



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,
Disability Services/Community Operations,
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369

Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

25th May 2018

Deputy James Browne,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: james.browne@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Browne,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ 20915/18

To ask the Minister for Health the waiting times for occupational therapy for children with dyspraxia in each of the years 2015 to 2017 and to date in 2018, by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

The Health Service Executive does not currently collect information specifically on persons with Dyspraxia/DCD. The National Disability Databases (NIDD & NPSDD) annual reports present data on the specialised health and personal social service use and requirements of people with a disability. However, participation in the databases is voluntary and therefore not every individual in Ireland, who has a disability, consents to inclusion on the database. This is a reflection that such individuals may not be availing of, or requiring, a specialised disability health and personal social services and may therefore access services and supports through the generic Primary Care Services. Therefore, the database does not provide any definitive epidemiological statement on the number of people with a particular type of disability or diagnosis, nor does it cover the proportion of people living in Ireland who have a disability and have chosen not to register.

The table below provides details of the number of children less than 18 years of age on waiting list for first time assessment for Occupational Therapy at the end of March 2018. This includes all children and not just those with dyspraxia.

Appendix 1: Occupational Therapy - Number of Patients Awaiting First Time Assessment March 2018											
CHO	Former LHO	0 - 4 Yrs 11 Months					5 - 17 Yrs 11 Months				
		0 - ≤ 12 weeks	>12 weeks - ≤ 26 weeks	>26 weeks but ≤ 39 weeks	>39 weeks but ≤ 52	> 52 weeks	0 - ≤ 12 weeks	>12 weeks - ≤ 26 weeks	>26 weeks but ≤ 39 weeks	>39 weeks but ≤ 52	> 52 weeks
CHO 1	Cavan Monaghan	2	1	0	0	0	33	46	67	66	440
	Donegal	38	9	5	4	0	38	39	12	9	0

	Sligo Leitrim	17	10	3	0	0	69	29	36	20	18
	CHO1 Total	57	20	8	4	0	140	114	115	95	458
CHO 2	Galway	10	13	1	1	0	51	36	4	1	0
	Mayo	27	21	27	25	30	49	28	35	62	71
	Roscommon	25	10	4	7	2	47	73	4	19	12
	CHO2 Total	62	44	32	33	32	147	137	43	82	83
CHO 3	Clare	2	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0
	Limerick	6	1	0	0	0	73	7	0	0	0
	North Tipperary East Limerick	2	0	1	0	0	49	38	27	1	1
	CHO3 Total	10	1	1	0	0	132	45	27	1	1
CHO 4	Kerry	24	15	17	12	13	52	54	51	74	237
	North Cork	5	9	11	2	23	41	40	28	39	357
	North Lee	28	51	28	20	25	107	126	111	159	510
	South Lee	13	30	16	7	5	70	106	89	98	161
	West Cork	6	5	4	7	3	39	49	19	47	106
	CHO4 Total	76	110	76	48	69	309	375	298	417	1371
CHO 5	Carlow Kilkenny	55	46	29	6	2	72	88	72	25	8
	South Tipperary	37	32	23	16	8	88	82	49	43	25
	Waterford	70	31	22	15	44	89	56	34	43	205
	Wexford	50	60	31	46	86	137	140	116	139	372
	CHO5 Total	212	169	105	83	140	386	366	271	250	610
CHO 6	Dublin South East	5	8	1	2	1	32	23	20	16	29
	Dun Laoghaire	12	16	19	16	17	21	26	20	17	30
	Wicklow	23	18	16	18	36	58	74	53	69	204
	CHO6 Total	40	42	36	36	54	111	123	93	102	263
CHO 7	Dublin South City	6	10	9	3	0	29	35	17	17	0
	Dublin South West	22	42	59	29	4	100	110	123	102	167
	Dublin West	18	52	51	24	12	65	110	53	47	27
	Kildare West Wicklow	24	20	17	12	34	87	106	113	115	520
	CHO7 Total	70	124	136	68	50	281	361	306	281	714
CHO 8	Laois Offaly	131	121	82	58	96	113	108	98	117	926
	Longford Westmeath	122	46	12	14	6	134	55	22	10	6
	Louth	40	33	25	24	73	56	66	66	74	468
	Meath	22	19	11	0	0	187	141	100	22	11
	CHO8 Total	315	219	130	96	175	490	370	286	223	1411
CHO 9	Dublin North	46	63	50	44	125	76	55	58	53	64
	Dublin North Central	24	35	16	1	0	22	33	14	15	0
	Dublin North West	61	53	47	34	36	41	99	67	59	379
	CHO9 Total	131	151	113	79	161	139	187	139	127	443
National Total		973	880	637	447	681	2135	2078	1578	1578	5354

Supports for People with Dyspraxia

Children and adults with Dyslexia or Dyspraxia may have difficulty with thinking, planning and carrying out sensory/motor tasks, and may benefit from the therapeutic support of healthcare professionals. They also need support and understanding in the education system to help them reach their full potential.

