



24th February 2021

Deputy Cian O'Callaghan
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 9832/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of children under 18 years of age waiting for a first assessment for speech and language therapy up to 24 February 2021 or the latest date available by LHO; the number waiting less than 4, 4 to 12 and more than 12 months, respectively in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Cian O'Callaghan

Dear Deputy O'Callaghan,

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

The spread of COVID-19 is posing significant challenges for many service areas, including all Therapy Services. In light of these unprecedented challenges together with the Government's guidance on social distancing and on 'Cocooning' for those aged over 70, the HSE has had to reassess its operation of Community Therapy Services nationally, to ensure that the assessed needs of those clients with the highest priority are met.

As a result of the national effort across all Community Healthcare Organisations throughout the country, some aspects of normal monthly reporting have been delayed. Preliminary data currently available reflects the period to the end of December 2020 which is the latest data available at this time. Please see below appendices which contain the following in tabular form;

Appendix 1 – Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - December 2020

Please note the list of LHO areas at the bottom of the Appendix which did not return data, as some areas were not in a position to return data due to staff being redeployed to Covid-19 related duties. Please also note that because of this the overall accuracy of the waiting list data is impacted.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring therapy services, and to reduce long waiting times for these important services.

As this is an evolving and unprecedented situation, the HSE will keep matters in review and will advise clients and/or family members accordingly.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TJ Dunford', written on a light blue background.

TJ Dunford,
Head of Operations Primary Care/A.N.D.
Community Operations

APPENDIX 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - December 2020

LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	275	139	214	340	84	5	1,057
Donegal	271	183	243	54	0	0	751
Sligo Leitrim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO1	546	322	457	394	84	5	1,808
Galway	558	311	286	104	20	10	1,289
Mayo	21	26	25	29	0	0	101
Roscommon	105	4	0	0	0	0	109
CHO2	684	341	311	133	20	10	1,499
Clare	217	69	19	7	11	3	326
Limerick	431	135	129	15	23	25	758
North Tipperary East Limerick	247	132	119	31	13	0	542
CHO3	895	336	267	53	47	28	1,626
Kerry	205	4	0	0	0	0	209
North Cork	215	36	0	0	0	0	251
North Lee	368	86	6	0	0	0	460
South Lee	352	40	2	0	9	15	418
West Cork	97	1	0	0	0	0	98
CHO4	1,237	167	8	0	9	15	1,436
Carlow Kilkenny	290	92	99	0	0	0	481
South Tipperary	198	23	3	0	0	0	224
Waterford	101	65	174	46	0	0	386
Wexford	266	79	255	283	0	0	883
CHO5	855	259	531	329	0	0	1,974
Dublin South East	122	22	10	8	6	0	168
Dun Laoghaire	99	13	17	28	26	18	201
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO6	221	35	27	36	32	18	369
Dublin South City	147	83	135	76	26	34	501
Dublin South West	218	93	149	188	87	296	1,031
Dublin West	134	69	192	327	162	54	938
Kildare West Wicklow	343	192	283	44	0	0	862
CHO7	842	437	759	635	275	384	3,332
Laois Offaly	335	176	451	53	0	0	1,015
Longford Westmeath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Louth	278	30	0	0	0	0	308
Meath	131	22	60	40	0	0	253
CHO8	744	228	511	93	0	0	1,576
Dublin North	332	213	421	207	100	0	1,273
Dublin North Central	136	54	118	246	51	0	605
Dublin North West	175	93	219	332	93	56	968
CHO9	643	360	758	785	244	56	2,846
Total	6,667	2,485	3,629	2,458	711	516	16,466