



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

Office of the Head of Operations,
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9th August 2022

Deputy Rose Conway Walsh,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: rose.conwaywalsh@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Conway Walsh,

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 41887/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting for a psychological assessment in each county; the number waiting more than 6, 12, 18 and 24 months in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

Since Part 2 of the Disability Act commenced in June 2007, the HSE has endeavoured to meet its legislative obligations under the Act. However, as a consequence of a High Court ruling of December 2009, the effect of which was to open eligibility to all children born after 1st June 2002, the number of children aged five and over, and in addition of school-going age, has risen steadily as a percentage of all applications received. At the end of 2011, the figure stood at 26%, while throughout 2021, this figure averaged 53%. This is a reflection that the AON process is an accumulative process in terms of numbers of children seeking access. However, it is acknowledged that the numbers of assessments overdue for completion remain high.

A High Court judgement delivered on 11th March 2022 has impacted on the completion of assessments since that date. As a consequence of the judgement, Assessment Officers cannot complete assessments based on the agreed Preliminary Team Assessment format. As a result, activity for the second quarter of 2022 indicates that there has been an increase in the total number of applications 'overdue for completion', which now stands at 2,447 (excluding those applications for which an extended time-frame was negotiated with the parent on the grounds of there being exceptional circumstances as provided for in paragraph 10 of the regulations).

The requirement to provide diagnostic assessments under the terms of the Act for children who applied for their AONs between January 2020 and December 2021 will further impact on compliance in the coming months.

The most recent information regarding the number of children and young persons on waiting lists for an assessment of need is given in Table 1 below.



Table 1. Applications overdue for completion - End of Quarter 2 2022

CHO	Overdue ¹	Overdue/ Exceptional Circumstances ²	Overdue/ No Exceptional Circumstances	<1 month	1 - 3 Months	>3 Months
AREA 1	156	5	151	31	65	60
AREA 2	48	1	47	7	28	13
AREA 3	87	0	87	45	35	7
AREA 4	587	64	523	38	73	476
AREA 5	123	1	122	15	22	86
AREA 6	115	1	114	13	49	53
AREA 7	452	0	452	108	157	187
AREA 8	236	2	234	42	74	120
AREA 9	727	10	717	66	214	447
Total	2531	84	2447	365	717	1449

¹All assessment reports that were not completed within 6 months of application or within 3 months of Start Stage 2 and before the end of the quarter are included in this report.

²The number of Assessment Reports for which an extended time-frame was negotiated with the parent on the grounds of there being exceptional circumstances as provided for in paragraph 10 of the regulations. Consent to extension is only valid if agreed extension date has not already passed.

With regard to the number of persons waiting for a psychological assessment, while the information above does not give the number of persons waiting for a psychological assessment, please see Table 2 below which gives information regarding the frequency (ranked nationally) with which a requirement for certain services has been indicated in Assessment Reports completed during the quarter, including reviewed reports. The requirement for psychology services is highlighted below.

Table 2: Service Requirements Identified in Completed Reports

Service Requirements	Service Totals	Frequency of Services Indicated
Occupational Therapy	135	63%
Speech and Language Therapy	124	57%
Psychology	105	49%
ASD service	46	21%
Physiotherapy	31	14%
Paediatric Services (Hospital/Community)	26	12%
Psychiatry /CAMHs	14	6%
Dietetics	10	5%
General Health Services	6	3%
Audiology	4	2%
Ophthalmology	3	1%
Social Work	3	1%
Complementary / Play Therapy	2	1%
Hospital based Medical/Surgical Services	2	1%
Nursing	1	<0.5%


The HSE are continuing to review the files of all children who received a preliminary team assessment and engaging directly with families to establish what additional assessments will be required to meet the requirements of the Act. Additional funding has been secured to support the additional assessments required.

The HSE's Clinical Programme for People with Disability in cooperation with Community Operations, Disability Services will implement a process over the coming weeks for a revised approach to Assessment of Need. In developing this clinical guidance, the HSE has engaged with a wide range of stakeholders,

including families, service providers, staff and representative bodies in an intensive consultation to develop a pathway for AONs that seeks to comply with the requirements of the Act but also protects the commitment to the provision of intervention.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard O'Regan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear 'O' and 'R'.

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

Appendix

Table 1							
Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Initial Assessment - November 2021							
LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	248	274	203	178	47	30	980
Donegal	426	168	45	3	22	93	757
Sligo Leitrim	25	0	0	0	0	0	25
CHO1	699	442	248	181	69	123	1,762
Galway	508	435	175	43	23	2	1,186
Mayo	53	5	0	0	0	0	58
Roscommon	63	13	4	0	0	0	80
CHO2	624	453	179	43	23	2	1,324
Clare	174	125	16	27	2	5	349
Limerick	346	250	204	65	8	53	926
North Tipperary East Limerick	225	194	82	31	15	0	547
CHO3	745	569	302	123	25	58	1,822
Kerry	161	14	0	0	0	0	175
North Cork	175	137	13	0	0	0	325
North Lee	333	201	19	0	0	0	553
South Lee	327	26	3	0	9	15	380
West Cork	51	2	0	0	0	0	53
CHO4	1,047	380	35	0	9	15	1,486
Carlow Kilkenny	207	128	6	2	0	0	343
South Tipperary	217	64	2	0	0	0	283
Waterford	66	58	63	78	152	4	421
Wexford	246	221	173	184	149	17	990
CHO5	736	471	244	264	301	21	2,037
Dublin South East	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dun Laoghaire	126	18	0	0	0	0	144
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO6	126	18	0	0	0	0	144
Dublin South City	163	135	74	111	36	2	521
Dublin South West	159	153	213	81	0	0	606
Dublin West	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kildare West Wicklow	330	368	190	88	0	0	976
CHO7	652	656	477	280	36	2	2,103
Laos Offaly	168	0	0	0	0	0	168
Longford Westmeath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	36	0	0	0	0	0	36
CHO8	204	0	0	0	0	0	204
Dublin North	318	274	40	2	0	1	635
Dublin North Central	113	79	54	23	14	0	283
Dublin North West	110	133	79	57	58	3	440
CHO9	541	486	173	82	72	4	1,358
Total	5,374	3,475	1,658	973	535	225	12,240

Table 2

Speech and Language Therapy - Total Number of patients awaiting Initial Therapy - November 2021							
LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	43	14	15	2	0	0	74
Donegal	47	5	0	0	0	0	52
Sligo Leitrim	58	7	2	0	0	0	67
CHO1	148	26	17	2	0	0	193
Galway	237	90	37	23	9	0	396
Mayo	158	113	49	1	0	0	321
Roscommon	200	130	32	25	10	0	397
CHO2	595	333	118	49	19	0	1,114
Clare	96	94	26	15	3	1	235
Limerick	122	44	45	15	18	42	286
North Tipperary East Limerick	88	39	13	2	0	0	142
CHO3	306	177	84	32	21	43	663
Kerry	97	62	17	9	0	0	185
North Cork	41	65	53	98	89	0	346
North Lee	183	207	136	261	111	57	955
South Lee	334	175	103	128	101	99	940
West Cork	51	28	10	2	0	0	91
CHO4	706	537	319	498	301	156	2,517
Carlow Kilkenny	83	93	63	49	47	196	531
South Tipperary	100	81	38	15	0	0	234
Waterford	49	42	44	25	22	173	355
Wexford	61	87	50	92	38	93	421
CHO5	293	303	195	181	107	462	1,541
Dublin South East	9	1	0	0	0	0	10
Dun Laoghaire	46	70	9	0	0	0	125
Wicklow	44	36	5	1	0	0	86
CHO6	99	107	14	1	0	0	221
Dublin South City	30	18	14	12	15	5	94
Dublin South West	59	58	35	47	80	129	408
Dublin West	3	2	6	2	27	18	58
Kildare West Wicklow	95	10	5	5	0	0	115
CHO7	187	88	60	66	122	152	675
Laois Offaly	144	95	1	0	8	1	249
Longford Westmeath	56	11	0	0	0	0	67
Louth	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Meath	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
CHO8	207	106	1	0	8	1	323
Dublin North	237	351	214	215	15	0	1,032
Dublin North Central	100	110	37	46	23	16	332
Dublin North West	196	158	128	61	54	21	618
CHO9	533	619	379	322	92	37	1,982
Total	3,074	2,296	1,187	1,151	670	851	9,229

Table 3

Speech and Language Therapy - Number of 0-17 years & 11 months old patients awaiting Further Therapy - November 2021							
LHO	0 to 4 Mths	4 months & 1 day - 8 months	8 months & 1 day - 12 months	12 months & 1 day - 18 months	18 months & 1 day to 24 months	>24 months	Total
Cavan Monaghan	16	33	22	25	29	0	125
Donegal	110	49	30	45	19	0	253
Sligo Leitrim	37	10	0	0	0	0	47
CHO1	163	92	52	70	48	0	425
Galway	313	305	115	137	135	36	1,041
Mayo	273	164	47	7	0	0	491
Roscommon	70	54	0	28	0	0	152
CHO2	656	523	162	172	135	36	1,684
Clare	231	146	134	17	37	15	580
Limerick	238	143	118	73	51	84	707
North Tipperary East Limerick	141	72	40	2	0	0	255
CHO3	610	361	292	92	88	99	1,542
Kerry	308	182	148	137	0	0	775
North Cork	169	30	49	61	33	0	342
North Lee	198	207	185	166	115	79	950
South Lee	311	163	112	64	38	42	730
West Cork	155	34	16	9	0	0	214
CHO4	1,141	616	510	437	186	121	3,011
Carlow Kilkenny	41	21	45	28	54	1	190
South Tipperary	0	194	292	0	0	0	486
Waterford	41	5	4	3	3	7	63
Wexford	84	88	73	58	114	75	492
CHO5	166	308	414	89	171	83	1,231
Dublin South East	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dun Laoghaire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dublin South City	80	66	43	36	50	17	292
Dublin South West	16	12	10	44	61	68	211
Dublin West	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kildare West Wicklow	103	103	23	17	3	0	249
CHO7	199	181	76	97	114	85	752
Laois Offaly	56	28	27	4	0	0	115
Longford Westmeath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Louth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHO8	56	28	27	4	0	0	115
Dublin North	306	423	280	299	25	0	1,333
Dublin North Central	63	69	17	27	14	10	200
Dublin North West	175	105	131	86	72	43	612
CHO9	544	597	428	412	111	53	2,145
Total	3,535	2,706	1,961	1,373	853	477	10,905