



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,  
Disability Services/Social Care Division,  
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

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25<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Deputy James Browne,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [james.browne@oireachtas.ie](mailto: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 5412/20

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on the speech and language therapy assessment waiting list by each LHO at the end of March 2020 or latest date available; the number waiting less than 4, 4 to 12 and more than 12 months, respectively; and the number waiting aged 0 to 17 and more than 18 years of age in each category in tabular form..*

#### HSE Response

Speech and Language Therapy Services are provided through Primary Care Teams in Community Healthcare Organisations to children and young people requiring assessment, diagnosis and treatment of speech, language and communication difficulties and feeding and swallowing difficulties.

Primary Care Operations compiles the data for Speech and Language waiting lists and has provided the most recently available data to answer this query. The tables in the attached appendices give the following information:

- Appendix 1 attached shows the number of patients awaiting Initial Assessment at the end of February 2020
- Appendix 2 attached shows the number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment at the end of February 2020
- Appendix 3 attached shows the number of patients aged 18 years and older awaiting Initial Assessment - February 2020

*(Please Note February data has not been returned as yet for Kerry and Dublin North)*

#### 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.

In this regard, all decisions regarding supports for children with disabilities and their families are made in the context of contemporaneous public health advice from the NPHET.

As the impact of social distancing measures has restricted the HSE and its partner organisations' ability to provide routine multidisciplinary / interdisciplinary team services, after school supports, home supports and respite services, the HSE and HSE funded children's disability services are endeavouring to provide remote telephone / video supports for children and families wherever possible.

Where a face to face contact is deemed critical to supporting a service user, and where a service user (and if a child, their carer,) is willing and able to attend a clinic, or for the clinician to provide a home visit, a face to face intervention may be provided. Again, strict adherence to Public Health guidance on COVID-19 must be maintained at all times.

Whilst accepting that significant levels of vital therapies have been temporarily curtailed, it is important to emphasise that 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.

I also want to draw attention to some important work we have been undertaking in terms of contingency measures/ guidance that HSE and disability umbrella bodies have jointly delivered.

Under the governance of the HSEs National Integrated Operations Hub chaired by the COO and work relating to vulnerable people, Disability Operations has a team in place with the responsibility for providing supports and capacity building training for the sector. To date, a range of guidance material has been developed to support people with disabilities, families and staff including:

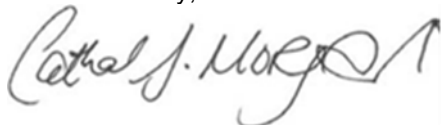
- Alternative Models of Care (Non-Residential)
- Streamlined Health Passport for people with disabilities who are admitted to hospital
- Coronavirus (Covid-19) Frequently Asked Questions for people with disabilities and family carers
- Guidance for supporting children in a community residence/at home
- Support coordination in a pandemic; practical checklist to avoid stressors for service users

Please see attached for the full list of guidance/advice documents, all of which are available at the below web link, which is the central repository for disability specific guidance material during the COVID-19 emergency.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>

Additional to the above, we are also putting in place a series of "webinar" training modules to assist frontline staff during the COVID-19 emergency period.

Yours sincerely,



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



APPENDIX 1							
Speech and Language Therapy - Total Number of patients awaiting Initial Assessment - February 2020							
LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	508	287	91	48	0	0	934
Donegal	364	127	7	0	0	73	571
Sligo Leitrim	149	20	1	0	0	0	170
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1,675</b>
Galway	542	93	51	21	10	10	727
Mayo	197	22	2	0	0	0	221
Roscommon	68	7	4	3	1	0	83
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,031</b>
Clare	182	52	12	9	5	0	260
Limerick	363	145	8	19	21	21	577
North Tipperary East Limerick	276	88	42	16	6	0	428
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1,265</b>
Kerry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Cork	183	31	0	0	0	0	214
North Lee	392	38	0	0	0	0	430
South Lee	426	16	36	55	53	65	651
West Cork	113	0	0	0	0	0	113
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>1,114</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>1,408</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	362	61	11	11	0	0	445
South Tipperary	270	62	0	0	0	0	332
Waterford	260	56	1	2	0	0	319
Wexford	302	246	189	4	0	0	741
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,837</b>
Dublin South East	147	65	9	10	10	0	241
Dun Laoghaire	113	33	20	20	30	0	216
Wicklow	288	79	20	38	0	0	425
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>882</b>
Dublin South City	239	93	31	20	33	9	425
Dublin South West	326	137	41	44	103	269	920
Dublin West	289	224	157	138	2	6	816
Kildare West Wicklow	512	147	0	0	0	0	659
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>1,366</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>2,820</b>
Laois Offaly	606	40	32	9	14	2	703
Longford Westmeath	524	194	116	50	1	0	885
Louth	281	6	0	0	0	0	287
Meath	651	277	95	46	30	0	1,099
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>2,062</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2,974</b>
Dublin North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dublin North Central	284	246	287	67	0	0	884
Dublin North West	592	386	284	68	37	4	1,371
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,255</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,809</b>	<b>3,278</b>	<b>1,547</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>16,147</b>

Note : February data not returned for Kerry and Dublin North

## APPENDIX 2

### Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - February 2020

LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	326	215	64	30	0	0	635
Donegal	360	112	0	0	0	0	472
Sligo Leitrim	23	0	0	0	0	0	23
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,130</b>
Galway	384	72	48	17	6	4	531
Mayo	182	20	0	0	0	0	202
Roscommon	48	0	0	0	0	0	48
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>781</b>
Clare	142	52	12	9	5	0	220
Limerick	342	127	8	19	21	21	538
North Tipperary East Limerick	266	88	42	16	6	0	418
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1,176</b>
Kerry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Cork	163	31	0	0	0	0	194
North Lee	366	38	0	0	0	0	404
South Lee	391	11	36	55	53	65	611
West Cork	66	0	0	0	0	0	66
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>1,275</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	233	6	0	0	0	0	239
South Tipperary	214	59	0	0	0	0	273
Waterford	207	53	1	0	0	0	261
Wexford	287	242	189	4	0	0	722
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,495</b>
Dublin South East	106	65	9	10	10	0	200
Dun Laoghaire	107	33	20	20	30	0	210
Wicklow	3	9	11	0	0	0	23
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>433</b>
Dublin South City	195	43	28	20	33	9	328
Dublin South West	220	40	41	44	103	269	717
Dublin West	227	199	147	120	0	1	694
Kildare West Wicklow	473	147	0	0	0	0	620
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>2,359</b>
Laois Offaly	504	2	0	0	0	0	506
Longford Westmeath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Louth	221	3	0	0	0	0	224
Meath	227	117	19	0	0	0	363
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,093</b>
Dublin North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dublin North Central	136	168	220	45	0	0	569
Dublin North West	414	267	210	68	37	4	1,000
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,569</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,833</b>	<b>2,219</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>11,311</b>

Note : February data not returned for Kerry and Dublin North

### APPENDIX 3

#### Speech and Language Therapy - Number of patients aged 18 years and older awaiting Initial Assessment - February 2020

LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	182	72	27	18	0	0	299
Donegal	4	15	7	0	0	73	99
Sligo Leitrim	126	20	1	0	0	0	147
<b>CHO1</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>545</b>
Galway	158	21	3	4	4	6	196
Mayo	15	2	2	0	0	0	19
Roscommon	20	7	4	3	1	0	35
<b>CHO2</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>250</b>
Clare	40	0	0	0	0	0	40
Limerick	21	18	0	0	0	0	39
North Tipperary East Limerick	10	0	0	0	0	0	10
<b>CHO3</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89</b>
Kerry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Cork	20	0	0	0	0	0	20
North Lee	26	0	0	0	0	0	26
South Lee	35	5	0	0	0	0	40
West Cork	47	0	0	0	0	0	47
<b>CHO4</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>133</b>
Carlow Kilkenny	129	55	11	11	0	0	206
South Tipperary	56	3	0	0	0	0	59
Waterford	53	3	0	2	0	0	58
Wexford	15	4	0	0	0	0	19
<b>CHO5</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>342</b>
Dublin South East	41	0	0	0	0	0	41
Dun Laoghaire	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Wicklow	285	70	9	38	0	0	402
<b>CHO6</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>449</b>
Dublin South City	44	50	3	0	0	0	97
Dublin South West	106	97	0	0	0	0	203
Dublin West	62	25	10	18	2	5	122
Kildare West Wicklow	39	0	0	0	0	0	39
<b>CHO7</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>461</b>
Laois Offaly	102	38	32	9	14	2	197
Longford Westmeath	524	194	116	50	1	0	885
Louth	60	3	0	0	0	0	63
Meath	424	160	76	46	30	0	736
<b>CHO8</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,881</b>
Dublin North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dublin North Central	148	78	67	22	0	0	315
Dublin North West	178	119	74	0	0	0	371
<b>CHO9</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>686</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,976</b>	<b>1,059</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>4,836</b>

Note : February data not returned for Kerry and Dublin North