



**Head of Service Primary Care**

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**22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024**

Mr Alan Farrell TD,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

**Email:** [Alan.Farrell@oireachtas.ie](mailto:Alan.Farrell@oireachtas.ie)

**PQ 42949/24** *“To ask the Minister for Health the number of children waiting for a primary care psychology appointment in CH09; and if he will make a statement on the matter”*  
**- Alan Farrell TD**

Dear Deputy Farrell,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I examined the matter and the following attached document outlines the position.

There are 3,444 children waiting for a Primary Care Psychology appointment in Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County and Dublin North City & West. The demand for Primary Care Psychology services within this area has doubled in the last four years as a result of increasing need at community level and changes to the threshold to access supports in secondary care and specialised paediatric services. We streamlined our Primary Care Psychology services as well as moving to offering hybrid attendance models to improve accessibility to core services. A service improvement initiative has been established including staff recruitment and retention initiatives aimed at improving access to services for children waiting longer than 52 weeks. This has contributed to 1,126 children from the waiting list accessing services in 2023. It is estimated 725 additional children may be seen in 2024.

Psychology advice clinics providing immediate support to children and families waiting for the service have been established with 10 running per fortnight across Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County and Dublin North City & West. Low intensity interventions, such as parent information workshops are also offered to support children waiting for individual appointments or with non-complex needs.

There are currently 17 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) psychologists in post in the Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County and Dublin North City & West Primary Care services and 15 WTE psychologist posts are vacant. Ten per cent of the vacant posts are approved for filling in line with the HSE Pay & Numbers Strategy and all recruitment is completed in line with the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) recruitment license.

The Psychology team see approximately 180 patients per week for a variety of psychological services (e.g. consultation, assessment, intervention).



Historically, Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County and Dublin North City & West has coordinated the funding of 45 trainee psychologist through Trinity College Dublin and 5 trainee psychologist roles through UCD to help meet demand for qualified psychologist posts.

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

Yours sincerely,

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**Brian Kirwan**  
**Acting Head of Service Primary Care**  
**HSE Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County and**  
**Dublin North City & West.**