



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 R: 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

Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

07th December 2021

PQ Number: 56842/21

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of children who are waiting on a CAMHS psychiatry service; the average waiting time after the completion of an assessment of needs by CHO area; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

CAMHS provide specialist mental health service to those aged up to 18 years, who have reached the threshold for a diagnosis of moderate to severe mental health disorder that require the input of a multi-disciplinary mental health teams, such as moderate to severe anxiety disorders, moderate to severe depression, Bi Polar Affective disorder, Psychosis, moderate to severe eating disorders, self-harm that require the input of a multi-disciplinary mental health team.

Community CAMHS refers to child and adolescent mental health services that are delivered in outpatient and day hospital settings, with the majority of CAMHS interventions being delivered in the community, close to people's homes. CAMHS community mental health teams (CMHTs) provide clinical assessment, formulation, diagnosis and multi-disciplinary interventions to children and adolescents based on their identified needs. They are also responsible for providing advice, information and support to parents in order to help them to support children and adolescents with moderate to severe mental disorders at home.

Community CAMHS

Waiting lists vary according to Community Healthcare Organisation where although some areas have relatively short waiting lists regrettably waiting times are longer in other counties. Factors such as availability of specialist CAMHS clinicians, current vacancies and difficulties in recruiting in an international context can impact on waiting times in various areas.

CAMHS wait lists are also impacted by capacities in other parts of the system - where young people may not receive early intervention and thus their needs escalate necessitating referrals to CAMHS. In CAMHS there are two types of referral; an urgent referral and a routine referral. Every effort is made to prioritise urgent referrals so that young people with high risk presentations are seen as soon as possible and this is often within 24 to 48 hours. Severity of presenting symptoms affects waiting times - where waiting times for those with high risk presentations are shorter. This may impact on wait times

for cases that are considered, by a clinician, to be less severe. CAMHS referral teams meet weekly to review all referrals and to assess the risk to the young person.

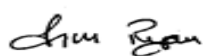
The reasons for differences around the country relate to availability of specialist CAMHS clinicians, current vacancies and difficulties in recruiting in an international context. CAMHS wait lists are also related to capacities in other parts of the system where young people may not receive early intervention and thus their needs escalate necessitating referrals to CAMHS. Waiting times for young people to be seen by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services continue to be an issue in a number of CHO's. A renewed focus on improving capacity and throughput is in place in this area and some improvement is being shown.

The latest set of data for the number of children waiting to be seen by CAMHS is at October 2021. The table below provides data per CHO by length of wait time. Waiting list data collected nationally does not capture data on age range. The Deputy's Question refers to CAMHS Waiting List and *Assessment of Need* refers to Young People with a Disability and are therefore not included in figures below. Please be advised that due to the cyber-attack on HSE systems, this data is subject to ongoing validation.

	Total	<= 12 weeks No	> 12 <= 26. weeks No	>26 <=39 weeks No	>39 <=52 Weeks No	>52 Weeks No
National Total	3,065	1,469	733	427	234	202
CHO 1	280	164	71	26	14	5
CHO 2	110	72	38	0	0	0
CHO 3	355	114	84	37	44	76
CHO 4	616	202	129	130	91	64
CHO 5	221	99	55	41	14	12
CHO 6	456	320	98	30	5	3
CHO 7	272	167	52	25	15	13
CHO 8	466	226	114	72	25	29
CHO 9	289	105	92	66	26	0

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,



Jim Ryan
Assistant National Director - Head of Operations
National Mental Health Service