



Oifig an Stiúrthoir Cúnta,
Cúram Priomhúil Rochtain agus Comhthathú,

Seomra 243, Ospidéal Dr Steevens,
Lána Steevens, Baile Átha Cliath 8.
D08 W2A8.

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13th August 2024

Deputy Kehoe,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 32127/24 To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost to the Government to pay for private occupational or psychology services to reduce waiting lists; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Paul Kehoe

Dear Deputy Kehoe,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 32127/24) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE is committed to delivering efficient high quality services to all eligible service users. In 2023, there were 350,886 patients seen by HSE Primary Care Occupational Therapy services and 41,479 patients seen by HSE Primary Care Psychology services. Primary Care is focused on improving access to care in order to reduce waiting times for patients. This includes monitoring the waiting list on an on-going basis in the context of clinical priority and available resources.

The HSE has explored a number of options to reduce waiting times for therapy services, including procuring therapy services from external private providers. Outsourcing of therapy services pose several challenges that often make it undesirable or impractical to do so. This includes; lack of availability of private providers, challenges related to continuity of care and clinical governance concerns. The HSE have therefore not perused detailed costings in relation to outsourcing of occupational therapy and psychology services on a large-scale basis.

The HSE will continue to work towards reducing waiting times. This includes ensuring that resources are prioritised within each region to fund areas with the greatest need. The HSE will also continue to work with community and voluntary partners particularly in the area of prevention and early intervention.

I trust this is of assistance.

Seán McArt

General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations