30th November 2020

Deputy Kathleen Funchion
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: kathleen.funchion@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Funchion

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 36397/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of children nationally that are waiting for an assessment for speech and language therapy in tabular form.

PQ 36398/20

To ask the Minister for Health the length of time children nationally are waiting to see a therapist for speech and language in tabular form.

HSE Response

Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational therapy and Physiotherapy Services are provided through Primary Care Teams in CHO Areas to children and young people requiring assessment, diagnosis and treatment and in the case of Speech and Language Therapy, for language and communication difficulties and feeding and swallowing difficulties.

Primary Care Operations compiles the data for SLT, OT and Physiotherapy waiting lists and has provided the most recently available data (September 2020) to answer this query.

The tables in the attached appendices which give the following information:

Appendix 1: Speech and Language Therapy, Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment, September 2020

Appendix 2: Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Therapy - September 2020

Whilst accepting that significant levels of vital therapies including speech and language therapy, were temporarily curtailed due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, processes are underway in order to plan for the reintroduction of non-Covid services.

Resumption of Disability Services

In respect of the provision of Disability Services and in the context of the Governments Resilience & Recovery Framework (2020 – 2021), the HSE regards the provision of disability services, including speech and language therapy provision, as essential to maintaining a response to people with a disability.

All disability services must follow public health guidance in this area, including the prevention and management of covid related infection. The HSE and its funded disability partners will continue to provide supports, including respite services, in line with public health guidance and direction and having regard to the availability of staffing resources.

Reference is drawn to the following HSE weblink which provides updates and guidance for disability service providers, including 'service resumption planning guidance'.

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

Attention is also drawn to the following important web links which provide up to date information resources in respect of COVID-19.

www.hspc.ie

https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/

The HSE and Service Providers recognise the critical need and importance of disability supports for people and their families. The impact of COVID-19 on people's lives has and continues to be very significant. Our collective aim is to restore services and to ensure continuity of services in a safe way in line with the very significant investment made by the State and funded agencies. We continue to work with service users and their families/carers to ensure that we achieve this aim.

In this context, we welcome the recent announcements from the Government of additional funding for Disability Services:

- An additional €100 million secured for Disability Services in the recent budget.
- €10 million is being made available to support the resumption of day services and enhanced home support services for disability service users. The €10 million funding is being drawn down from the National Action Plan on COVID-19 - €7.5 million will increase the level of day service provision and €2.5 million will provide intensive support packages for children and young people with complex/high support needs.
- €20 million in one-off grants will be provided to reform disability services, build the capacity of disability organisations and to improve the quality of life of those who rely on these services.
- €7.8 million has been allocated by Sláintecare to facilitate the HSE and its funded service providers to address the overdue Assessments of Need.

Yours sincerely,

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

APPENDIX 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - September 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	177	143	400	93	31	0	844
Donegal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sligo Leitrim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO1	177	143	400	93	31	0	844
Galway	344	381	126	80	3	10	944
Mayo	219	20	20	15	0	0	274
Roscommon	72	2	0	0	0	0	74
CHO2	635	403	146	95	3	10	1,292
Clare	155	107	29	46	8	2	347
Limerick	218	161	145	20	23	25	592
North Tipperary East Limerick	171	162	106	49	29	0	517
CHO3	544	430	280	115	60	27	1,456
Kerry	138	5	0	0	0	0	143
North Cork	145	11	0	0	0	0	156
North Lee	166	108	20	0	0	0	294
South Lee	215	23	0	7	3	13	261
West Cork	70	6	0	0	0	0	76
CHO4	734	153	20	7	3	13	930
Carlow Kilkenny	137	137	74	0	0	0	348
South Tipperary	98	41	13	1	0	0	153
Waterford	77	89	193	1	0	0	360
Wexford	156	158	378	137	0	0	829
CHO5	468	425	658	139	0	0	1,690
Dublin South East	75	59	10	9	9	8	170
Dun Laoghaire	63	15	22	0	0	0	100
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO6	138	74	32	9	9	8	270
Dublin South City	94	119	107	41	14	17	392
Dublin South West	187	117	152	44	78	373	951
Dublin West	76	141	255	241	133	11	857
Kildare West Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO7	357	377	514	326	225	401	2,200
Laois Offaly	394	279	213	0	0	0	886
Longford Westmeath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Louth	192	72	0	0	0	0	264
Meath	85	56	76	23	0	0	240
CHO8	671	407	289	23	0	0	1,390
Dublin North	192	392	505	316	87	0	1,492
Dublin North Central	85	108	174	214	24	0	605
Dublin North West	135	219	325	259	127	39	1,104
CHO9	412	719	1,004	789	238	39	3,201
Total	4,136	3,131	3,343	1,596	569	498	13,273

APPENDIX 2

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Therapy - September 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	1	20	0	0	0	0	21
Donegal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sligo Leitrim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO1	1	20	0	0	0	0	21
Galway	64	124	88	112	44	227	659
Mayo	58	49	39	0	0	0	146
Roscommon	76	103	40	0	0	0	219
CHO2	198	276	167	112	44	227	1,024
Clare	37	34	65	45	16	1	198
Limerick	79	34	62	34	11	25	245
North Tipperary East Limerick	20	8	6	2	0	0	36
CHO3	136	76	133	81	27	26	479
Kerry	96	90	20	0	0	0	206
North Cork	85	76	94	60	0	0	315
North Lee	148	120	271	161	51	38	789
South Lee	119	160	145	137	37	37	635
West Cork	35	32	26	12	2	0	107
CHO4	483	478	556	370	90	75	2,052
Carlow Kilkenny	27	34	85	168	147	163	624
South Tipperary	68	45	67	44	0	0	224
Waterford	15	34	62	133	172	103	519
Wexford	77	39	122	155	70	32	495
CHO5	187	152	336	500	389	298	1,862
Dublin South East	17	0	0	0	0	0	17
Dun Laoghaire	63	15	22	0	0	0	100
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO6	80	15	22	0	0	0	117
Dublin South City	64	54	126	119	51	120	534
Dublin South West	39	55	85	116	45	20	360
Dublin West	5	64	100	230	112	131	642
Kildare West Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO7	108	173	311	465	208	271	1,536
Laois Offaly	29	36	88	170	13	0	336
Longford Westmeath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO8	29	36	88	170	13	0	336
Dublin North	78	94	249	298	84	0	803
Dublin North Central	82	41	64	75	1	0	263
Dublin North West	40	79	94	157	54	3	427
CHO9	200	214	407	530	139	3	1,493
Total	1,422	1,440	2,020	2,228	910	900	8,920

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