



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath20.
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6th January 2021
Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ 40766/20

To ask the Minister for Health the steps he proposes take to ease the waiting list for children to attend child and adolescent mental health services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Ward,

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 position.

Total No. to be seen or waiting to be seen by CAMHS Nov 2020	Total Waiting No	<= 12 weeks No.	> 12 <= 26 weeks No	>26 <=39 weeks No	>39 <=52 Weeks No	>52 Weeks No
National Total	2,551	1,455	321	233	300	242
CHO 1	398	229	45	20	47	57
CHO 2	34	29	5	0	0	0
CHO 3	209	75	29	35	39	31
CHO 4	398	178	49	33	55	83
CHO 5	286	193	49	18	22	4
CHO 6	370	245	49	30	28	18
CHO 7	214	176	12	11	11	4
CHO 8	407	217	45	44	59	42
CHO 9	235	113	38	42	39	3

There are two types of referral to CAMHS; an urgent referral and a routine referral. Every effort is made to prioritise urgent referrals so that young people with high risk presentations are seen as soon as possible and this is often within 24 to 48 hours. This may impact on wait times for cases that are considered, by a clinician, to be less severe. The CAMHS referral teams meet every week to review all referrals and to assess the risk to the young person.

Waiting lists vary according to Community Healthcare Organisation where although some areas have relatively short waiting lists regrettably waiting times are longer in other counties. The reasons for differences around the country relate to availability of specialist CAMHS clinicians, current vacancies and difficulties in recruiting in an



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international context. CAMHS wait lists are also related to capacities in other parts of the system where young people may not receive early intervention and thus their needs escalate necessitating referrals to CAMHS. 78.4% of referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Teams were offered a first appointment within 12 weeks in November 2020 against a target of 78%. 88.2% of urgent referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Teams were responded to within three working days in November 2020 against a target of 80%.

In 2021 HSE Mental Health plans to progress the development of three CAMHS telehealth hubs to increase the provision of accessible care across multiple community healthcare areas, reducing waiting lists and managing projected new referrals as part of the National Service Plan 2021. Also under Programme for Government 2021, HSE Mental Health will continue to work in partnership with NGO partners to provide digital services and supports as appropriate. These digital services and supports, which include the crisis support service text50808, online Jigsaw supports and online counselling, are designed to increase our capacity for prevention and early intervention thereby ultimately reducing the need for child and adolescent mental health services.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Sinead Reynolds
General Manager Mental Health Services