



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

22nd May 2019

Deputy Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: fiona.oloughlin@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy O' Loughlin

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 2066319

T To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on the speech and language therapy assessment waiting list at the end of March 2019 or the latest date available; and the number waiting less than 4, 4 to 12 and more than 12 months, respectively by local health area in tabular form

PQ 20664/19

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on the speech and language therapy initial treatment waiting list at the end of March 2019 or the latest date available; and the number waiting less than 4, 4 to 12 and more than 12 months, respectively by local health area in tabular form –

PQ 20665/19

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on the speech and language therapy further treatment waiting list at the end of March 2019 or the latest date available; and the number waiting less than 4 and 4 to 12 months, respectively by local health area in tabular form.

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 total number of persons awaiting speech and language assessment at the end of April 2019.
- Appendix 2 attached shows the number of the number of persons on the speech and language therapy initial treatment waiting list at the end of April 2019.
- Appendix 3 attached shows the number of persons on the speech and language therapy further treatment waiting list 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

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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,
Community Operations**

Appendix 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Total Number of 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	421	137	22	3	0	0	583
Donegal	390	26	2	1	6	65	490
Sligo Leitrim	211	27	1	0	0	0	239
CHO1	1,022	190	25	4	6	65	1,312
Galway	541	145	24	13	7	13	743
Mayo	197	24	20	8	0	0	249
Roscommon	99	2	1	1	0	0	103
CHO2	837	171	45	22	7	13	1,095
Clare	174	21	4	0	0	0	199
Limerick	381	126	20	0	0	0	527
North Tipperary East Limerick	271	77	25	2	0	0	375
CHO3	826	224	49	2	0	0	1,101
Kerry	188	0	0	0	0	0	188
North Cork	189	38	0	0	0	0	227
North Lee	357	17	0	0	0	0	374
South Lee	377	39	38	48	71	62	635
West Cork	116	0	0	0	0	0	116
CHO4	1,227	94	38	48	71	62	1,540
Carlow Kilkenny	335	22	2	0	0	0	359
South Tipperary	254	20	0	0	0	0	274
Waterford	178	24	4	0	0	0	206
Wexford	577	304	174	40	0	0	1,095
CHO5	1,344	370	180	40	0	0	1,934
Dublin South East	116	0	0	0	0	0	116
Dun Laoghaire	149	9	12	8	7	0	185
Wicklow	190	66	6	0	0	0	262
CHO6	455	75	18	8	7	0	563
Dublin South City	209	120	71	21	6	0	427
Dublin South West	375	68	72	106	95	134	850
Dublin West	295	235	181	47	0	10	768
Kildare West Wicklow	430	161	0	0	0	0	591
CHO7	1,309	584	324	174	101	144	2,636
Laois Offaly	293	58	27	8	9	9	404
Longford Westmeath	462	154	9	0	0	0	625
Louth	434	58	0	0	0	0	492
Meath	572	260	160	99	53	0	1,144
CHO8	1,761	530	196	107	62	9	2,665
Dublin North	652	397	159	11	0	0	1,219
Dublin North Central	370	243	124	15	1	0	753
Dublin North West	418	311	163	9	0	0	901
CHO9	1,440	951	446	35	1	0	2,873
Total	10,221	3,189	1,321	440	255	293	15,719

Appendix 2

Speech and Language Therapy - Total Number of 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	18	14	7	0	0	0	39
Donegal	85	2	0	0	0	0	87
Sligo Leitrim	79	6	1	0	0	0	86
CHO1	182	22	8	0	0	0	212
Galway	221	65	10	0	0	0	296
Mayo	51	3	0	0	0	0	54
Roscommon	113	12	0	0	0	0	125
CHO2	385	80	10	0	0	0	475
Clare	63	31	11	0	0	0	105
Limerick	145	57	34	18	0	0	254
North Tipperary East Limerick	54	41	2	0	0	0	97
CHO3	262	129	47	18	0	0	456
Kerry	38	34	7	0	0	0	79
North Cork	73	46	70	18	0	0	207
North Lee	202	142	111	26	27	20	528
South Lee	100	74	36	1	0	0	211
West Cork	63	24	13	0	0	0	100
CHO4	476	320	237	45	27	20	1,125
Carlow Kilkenny	162	104	130	110	2	0	508
South Tipperary	134	50	42	1	0	0	227
Waterford	168	102	139	26	0	0	435
Wexford	123	103	116	103	38	0	483
CHO5	587	359	427	240	40	0	1,653
Dublin South East	11	0	0	0	0	0	11
Dun Laoghaire	53	66	32	0	0	0	151
Wicklow	65	43	9	0	0	0	117
CHO6	129	109	41	0	0	0	279
Dublin South City	123	106	135	76	12	0	452
Dublin South West	117	77	104	31	0	0	329
Dublin West	142	141	118	58	36	12	507
Kildare West Wicklow	119	3	0	0	0	0	122
CHO7	501	327	357	165	48	12	1,410
Laois Offaly	151	121	67	12	8	0	359
Longford Westmeath	189	100	1	0	0	0	290
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	70	0	0	0	0	0	70
CHO8	410	221	68	12	8	0	719
Dublin North	410	197	41	0	0	0	648
Dublin North Central	107	52	27	4	0	0	190
Dublin North West	260	186	77	1	0	0	524
CHO9	777	435	145	5	0	0	1,362
Total	3,709	2,002	1,340	485	123	32	7,691

Appendix 3

Speech and Language Therapy - Total Number of 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	25	0	0	0	0	0	25
Donegal	528	14	0	0	0	0	542
Sligo Leitrim	243	91	71	11	1	4	421
CHO1	796	105	71	11	1	4	988
Galway	739	309	84	75	23	146	1,376
Mayo	56	1	0	8	0	0	65
Roscommon	0	0	0	1	18	0	19
CHO2	795	310	84	84	41	146	1,460
Clare	201	162	54	8	0	0	425
Limerick	450	266	64	21	34	0	835
North Tipperary East Limerick	144	88	21	11	0	0	264
CHO3	795	516	139	40	34	0	1,524
Kerry	470	128	12	0	0	0	610
North Cork	162	91	89	33	0	0	375
North Lee	231	213	174	77	59	75	829
South Lee	312	181	75	28	28	25	649
West Cork	160	93	45	0	0	0	298
CHO4	1,335	706	395	138	87	100	2,761
Carlow Kilkenny	171	27	10	3	0	0	211
South Tipperary	0	276	185	0	0	0	461
Waterford	16	14	14	3	0	1	48
Wexford	109	115	129	88	39	4	484
CHO5	296	432	338	94	39	5	1,204
Dublin South East	138	0	0	0	0	0	138
Dun Laoghaire	103	20	31	17	15	18	204
Wicklow	80	53	24	29	22	24	232
CHO6	321	73	55	46	37	42	574
Dublin South City	141	149	200	153	9	0	652
Dublin South West	184	224	240	111	19	0	778
Dublin West	300	262	273	171	81	69	1,156
Kildare West Wicklow	113	23	7	0	0	0	143
CHO7	738	658	720	435	109	69	2,729
Laois Offaly	122	110	60	28	0	0	320
Longford Westmeath	403	152	51	2	0	0	608
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	47	30	0	0	0	0	77
CHO8	572	292	111	30	0	0	1,005
Dublin North	845	385	44	1	0	0	1,275
Dublin North Central	290	111	69	3	0	0	473
Dublin North West	383	272	113	0	0	0	768
CHO9	1,518	768	226	4	0	0	2,516
Total	7,166	3,860	2,139	882	348	366	14,761