



Children's Health Ireland

14th December 2020

Stáinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire  
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97, Ireland

Deputy Sean Canney,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 39670/20**

"To ask the Minister for Health the reason for the excessive delay in assessing children under the genetics team in Temple Street and Crumlin Hospitals; and if he will make a statement on the matter".

Dear Deputy Canney,

I refer to your parliamentary question above to which I have been asked to provide a response.

CHI at Crumlin sincerely regret that children and their families are experiencing long waiting times for their appointments. We recognise that too many children are waiting too long and we are making every effort to reduce these waiting times.

During the initial phase of COVID-19, all elective surgeries and outpatient appointments were suspended in line with the advice from the HSE at the time including Genetics.

However, over the last number of months, CHI at Crumlin has recommenced face to face appointments, albeit at reduced numbers due to COVID-19 restrictions around social distancing. The outpatient teams, including Genetics, have been seeing urgent patients and those who have their appointment displaced during COVID-19 restrictions. CHI at Crumlin is working closely with the Genetics Team and they are looking at ways to increase the number of patients that can be seen. An appointment for the Genetic service can be significantly different than a normal outpatient appointment as it may require that extended family members are also seen. This affects the number of appointments that can be scheduled.

In terms of addressing the longest waiters, CHI at Crumlin have acquired the services of a locum Consultant Geneticist who is seeing patients that have been waiting the longest. This coupled with the recent commencement of an additional full-time Consultant Geneticist are assisting to address the issues you raise in your questions round the waiting lists in Genetics. The Genetics Team are endeavouring to see as many patients as is safely as possible, and with the recent appointments are hoping to address some of the longest waiters.

Yours sincerely,

**Joe Gannon**  
Chief Operations Officer  
Children's Health Ireland  
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Mission – To promote and provide child-centered, research-led and learning informed healthcare, to the highest standards of safety and excellence. We do this in partnership with each other, with children, young people and their families through a network of children's services in Ireland.

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