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10<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Ms Mary Butler TD  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 14405 - To ask the Minister for Health his plans to deal with the extensive outpatient ophthalmology waiting list especially for the elderly at University Hospital Waterford of which 594 are waiting in excess of 18 months**

Dear Deputy Butler

The Health Service Executive 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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Ophthalmology Services and UHW Management are actively working to seek solutions to reduce waiting times for the long waiters over 18 months. Ophthalmology Services at UHW receives an average of 280 to 300 new referrals per month and there are various ophthalmological sub specialities appropriate to specific patient referrals. The nature of ophthalmology is that patients are required to attend for multiple review appointments, therefore demand versus capacity constitute a continuous challenge.

A number of NTPF funded initiatives for in-patient and out-patient waiting list patients are near finalisation with the Clinical Lead for Ophthalmology. For the long waiter outpatients this will involve scheduling additional clinics out of hours 'Twilight clinics' due to current clinic capacity being at maximum.

I trust the above is satisfactory but if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Grace Rothwell  
General Manager  
University Hospital Waterford  
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital