



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
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Deputy Sean Sherlock.  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

16<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**PQ Number: 42977/22**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting to be seen by child and adolescent mental health services by CHO and LHO in tabular form; and the length of time that persons are waiting to be seen. -Sean Sherlock**

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Dear Deputy Sean Sherlock,

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.

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.



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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 the latest available 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 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
<b>National Total</b>	4,127	1,492	990	726	398	521
CHO 1	395	181	98	63	18	35
CHO 2	273	127	78	36	21	11
CHO 3	430	117	69	74	45	125
CHO 4	843	184	179	173	129	178
CHO 5	282	70	73	71	43	25
CHO 6	562	293	145	92	25	7
CHO 7	296	131	84	46	8	27
CHO 8	677	287	168	102	49	71
CHO 9	369	102	96	69	60	42

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'.

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**Tony Mc Cusker**  
**General Manager**  
**National Mental Health Services**