



10/12/2019

Deputy Willie O'Dea,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 48700/19 - To ask the Minister for Health, the reason for the long waiting list for children that wear orthotics; if there is a problem with funding for same in mid-western areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Willie O'Dea

Dear Deputy Willie O'Dea,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

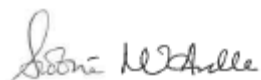
At present the HSE provides orthotics, prosthetics, and specialised footwear services which are funded and waitlisted at Community Healthcare Organisation level. All applications for Aids & appliances are reviewed and based on the information supplied are prioritised appropriately and placed on the waiting lists. Referrals are prioritised by the receiving Orthotist according to criteria which ensures that clients with the greatest clinical need are seen at the earliest opportunity. While clinical need is not based on age, a growing skeleton is considered when assessing risk and prioritising. Policies ensure that the clients with the greatest clinical need are seen at the earliest opportunity.

Currently in Community Healthcare Mid-West there are 156 persons under the age of 18 years on the Aids & Appliances waiting list greater than 36 months, the majority of these (122) in Limerick. Most of the items requested are low cost insoles that have low risks in comparison to other requests. A total of €2.025m has been spent on Aid & Appliances for persons under 65 years of age up to the end of October 2019.

A working group as part of the overall Aids & Appliances Project currently underway in Community Healthcare Mid-West, are working on developing a clear pathway for these orthotic type requests. As part of this a number of clinics were run in conjunction with the Podiatry department over the summer months where a lot of the individuals on the waiting lists were reviewed and are due to be taken off the waiting list in the coming weeks. This is not reflected on the waiting list reports at present as follow up calls for fittings have to be completed in a number of cases. These follow up appointments are due to continue until year end with the Podiatry department holding a specific clinic every Wednesday to facilitate these fittings. Once a person has attended this follow up clinic they can then be taken off the waiting list. A validation of the waiting list has also been undertaken. This has been a successful exercise and which will result in a high number of individuals being taken off the waiting list. An updated waiting list figure can be provided in early 2020 if required.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Siobhán McArdle,
Head of Operations Primary Care,
Community Operations