



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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16th December 2022

Deputy Eoin Ó Broin,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: eoin.obroin@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Ó Broin,

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: 62269/22

To ask the Minister for Health the total number of children waiting for assessments of need broken down by the disability network team; the average waiting time for such assessments in each DNT; the total number of children waiting for interventions post assessment including speech and language, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and other supports broken down by DNT; and the average waiting time for each intervention in each DNT in tabular form.

HSE Response

The National Access Policy

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).

The appropriate service is identified based on the presenting needs of the child and may be through Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs), Primary Care, or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Children with complex disability needs are referred to Children's Disability Network Teams.

Many children will access services via Primary Care. HSE Disability Services does not gather data on services provided through other service areas including Primary Care.

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

Childrens' Disability Network Teams

In line with the Progressing Disability Services for Children & Young People Programme, resources assigned to children's disability services are allocated to the CDNTs; 91 CDNTs are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare



Networks 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.

Parents, health professionals or education professionals can refer children directly to CDNTs or Primary Care services. They do not require an Assessment of Need to access these services.

The Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) do not collect activity or waiting list data by individual discipline as this does not align with the interdisciplinary model of care. Discipline-specific data is not available in Disability Services.

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.

Assessment of Need

The Disability Act (2005) provides for an Assessment of Need (AON) that outlines the health and education needs for people born on or after 1st June 2002 who are suspected of having a disability. This is a legislative process and is separate to the routine access to health and education services.

The HSE receives approximately 6,000 applications for these assessments each year. Assessment of Need data is collected based on the legislative stages of the process that are described in the Act. At Stage 2 of the process the Assessment Officer refers the applicant for a clinical assessment. The Assessment Officer may access an assessment from a range of services including CDNTs or Primary Care services depending on the child's needs. On occasion these clinical assessments are procured privately.

The Table in Appendix 1 attached gives the most recent information regarding Assessment of Need applications overdue for completion – at end of Quarter 3, 2022. (Reports are available on a Quarterly basis). Information is not



collated regarding the total number of children waiting for assessments of need broken down by the disability network team.

The HSE remains committed to the delivery of appropriate services for children with disabilities and will work with families and staff to develop services that meet their needs.

Yours Sincerely,

Bernard O'Regan

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



Appendix 1

The Table below gives the most recent information regarding applications overdue for completion – at end of Quarter 3, 2022. (Reports are available on a Quarterly basis).

Applications overdue for completion - End of Quarter 3, 2022

CHO	LHO	Overdue	<1 month	1 - 3 Months	>3 Months
AREA 1		160	24	21	115
	Cavan/Monaghan	55	20	5	30
	Donegal	85	4	16	65
	Sligo/Leitrim	20	0	0	20
AREA 2		72	15	27	30
	Galway	34	9	12	13
	Mayo	31	6	13	12
	Roscommon	7	0	2	5
AREA 3		176	63	68	45
	Clare	23	9	10	4
	Limerick	101	33	34	34
	Tipperary N.R	52	21	24	7
AREA 4		589	40	71	478
	Kerry	42	1	7	34
	Cork North	88	7	9	72
	Cork North Lee	292	22	42	228
	Cork South Lee	161	8	13	140
	Cork West	6	2	0	4
AREA 5		149	10	24	115
	Carlow/Kilkenny	26	3	6	17
	Tipperary S.R	19	1	4	14
	Waterford	17	2	7	8
	Wexford	87	4	7	76
AREA 6		181	30	48	103
	Dublin South East	14	2	7	5
	Dublin South	45	9	15	21
	Wicklow	122	19	26	77
AREA 7		899	150	298	451
	Dublin South City	66	7	21	38
	Dublin South West	275	51	103	121
	Dublin West	279	52	103	124
	Kildare/West Wicklow	279	40	71	168
AREA 8		305	44	87	174
	Laois/Offaly	106	15	21	70
	Longford/Westmeath	17	3	10	4
	Louth	44	10	20	14
	Meath	138	16	36	86
AREA 9		963	93	188	682
	North Dublin	609	55	92	462
	Dublin North Centre	48	3	9	36
	North West Dublin	306	35	87	184
Total		3494	469	832	2193

