



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare
Health Service Executive
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Mr. Johnny Mythen TD
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 19033/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of children waiting more than 3, 6 and 12 months respectively in tabular form for autism spectrum disorder assessment in County Wexford; 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 is the current position.

There have been significant year on year increases in the number of children applying for assessments (including Autism Spectrum Disorder) 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 demand and this has been included in the estimates for 2021. ASD assessments are multidisciplinary in nature and the service is experiencing an unprecedented demand for this service.

Table 1. Children awaiting ASD Assessment Wexford*

Waiting over 3 months	20
Waiting over 6 months	47
Waiting over 12 months	436

*It should be noted that some of the children on the waiting list in Table 1 above may already be in receipt of other HSE services or may have received some component of the assessment.

The HSE regrets the difficulties in accessing multidisciplinary assessments for ASD and 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 in line with the HSE Recruitment and National Pay Bill Management Framework
- Waiting list validation is in operation with a particular focus on those who are waiting longest.
- Joint submission between Primary Care and Social Care- disability for National waiting list initiative funding to address the ASD waiting list.

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. At this time the HSE are reviewing best practice, based on Public Health guidelines to resume assessments.

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. Anne Ennis
A/Head of Service, Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare