



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.
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Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

10th August 2022

PQ Number: 41527/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of children in each CHO who are on waiting lists for CAMHS; the length of time that they have been waiting; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

CAMHS provide specialist mental health service to those aged up to 18 years, who have reached the threshold for a diagnosis of moderate to severe mental health disorder that require the input of a multi-disciplinary mental health teams, such as moderate to severe anxiety disorders, moderate to severe depression, Bi Polar Affective disorder, Psychosis, moderate to severe eating disorders, self-harm that require the input of a multi-disciplinary mental health team.

Community CAMHS refers to child and adolescent mental health services that are delivered in outpatient and day hospital settings, with the majority of CAMHS interventions being delivered in the community, close to people's homes. CAMHS community mental health teams (CMHTs) provide clinical assessment, formulation, diagnosis and multi-disciplinary interventions to children and adolescents based on their identified needs. They are also responsible for providing advice, information and support to parents in order to help them to support children and adolescents with moderate to severe mental disorders at home.

Community CAMHS

Waiting lists vary according to Community Healthcare Organisation where although some areas have relatively short waiting lists regrettably waiting times are longer in other counties. Factors such as availability of specialist CAMHS clinicians, current vacancies and difficulties in recruiting in an international context can impact on waiting times in various areas.



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CAMHS wait lists are also impacted by capacities in other parts of the system - where young people may not receive early intervention and thus their needs escalate necessitating referrals to CAMHS.

In CAMHS there are two types of referral; an urgent referral and a routine referral. Every effort is made to prioritise urgent referrals so that young people with high risk presentations are seen as soon as possible and this is often within 24 to 48 hours. Severity of presenting symptoms affects waiting times - where waiting times for those with high risk presentations are shorter. This may impact on wait times for cases that are considered, by a clinician, to be less severe. CAMHS referral teams meet weekly to review all referrals and to assess the risk to the young person.

The reasons for differences around the country relate to availability of specialist CAMHS clinicians, current vacancies and difficulties in recruiting in an international context. CAMHS wait lists are also related to capacities in other parts of the system where young people may not receive early intervention and thus their needs escalate necessitating referrals to CAMHS. Waiting times for young people to be seen by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services continue to be an issue in a number of CHO's. A renewed focus on improving capacity and throughput is in place in this area and some improvement is being shown.

The table below provides information on the number of children and adolescents who are on the waiting lists CAMHS services by CHO area. Please be advised that this data is at June 2022 and is subject to change due to ongoing review and validation. Please note data is not captured by age range.

	Total	<= 12 weeks No.	> 12 <= 26 weeks No	>26 <=39 weeks No	>39 <=52 Weeks No	>52 Weeks No
National Total	4,175	1,543	982	723	387	540
CHO 1	417	206	98	57	18	38
CHO 2	218	83	80	44	10	1
CHO 3	402	115	66	70	39	112
CHO 4	862	198	175	177	114	198
CHO 5	346	98	108	64	51	25
CHO 6	580	329	153	68	24	6
CHO 7	312	151	84	44	11	22
CHO 8	648	267	125	110	66	80
CHO 9	390	96	93	89	54	58

I trust this information is of assistance to you.



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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Mc Cusker'.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services