



Ceannasaí Seirbhíse do
Dhaoine Faoi Mhíchumas

Campas Gnó Shoid,
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7th June 2023

Mr Alan Farrell TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Email: alan.farrell@oireachtas.ie

PQ 26316/23 *"To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of children awaiting their AON in CHO9; and if he will make a statement on the matter."* **Alan Farrell TD**

Dear Deputy Farrell,

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

Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHO DNCC) wish to advise that the total number of applicants awaiting to complete an Assessments of Needs (AON) to date is 4,426. This build up is due to sustained high referral rates over several years. A High Court judgement in March 2022 that has stated the Preliminary Team Assessment (PTA) approach used in AON does not meet the requirements of the Disability Act 2005 in terms of assessment also led to approximately 2,955 PTAs that were completed having to now be reassessed.

The ability to carry out assessments is currently limited to an average of 100 assessments per month. This is due to the current resources available both within Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) and the capacity for assessments available through private providers. CHO DNCC Disability Services, in conjunction with all lead agencies in the area, is working to increase capacity within our CDNTs. There are ongoing local and international recruitment campaigns for all staff grades. Coupled with this a new tender process will be launched in the coming weeks to try and identify any additional capacity for assessments that may be available within the private market.

All applications and assessments through AON are dealt with strictly in order of date of application. As soon as an appointment becomes available contact will be made with parents to schedule a suitable time and date for assessments. I understand that each parent's priority is for their child and I empathise with the frustrations of those currently awaiting an assessment.

I trust this information clarifies this matter for you

Yours sincerely,

Ms Olive Hanley
Head of Service for Disability