



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Office of the Head of Primary Care  
South East Community Healthcare  
HSE Offices, Lacken  
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Kilkenny

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14<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Mr. Johnny Mythen TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ 17718/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting for motorised wheelchairs in community healthcare organisation area 5 for the latest available date by area in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Mythen,

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

*I have reviewed the matter and the following outlines the current position.*

Assessment of mobility needs including assessment for mobility wheelchairs are primarily carried out by Occupational Therapy staff. Referrals to the Occupational Therapy Service are prioritised based on the service prioritisation system using categories such as urgent, semi-urgent and routine. Referrals deemed as Priority 1 are immediately prioritised and receive an appointment very quickly whilst for Priority 2 referrals are seen in the order in which they are received.

The waiting times for assessment vary across the South East and are impacted by a number of factors including the number of patients waiting to be assessed at any point in time. The current average waiting times for P1 assessments is approximately 1-3 weeks, however in Wexford it can take up to 3 months and for P2 assessments is up to and over 12 months in the primary care adult service .

Where a client successfully completes all tasks/trials involved in powered mobility assessment, in line with the overall process, national policy for assessment and provision of powered mobility, Occupational Therapy Services then submit a request for funding to the Resource Allocation Group (RAG) for approval. Stock items from Community Asset Management System (CAMS) are reviewed in the first instance before bespoke items. In some areas the RAG meets weekly and in other areas fortnightly and considers the submissions in the context of determining demand and needs of the patient within available resources. RAG only considers funding for Priority 1 applications. Once approved the application is submitted through the ordering process. The current average waiting time from

completion of assessment or funding approval to provision of motorised wheelchairs to patients who require same is 14 weeks approximately. More complex seating cases can take longer. For example adults with complex disabilities require a much longer timeframe compared with older adults with no postural needs. If item is available in CAMS stock this would give a quicker turnaround.

The table below outlines the average number of persons currently waiting for motorised wheelchair across the South East.

<b>Area</b>	<b>No. Waiting for Motorised Wheelchair (average)</b>
Carlow/Kilkenny	<10
South Tipperary	<10
Wexford	Number is not available in Co. Wexford
Waterford	<13

It is difficult to be more specific as the data is not routinely collected by specific items of equipment.

Once clients are assessed, they are allocated the specific wheelchair in line with the provider and delivery timelines. With regard to motorised scooters, I can confirm that South East Community Healthcare does not assess for these items.

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

Yours sincerely,



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**Jeanne Hendrick**  
**A/Head of Service-Primary Care**  
**South East Community Healthcare**