



18th November 2019.

Denis Naughten, TD
Leinster House,
Kildare St,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 46138/19.

“To ask the Minister for Health the waiting times for access to a service (ASD service in Athenry, Co. Galway); the number of children on the waiting list; his plans to address waiting times; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Naughten,

I refer to PQ 46138/19 uploaded on the PAD System on 6th November 2019 and due for response on the 26th November 2019 regarding representations that you have made to the Minister for Health concerning “the waiting times for access to a service (ASD service in Athenry, Co. Galway); the number of children on the waiting list; his plans to address waiting times; and if he will make a statement on the matter”. The HSE has been requested to reply directly to you on this matter. The following response outlines the position.

Listed below are the waiting times for access to Galway Roscommon Autism Spectrum Disorder Services (GR ASD):-

Waiting List	0-4 months	4 – 8 months	8 – 12 months	12 – 18 months	18 – 24 months	Greater than 24 months
No. Waiting	54	70	53	61	46	137

I wish to advise that in response to the long waiting times experienced by children and families a Waiting List Initiative was established in 2017. The Waiting List initiative will have provided a diagnostic assessment to over 140 children, reducing the waiting time from over 2.5 years to approximately 12 months. By the end of 2019, approximately 150 children will have participated in a Social Skills group which has been running in partnership with the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG).

In addition, the Waiting List Initiative, in association with NUIG has organised ‘Model Me’ which is a social skills training programme for parents and children. I can also confirm that in association with NUIG, Middletown Training for parents took place in October/November 2018 and March/April 2019. Speech and Language Training for parents was held in August 2019 provided by the GR ASD. In addition, an Educational Consultant Presentation was held in October 2019 in association with NUIG. Community Healthcare West are committed to continue with this support and explore ways to extend support to those on the waiting lists.

Listed below in tabular format is the caseload for GR ASD as at 31st October 2019.

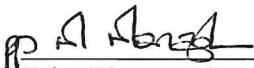
Assessment Waiting List	Intervention Waiting List	Total
114	525	639

Please note that the GR ASD Service is in the process of reconfiguring as per Progressing Disability Services National Policy. The process of implementing these changes has begun and when the service has been reconfigured, there will be a team based in Co Roscommon, therefore children will be supported closer to home.

The GR ASD Service deeply regrets the delay experienced by children and their families and acknowledges the difficulties experienced and continues to address the situation within the resources allocated to the service.

I trust that this response has clarified the matter that you have raised in this instance.

Yours sincerely,



John Fitzmaurice,
General Manager,
Community Healthcare West.