



Thursday, 31st May 2018

Deputy Fiona O'Loughlin,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
DUBLIN 2

PQ Ref. No 22938/18 - To ask the Minister for Health his plans to address the levels of children waiting to be seen by their community ophthalmic physician; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Loughlin,

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

The PCESRG Report was launched in June 2017. The Report sets out the current levels of service, models of service provision and the consultation process undertaken with patients, advocates, ophthalmic staff and representative bodies. It also highlights the limitations of the current model of service delivery and sets out the way forward for a significant amount of eye services to be delivered in a Primary Care setting. The report estimates that 60% of existing outpatient activity could be moved to the community thus enabling hospital services to focus on patients who require more specialist diagnostics or treatments. The National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology has developed a model of care which details how the re-alignment of eye services from the acute hospitals to the community will be undertaken. The recommendations from the PCESRG Report also complement the Model of Care.

Funding of €1M was made available on a recurrent basis in 2017 to progress the development of eye services in the Dublin areas. This funding has been allocated to CHO Areas 6, 7 and 9 to recruit primary care eye teams and to help alleviate waiting lists.

In 2018, an addendum to the Community Ophthalmic Services Scheme will be agreed to allow optometrists to see children aged 8 years+. This will reduce waiting lists for primary care eye teams/community ophthalmic physicians by approximately 30%.

I trust the above is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Walsh".

David Walsh,
Head of Operations
Community Services