



Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta, An Chéad
Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15, Áras Phlásóg na Rós,
Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile, Páirc
Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta, Caladh an
Treoigh, Luimneach

Office of the Assistant National
Director, National Disability Team,
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,
Roselawn House, University Business
Complex, National Technology Park,
Castletroy, Limerick.

17th July 2025

Deputy Sorca Clarke,
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sorca.clarke@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 36444/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the current waiting time for children's therapy services, speech and language, occupational therapy, physiotherapy under the early intervention scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Clarke,

Thank you for your Parliamentary Question referenced above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply.

Childrens Disability Services

In line with the Progressing Disability Services model, all 93 CDNTs, aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country, are in place and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.

Each CDNT covers a specific geographical area and holds a waiting list for children with complex needs residing in that area.

The model of service for all CDNTs is family-centred and based on the needs of the child. This includes universal, targeted and specialised supports and interventions, as appropriate to the individual child and family. It is based on the objectives of empowering and supporting parents and others who are with the child on a daily basis to facilitate the child's developmental needs.

The CDNTs are currently providing services and supports for 44,000 children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow.

Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People

The HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People is a targeted Service Improvement Programme to achieve a quality, accessible, equitable and timely service for all children with complex needs as a result of a disability and their families.

The Roadmap, has four Working Groups which report into a Service Improvement Programme Board every month, which in turn reports to the Roadmap Oversight Group which was chaired by the Minister of State.

Working Group 1: Integrated Children's Services – has responsibility for the implementation of National Access Policy (NAP) and the Primary Care, Disability, CAMHS Joint Working Protocol (JWP), Equity of Access to Aids and Appliances across all CHOs; and the Review of HSE Tusla Joint Protocol.

Working Group 2: Service Access and Improvement – has responsibility for Waitlist Management and Services; Optimising Teams Efficiencies, Effectiveness and Governance; AONs overdue for completion; and the development of a National Capital plan to enable all staff of a CDNT to be co-located.

Working Group 3: Workforce – has 21 actions dedicated to Retention of specialised CDNT staff, Recruitment of new graduates and experienced staff for all CDNTs Deployment of Students/Trainees/New Graduates; and Development of Existing Staff.



Waiting List for the Childrens Disability Services

Historically the number of children waitlisted for children's disability services provided by section 38 and section 39 providers has not been available nationally. The establishment of CDNTs in 2021 has facilitated the collection of this data. A National Information Management System for all 93 CDNTs is being rolled out and when implemented, will provide current data on waiting lists and other details for all CDNTs.

Pending full roll-out to all 93 CDNTs, manual data collection is currently in place nationally as an interim measure.

The table below is the validated data for the end of May 2025 activity reports. This shows the number of children that are waiting for an initial contact with a CDNT in the 6 Regional Healthcare Areas (RHAs). In line with best practice guidelines, CDNTs use a multidisciplinary approach to assessment and intervention. In this context, the CDNTs do not collect activity data by individual discipline (such as SLT, Physiotherapy, OT etc) as this does not align with the interdisciplinary model of care.

End of May 2025

| National CDNT Interim Metrics (May2025) | HSE West and North West | HSE Midwest | HSE South West | HSE Dublin and South East | HSE Dublin Midlands | HSE Dublin and North East | Total |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| No. of children waiting 0-3 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end | 291 | 165 | 160 | 170 | 227 | 270 | 1283 |
| No. of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end | 128 | 133 | 130 | 145 | 232 | 258 | 1026 |
| No. of children waiting 7-12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end | 135 | 266 | 103 | 283 | 345 | 284 | 1416 |
| No. of children waiting over 12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end | 324 | 614 | 212 | 2135 | 2243 | 2274 | 7802 |
| Total no. of children on the CDNT waiting list @ month end. | 878 | 1178 | 605 | 2733 | 3047 | 3086 | 11527 |

In addition, 1,416 children (&/or their parents) who are on the CDNT waiting list participated in one or more individual and/or group intervention appointments during May 2025.

Yours Sincerely,

Tom McGuirk,
General Manager, Disability Services, Access & Integration