



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,
Disability Services/Social Care Division,
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8th December 2022

Deputy Mattie McGrath,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: mattie.mcgrath@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy McGrath,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 60246/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of children under the age of 18 years with an intellectual, physical or sensory disability, currently referred and waiting to be seen by HSE who are yet to receive an initial contact; and the length of time that they have been waiting for the initial contact according to CHO in tabular form.

HSE Response

The National Policy on Access to Services for Children & Young People with Disability & Developmental Delay ensures that children are directed to the appropriate service based on the complexity of their presenting needs rather than based on diagnosis. Many children with a disability who have support needs can be effectively supported within mainstream child health services. This policy provides a single point of entry, signposting parents and referrers to the most appropriate service (Primary Care for non-complex functional difficulties and Children's Disability Network Teams for complex functional difficulties).

National HSE Disability and Primary Care are working together collaboratively with Community Health Organisations via their Chief Officers to support implementation of the HSE's National Policy on Access to Services for Children with a Disability or Developmental Delay.

While many children will access services via Primary Care, a proportion with more complex needs are referred to disability services.

Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs)

In line with the PDS model, resources assigned to children's disability services are allocated to the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs); 91 CDNTs are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.



CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work and others. The team works closely together in a family centred model, focusing on the child's and family's own priorities

Regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend, every child with complex needs and their families have access to the full range of family centred services and supports of their CDNT according to their individual needs. This includes universal, targeted and specialist supports, such as individual therapeutic intervention and access to specialist consultation and assessment when needed. Supports are provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community.

Work is ongoing on mapping specialised services and supports, and paediatric supports available and gap analysis for children with highly complex needs, in order to develop standardised approaches to integrated pathways of support for CDNTs and Primary Care staff.

National Information Management System for the CDNTs (CDNTIMS)

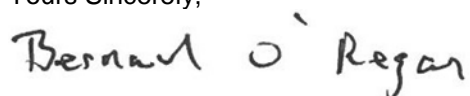
Historically the number of children waitlisted for children's disability services provided by section 38 and section 39 providers has not been available nationally. The establishment of CDNTs will facilitate the collection of this data. A National Management Information System for all 91 CDNTs is in development and when implemented, will provide current data on waiting lists and other details for all CDNTs. In the interim, manual data collection is on-going and will provide information to the local areas regarding the number of children waiting for each CDNT.

The data provided in the table below shows the number of children that are waiting for an initial contact with a CDNT in the 9 CHO Areas: Data for CHO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 represents end of September 2022 activity.

Status report	CHO 1	CHO 2	CHO 3	CHO 4	CHO 5	CHO 6	CHO 7	CHO 8	CHO 9
No of children waiting 0-3 months for an initial contact @month end	311	197	269	225	146	131	173	400	140
No of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial contact @month end	319	129	218	201	280	167	297	447	147
No of children waiting 6-12 months for an initial contact @month end	289	827	252	416	651	249	644	569	409
No of children waiting over 12 months for an initial contact @month end	673	62	368	1415	518	626	1442	1471	2295

Please also note that this is an interim dataset as we await the roll out of the National Information Management System and some individual CDNTs indicate that they do not have a system in place to capture this level of activity, therefore there are gaps in data returns for some of the CHO Areas.

Yours Sincerely,



**Mr Bernard O'Regan,
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations**

