



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,
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369

Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

24th January 2023

Deputy Jennifer Whitmore,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: jennifer.whitmore@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Whitmore,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 1813/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of children on waiting lists who are awaiting first contact with their children's disability network team nationwide; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ: 1814/23

To ask the Minister for Health the average time spent on waiting lists for children awaiting first contact with their children's disability network team nationwide, broken down to indicate the number of children awaiting longer than 18 months, 12 months and 6 months in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

In line with the PDS model, 91 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) 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.



Since 2019, more than 610 development posts have been allocated to children’s disability services across the country. These posts have been assigned to teams based on a number of factors, including the existing ratio of staff to the number of children with disabilities in each area. This figure includes 190 posts provided in 2022 as well as an additional 136.3 WTEs to restore pre-existing services in 104 special schools.

The HSE continues to explore a range of options to enhance the recruitment and retention of essential staff across all aspects of the health services. The HSE is operating in a very competitive global market for healthcare talent as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals across the globe. The HSE Community Operations Disability Services is working collaboratively with the CDNT lead agencies at CHO level to promote CDNTs as a workplace of choice in a competitive employment market. Each lead agency is responsible for recruitment of staff on their CDNTs and is using a variety of approaches to fill funded vacancies.

National Information Management System for the CDNTs (CDNTIMS)

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.

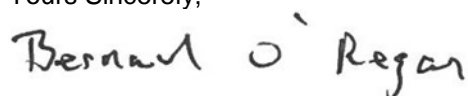
The data provided in the table below shows the number of children that are waiting for an initial contact with a CDNT in the 9 CHO Areas. This Dataset represents end of December 2022 activity reports.

Information is not collated on the average time on waiting lists.

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	481	132	294	181	179	120	185	361	87
No of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial contact @month end	315	231	209	164	217	120	258	498	119
No of children waiting 6-12 months for an initial contact @month end	341	1,275	316	272	395	266	672	367	354
No of children waiting over 12 months for an initial contact @month end	186	80	366	1488	1275	685	1551	1903	2302

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.

Yours Sincerely,



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

