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Le Lár Tíre, An Lú, An Mhí,

Coimpléasc Naomh Bríd, Baile Átha Fhirdia,
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Ref: MLM MH 298/2025

Deputy Joanna Byrne
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

12th August 2025

Re: PQ 37488/25 - To ask the Minister for Health to provide an update on the recent meeting with HSE regional health areas/regional executive officers and teams within mental health services for Louth , Meath and the midlands with a focus on improvements to all aspects of youth mental health care; the areas that were identified for improvement from these meetings; the areas of positive delivery of services that were identified at these meetings; the initiatives to reduce CAMHS waiting lists identified; and if she will make a statement on the matter – Joanna Byrne

Dear Deputy Byrne,

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. I have examined the matter and outlined the position as follows.

Dublin and North East Health Region

The Dublin and North East Health Region is committed to supporting all of our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Teams to achieve and maintain access to “Under 12 month Waiting Time” for the assessment for all children. Dublin and North East Health Region acknowledges receipt of €706,700 funding from the Department of Health for our CAMHS Waiting List Action Plan and which was allocated via the HSE National Access & Integration. Dublin and North East Health Region have commenced the process of individual CAMHS Catchment Management Team business case submissions with planned monthly data returns as requirements. Our aim is to ensure that no child is waiting longer than 12 months for assessment in any CAMHS team in the Dublin and North East Health Region by year end 2025.



In Dublin and North East Health Region, we are committed to ensuring that change practises and improvements to any of our services are done sustainably, tracked and learning shared. A recently established Integrated Children's Services Improvement Board will advance local and regional initiatives that ensure children/young people in Dublin and North East Health Region have improved access to the services they need, when they need them, in line with Sláintecare objectives. This will focus on assessing the utilisation of existing resources and identifying specific areas for improvement in order to reduce the waiting times for services currently being experienced by children. One of the key priorities for the Children's Services Improvement Board is to identify clear priority areas for action across all four Integrated Healthcare Areas and this will include addressing the current longest waiters in CAMHS.

HSE National Access & Integration have assigned specific once off funding to deliver improvements in the current waiting lists in Primary Care for psychological interventions. Whilst Dublin and North East Health Region would like to be in a position to provide you with absolute assurances, there are caveats to achieving our shared aims, however Dublin and North East Health Region can assure you that we will exercise every opportunity to successfully reduce our waiting times within 2025.

Louth Meath Integrated Healthcare Area can confirm the following:

- A sustainable longer-term plan has been developed to support the challenged teams in the Louth Meath area which will require recurring investment in addition to the once off Waiting List Action Plan funding. This investment is a priority for the region.
- The Louth Meath plan provides for the intensive support to the teams with the highest waiting lists in the region to support them to eliminate waiting times more than 12 months.
- Dublin and the North East Health Region will prioritise the recruitment of new development posts and the backfill of funded CAMHS vacancies on an ongoing basis. The current 14.5 WTE vacancies across our CAMHS teams are in active recruitment.
- The Department of Health Waiting List Action Plan funding provided to the HSE will support the removal of children waiting the longest (i.e. more than 12 months).
- The aim is to ensure that no child is waiting longer than 12 months for assessment in any CAMHS team in the Louth Meath Integrated Health Area by year end 2025.



Dublin and Midlands Health Region:

The Dublin and Midlands Health Region is committed to supporting all of our CAMHS teams to achieve and maintain access to “Under 12 month Waiting Time” for the assessment for all children. Dublin and Midlands Health Region acknowledges receipt of €573,804 funding from the Department of Health for our CAMHS Waiting List Action Plan and which was allocated via the HSE National Access & Integration. Dublin and Midlands Health Region have commenced the process of individual CAMHS Catchment Management Team business case submissions with planned monthly data returns as requirements. Our aim is to ensure that no child is waiting longer than 12 months for assessment in any CAMHS team in the Dublin and Midlands Health Region by year end 2025.

In Dublin and Midlands Health Region, we are committed to ensuring that change practises and improvements to any of our services are done sustainably, tracked and learning shared. The Longford Single Point of Access Entry, as per the Children’s Services Project, was presented at the most recent Regional Executive Officer Engagements for parents and staff. It is the intention of Dublin and Midlands Health Region to progress Single Points of Access Entry for child referrals in all Community Healthcare Networks/Areas. The Single Point of Access Entry for children has a step-by-step guide and a standard operating procedure for Networks to follow.

Dublin and Midlands Health Region will

- Make every effort to ensure that the ‘Waiting List Action Plan funding allocated to the Dublin and Midlands Health Region is directed towards addressing the needs of children who have been waiting the longest, particularly those waiting over 12 months, in line with service priorities and operational capacity.
- All approved vacancies for CAMHS are being actively pursued in line with the HSE Dublin & Midlands Health Region available financial and WTE limits and recruitment processes. There is a constant focus on the available resources and utilisation of same. The Regional Executive Officer has been clear that CAMHS vacancies are to be prioritised for recruitment regionally.
- Across the region, progress in reducing waiting times will be closely monitored against a target that within six months (i.e. 11th January 2026) and that no child will be waiting longer than 12 months. This target will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure oversight around the Wait List Action Plan through the CAMHS governance structures and through Dublin and Midlands regional Planning & Performance function.



Midlands Integrated Health Area can confirm the following:

- Every effort will be made to ensure that the funding allocated to the Midlands Integrated Health Area is directed towards addressing the needs of children who have been waiting the longest, particularly those waiting over 12 months in line with service priorities and operational capacity.
- All approved vacancies for Midlands Integrated Health Area CAMHS are being actively pursued in line with the HSE Dublin & Midlands Health Region available financial and WTE limits and recruitment processes. There is a constant focus on the available resources and utilisation of same. The Midlands Integrated Health Area Manager has been clear that Midlands CAMHS vacancies are to be prioritised for recruitment.
- Across the Midlands Integrated Health Area region, progress in reducing waiting times will be closely monitored against a target that within six months (i.e. 11th January 2026) and that no child will be waiting longer than 12 months. This target will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure oversight around the Wait List Action Plan through the Midlands CAMHS governance structures and Integrated Health Area Performance function.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours Sincerely,

Mairead O'Neill,
Head of Mental Health Services