



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare
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Ms Verona Murphy TD
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 38438/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients on the autism disorder assessment waiting list in County Wexford; the average length of time for a patient to wait for an assessment appointment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Murphy

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

I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.

There have been significant year on year increases in the number of children applying for assessment (including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)) and all disability services which has led to delays in timeframes. It is acknowledged that given increased referral rates and demands for assessments and Disability Services, there is a requirement for additional resources to meet current need.

There are 504 children 0-18yrs awaiting multi-disciplinary ASD assessments in Wexford. It should be noted that some of the children on the waiting list, if referred separately to other disciplines, for example Speech and Language (SLT), may already be in receipt of SLT intervention, but would also remain on the multidisciplinary assessment waiting list. In addition some children may also have received intervention from Primary Care Psychology or National Education Psychology Service (NEPS).

The HSE regrets the difficulties in accessing multidisciplinary assessments and are seeking to reduce the waiting times and address issues arising for all children and their families through a number of measures including;

- The HSE continues to fill approved posts through in line with HSE Recruitment and National Pay-bill Management Framework including a Liaison Officer/Early Intervention Co-ordinator
- Appointed Children's Network Disability Managers (CDNM) to progress the implementation of Progressing Disability Service for children and young people under the National reconfiguration plan.

During this reconfiguration phase the CDNMs will lead out on this process with local managers and services.

- Waiting list validation is in operation with a particular focus on those who are waiting longest.

Furthermore, in line with public health guidance, at the outset of the pandemic, these services, along with many other services, were significantly reduced to limit exposure to Covid-19.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Janette Dwyer
Head of Service, Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare