



12th December 2019

Deputy Róisín Shortall,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 49572/19 - To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the severe shortages of services for children with mental health problems in the north western areas of Dublin in which there are now significant waiting lists for assessments in primary care and for therapy; and the specific steps he will take to address the matter

-Róisín Shortall

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the up to date position for Primary Care Dublin North City and County - Dublin North West area and Child and Adolescent Mental Health, CAMHS, Dublin North City and County - Dublin North West area

Primary Care Dublin North City and County - Dublin North West area

There are 855 children under the age of 18 years currently on the waiting list for Primary Care Child Psychology services in the Dublin North West area. The waiting time is between 12-30 months; however, management and staff continue to focus on reduction in waiting times for the area.

I wish to confirm that the Primary Care Psychology team has developed a number of low intensity, electronic, & group treatment pathways to provide faster access to effective care. Advice clinics are run twice monthly in the Finglas, Grangegorman, Navan Road, Corduff, and Blanchardstown areas. Parents (with or without a referral) may access direct advice, reading and support materials, and signposting to other services in the local area. Parents can contact either of these clinics to book an appointment to discuss their concerns about their child. The clinic does not provide any assessment or therapy function and is for parents only. I have attached the Advice Clinic poster for your convenience.

The Head of Service Primary Care, Dublin North City and County approved the filling of vacant Psychology posts and the recruitment is progressing.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, CAMHS, Dublin North City and County - Dublin North West area

Young people with moderate to severe mental health difficulties are referred to CAMHS secondary specialist mental health services, which are provided by multidisciplinary teams under the leadership of a Consultant

Psychiatrist. There are currently 52 children and adolescents on the waiting list for CAMHS across the Blanchardstown and Castleknock teams. The waiting time is between 6-12 months; however every effort is made to prioritise urgent referrals so that young people who are deemed high risk are seen as soon as possible. This may impact on waiting times for cases that are considered to be less severe with focus on ensuring that no child is waiting over 12 months.

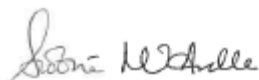
Team	0-3 Months	3 - 6 Months	6 -9 Months	9-12 months	Total
Castleknock	9	7	4	5	25
Blanchardstown	21	5	1	0	27

The Castleknock CAMHS team was without a locum Consultant Psychiatrist and intensive efforts were made to recruit against a backdrop of a serious shortage of suitably qualified CAMHS Consultants nationally and internationally. The Head of Service Mental Health, Dublin North City and County approved the filling of vacant Social Work, Psychology, Occupational Therapy and Nursing posts. Intensive efforts were made to fill these vacancies, with redeployments and replacements in 2019. I can confirm that all are now in post since October 2019. We regret any disruption to this important service for your people and their families.

We remain committed to ensuring all aspects of CAMHS services are delivered in a consistent and timely fashion, including improved access and reducing waiting lists in Castleknock and Blanchardstown.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



PP

David Walsh,
National Director,
Community Operations