

8th October 2021

Mr. David Cullinane TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 48880/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients waiting for audiology appointments in the CHO5 area; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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

I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.

In recent years there have been increased referrals and services demands for audiology services with waiting lists in operation. Prioritisation following a referral to community audiology services, is designated by medical/clinical need of the client. Appointments are issued according to clinical priority and, in accordance with the date of receipt of referrals.

Area – SECH (formerly CHO5)	No. of patients waiting for audiology appointments
Carlow/Kilkenny	766
South Tipperary	739
Waterford	705
Wexford	2,003
Total	4,213

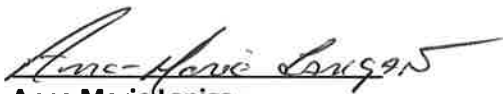
The Covid-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges for many service areas and therapy services including Audiology Services. In light of these unprecedented challenges together with the Government's guidance on social distancing there has been an impact on service capacity. There are ongoing efforts to ensure appropriate measures are in place for the safe delivery of services for both audiology clients and staff.

In addition to increased service demands, there have been staffing challenges in HSE audiology services in County Wexford resulting in the HSE taking on agency staff as an interim measure to maintain this service.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring audiology services and to seek to reduce long waiting times for these services. Please be assured that Management from all areas and personnel from Audiology Services continue monitor the waiting list on an ongoing basis in the context of available resources and prioritisation criteria.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Marie Lanigan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Anna Marie Lanigan
Head of Service-Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare