

1st October, 2024

Ms. Holly Cairns, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 37305/24

"To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 2043 of 23 July 2024, the number of clinical sessions typically offered to children and adolescents attending the CHO4 primary care speech and language therapy services; and if these clients are placed on another waiting list following discharge in the event that they require ongoing support".

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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.

The Speech and Language Therapy Department see children aged 0 to 18 years, who have speech or language difficulties as their primary need. Children who may benefit from speech and language therapy may have some of the following needs:

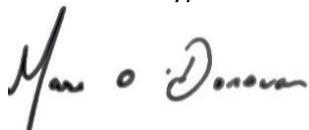
- Speech: difficulty making speech sounds.
- Language: difficulty understanding and/or using words and sentences.
- Stammering or Stuttering: difficulty with fluent speech (getting stuck on words).
- Voice: hoarseness or loss of voice (in some instances a referral by G.P. to the E.N.T. Department is required).
- Social communication: difficulty with using language appropriately and following the rules of conversation.

The number of Speech and Language Therapy intervention sessions a child/ teenager receives depends on their needs but generally a traditional block of Speech and Language Therapy intervention in Primary Care would consist of 6 to 8 sessions after which time if the child requires further intervention they are returned to the waiting list for more treatment sessions. A child would not be discharged if they require further intervention / support after their block of Speech and Language Therapist intervention i.e. they would be returned to the waiting list for further intervention.

There are also other care pathways e.g. review on request where a child's parents can request a review if they want over a specified time period but if they do not contact the service, then the child is discharged.

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

Yours sincerely,



Mari O'Donovan
Acting Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare