

23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2021

Deputy Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 62628/21**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the current waiting list for CAMHS services in County Cork by area; the average waiting time; and his plans to address this.”**

Dear Deputy Ó Laoghaire,

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

CAMHS services are designed for children and adolescents presenting with moderate to severe mental health disorders. All referrals received to CAMHS services are triaged in a timely manner and the referral is either accepted or rejected at that point. Referrals accepted are wait listed in order of clinical priority and wait lists vary across each sector based community team. Routine Referrals are waitlisted as is the standard procedure and urgent referrals are responded to within 7 days in line with national Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

There are a total of eight sector based community mental health teams in Cork. The average waiting time for CAMHS services in County Cork is between 6-9 months and I detail hereunder the current waiting list numbers by team:

Name of Team	No. on Waitlist
South Lee 1	101
South Lee 2	39
South Lee 3	118
South Lee West Cork	32
North Lee East	25
North Lee West	63
North Cork	192
North Lee North	49
<b>Total wait list as at 31st November 2021</b>	<b>619</b>

There are long-standing workforce challenges and although additional investment has been approved for some community services, the ability to recruit and retain the community workforce is an on-going significant issue. These workforce challenges have grown over the last 2 years as a result

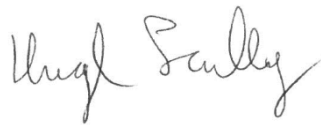
of competing priorities to deliver essential programmes of work including vaccination services, test and trace services, the implementation of key policies as well as on-going operational challenges of winter, the COVID response and the cyber-attack. It is acknowledged that the number of people on waiting lists for treatment or assessment exceeds Sláinte Care waiting time targets.

The commitment to Sláinte Care has been reconfirmed in the Programme for Government and the overall budget 2021 has invested in staffing and infrastructure so as to enhance the permanent capacity of our health services and expand the scale and range of services to be provided in the community. A budget of €250 million has been allocated nationally to address waiting lists and to deliver on waiting list initiatives across the health service. A project team has been established in Community Operations with senior national representation from all Care Groups to oversee the further development and implementation of waiting list initiatives. The project team will collaborate with CHO colleagues and partners in acute services, procurement, NTPF and the Department of Health with a key goal to address waiting list issues.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare is planning with our national colleagues to progress and implement waiting list initiatives. Furthermore, I wish to assure you that all efforts continue to be made locally to address and reduce waiting list in CAMHS Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and we are committed to continuing these efforts to ensure that better access to a safe and effective service is delivered.

I trust this clarifies the query raised.

Kind regards,



---

**Mr. Hugh Scully**  
**A/Head of Service**  
**Mental Health Services**  
**Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**