



**Johnny Guirke TD**  
**Dail Eireann,**  
**Leinster House,**  
**Kildare Street,**  
**Dublin 2.**

9<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**PQ 25984/20**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons awaiting face-to-face psychology appointments prior to March 2020; the number of appointments conducted in the period March 2020 to August 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Johnny Guirke”**

Dear Deputy Guirke,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 25984/20), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

At the end of February 2020 there were 10,302 adults and children on the waiting list for psychology treatment. In the period from March 2020 to August 2020 there were 17,420 psychology patients seen. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic a level of service continued to be provided for referrals to psychology services for those referrals considered to be a priority.

The HSE have developed a formal programme of work under the governance of the Chief Clinical Officer and Chief Operations Officer namely the Continuity of System Wide Healthcare Services Steering Group. The focus is to plan the recommencement of the delivery of Non-COVID Services to address ongoing clinical demands while maintaining capacity for COVID-19 rapid response.

A date for the full resumption of routine services has not been set but the preparatory work in terms of infrastructure readiness to ensure a clean and safe environment is underway. Every effort will be made to restore all Non-COVID services as soon as possible in the context of “A safe return to health services – restoring services in a Covid Environment” and public health guidance as it evolves through implementation of the Governments “Resilience and Recovery 2020 – 2021: Plan for Living with Covid-19”.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán McKeown'.

**Siobhán Mc Ardle**

Head of Operations: Primary Care  
Community Operations