

Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas

Eagraíocht Chúram Sláinte Limistéar (An Cabhán, Dún na nGall, Liatroim, Muineachán & Sligeach) Áras Isacc Butt, Bealach Féich, Tír Chonaill F93 YV9R **Head of Service Disability**

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12th May 2023

Frank Feighan T.D. Dáil Éireann Leinster House Kildare Street Dublin 2

Re: PQ 16669/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the key services and supports available to children with learning disabilities such as autism in counties Sligo and Leitrim or CHO1 once diagnosis takes place; the wait list numbers and wait list times for children to see OTs and SLTs publicly; the number of WTE posts for OTs and SLTS in the same region; the number of posts open; the steps the HSE is taking in terms of recruitment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Feighan

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 response. I am advised that you have clarified to the Chief Officer that you were only seeking this information from a Disability Services perspective. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position in Community Healthcare Cavan Donegal Leitrim Monaghan and Sligo (CH CDLMS).

There are seven Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) in CH CDLMS which offer services to children with complex disabilities. A CDNT's staffing will typically be comprised of Health and Social Care Professionals, including Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, Physiotherapists, Social Workers, and Speech and Language Therapists. CDNTs also have access to Dieticians, Family Support Workers, Nurses and Social Care Workers.

CDNT waiting lists are based on need, not diagnosis. CDNTs are interdisciplinary teams and as such, do not hold separate waiting lists for each discipline.

The below table details the requested information pertaining to Occupational Therapy (OT) and Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), in each of the seven CDNTs in CH CDLMS.

Area	Caseload	Team	Team	Number of	Number of	Number of	Number of
Children's		Waiting	Waiting	Approved	Vacant WTE	Approved	Vacant WTE
Disability		Times:	Times:	WTE for	for	WTE for	for Speech
Network		Occupational	Speech &	Occupational	Occupational	Speech &	& Language
Teams		Therapy	Language	Therapists	Therapists	Language	Therapists



			Therapy			Therapists	
Sligo South Donegal	471	24 months	20 months	3 WTE	2 WTE	4.8 WTE	3.8 WTE
Leitrim West Cavan	316	12 months	8 months	3 WTE	1 WTE	3 WTE	Nil Vacant
Donegal East & Inishowen	430	12 – 18 months	6 – 24 months	4 WTE	2 WTE	5 WTE	2 WTE
Donegal North	344	14 months	10 months	4 WTE	2.5 WTE	4 WTE	2 WTE
Donegal South West	280	6 months	6 months	2.8 WTE	2.0 WTE	4.8 WTE	2.8 WTE
Cavan	526	24 months	24 months	4 WTE	2.7 WTE	5.8 WTE	1 WTE
Monaghan	652	51 months	13 months	5.8 WTE	1.8 WTE	6.4 WTE	2.8 WTE

The following measures are currently in place to support families during waiting times.

- Support with the diagnostic process and school placement.
- Universal training programmes support.
- Target-specific parent training programmes.
- Meeting clinicians for general advice.
- In each CDNT area, following autism diagnostics, families are offered a place at Early Bird
 or Early Bird Plus (age specific), which is a parental post diagnostic programme aimed at
 increasing awareness of autism and how to deal with the issues that a child may be more
 likely to experience due to their autism.
- All interventions offered are based on what is agreed from each child's Individual Family Service Plan and differing types of interventions can be offered by SLT/OT, depending on the child specific goals. CDNTs offer a mix of group advice and one-to-one interventions, depending on the goal identified.
- The Children's Disability Network Manager is working closely with the HSE Human Resources department on an ongoing basis to recruit suitably qualified staff to fill the SLT and OT posts. Local initiatives and national initiatives are being undertaken to address the lack of suitably qualified professionals available for employment in CDNTs. An Taoiseach's



office is overseeing the development of a Progressing Disability Services (PDS) Roadmap to address recruitment concerns.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

En Ruin

Edel Quinn

Head of Service Disability CH CDLMS Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas Eagraíocht Chúram Sláinte Limistéar CDLMS