does not mean we should be forgotten about.

It’s time for us to fight for the rights of our children and I’m asking you as a parent of a child with the condition to assist us. Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland needs proper, consistent funding to ensure that the correct services are in place for our children to help them deal with this condition in childhood so it does not adversely affect their adult lives. Furthermore, recent changes in how SNA funding is allocated and the ‘New Allocation Model’ in schools means that children with Dyspraxia/DCD are more likely to lose out, making the work of Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland even more vital.

Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland have lodged an application with the HSE seeking further funding for the organisation. In particular they are looking for funding for two additional full time positions, funding which will enable it to provide services for families and people living with Dyspraxia/DCD, and funding for everyday costs such as rent, insurance, telephone and other utilities.

As my local TD, I’m asking you to speak up for those of who live with Dyspraxia/DCD. I would like you to contact the Minister for Health, Simon Harris and speak to him on my behalf.

He can be contacted in the following ways,

Via email Department ministersoffice@health.gov.ie

 Constituency simon.harris@oireachtas.ie

Via phone Department 01 635 4000 Constituency 01 281 3727

If you need further information on Dyspraxia/DCD Ireland and what they need to continue helping families in your constituency, please call Harry Conway on (01) 874 7085.

Best wishes,

[insert name here]