



2nd May 2025

Ms Holly Cairns TD
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin

PQ 16844/25

To ask the Minister for Health for the current primary care psychology staffing levels, by grade of psychologist and per population size, served in each integrated health area of the Dublin and South East Regional Health Area, as of March 1, 2025.

PQ 16846/25

To ask the Minister for Health the psychology waiting-list numbers and exact wait-times, in months and years, for children and adolescents in each integrated health area of the Dublin and South East Regional Health Area primary care services, in tabular form, to also include numbers of years waiting for young people waiting more than twelve months; and the longest wait-time, in years and months, as of March 1, 2025.

Dear Deputy Cairns,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which were submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have reviewed the matter, and the following composite response outlines the current position.

Staffing levels change regularly during any year due to career progression, resignation and/or statutory leave and therefore the available WTE can be affected throughout that year. The table below outlines the current primary care psychology staffing levels by IHA in HSE Dublin and South East.



Table 1: Current Staffing Levels Primary Care Psychology Services

| Staff Grade | IHA Dublin South and Wicklow | IHA Waterford and Wexford | IHA Carlow, Kilkenny, and Tipperary South |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| Senior Psychologist | 9.8 WTE | 4.6 WTE | 4.85 WTE |
| Staff Grade Psychologist | 7 WTE | 4.8 WTE | 3.58 WTE |
| Psychology Assistant | 3 WTE | 5 WTE | 1.9 WTE |
| Total WTE | 19.8 | 14.4 | 10.33 |

Please find below in tabular form, the Psychology waiting list in each IHA area, based on the most recent data available.

Table 2: Dublin and South Wicklow

**Primary Care & Adolescent Psychology Services, Dublin
South & Wicklow**

| Age (years) | 0-12 weeks | 13-26 weeks | 27-39 weeks | 39-52 weeks | >52 weeks | Longest Waiter (in months) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 0-18 yrs | 134 | 163 | 158 | 45 | 151 | 36 |

Tables 3, 4: Waterford and Wexford

Table 3: Primary Care & Adolescent Psychology Services, Waterford

| Age (years) | 0-12 weeks | 13-26 weeks | 27-39 weeks | 39-52 weeks | >52 weeks | Longest Waiter (in months) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 0-4 yrs | 2 | 26 | 18 | 13 | 28 | 21 |
| 5-18yrs | 48 | 216 | 161 | 184 | 366 | 34 |



Table 4: Primary Care & Adolescent Psychology Services, Wexford

| Age (years) | 0-12 weeks | 13-26 weeks | 27-39 weeks | 39-52 weeks | >52 weeks | Longest Waiter (in months) |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 0-4 yrs | 17 | 14 | 8 | 12 | 14 | 22 |
| 5-18yrs | 79 | 94 | 129 | 110 | 356 | 34 |

Tables 5, 6: Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South

Table 5: Primary Care & Adolescent Psychology Services, Carlow/Kilkenny

| Age (years) | 0-12 weeks | 13-26 weeks | 27-39 weeks | 39-52 weeks | >52 weeks | Longest Waiter (in months) |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 0-4 yrs | 13 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 20 |
| 5-18yrs | 81 | 48 | 45 | 63 | 81 | 24 |

Table 6: Primary Care & Adolescent Psychology Services, South Tipperary

| Age (years) | 0-12 weeks | 13-26 weeks | 27-39 weeks | 39-52 weeks | >52 weeks | Longest Waiter (in months) |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 0-4 yrs | 21 | 20 | 6 | 9 | 13 | 20 |
| 5-18yrs | 67 | 63 | 52 | 51 | 135 | 24 |

Referral rates to primary care psychology services have increased in recent years in line with national trends. HSE Dublin and South East is committed to delivering efficient high-quality services to all eligible service users. We are focused on improving access to care in order to reduce waiting times for patients. This includes monitoring the waiting list on an on-going basis in the context of available resources. In addition, HSE Dublin and South East continues to address those longest waiters with the current Waiting List Initiative which includes children and young people waiting for > 52 weeks since 2021.



Across the HSE there has been ongoing recruitment challenges in psychology services. We operate in a competitive market as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals including psychologists nationally and internationally. The HSE continues to progress approved posts including NRS panels for Psychology Grades and advertising via universities to graduates of professional psychology programmes.

We acknowledge that waiting times for services at this time are stressful for children and their families, and we will continue to explore a range of options to enhance the recruitment and retention of essential staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Martina Queally
Regional Executive Officer
HSE Dublin and South East