In the health service over the past decades there have been major changes in how services are delivered. Current services are based on the principle of mainstreaming with a clear focus on ensuring persons with a disability have access to the normal range of services and participate in community life as far as possible. Many children and adults with a disability who have support needs can be

effectively supported within mainstream child and adult health services. A proportion, representing those with assessed need for specialist services are referred to disability services.

The HSE funds a range of community services and supports to enable each individual with a disability to achieve his or her full potential and maximise independence. Services are provided in a variety of community and residential settings in partnership with service users, their families and carers and a range of statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and community groups. Services are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary service providers. Voluntary agencies provide the majority of services in partnership with and on behalf of the Health Service Executive.

From a health perspective, there are a number of therapies that can make it easier for persons with dyslexia or dyspraxia to cope with their problems. These include Speech and Language Therapy, to improve speech and communication skills, and Occupational Therapy to find ways to remain independent and complete everyday tasks.

Therapy Services

Therapy services for adults and children are generally delivered through Primary Care Teams or community therapy services; through specialist disability providers or Early Intervention and Children's Teams for 0-18 years, which are continually being developed under *Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (0-18s) Programme*

The HSE is currently engaged in a reconfiguration of existing therapy resources to geographic based teams for children (0-18 years). It is supported by a National Coordinating Group which has representatives from the Department of Health and the Department of Education and Skills in addition to other key stakeholders.

The objective of the new model of assessment and intervention is to provide one clear referral pathway for all children (0-18s), irrespective of their disability, where they live or the school they attend. The transition to this service delivery model is governed by a consultation and engagement process with all stakeholders, including service users and their families, and is being implemented on a phased basis, with full implementation of the model scheduled for 2018.

The intention is to roll out an integrated care model that will allow children, whatever the nature of their disability, to be seen as locally to their home and school as possible; at primary care level when their needs can be met there and by a network specialist interdisciplinary team if their needs are more complex. The primary and network teams will be supported as appropriate by specialist support services with a high level of expertise in particular fields.

Since 2014, the roll out of the *Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (0-18s) Programme* has entailed targeted investment of €14m and the provision of 275 additional therapy staff, to increase services for children with all disabilities.

In 2013, additional funding of €20m was provided to strengthen primary care services. This comprised over €18.5m for the recruitment of over 260 primary care team posts and over €1.4m to support community intervention team development. There was also a €4m allocation within the 2016 Service Plan to facilitate the recruitment of Speech and Language Therapists to address waiting lists as part of the overall Speech and Language Therapy waiting list initiative within Primary Care and Social Care. The allocation provides for an additional 83 posts.

National Service Improvement Groups have been established to review Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy waiting times and the Primary Care Division is working with the Chief Officers in each area to address waiting lists.

The level of increase underlines the commitment of the HSE and Government to ongoing therapy provision. These measures will have a positive impact on the provision of clinical services for all children requiring access to health related supports.

Dyspraxia Ireland

Dyspraxia Ireland was formed in 1995 by parents of children with Dyspraxia/DCD with the following aims:

- Raise awareness of Dyspraxia/DCD in Ireland and create a better understanding of the difficulties people with Dyspraxia/DCD and their families face.
- Ensure adequate resources are available to support the needs of people with Dyspraxia/DCD. This includes occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy, psychological support and education.
- Provide information, sharing and support network for people with Dyspraxia/DCD and their families.
- Improve diagnostic services.
- Organise meetings for people with Dyspraxia/DCD and their families.
- Provide a link to professionals, for people with Dyspraxia/DCD and their families.

Dyspraxia runs a number of support groups throughout the country as well as a national help and support line to all those affected by Dyspraxia/DCD.

The HSE Disability Services provides funding to Dyspraxia Ireland under a grant aid agreement, which amounts to €50,000 per year. The organisation also received lottery funding of €1,000 in 2017 through the HSE's Primary Care Division.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Cathal Morgan,
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations**