

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION
BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST. JOHN
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2021**

Question

Given that the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (C.A.M.H.S.) has recently reported a Green R.A.G. (red, amber, green) rating despite the current waiting list for accessing services, will the Minister state –

- (a) whether or not he agreed the objectives that underpin a Green R.A.G. rating for this service;
- (b) his assessment of whether a Green R.A.G. rating is appropriate given the current waiting time to access services; and
- (c) whether or not he will be seeking to review the R.A.G. targets for C.A.M.H.S.?

Answer

(a)

The development of the complete performance management framework for CAMHS is still in progress and the Minister will approve the objectives once this is finalised. There is work ongoing to ensure data accuracy and appropriate business intelligence reports are in place, as well as developing outcome measures and key performance indicators.

The above question refers to the R.A.G. rating for routine appointments. For some children or young people referred they are seen the same or next day due to the urgency of issues. For others it is appropriate that they wait for the next routine appointment. Waiting times for routine appointments was R.A.G. rated green as the 2021 ambition was to reduce waiting times which continues to be achieved. Quarter three data for 2021 indicates a mean waiting time for routine appointments of just two weeks. In 2019 and 2020 mean waiting times were higher at six and five weeks.

(b)

The performance of the service has improved considerably in the last number of months in the context of very difficult operating conditions due to the pandemic and a significant increase in referrals. In 2021 79% of routine CAMHS referrals have been seen within 28 days, compared to 49% in 2020. The mean waiting time in 2021 for referral to assessment is 3 weeks, compared to 5 weeks in 2020. There have also been reductions in waiting times for autism assessments (currently 2 months, compared to 18 months earlier this year) and ADHD assessments (currently 6 months, compared to 12 months earlier this year). The team's performance was recognised when it won a national award for its delivery of a DBT programme with young people on the island.

Benchmarking against similar services in the UK the local CAMHS service evidence overall good performance although the service continues to strive for improvement across all areas.

The Minister believes that the green R.A.G. rating for routine appointment waiting times is appropriate.

(c)

The CAMHS redesign has been approved with necessary investment a part of the Government Plan. Increasing need and numbers of referrals to the service has been a feature for the last number of years and this has been a significant feature throughout the pandemic, with unpredictable future implications likely for some time.

As part of the redesign, target outcomes include children and young people being assessed and receiving treatment in a timely manner and decreasing waiting times decrease. Recruitment is underway for additional staff as a means of addressing the increased levels of need and numbers of referral to the service. In addition, there is investment in a data analyst post and a Quality Assurance Manager who will lead on quality assurance, performance management and data quality. This will ensure the service is able to accurately report on its performance and outcomes of service users.

The Minister for Children and Education and the Minister for Health and Social services will have oversight of the performance management framework, developed and implemented for mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people.