



**Stiúrtóra Náisiúnta
Acmhainní Daonna**
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí,
Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens',
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**National Director
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Cian O Callaghan, T.D.

8th April 2024

PQ 13542/24: To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide a progress update on the HSE recruitment freeze; when this recruitment freeze is likely to be lifted; if he will provide data, in tabular form, on waiting lists across adult mental health services compared to before the freeze was implemented; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Cian O'Callaghan

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent Parliamentary Question which was sent to the HSE for response.

The HSE has been through a period of significant workforce growth since end 2019. Successful recruitment campaigns in a number of disciplines have also meant that in many cases funded 2023 targets were reached and indeed exceeded ahead of year end.

The unprecedented levels of additional Government investment in our health services in recent years that has enabled significant expansion in our workforce by +26172 equating to a 22% increase overall since December 2019, with a 8239 net increase in 2023 against a funded target of 6,100 net increase.

Exceeding the funded level of new recruitment ahead of year end 2023 necessitated putting in place the recruitment measures with arrangements in place for

- (1) derogation of specific grades and
- (2) a process whereby services can seek derogation for posts, each of which is assessed by the relevant EMT member and where deemed appropriate submitted to the CEO for decision.

The HSE needs to ensure it has an increasingly adequate control of its funding level as received from Government.

The HSE is currently finalising the 2024 Pay and Numbers Strategy with the Department of Health. Once finalised and advised to services, will underpin the clear requirement to have a robust approach to managing our pay and numbers along with autonomy for Regions and National Services to operate within same

I have engaged with Colleagues in the Mental Health division re your question re on waiting lists across adult mental health services who advise that Community Adult Mental services do not routinely collect waiting list data as per the Mental Health KPI suite. This is due to the fact that 90% (General Adult) & 98% (Psychiatry of Later Life) are offered an appointment within 12 weeks, with those not offered within 12 weeks offered an appointment shortly afterwards.

The severity of an individuals' presenting symptoms as well as an assessment of risk is always taken into account in terms of waiting times. Every effort is made to prioritise urgent cases so that the referrals of those with high risk presentations are responded to as soon as possible.

The table below shows the February 2024 position.

- 84.1% of referred patients were offered an appointment within 12 weeks in general adult mental health services.
- Overall 23% (or over 1 in 5) people referred to the general adult services did not attend (DNA) their appointments.
- 90.4%* of referred patients in Psychiatry of Later Life services were offered an appointment within 12 weeks.

*Please note that this data is live and is therefore is subject to change and amendment pending ongoing review and validation.



CHO areas that are below target are regularly discussed at Monthly Engagement calls and action plans are put in place if appropriate.

Please note: *figure contains a gap due to service reconfiguration which will be rectified next period.

Performance Activity / KPI	Reporting Level	Activity YTD
Community Adult		
% of accepted referrals / re-referrals offered first appointment within 12 weeks by General Adult Community Mental Health Team	National	84.1%
	CHO 1	92.7%
	CHO 2	96.3%
	CHO 3	86.4%
	CHO 4	90.0%
	CHO 5	93.8%
	CHO 6	84.4%
	CHO 7	82.1%
	CHO 8	67.7%
	CHO 9	64.6%
% of accepted referrals / re-referrals offered first appointment within 12 weeks by Psychiatry of Later Life Community Mental Health Teams	National	90.4%*
	CHO 1	97.9%
	CHO 2	100.0%
	CHO 3	94.7%
	CHO 4	80.0%
	CHO 5	97.7%
	CHO 6	98.6%
	CHO 7	73.7%
	CHO 8	81.3%
	CHO 9	81.5%



I trust this clarifies and is of some assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Marie O'Sullivan

Marie O'Sullivan
National HR