



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Social Care  
South East Community Healthcare  
c/o Community Care Headquarters  
James' Green

Kilkenny

Telephone 353 56 7784600  
Fax 353 56 7764172

29<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr. Mike Wallace T.D.  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin

**PQ 48037-18**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of children in County Wexford waiting on an initial assessment of needs; and the number waiting longer than 3, 6, and 12 months and 2 and 3 years, respectively for an initial assessment of needs.**

Dear Deputy Wallace

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

*I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position*

Wexford Disability Services provide a range of multidisciplinary supports and services for children with disabilities including Early Intervention (0-6 years) and School Age Services (6-18 years).

There have been significant year on year increases in the number of children applying for assessment (including Autism Disorder Spectrum) and all disability services which has led to delays in timeframes. It is acknowledged that given increased referral rates and demands for assessments and Disability Services, there is a requirement for additional resources to meet current need.

The table below provides the number of applications for assessment of need (AON) under the Disability Act that were overdue for completion at the end of September 2018. This information is based on data extracted from the Assessment Officers' System database (AOS). There were a total of 258 application for AON received in the South East Community Healthcare area of which 150 were received in Wexford.

Wexford	Overdue	<1month	1-3 months	>3 months
	114	5	23	86

The HSE recognise there is a lack of standardisation and clarity in the AON process which can contribute to delays. The AON is not a clinical pathway for services and was never intended for that purpose. To ensure that children receive intervention as soon as possible and to improve the AON

process, the HSE has recently finalised a Standard Operating Procedure for this. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure those children with disabilities, and their families, access appropriate assessment and intervention as quickly as possible. In addition, this procedure will ensure that the approach to AON is consistent across all areas. The HSE are currently working with all stakeholders on how best to implement this new procedure.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'PMcEvoy', written in black ink.

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**Patricia McEvoy**  
**General Manager, Disability Service- South East Community Healthcare**