



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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20th June 2024

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

PQ 25314/24 - To ask the Minister for Health his plans to speed up the process for the assessment for and issuing of wheelchairs to children in view of the regularity which a child needs to be issued a new wheelchair as they grow; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Neasa Hourigan

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 25314/24) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The provision of a wheelchair commences with the identification of a recognised need by an individual, family member, or a member of a health, social service or education profession. This is followed by a referral to an appropriate clinician (commonly an Occupational Therapist) for a detailed assessment and determination of the most appropriate type of wheelchair and/or other mobility equipment required to meet that individual's needs.

The assessment process itself is individual-based and depends on the particular case complexity. A service user who has a particular issue e.g. wheelchair size should contact their local primary care centre/office who will be in a position to provide them with guidance and detail on the local procedures. Bespoke items with specific requirements, once approved, are sent to the relevant supplier for fulfilment of the order. Following assessment stock items should be provided without undue delay, bespoke items generally have to be manufactured from scratch and therefore have a longer lead time.

The HSE understands the needs of children will change as they grow. Funding and provision of wheelchairs and other equipment for children within the community is continually reviewed by the HSE to ensure they are adequately funded.

I trust this is of assistance.

Seán McArt
General Manager
Primary Care Access & Integration