

17th July, 2025

Deputy Thomas Gould,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 36936/25

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of children currently awaiting an appointment with CAMHS in Cork by urgency level, in tabular form and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Gould,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for the Minister for Health for a response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

HSE South West operates in accordance with the CAMHS Operational Guidelines (COG) and accepts referrals for children and adolescents presenting with moderate to severe mental health disorders. Referrals are triaged based on three levels of urgency: routine, priority, and urgent. Access to the service is determined by clinical priority.

There is significant demand for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and we are currently experiencing a large number of referrals and increased demand for services. The multi-disciplinary team (MDT) screen all referrals according to clinical urgency. In some situations, where indicated, based on information provided in the referral, CAMHS also signpost to other services who may be able to provide support to families.

Once a referral is received by CAMHS, the team rely on updated information from a referrer regarding any clinical risks or changes in a young person's presentation whilst they are awaiting initial assessment. All information received from a referrer in regards to an update on clinical urgency is discussed at the Multi-Disciplinary team (MDT) meeting, and the priority for assessment is considered in the context of the other cases on the waiting list and urgent assessments referred to the service.

HSE South West acknowledges the lengthy waiting times that parents are experiencing. We sincerely regret that any child must wait for an assessment. We fully appreciate the level of stress that families are experiencing due to the current waiting times. Recruitment across CAMHS is ongoing and every effort is being made to ensure vacant posts are filled as quickly as possible. We are actively focused on reducing the overall waiting lists, with a particular focus on those waiting longest for access to CAMHS.

Please find below the information which you requested.

Data as at 11/07/25	North Cork	North Lee North	North Lee East	North Lee West	South Lee 1	South Lee 2	South Lee 3	West Cork	South Kerry	North Kerry	Regional Eating Disorders	TOTAL
Urgent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Priority	0	12	10	33	19	0	17	29	0	0	0	120
Routine	215	57	28	37	115	24	173	73	72	88	21	903
Total on waiting list	215	69	38	70	134	24	190	102	72	88	23	1025

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Collins
Acting Head of Service
Mental Health Services