



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath20.

T 01 6207304 R: [jim.ryan1@hse.ie](mailto:jim.ryan1@hse.ie)

Head of Operations, Mental Health Service  
St Loman's Hospital, Palmerstown Dublin 20  
Tel: 01-6207304 Email: [jim.ryan1@hse.ie](mailto:jim.ryan1@hse.ie)

25<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
Deputy Brendan Smith  
Dail Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 7772/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health if additional personnel will be provided for child and adolescent mental health services in view of the increasing number of children presenting for assessment and treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Smith,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The availability of skilled staff is a significant issue in Mental Health services where demand outstrips supply in both the national and international contexts and our potential workforce are availing of employment opportunities outside of Ireland. This is symptomatic of the overall recruitment problem that Mental Health services have been experiencing for the past number of years. It is recognised that there is a current shortage of trained Mental Health staff nationally and this trend is not unique to Ireland. Ongoing efforts, both locally, nationally and internationally, are continuing in order to ensure that all available avenues are explored in providing a staffing supply for Mental Health services, including CAMHS services.

It is often the case that staff shortages are filled on an intermittent basis by locum, agency and overtime. Despite these recruitment challenges and difficulties, Mental Health services continue to work with our local HR colleagues and at a national level through the HSE Health Business Services National Recruitment to achieve recruitment results in as efficient a time frame as possible for posts to be filled in line with HSE recruitment guidelines.

Currently, CAMHS teams are meeting referral demands. CAMHS targets were met or exceeded in the domains as per table below.



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	2020 Target	Outturn 2020	Outturn 2019	+/-
% of accepted referrals / re-referrals <b>offered</b> first appointment within 12 weeks by Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Teams	78%	79.2%	78.4	+1%
% of accepted referrals / re-referrals offered first appointment and <b>seen</b> within 12 weeks by Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Teams	72%	74.5%	72.2%	+3.2%
%. of new (including re-referred) <b>child/adolescent</b> referrals offered appointment and <b>DNA</b> in the current month	<10%	6.6%	8.5%	-1.9%
% of urgent referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Teams responded to within <b>three working days</b>	80%	89%	76.3%	+12.7
No. of <b>child / adolescent</b> referrals (including re-referred) received by mental health services	18,128	17,358	18,831	-7.8%

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sinead Reynolds  
General Manager Mental Health Services