



Oifig um Cheannasaí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín
Luimneach
Teil: 061 483722

Office of the Head of Service for Primary Care
HSE Mid West Community Healthcare
Ballycummin Ave, Raheen Business Park, Raheen,
Limerick
Tel: 061 483722

14th April 2023

Deputy Niall Collins
Red House Hill
Patrickswell
Co. Limerick
V94 KWN6

Re: PQ 14810/23 - “To ask the Minister for Health what plans are in place to reduce waiting times for children to receive Speech & Language Therapy in Limerick; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Collins,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

In relation to Primary Care Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) services in Limerick, one vacant SLT post was filled in January 2023. In addition, two vacant SLT posts are in the early stages of recruitment. When these resources are in place, they will enhance the Primary Care SLT services in Limerick and result in a beneficial impact on the waiting times for children.

I can advise that there has been a notable increase in the referral rates to HSE SLT services and this increase is being experienced across the other core HSE disciplines (i.e. Psychology, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Dietetics, Social Work) also. These increases can be attributed to a number of factors, notably, post Covid and also the implementation of the National Access Policy (NAP) which has broadened the access criteria for Children’s Services in Primary Care.

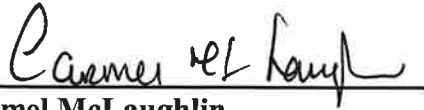
Since the introduction of the NAP additional resources have been identified across all of the core Primary Care Services and a business case has been submitted in this regard. If and when these additional resources are approved and in place, they will also have a beneficial impact on the waiting times for children for all Primary Care Services including SLT services.

I can assure you that the HSE Primary Care SLT services are working to address the current waiting times for children. A waiting list validation process is in place to ensure that only those children requiring the service remain on the waiting list.

I can also advise that monthly KPI data for Primary Care SLT services are monitored/reviewed and any shortfalls are queried and issues addressed where possible. I can confirm that the HSE Primary Care SLT services in Limerick are meeting the targets required for Priority 1 children.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carmel McLaughlin', written over a horizontal line.

Carmel McLaughlin
General Manager
Primary Care