



7th April 2021

Martin Browne TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 15100/21

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of children currently on the waiting list for speech and language therapy by county in 2019, 2020 and to date in 2021; and his views on the situation of children that are in need of a multidisciplinary team approach occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and so on that cannot access them due to the Covid-19 crisis - Martin Browne”

Dear Deputy Browne,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 15100/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring speech and language therapy services, and to reduce long waiting times for this important service. The HSE is committed to delivering efficient high quality speech and language therapy services to all eligible service users. In full year 2020 a total of 165,657 children and adults were seen by HSE community speech and language therapy clinics.

To address the current third wave of Covid infections there was a requirement to prioritise the level of services delivered during this period. Building upon the experience from earlier waves of the pandemic, Community Services have developed a prioritisation framework to support local decisions to be made on service prioritisation. This approach will ensure that services will be focused on identifying and supporting patients who have the greatest need and enabling staff to be deployed where necessary to support these patients. Where services are curtailed or reduced, this will be in line with clinical approval, a shared national position and with an appropriate risk assessment and communication with providers, service users and families. It is the intention of Community Services that full services, including speech and language therapy services and occupational therapy services, would return as soon as is safe and practicable.

Please see Appendix 1 on the final page of this document, which shows the number of children awaiting a Speech and Language Therapy Initial Assessment at February 2021, December 2020 and December 2019 by LHO area.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

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

TJ Dunford

Head of Operations; Primary Care.

Community Operations.

Appendix 1

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment			
LHO	December 2019	December 2020	February 2021
Cavan Monaghan	594	1,057	1,216
Donegal	282	751	769
Sligo Leitrim	4	0	0
CHO1	880	1,808	1,985
Galway	663	1,289	1,177
Mayo	346	101	58
Roscommon	86	109	114
CHO2	1,095	1,499	1,349
Clare	283	326	292
Limerick	546	758	816
North Tipperary East Limerick	347	542	528
CHO3	1,176	1,626	1,636
Kerry	164	209	153
North Cork	222	251	204
North Lee	438	460	512
South Lee	606	418	383
West Cork	79	98	99
CHO4	1,509	1,436	1,351
Carlow Kilkenny	248	481	475
South Tipperary	254	224	194
Waterford	221	386	379
Wexford	700	883	869
CHO5	1,423	1,974	1,917
Dublin South East	226	168	0
Dun Laoghaire	171	201	238
Wicklow	8	0	0
CHO6	405	369	238
Dublin South City	257	501	534
Dublin South West	712	1,031	1,009
Dublin West	617	938	987
Kildare West Wicklow	575	862	848
CHO7	2,161	3,332	3,378
Laois Offaly	330	1,015	1,314
Longford Westmeath	706	0	0
Louth	228	308	0
Meath	377	253	159
CHO8	1,641	1,576	1,473
Dublin North	1,078	1,273	1,099
Dublin North Central	554	605	682
Dublin North West	866	968	914
CHO9	2,498	2,846	2,695
Total	12,788	16,466	16,022