



Oifig Sorcha Mhic Giolla Brídhe
Príomhoifigeach, Eagraíocht Cúram
Sláinte Pobail, Lár Tíre, An Lú, An Mhí
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Oifig Cheantair, Bóthar Ardáin, An
Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí.
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11th February, 2021

Mr. Peadar Tóibín T.D.,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: Parliamentary Question - 5378/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons currently awaiting appointments under the National Counselling Service in County Laois; the waiting times for each service for CAPA, CIPC and counselling for former residents of mother and baby homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Peadar Tóibín

Dear Deputy Tóibín

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question. I have examined the matter and outline the position as follows.

The CaPA service offers counselling/psychotherapy to clients with experiences of childhood trauma and abuse. The Model of Service is client centred and the length of time required in counselling/therapy is usually longer to effectively address the complex needs of clients.

Notwithstanding this impact on waiting times, client feedback to the service post completion of therapy, is that 91% of respondents reported successful outcomes in terms of the effectiveness of the service in addressing their problems/concerns.

Longer waiting times arise where referral rates exceed NCS service capacity to meet them and within available resources. Therefore the needs of clients currently attending the service have to be carefully balanced with those waiting on the list. The waiting list is continuously monitored and local action is taken to address waiting lists in a specific area where possible. All clients are offered the option of Connect Professional Telephone Counselling and Support Service while on the waiting list.

Waiting times:

The number of persons waiting for the Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) in Laois	
Waiting for Face to Face	8
Waiting for 0-3 Months	32
Total number waiting	40

0-3 Months is the target waiting time agreed for the CIPC service.

The number of persons waiting for the Counselling and Psychotherapy for Adults CaPA in Laois	
Waiting for Face to Face	2
Waiting for 0-3 Months	9
Total number waiting	18
Waiting for over 6 Months	9
Total number waiting	38

There is no person waiting for counselling/psychotherapy under Mother and Baby Home Counselling Initiative in Laois.

The NCS planned an additional counselling provision for this client group and were able to meet the demand following the publication of the Report. Any person who requested Counselling/Psychotherapy were offered appointments immediately.

Please note that during the COVID-19 pandemic the HSE National Counselling Service (NCS) responded by implementing Tele-health options for clients including Structured Telephone Counselling (STC) and Online Video Counselling (OVC) using the HSE approved platform *Attend Anywhere*. Decisions on the medium of counselling are made in collaboration with clients attending the NCS.

Face to face appointments are currently being offered on a limited basis on reasoned clinical judgments and where Tele-health options are not appropriate. Face to face appointments are provided from locations which are fully compliant with all HSE COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures.

I trust the above is in order and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah McBride

Chief Officer

Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation