



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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

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31<sup>st</sup> July 2019

Deputy Louise O'Reilly,  
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Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

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

**PQ 31732/19**

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of children and adults, respectively waiting for initial speech and language therapy assessment at 28 June 2019, by CHO and LHO area in tabular form; the comparative figure as at 28 June 2018; and if he will make a statement on the matter..*

**PQ 31733/19**

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of children and adults, respectively, waiting for initial speech and language therapy assessment at 28 June 2019 by CHO and LHO area in tabular form; and the number waiting 0 to 12, 12 to 26, 26 to 52 and more than 52 weeks respectively*

**HSE Response.**

Speech and Language Therapy Services are provided through Primary Care Teams in Community Healthcare Organisations to children and young people requiring assessment, diagnosis and treatment of speech, language and communication difficulties and feeding and swallowing difficulties.

Primary Care Operations compiles the data for Speech and language waiting lists and have provided the most recently available data to answer this query. The tables in the attached appendices give the following information:

- Appendix 1 attached shows the number of children awaiting Initial speech and language therapy assessment up to the end of May 2019.
- Appendix 2 attached shows the number of adults awaiting Initial speech and language therapy assessment up to the end of May 2019.
- Appendix 3 attached shows the number of children awaiting Initial speech and language therapy Assessment at the end of May 2018.
- Appendix 4 attached shows the number of adults awaiting Initial speech and language therapy Assessment at the end of May 2018.

The HSE is aware of the numbers of children and adults waiting for therapy services and is fully cognisant of the stress this can cause to families. One of the key priorities for the HSE is to improve waiting times for therapy services by implementing a revised model of care for children's Speech and Language Therapy services and Psychology services and develop new models for Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy services.

In addition to the significant numbers of additional posts allocated to Primary Care and to Social Care under the Progressing Children's Disabilities Programme in recent years (see further details below), the HSE is committed to using innovative approaches, involving public, voluntary and private providers, to achieving a targeted reduction in therapy waiting lists.

The HSE is fully committed to working in partnership with service providers to achieve maximum benefits for children with complex needs, and aims to ensure that resources available are used in the most effective manner possible.

### **Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (PDS)**

The HSE is rolling out the Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (PDS) Programme, which requires a reconfiguration of all current HSE and HSE funded children's disability services into geographically-based Children's Disability Network Teams (Early-Intervention and School-aged or 0-18 Teams). This Programme aims to achieve a national equitable approach in service provision for all children based on their individual need and regardless of their disability, where they live or where they go to school. Based on the recommendations of the Report of the National Reference Group on Multidisciplinary Services for Children aged 5-18 Years (2009), its objectives are:

- ✓ One clear pathway to services providing equity of access for all children with disabilities, according to their need.
- ✓ Effective teams working with partnership with parents and Education to support children in achieving their potential.
- ✓ Available resources used to the optimum benefit for children and their families.

PDS is achieving this by forming partnerships between all the disability organisations in an area. The staff resources are then pooled according to expertise in the different types of disabilities to form local Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs). The CDNTs will then provide for all children with significant disability, regardless of presenting needs.

In tandem with Health service reform which seeks to have Health and Social Care "Networks" in place, HSE is well underway in terms of establishing a total of 96 Children's Disability Networks across each of the nine CHOs. A key enabler to establishment of the remaining Children's Disability Network Teams is the recruitment of the Children's Disability Network Managers. The recruitment process for these posts is well advanced and the HSE is awaiting the outcome of an Industrial Relations process before appointing the successful candidates. It is intended that Children's Network Disability Services will be outcomes focussed, which is an approach setting out services to support children and young people to achieve outcomes. In addition, while recognising the lived experience of families, disability services should also aim to support families to achieve certain outcomes.

Please note that **all** HSE Areas planning reconfiguration continue to have significant Early Intervention and School Age Services in place, provided either directly by the HSE, or by voluntary service providers funded by the HSE, such as Enable Ireland, Kare, Muriosa Foundation, St. John of God Services, Brothers of Charity Services, St. Michael's House, Cope Foundation, CRC, Daughters of Charity Services etc.

### **National Policy on Access to Services for Children with a Disability or Developmental Delay**

National HSE Disability and Primary Care are working together collaboratively with Community Health Organisations via their Chief Officers to support implementation of the HSE's National Policy on Access to Services for Children with a Disability or Developmental Delay. This policy will provide a


single point of entry, signposting parents and referrers to the most appropriate service (Primary Care for non-complex functional difficulties and Children's Disability Network Teams for complex functional difficulties).

### **Additional funding for Therapeutic services across both Disability and Primary Care**

NSP 2019 has provided for an additional 100 new therapy posts to be implemented over 2019/ 2020 to the Children's Disability networks. This is additional to existing resources in this area as follows:

- The above should be considered in light of previous investment secured by the HSE for therapeutic services has been invested in the Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (0-18s) Programme (PDS). Since 2014, the roll out of the PDS 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.
- In addition, the recruitment of a further 40 posts in Occupational Therapy (OT) commenced in Quarter 4, 2018. Currently the OT Service Improvement Working Group is reviewing options pertaining to the allocation of posts across CHO Areas. This is being done in conjunction with the findings of the OT Service Improvement report for Primary Care.

Yours sincerely,



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

## Appendix 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - May 2019							
LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	283	108	7	0	0	0	398
Donegal	349	0	0	0	0	0	349
Sligo Leitrim	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>755</b>
Galway	327	76	20	0	0	0	423
Mayo	157	18	6	0	0	0	181
Roscommon	172	0	0	0	0	0	172
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>776</b>
Clare	101	21	13	0	0	0	135
Limerick	342	145	27	0	0	0	514
North Tipperary East Limerick	257	81	26	8	0	0	372
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,021</b>
Kerry	206	14	0	0	0	0	220
North Cork	146	61	0	0	0	0	207
North Lee	363	41	0	0	0	0	404
South Lee	382	38	37	40	71	67	635
West Cork	92	0	0	0	0	0	92
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1,558</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	282	4	0	0	0	0	286
South Tipperary	194	19	0	0	0	0	213
Waterford	143	13	0	0	0	0	156
Wexford	310	297	141	23	0	0	771
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,426</b>
Dublin South East	55	0	0	0	0	0	55
Dun Laoghaire	151	5	9	9	5	0	179
Wicklow	9	16	38	0	0	0	63
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>297</b>
Dublin South City	149	93	46	9	7	0	304
Dublin South West	246	47	62	101	118	120	694
Dublin West	180	273	185	49	0	0	687
Kildare West Wicklow	412	163	0	0	0	0	575
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>2,260</b>
Laois Offaly	254	21	14	0	0	0	289
Longford Westmeath	258	191	5	0	0	0	454
Louth	364	0	0	0	0	0	364
Meath	281	115	50	17	10	0	473
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>1,157</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,580</b>
Dublin North	529	367	117	18	0	0	1,031
Dublin North Central	222	187	104	0	0	0	513
Dublin North West	339	220	118	45	0	0	722
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>1,090</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,266</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,563</b>	<b>2,634</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>11,939</b>

## Appendix 2

**Speech and Language Therapy - Number of patients aged 18 years and older awaiting Initial Assessment - May 2019**

LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	129	57	21	0	0	0	207
Donegal	78	21	3	0	4	67	173
Sligo Leitrim	193	23	1	0	0	0	217
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>597</b>
Galway	158	0	6	0	0	0	164
Mayo	17	0	1	6	0	0	24
Roscommon	22	3	1	1	0	0	27
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>215</b>
Clare	13	0	0	0	0	0	13
Limerick	25	2	4	0	0	0	31
North Tipperary East Limerick	15	1	0	0	0	0	16
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60</b>
Kerry	41	0	0	0	0	0	41
North Cork	23	0	0	0	0	0	23
North Lee	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
South Lee	22	0	0	0	0	0	22
West Cork	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>103</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	77	32	0	0	0	0	109
South Tipperary	58	0	0	0	0	0	58
Waterford	76	8	6	0	0	0	90
Wexford	23	0	0	0	0	0	23
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>280</b>
Dublin South East	44	0	0	0	0	0	44
Dun Laoghaire	10	9	5	0	0	0	24
Wicklow	187	0	0	0	0	0	187
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>255</b>
Dublin South City	58	34	20	0	0	0	112
Dublin South West	139	38	0	0	0	0	177
Dublin West	57	13	7	7	0	10	94
Kildare West Wicklow	46	0	0	0	0	0	46
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>429</b>
Laois Offaly	148	15	16	11	8	10	208
Longford Westmeath	97	49	6	2	0	0	154
Louth	47	54	0	0	0	0	101
Meath	318	154	96	80	52	0	700
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,163</b>
Dublin North	53	0	0	0	0	0	53
Dublin North Central	165	59	12	29	2	0	267
Dublin North West	135	90	54	0	0	0	279
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>599</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,491</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>3,701</b>

