



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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21st May 2019

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 questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ 20640/19

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons aged under 18 years of age awaiting speech and language therapy in each county; the number of these patients waiting longer than 6, 12, 18, 24 and 36 months, respectively for speech and language therapy in each county; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

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 April 2019.
- Appendix 2 attached shows the number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Therapy at the end of April 2019.
- Appendix 3 attached shows number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Further Therapy at the end of April 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 19th 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, Muriosa 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

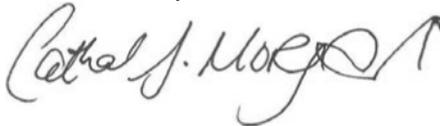
NSP 2019 has provided for an additional 100 new therapy posts to be implemented by end 2019 (Note: 2.5m granted in 2019, therefore the posts have to be implemented in a gradual way) over 2019/ 2020 to the Children's Disability networks. This is additional to existing resources in this area as follows:

- 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, Social Care Division**

Appendix 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - April 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	298	92	6	0	0	0	396
Donegal	245	0	0	0	0	0	245
Sligo Leitrim	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
CHO1	546	92	6	0	0	0	644
Galway	403	87	20	0	0	0	510
Mayo	188	12	9	0	0	0	209
Roscommon	77	0	0	0	0	0	77
CHO2	668	99	29	0	0	0	796
Clare	169	21	4	0	0	0	194
Limerick	336	124	16	0	0	0	476
North Tipperary East Limerick	264	76	25	2	0	0	367
CHO3	769	221	45	2	0	0	1,037
Kerry	156	0	0	0	0	0	156
North Cork	168	38	0	0	0	0	206
North Lee	347	17	0	0	0	0	364
South Lee	371	39	38	47	71	62	628
West Cork	96	0	0	0	0	0	96
CHO4	1,138	94	38	47	71	62	1,450
Carlow Kilkenny	268	7	0	0	0	0	275
South Tipperary	195	18	0	0	0	0	213
Waterford	126	18	4	0	0	0	148
Wexford	539	303	170	0	0	0	1,012
CHO5	1,128	346	174	0	0	0	1,648
Dublin South East	86	0	0	0	0	0	86
Dun Laoghaire	141	5	8	8	7	0	169
Wicklow	10	56	0	0	0	0	66
CHO6	237	61	8	8	7	0	321
Dublin South City	143	95	47	21	6	0	312
Dublin South West	292	59	72	106	95	134	758
Dublin West	225	231	180	35	0	0	671
Kildare West Wicklow	409	161	0	0	0	0	570
CHO7	1,069	546	299	162	101	134	2,311
Laois Offaly	167	27	13	0	0	0	207
Longford Westmeath	370	136	2	0	0	0	508
Louth	317	0	0	0	0	0	317
Meath	203	155	92	26	8	0	484
CHO8	1,057	318	107	26	8	0	1,516
Dublin North	607	397	159	11	0	0	1,174
Dublin North Central	203	190	104	0	0	0	497
Dublin North West	282	226	113	9	0	0	630
CHO9	1,092	813	376	20	0	0	2,301
Total	7,704	2,590	1,082	265	187	196	12,024

Appendix 2

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Therapy - April 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	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Donegal	85	0	0	0	0	0	85
Sligo Leitrim	16	0	0	0	0	0	16
CHO1	106	0	0	0	0	0	106
Galway	154	64	10	0	0	0	228
Mayo	47	3	0	0	0	0	50
Roscommon	113	12	0	0	0	0	125
CHO2	314	79	10	0	0	0	403
Clare	63	31	11	0	0	0	105
Limerick	100	42	33	18	0	0	193
North Tipperary East Limerick	43	41	2	0	0	0	86
CHO3	206	114	46	18	0	0	384
Kerry	23	33	7	0	0	0	63
North Cork	67	46	70	18	0	0	201
North Lee	192	142	111	26	27	20	518
South Lee	96	74	36	1	0	0	207
West Cork	60	24	13	0	0	0	97
CHO4	438	319	237	45	27	20	1,086
Carlow Kilkenny	162	104	130	110	2	0	508
South Tipperary	133	50	42	1	0	0	226
Waterford	168	102	139	26	0	0	435
Wexford	123	103	115	103	38	0	482
CHO5	586	359	426	240	40	0	1,651
Dublin South East	10	0	0	0	0	0	10
Dun Laoghaire	53	66	32	0	0	0	151
Wicklow	62	38	9	0	0	0	109
CHO6	125	104	41	0	0	0	270
Dublin South City	123	106	135	76	12	0	452
Dublin South West	108	66	92	31	0	0	297
Dublin West	142	141	118	58	36	12	507
Kildare West Wicklow	119	3	0	0	0	0	122
CHO7	492	316	345	165	48	12	1,378
Laois Offaly	151	121	67	12	8	0	359
Longford Westmeath	177	94	1	0	0	0	272
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
CHO8	335	215	68	12	8	0	638
Dublin North	410	197	41	0	0	0	648
Dublin North Central	76	46	27	4	0	0	153
Dublin North West	157	103	23	1	0	0	284
CHO9	643	346	91	5	0	0	1,085
Total	3,245	1,852	1,264	485	123	32	7,001

Appendix 3

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Further Therapy - April 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	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Donegal	528	6	0	0	0	0	534
Sligo Leitrim	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
CHO1	532	6	0	0	0	0	538
Galway	668	250	77	22	0	1	1,018
Mayo	46	1	0	0	0	0	47
Roscommon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO2	714	251	77	22	0	1	1,065
Clare	201	162	54	8	0	0	425
Limerick	448	219	57	21	34	0	779
North Tipperary East Limerick	134	87	21	11	0	0	253
CHO3	783	468	132	40	34	0	1,457
Kerry	394	112	2	0	0	0	508
North Cork	143	87	86	33	0	0	349
North Lee	195	196	168	65	49	75	748
South Lee	271	169	72	26	28	22	588
West Cork	160	93	45	0	0	0	298
CHO4	1,163	657	373	124	77	97	2,491
Carlow Kilkenny	99	27	10	3	0	0	139
South Tipperary	0	272	181	0	0	0	453
Waterford	16	14	14	3	0	1	48
Wexford	109	115	129	88	39	4	484
CHO5	224	428	334	94	39	5	1,124
Dublin South East	138	0	0	0	0	0	138
Dun Laoghaire	81	0	0	0	0	0	81
Wicklow	27	18	0	0	0	0	45
CHO6	246	18	0	0	0	0	264
Dublin South City	141	149	200	153	9	0	652
Dublin South West	180	208	234	111	19	0	752
Dublin West	280	262	272	160	74	23	1,071
Kildare West Wicklow	113	23	7	0	0	0	143
CHO7	714	642	713	424	102	23	2,618
Laois Offaly	81	110	60	28	0	0	279
Longford Westmeath	349	139	49	1	0	0	538
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO8	430	249	109	29	0	0	817
Dublin North	794	385	44	1	0	0	1,224
Dublin North Central	163	111	69	3	0	0	346
Dublin North West	289	180	51	0	0	0	520
CHO9	1,246	676	164	4	0	0	2,090
Total	6,052	3,395	1,902	737	252	126	12,464