



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

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12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Deputy Sorca Clarke,  
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Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [sorca.clarke@oireachtas.ie](mailto:sorca.clarke@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Clarke,

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: 60472/22**

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of children who are awaiting an assessment for dyspraxia by county in tabular form.*

**HSE Response**

Children with dyspraxia may have difficulty with thinking, planning and carrying out sensory/motor tasks, and may benefit from the therapeutic support of healthcare professionals. They also need support and understanding in the education system to help them reach their full potential.

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 dyspraxia 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.

From a health perspective, there are a number of therapies that can support children with dyspraxia. These include Occupational Therapy to find ways to develop coordination and complete everyday tasks and Speech and Language Therapy, to improve speech and communication skills.

While many children with dyspraxia will access unidisciplinary occupational therapy services via Primary Care, a proportion with more complex needs are referred to disability services. The HSE does not collate data on waiting lists based on the potential diagnosis.



## **Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs)**

Children's disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of the child rather than by their diagnosis or the actual type of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the child's individual requirements and support needs. The HSE is committed to the full implementation of the Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People Programme (PDS). PDS is a significant change programme for the provision of services and supports for children from birth to 18 years of age, in line with Sláintecare and the Programme for Government.

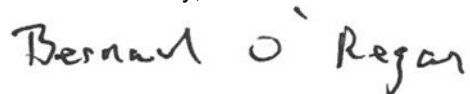
In line with the PDS model, resources assigned to children's disability services are allocated to the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs); 91 CDNTs are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to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

Children and their families will have access to a range of services and supports of the 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 will be provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community.

The HSE also works collaboratively with organisations such as Dyspraxia Ireland who aim to raise awareness of Dyspraxia in Ireland and create a better understanding of the difficulties people with Dyspraxia and their families face. They also provide information sharing and support network for people with Dyspraxia and their families and provide a link to professionals for people with Dyspraxia/DCD and their families.

Yours Sincerely,



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

