

14<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

Email: [Violet-Anne.Wynne@oireachtas.ie](mailto:Violet-Anne.Wynne@oireachtas.ie)

Re: PQ/60346/22

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons and length of time waiting on assessments of need in County Clare, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Wynne

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.

<b>Number of children awaiting Assessment of Need in Clare</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>The length of time awaiting an Assessment of Need.</b>	<b>20 Months</b>

The above number relates to children awaiting an assessment of need from Primary Care, Children's Disability Team or National Council for Special Education to date. 20 months is the longest waiting time for an assessment for a child residing in County Clare.

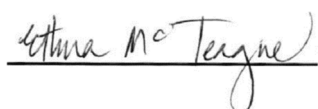
In January 2020 a new Standard Operating Procedure for Assessment of Need (AON) was implemented which deemed that eligible applicants under the Disability Act would receive a Preliminary Team Assessment (PTA). Following a High Court ruling in March 2022, the PTA was determined not to meet the criteria under the Disability Act 2005. Unfortunately, due to this unprecedented change, a backlog has occurred which has resulted in AON assessments not being completed within the statutory timeframe.

The HSE Mid-West Disability Services is striving to alleviate this backlog and increase compliance with the Disability Act 2005. The approach undertaken includes:

- Completion and dissemination of AON reports and service statements for children who have engaged with and completed assessments to date.
- Recruitment of an additional clinical team, solely dedicated to the completion of AON assessments under the Disability Act, to commence assessments in December 2022.
- Securing suitably qualified and experienced private providers to engage with outsourcing assessments.

I trust this clarifies the situation but should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



General Manager, Disability Services

