



19<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Deputy David Cullinane  
Dáil Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 48882/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients waiting for audiology appointments in the CHO7 area; and if he will make a statement on the matter - David Cullinane**

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

**CHO7 Audiology Waiting Lists**

<b>New clients who have not yet been offered an appointment</b>	
Adults	443
Paediatric	533
<b>Clients in continuous care who are awaiting follow up appointments</b>	
Adults	205
Paediatric	1,078

It should be noted that clients with a diagnosed hearing loss are prioritised for appointments including their follow ups.

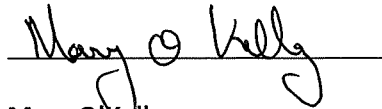
A number of factors, listed below, have influenced wait times for Audiology services, over the past 2 years

- Covid Public Health Guidelines- the initial pause on all but emergency services at the outset of the pandemic, and, following resumption of services, the additional times for cleaning reducing clinic time and the need to stagger footfall on sites.
- Cyber-attack on HSE IT systems earlier this year – Audiology Services is fully digital including client files and the equipment needed to carry out treatment. For the duration of the cyber-attack response Audiology Services could not offer any service.
- Retention of staff - As staff grade Audiologists gain more experience to the level where they can treat Paediatric clients over 4, and eventually under 4 years, they become highly sought after by the private sector.

I would like to assure you that Audiology team is working very hard to reduce the numbers awaiting services, in line with current staffing levels and prevailing Covid Public Health Guidelines.

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

Yours sincerely,



Mary O'Kelly

Head of Service, Primary Care

Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow Community Healthcare