



Ref: PQ 33216/23

25<sup>th</sup> July 2023

**Deputy Róisín Shortall**  
**Dáil Eireann**  
**Dublin 2**

Dear Deputy Shortall

I refer to your below parliamentary question which has been forwarded to me for attention.

**PQ 33216/23: To ask the Minister for Health in view of the unacceptably long waiting times for scoliosis surgery which many children have to endure, if he will make a special allocation for mental health supports during this difficult period, as requested by an organisation (Scoliosis Ireland); and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response:**

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Psychology services for patients referred from the Orthopaedic specialty comprises 3.2 Whole-time Equivalent (WTE) staff. There is currently 1 WTE vacancy being actively recruited.

The service is provided for inpatients and outpatients and referrals are prioritised based on clinical need. For example, priority referrals for inpatients may be children and young people who are demonstrating psychological distress which is interfering with discharge planning or impacting their medical treatment. Outpatients are prioritised where their distress may be impacting on suitability for surgery or whereby they may be demonstrating pre-operative distress (where surgery date is within 6 months).

The psychologists work as core members of the multidisciplinary team liaising with physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical social workers, dietitians, nursing and medical colleagues among others as appropriate.

Please find enclosed additional information from a CHI at Crumlin perspective which I trust will be of assistance to you.

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire  
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97 Ireland

Yours sincerely

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**Deputy CEO/Operations Director**  
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Our **Mission** is to: Promote and provide child-centred, research-led and learning informed healthcare, to the highest standards of safety and excellence. We will do this in partnership with each other, with children, young people and their families through a network of children's services in Ireland.

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