



27<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Deputy Mattie McGrath,  
 Dáil Éireann,  
 Leinster House,  
 Kildare Street,  
 Dublin 2.

**PQ 28396/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of children waiting for speech and therapy appointments in County Tipperary; if full speech and therapy services have resumed in the county; if there is a full complement of speech and language therapists working the county; if not, if are vacancies waiting to be filled; if speech and language therapists have been redeployed to other areas since Covid-19; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

- Mattie McGrath

Dear Deputy McGrath,

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

Please see below Table 1 outlining the number of children awaiting Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) appointments in County Tipperary as of August 2020, which is the latest data available at this time. Please note that Tipperary crosses both Community Health Organisations 3 (North Tipperary/East Limerick) and 5 (South Tipperary).

	No. of children waiting initial assessment (waiting time up to 12 months)	No. of children waiting initial therapy (waiting time up to 18 months)	No. of children waiting further therapy (waiting time up to 12 months)	Total
North Tipperary/East Limerick	545	29	505	1079
South Tipperary	179	228	569	976

All redeployed Speech & Language Therapists have now returned from Covid-19 duties (September 2020). All SLT services have resumed. The SLT Department are working to a hybrid approach of tele-therapy and risk assessed face-to-face appointments.

In North Tipperary, there are currently three unfilled Speech & Language Therapist posts. Two of these posts are at an advanced stage of recruitment, successful candidates have been identified. The other vacant post is due to a maternity leave which has remained unfilled due to the Pay & Number Strategy.

In South Tipperary, there are 4 WTE vacant posts affecting children's services as follows: 2 WTE maternity leave (Social Care and CAMHS) and 2 WTE associated with temporary reduction in working hours and parental leave. These posts are being processed in line with national paybill management framework.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



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Siobhán McArdle,  
Head of Operations Primary Care,  
Community Operations