Appendix 3

**Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - May 2018**

LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	341	74	28	0	0	0	443
Donegal	252	15	0	0	0	0	267
Sligo Leitrim	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>711</b>
Galway	486	135	4	0	0	0	625
Mayo	203	10	0	0	0	0	213
Roscommon	175	12	0	0	0	0	187
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,025</b>
Clare	121	10	6	0	0	0	137
Limerick	403	138	14	0	0	0	555
North Tipperary East Limerick	267	43	16	0	0	0	326
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,018</b>
Kerry	169	9	0	0	0	0	178
North Cork	182	26	34	8	3	11	264
North Lee	317	41	0	0	0	0	358
South Lee	459	108	136	128	7	23	861
West Cork	86	16	5	3	0	0	110
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>1,213</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1,771</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	249	5	0	0	0	0	254
South Tipperary	179	26	0	0	0	0	205
Waterford	199	30	0	0	0	0	229
Wexford	298	298	121	14	0	0	731
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,419</b>
Dublin South East	28	20	6	0	0	0	54
Dun Laoghaire	150	16	7	5	0	0	178
Wicklow	16	0	0	0	0	0	16
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>248</b>
Dublin South City	179	73	25	13	0	0	290
Dublin South West	302	99	109	46	26	54	636
Dublin West	257	212	107	16	0	0	592
Kildare West Wicklow	433	47	0	0	0	0	480
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>1,171</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1,998</b>
Laois Offaly	444	14	0	0	0	0	458
Longford Westmeath	410	79	0	0	0	0	489
Louth	257	0	0	0	0	0	257
Meath	133	0	0	0	0	0	133
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,337</b>
Dublin North	450	446	16	0	0	0	912
Dublin North Central	240	149	8	0	0	0	397
Dublin North West	352	311	89	5	0	0	757
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>1,042</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,066</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,038</b>	<b>2,462</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>11,593</b>

Appendix 4

**Speech and Language Therapy - Number of patients aged 18 years and older awaiting Initial Assessment - May 2018**

LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	95	0	0	0	0	0	95
Donegal	118	10	4	67	0	0	199
Sligo Leitrim	180	8	0	0	0	0	188
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>482</b>
Galway	67	10	11	9	9	8	114
Mayo	22	2	2	0	0	0	26
Roscommon	15	3	0	0	0	0	18
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>158</b>
Clare	23	1	0	0	0	0	24
Limerick	16	0	0	0	0	0	16
North Tipperary East Limerick	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>47</b>
Kerry	86	0	0	0	0	0	86
North Cork	20	0	0	0	0	0	20
North Lee	32	7	0	0	0	0	39
South Lee	15	0	0	0	0	0	15
West Cork	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>166</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	82	26	8	18	0	0	134
South Tipperary	26	0	0	0	0	0	26
Waterford	29	1	0	0	0	0	30
Wexford	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>192</b>
Dublin South East	28	0	0	0	0	0	28
Dun Laoghaire	9	6	11	0	0	0	26
Wicklow	252	0	0	0	0	0	252
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>306</b>
Dublin South City	33	0	0	0	0	0	33
Dublin South West	77	3	0	0	0	0	80
Dublin West	82	8	12	0	2	55	159
Kildare West Wicklow	15	0	0	0	0	0	15
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>287</b>
Laois Offaly	174	47	8	11	18	0	258
Longford Westmeath	81	8	1	0	0	0	90
Louth	57	0	0	0	0	0	57
Meath	301	141	94	55	2	0	593
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>998</b>
Dublin North	90	5	0	1	0	0	96
Dublin North Central	128	56	41	12	1	1	239
Dublin North West	109	64	26	0	0	0	199
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>534</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,277</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>3,170</b>

