

23rd June, 2023

Mr. Denis Naughten, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 29122/23

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of children awaiting a speech and language appointment in CHO4; the breakdown of the time they have been on the waiting list; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy Naughten,

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 wish to advise of the following in regard to Primary Care services:

CKCH		Waiting Initial Assessment - 0 - 17 years & 11 months					
		0-4 months	4 - 8 months	8 - 12 months	12 - 18 months	18 - 24 months	< 24 months
CKCH	North Cork	183	146	46	0	0	0
	North Lee	234	184	16	0	0	0
	South Lee	476	16	0	0	0	0
	West Cork	68	0	0	0	0	0
	Kerry	147	0	0	0	0	0
	CHO4 Total	1108	346	62	0	0	0
Total waiting initial Assessment 0 - 17 yrs & 11 months = 1516.53							

CKCH		Waiting Initial Therapy - 0 - 17 years & 11 months					
		0-4 months	4 - 8 months	8 - 12 months	12 - 18 months	18 - 24 months	< 24 months
CKCH	North Cork	57	60	56	47	45	34
	North Lee	200	187	188	124	4	0
	South Lee	163	125	99	18	0	0
	West Cork	36	23	17	0	0	0
	Kerry	122	37	14	1	0	0
	CHO4 Total	578	432	374	190	49	34
Total waiting initial Therapy 0 - 17 yrs & 11 months = 1657							

CKCH		Waiting Further Therapy - 0 -17 years & 11 months					
		0-4 months	4 - 8 months	8 - 12 months	12 - 18 months	18 - 24 months	< 24 months
CHO 4	North Cork	32	35	35	25	26	8
	North Lee	147	172	198	146	21	0
	South Lee	241	183	167	18	0	0
	West Cork	54	32	19	0	0	0
	Kerry	251	163	64	9	0	0
	CHO4 Total	725	585	483	198	47	8
Total waiting Further Therapy 0 - 17 yrs & 11 months = 2046							

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare acknowledges the Speech and Language Therapy waiting list for children. There has been significant challenges in relation to the recruitment of staff and this in conjunction with higher referral rates than previous years has attributed to longer waiting times in certain areas of Cork and Kerry. I wish to ensure you that CKCH remains committed to meeting these demands. This includes local, national and international recruitment campaigns along with relevant quality initiatives in local Community Healthcare Networks.

In preparing this response I liaised with my colleagues Majella Daly, Head of Disability Services, and Julie O'Neill, Head of Mental Health Services, and they have advised of the following in regard to their respective services:

Disability Services

A child's access to services is based on his/her needs, i.e. a diagnosis is not required. Instead of a service providing for children with one type of disability only, resulting in some children unable to access a service, each CDNT provides for all children with complex needs arising from their disability who live in that area. Children with non-complex needs receive services at Primary Care level.

Currently, the teams have large numbers of complex children on their caseloads who require an interdisciplinary team approach and this is provided on a needs basis due to priority and risk to child, young adult, and family in all environments such as home, school and in the community.

We are unable to provide a breakdown of data on those awaiting intervention as at any one time, a number of children may be in receipt of some interventions but may also be waiting for other interventions and without ICT systems, we are unable to provide that level of breakdown at this time. However, please see below table which outlines the current caseload of children and young adults on each Childrens Disability Network Team and the number of children awaiting initial contact:-

Team	Current Caseload	No. of children awaiting initial contact				Total waiting
		0-3 months	4-6 months	6-12 months	Over 12 months	
North Kerry Childrens Disability Network Team	371	12	16	11	0	39
West Kerry Childrens Disability Network Team	372	14	7	17	10	48
South Kerry Childrens Disability Network Team	570	10	2	0	0	12
Northwest Childrens Disability Network Team	671	20	12	7	0	39
Northeast Childrens Disability Network Team	294	17	16	45	59	78
East Central Cork Childrens Disability Network Team	477	9	33	37	85	188
East Cork City Childrens Disability Network Team	266	8	8	22	309	347

Central Cork Childrens Disability Network Team	565	23	4	21	12	39
North Cork City & Blarney Childrens Disability Network Team	332	3	9	20	197	229
West Cork Childrens Disability Network Team	835	7	0	0	0	7
South East Cork City Childrens Disability Network Team	484	13	8	12	115	148
West Central Cork Childrens Disability Network Team	556	11	6	15	197	229
Carrigaline/Kinsale/Bandon Childrens Disability Network Team	508	2	6	19	245	272
West Central Cork Childrens Disability Network Team	368	2	2	24	62	90

Children who have had an initial contact may then be waiting for the development of their IFSP and thereafter for universal, targeted, or individual interventions, but the data management systems in the five lead agencies, do not enable collection or collation of those statistics currently.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services:

Service Provider	SLT (number)	Wait time
CAMHS Cork North Central	4	0-3 Months
CAMHS North Kerry	7	0-3 months
	5	3-6 months
CAMHS South Kerry	10	0-3 Months
	10	3-6 Months
CAMHS North Cork	20	6-12 Months
CAMHS North Lee East	6	0-3 Months
CAMHS North Lee West	2	0-3 Months
CAMHS West Cork	2	3-6 Months
CAMHS South Lee 1	4	0-3 Months
CAMHS South Lee 2	5	3-6 Months
CAMHS South Lee 3	4	3-6 Months

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Priscilla Lynch
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare