



Oifig an Príomhoifigeach  
Eagraíocht Cúram Sláinte Pobail Lár Tire,  
An Lú, An Mhí

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,  
Oifig Cheantair, Bóthar Ardáin,  
An Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí.

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18<sup>th</sup> July, 2023

Mr. Denis Naughten T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

**Re: Parliamentary Question 29126/23**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of children awaiting a speech and language appointment in CHO8; the breakdown of the time they have been on the waiting list; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Denis Naughten**

Dear Deputy Naughton,

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 I outline the position as follows;

Primary Care Network	No. of children waiting	Longest Waiter in weeks
North Meath & Ardee	80	59
Central Meath	291	70
East Meath	278	52
Southwest Meath	231	68
North Louth	244	28
South Louth & Bettystown	122	22
South Laois	300	73
Offaly	144	106
North Laois & East Offaly	130	79
East Westmeath	431	53
West Westmeath & NW Offaly	195	60
Longford & Central Westmeath	473	61

Children's Disability services were reconfigured in line with Progressing Disabilities Services for Children and Young People in November 2021. *Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People Programme (PDS)* is a significant change programme for the provision of therapeutic services for children from birth to 18 years of age. It was rolled out nationally by



the HSE in partnership with its funded voluntary organisations. PDS requires pooling together all resources, including staff, facilities and equipment, from the different voluntary agencies and the HSE providing specialist children's disability services, in order to set up Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs).

A CDNT comprises of a team of health and social care professionals who provide a range of different supports in an interdisciplinary way. This means that the professionals on the team work together with the child and family. Waiting lists are not kept for individual disciplines as this does not reflect the nature of the support provided for children with complex needs. Children referred and accepted to the CDNT's are now wait listed for an individual family support plan (IFSP) and targeted supports are then provided in line with the needs outlined in the IFSP. The average waiting time for an IFSP in the CDNT's is 14 months.

An IFSP is an Individual Family Support Plan and is developed by the family, child and the members of the CDNT. It guides how the team supports the child. This is a process which requires getting to know the child and their needs (if not already known), preparing the family to create the IFSP and the development of the document along with the development of the supports to address the identified goals which include universal, targeted, and individual supports. Each IFSP is estimated to take up to 12 clinical hours across 2-3 staff to develop over a period of 6 weeks. This does not include the supports delivered after the IFSP to meet the goals and priorities identified. The information provided below is based on September 2022 caseload analysis.

Whilst waiting on provision of an IFSP, children can be provided some other Universal Supports inputs prior to this date depending on the need (Universal Supports are first line of input in format of groups, team facilitation, standardised parent workshops etc) MLM CHO are currently developing waitlist initiatives which families can avail of while awaiting their IFSP.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Carole Broadbank'.

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Carole Broadbank  
Chief Officer  
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation