



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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4<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin  
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Dear Deputy Ó Caoláin,

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 26637/19

*To ask the Minister for Health the waiting lists for children seeking access to a speech and language therapist by CHO in tabular form; the number of additional speech and language therapists required to eliminate waiting lists for same; and the estimated cost of employing such therapists in line with the Disability Act 2005.*

#### 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 (The data provided is to the end of April 2019.)

- Appendix 1 attached shows the number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment up to the end of May 2019.
- Appendix 2 attached shows the number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Therapy at the end of May 2019.
- Appendix 3 attached shows number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Further Therapy at the end of May 2019.

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.

### **Current Status:**

Fifty six Children's Disability Teams have already been established with a further eighty two Children's Disability Network Teams to be reconfigured from existing services in 2019. However, and in light of Health reform which seeks to have "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. These posts were advertised on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018. It is envisaged that the Children's Disability Network Managers will be in place in Q2 2019.

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, Muriola Foundation, St. John of God Services, Brothers of Charity Services, St. Michael's House, Cope Foundation, CRC, Daughters of Charity Services etc.

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

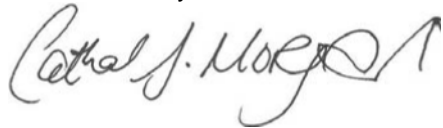
NSP 2019 has provided for an additional 100 new therapy posts to be implemented by end 2019 (Note: 2.5m granted in 2019, therefore the posts have to be implemented in a gradual way) over 2019/ 2020 to the Children's Disability networks. This is additional to existing resources in this area as follows:

- 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.

However, additional resources are required. The Report on the Future Needs of Disability Services (April 2018) estimates an additional 400 posts are required to provide adequate staffing levels to meet the demand for children's disability services and the HSE is working to address this. Budget 2019 has provided for a funding commitment to provide an additional 100 therapy posts specific to the Disability Network Teams to be established.

Yours sincerely,



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

## Appendix 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Total Number of patients awaiting Initial Therapy - 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	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
Donegal	80	0	0	0	0	0	80
Sligo Leitrim	66	8	2	0	0	0	76
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>164</b>
Galway	211	77	10	0	0	0	298
Mayo	58	3	0	0	0	0	61
Roscommon	93	6	0	0	0	0	99
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>458</b>
Clare	69	42	21	0	0	0	132
Limerick	148	46	30	19	0	0	243
North Tipperary East Limerick	60	42	6	0	0	0	108
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>483</b>
Kerry	102	26	4	0	0	0	132
North Cork	69	52	68	36	0	0	225
North Lee	221	159	152	30	16	25	603
South Lee	120	72	40	0	0	0	232
West Cork	67	30	9	0	0	0	106
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,298</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	135	111	118	124	12	0	500
South Tipperary	131	59	24	2	0	0	216
Waterford	151	121	132	49	0	1	454
Wexford	138	113	118	106	37	0	512
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,682</b>
Dublin South East	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Dun Laoghaire	40	65	7	0	0	0	112
Wicklow	85	58	40	35	0	0	218
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>334</b>
Dublin South City	113	100	154	85	20	0	472
Dublin South West	108	86	82	38	0	0	314
Dublin West	207	148	136	84	41	6	622
Kildare West Wicklow	89	4	0	0	0	0	93
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1,501</b>
Laois Offaly	115	95	85	14	2	0	311
Longford Westmeath	187	92	6	0	0	0	285
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	76	0	0	0	0	0	76
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>672</b>
Dublin North	427	259	20	0	0	0	706
Dublin North Central	94	45	41	10	0	0	190
Dublin North West	250	211	93	5	0	0	559
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,455</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,722</b>	<b>2,130</b>	<b>1,398</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>8,047</b>

## Appendix 2

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Therapy - 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	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Donegal	80	0	0	0	0	0	80
Sligo Leitrim	16	0	0	0	0	0	16
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>
Galway	155	65	10	0	0	0	230
Mayo	55	3	0	0	0	0	58
Roscommon	93	6	0	0	0	0	99
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>387</b>
Clare	69	42	21	0	0	0	132
Limerick	114	41	29	19	0	0	203
North Tipperary East Limerick	58	42	6	0	0	0	106
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>441</b>
Kerry	91	25	4	0	0	0	120
North Cork	61	52	68	36	0	0	217
North Lee	210	157	152	30	16	25	590
South Lee	120	72	40	0	0	0	232
West Cork	67	30	9	0	0	0	106
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,265</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	135	111	118	124	12	0	500
South Tipperary	131	59	24	2	0	0	216
Waterford	151	121	132	49	0	1	454
Wexford	138	113	117	106	37	0	511
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,681</b>
Dublin South East	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Dun Laoghaire	40	65	6	0	0	0	111
Wicklow	1	1	6	12	0	0	20
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>133</b>
Dublin South City	113	100	154	85	20	0	472
Dublin South West	99	72	74	38	0	0	283
Dublin West	207	148	136	84	41	6	622
Kildare West Wicklow	89	4	0	0	0	0	93
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1,470</b>
Laois Offaly	115	95	85	14	2	0	311
Longford Westmeath	180	87	5	0	0	0	272
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>583</b>
Dublin North	427	259	20	0	0	0	706
Dublin North Central	70	36	27	4	0	0	137
Dublin North West	167	127	91	3	0	0	388
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,231</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,258</b>	<b>1,933</b>	<b>1,334</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7,291</b>

### Appendix 3

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old awaiting Further Therapy - 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	37	0	0	0	0	0	37
Donegal	446	2	0	0	0	0	448
Sligo Leitrim	293	94	14	7	0	3	411
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>896</b>
Galway	633	259	64	31	10	28	1,025
Mayo	152	1	0	0	8	0	161
Roscommon	0	0	0	1	18	0	19
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1,205</b>
Clare	195	156	58	11	1	0	421
Limerick	395	270	142	37	1	33	878
North Tipperary East Limerick	154	64	43	11	0	0	272
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1,571</b>
Kerry	441	122	23	0	0	0	586
North Cork	167	94	81	40	0	0	382
North Lee	273	220	158	92	51	46	840
South Lee	294	176	111	22	26	24	653
West Cork	141	93	57	0	0	0	291
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>2,752</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	194	40	10	4	0	0	248
South Tipperary	0	267	178	0	0	0	445
Waterford	32	13	17	7	0	0	69
Wexford	51	109	115	91	50	0	416
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,178</b>
Dublin South East	145	0	0	0	0	0	145
Dun Laoghaire	90	22	30	15	17	20	194
Wicklow	95	128	5	0	0	0	228
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>567</b>
Dublin South City	138	157	155	179	18	0	647
Dublin South West	183	187	214	118	10	0	712
Dublin West	368	222	101	105	74	71	941
Kildare West Wicklow	104	14	7	0	0	0	125
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>2,425</b>
Laois Offaly	138	91	84	20	0	0	333
Longford Westmeath	399	153	51	0	0	0	603
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	12	27	0	0	0	0	39
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>975</b>
Dublin North	879	388	27	0	0	0	1,294
Dublin North Central	254	160	72	12	0	0	498
Dublin North West	378	280	150	3	0	0	811
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,603</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,081</b>	<b>3,809</b>	<b>1,967</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>14,172</b>