



22 May 2025

**Mark Ward TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

Ref: PQ 20991/25

Re: Assessment of Need

“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to comment on the waiting times for assessments of needs throughout Dublin mid-west; if the statutory waiting time is being met; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

-Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Questions which has been referred by the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to the Health Service Executive for direct response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The number of the application for assessments of need awaiting Stage 1 in Dublin West is 1155.

Due to the high volume of applications received in Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow Community Healthcare area there is a delay in reviewing applications and determining if an Assessment of Need (AON) is required. All AON cases are processed and prioritised for assessment strictly on the basis of application date.

Recruitment to fill vacant Assessment Officer posts is currently taking place. The HSE is working with all HSE and HSE funded services in the area and a number of private providers to increase capacity of assessments and decrease wait times.

It is important to highlight that:

- Children do not require a diagnosis or Assessment of Need (AON) to access health services within the HSE. Parents/Guardian can refer their child directly to their local Primary Care Service or Children’s Disability Network Team.

- Children do not require a diagnosis and/or a professional report or Assessment of Need (AON) to access education supports such as SET and SNA supports within a mainstream education setting. These resources should be put in place by the child's school where the school has identified additional education needs.

I trust this information is of use to you. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret O'Neill,
Head of Service, Disability Services
HSE Dublin and Midlands