



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an tUas. Pat Bennett,
Príomhoifigeach, Eagraíocht Cúram
Sláinte Pobail, Lár Tíre, An Lú, An Mhí
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Oifig Cheantair, Bóthar Ardáin, An
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1st November, 2019

Mr. Sean Fleming T.D.,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: Parliamentary Question – 43072/19

To ask the Minister for Health the action being taken to address issues with staffing levels in the orthodontic services in County Laois; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Sean Fleming

Dear Deputy Fleming,

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 outline the position as follows.

In September, 2014 the orthodontic services for Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Longford was centralized, thus giving an equitable services to all patients across the four counties regardless of which county they reside in.

In overall terms the number of service users under treatment (or about to be) for Orthodontics for the Midlands for 2019 is as follows

- Number of patients under treatment = 878 .
- Number of New Patients called/being called for Treatment during 2019 = 260

The numbers awaiting Orthodontic treatment in the Midlands for 2019 is as follows (by orthodontic clinical category) :

- Category 5 = 583
- Category 4 = 1529
- Total number of patients on the Orthodontic waiting = 2,112.

Due to the large waiting lists the Specialist Orthodontists are only able to treat Category 5 patients in the HSE as these patients are deemed a higher clinical priority. They are unable to call any patients from Category 4 due to capacity. At present we have 2.6 WTE Specialist Orthodontist who are completing treatment across the four counties.

We have a long standing deficit between demand for services and clinical capacity i.e. trained staff, very simply we do not have enough trained staff to meet demand.

In March 2019 interviews were held for a Specialist Orthodontist post in the Midlands Area, only three people applied for this position of which only one person presented for interview on the day. This person has been successful and at present this post is with National Primary Care division awaiting derogation to proceed with recruitment.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Pat Bennett
Chief Officer CHO Area 8