

23rd December, 2021

Deputy Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 62629/21

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of young persons on the CAMHS waiting list in Cork city for less than 3, 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, 12-18, 18-24 and for over 24 months, in tabular form.”

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 Health 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, supported by Eist Linn, Child and Adolescent Inpatient Unit.

The below table shows the total number on the waiting list across these Local Health Office teams as at 30th November, 2021.

Name of Team	0-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-18 months	>18 months	>24 Months	Total Wait List
South Lee 1	27	30	22	13	9	0	0	101
South Lee 2	12	9	15	3	0	0	0	39
South Lee 3	44	32	27	10	5	0	0	118
North Lee North	11	15	15	4	4	0	0	49
North Lee East	22	3	0	0	0	0	0	25
North Lee West	25	16	10	9	3	0	0	63
Total wait list by timeframe	141	105	89	39	21	0	0	395

Of the total young people waiting to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Cork city, 246 (62.27%) of these are waiting < 6 months, 128 (32.40%) are waiting 6-12 months and the remaining 21 (5.33%) are waiting > 1 year to access these services.

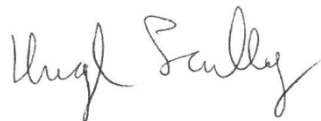
There are long-standing workforce challenges and although additional investment has been approved for some community services, the ability to recruit and retain the community workforce is an on-going significant issue. These workforce challenges have grown over the last 2 years as a result of competing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

The commitment to Sláintecare 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