



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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25th May 2020

Deputy James Browne,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: james.browne@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Browne,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ 5410/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of children at the end of February 2020 or the latest date available that were awaiting a first assessment from the HSE by LHO area under the Disability Act 2005

Applications for Assessment of Need under the Disability Act overdue for completion

It is acknowledged that the numbers of assessments overdue for completion remain high, although there had been some improvement in these figures in 2018 and 2019 prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Table 1 below provides the number of applications for Assessment of Need under the Disability Act that were overdue for completion on the last day of Quarter 1, 2020 broken down by CHO Area. The information is based on data extracted from the Assessment Officers' System Database (AOS). 5,083 applications are overdue for completion with 146 of these on the grounds of there being exceptional circumstances as provided for in paragraph 10 of the regulations.

Applications overdue for Completion and applicants consent

CHO	LHO	Total Overdue ¹	Overdue/ Exceptional Circumstances ²	Overdue/ No Exceptional Circumstances
AREA 1		149	1	148
	Cavan/Monaghan	118	0	118
	Donegal	25	0	25
	Sligo/Leitrim	6	1	5
AREA 2		112	9	103
	Galway	71	8	63
	Mayo	41	1	40
	Roscommon	0	0	0
AREA 3		598	12	586
	Clare	90	3	87
	Limerick	304	6	298

	Tipperary N.R	204	3	201
AREA 4		879	6	873
	Kerry	44	0	44
	Cork North	119	0	119
	Cork North Lee	324	3	321
	Cork South Lee	353	2	351
	Cork West	39	1	38
AREA 5		468	13	455
	Carlow/Kilkenny	77	0	77
	Tipperary S.R	79	1	78
	Waterford	103	5	98
	Wexford	209	7	202
AREA 6		217	6	211
	Dublin South East	15	0	15
	Dublin South	33	0	33
	Wicklow	169	6	163
AREA 7		751	4	747
	Dublin South City	31	0	31
	Dublin South West	342	4	338
	Dublin West	101	0	101
	Kildare/West Wicklow	277	0	277
AREA 8		677	18	659
	Laois/Offaly	384	8	376
	Longford/Westmeath	16	0	16
	Louth	89	4	85
	Meath	188	6	182
AREA 9		1232	77	1155
	North Dublin	600	4	596
	Dublin North Centre	139	14	125
	North West Dublin	493	59	434
Total		5083	146	4937

¹All assessment reports that were not completed within 6 months of application or within 3 months of Start Stage 2 and before the end of the quarter are included in this report.

²The number of Assessment Reports for which an extended time-frame was negotiated with the parent on the grounds of there being exceptional circumstances as provided for in paragraph 10 of the regulations. Consent to extension is only valid if agreed extension date has not already passed.

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

In preparing for and responding to COVID-19 and to fully align with Public Health guidance as recommended via the NPHET, the HSE and its partner service providers put in place a range of measures, which included the prioritisation of vital residential and home support services whilst curtailing or closing certain services such as day services, as well as certain clinical supports in order to; a) prioritise essential public health services at CHO level and b) ensure continued delivery of the referenced residential and home supports provision. I should note that in the absence of regular access to some service and supports, CHOs and service providers have tried to maintain services that can be delivered safely; providing outreach and telecare solutions, using technology where possible; and using creative and innovative models of care to support service users, both adults and children.

While applications for Assessment of Need under the Disability Act continue to be accepted, the HSE acknowledges that during the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, it has not been possible for services to undertake clinical assessments while maintaining social distancing and meeting health and safety requirements. It has therefore, been difficult to complete the assessment within the statutory timelines.

Since the publication of the Governments 'Roadmap for reopening Society & Business' as well as the 'Return to work safely' protocol, the HSE is finalising plans to re-establish vital non-covid supports and services. This includes very careful and detailed work on the part of the Disability Sector with national

guidance and will result in directing how all funded agencies can deliver services on a medium to long-term basis. In effect this means that the HSE will soon set out its plans in terms of how we can safely begin to commence services, which will have to comply with guidance as set out by the National Public Health Emergency Team as well as Public Health specialists in the HSE.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Cathal Morgan,
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations**