



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
Treigh, 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.

10th July 2025

Deputy Donna McGettigan,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: donna.mcgettigan@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 32832/25

To ask the Minister for Health the number of teenagers in the State currently awaiting an autism assessment, by county; the length of time they are waiting, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy McGettigan,

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

National Access Policy

The National Policy on Access to Services for Children & Young People with Disability & Developmental Delay ensures that children are directed to the appropriate service based on the complexity of their presenting needs i.e. Primary Care for non-complex functional difficulties and Children's Disability Network Teams for complex functional difficulties arising from their disability. Children with ASD may access supports from a Children's Disability Network Team or from Primary Care or from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) depending on the complexity of their needs.

There is a significant demand for a range of assessments for children with complex disability needs. Many children require lengthy diagnostic ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) assessments. Some children who are suspected of having autism do not have complex disability needs and receive the necessary assessments and supports from Primary Care services. Children with autism who have complex disability needs access a range of supports through their local Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT). Depending on presenting needs, some children may require to access these assessments through Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

With regard to the question asked, the HSE does not currently collect information specifically on children identified with autism on a national basis. Children's disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of the child rather than by their diagnosis or the actual type of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the child's individual requirements and support needs.

Although the HSE has experienced an increased demand for assessment of Autism, we cannot be sure that this is a result of increased prevalence. It may be due to increased awareness of autism coupled with a recognition for the need for earlier interventions. In addition, many individuals with autism due to the complexity of their presentation may have a primary diagnosis of intellectual disability or a co-morbid mental health component.

Yours sincerely,

Tom McGuirk
General Manager, Disability Services, Access & Integration