



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
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27<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Deputy Róisín Shortall TD  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2.

PQ 5529/19 Question: To ask the Minister for Health his plans to improve and expand the child and adolescent mental health services in County Tipperary in view of the need for service improvement; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Róisín Shortall

Dear Deputy Shortall,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

With regard to plans to improve the level of child mental health service in County Tipperary discussions are taking place in relation to the future development of child/adolescent services within the available resources.

In 2018 the Minister announced the recruitment of 10 new posts nationally for Advanced Nurse Practitioners for CAMHS (ANPs) where two of these posts are being recruited for Community Healthcare Organisation Southeast and one for Community Healthcare Midwest. These new ANPs will play a key role in delivering improved access, reduced waiting lists and increased sustainability of service delivery.

Another initiative aimed at improving early intervention for young people with emerging and mild mental health difficulties is that of enhancing primary care psychology services through the employment of assistant psychologists. The HSE recently recruited 114 new Assistant Psychologists and they have now become actively involved in Primary Care Teams providing psychological intervention for young people. These posts will assist by ensuring that young people whose clinical needs are at primary care level receive appropriate intervention and do not end up on secondary care waiting lists (for specialist mental health services) due to lack of appropriate assessment and resources in primary care.

As of December 2018 in county Tipperary CAMHS Teams service delivery levels are broadly consistent with HSE performance targets for example North Tipperary CAMHS Team offered 95% of



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accepted referrals a first appointment within 12 weeks. The South Tipperary CAMHS Team offered 94% of accepted referrals/referrals a first appointment within 12 weeks, and the South Tipperary Team 2 offered 83% of accepted referrals/referrals a first appointment within 12 weeks. However variance exists in the number of children on CAMHS waiting list waiting greater than 12 months for first appointment with 18 children waiting greater than 12 months in County Tipperary in December 2018.

There are two types of referral; an urgent referral and a routine referral. Every effort is made to prioritise urgent referrals so that young people with high risk presentations are seen as soon as possible and this is often within 24 to 48 hours. This may impact on wait times for cases that are considered, by a clinician, to be less severe.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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Dr Sinead Reynolds  
General Manager Mental Health Services