

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
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Thomas Gould T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 19465/20

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of children and adults on the dental appointment waiting list in Cork city; the average waiting times for appointments; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Gould,

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.

The Primary Care Dental services team provides Dental treatment services to eligible children, medical card holders, special needs clients and others in the care of the HSE at various locations throughout Cork. Children under 16 years of age are treated in HSE dental clinics and adults are treated by private dental practitioners contracted to the Health Services under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS).

While the Cork Kerry Primary Care Dental Service has continued to provide an emergency dental service since the emergence of Covid-19 in Ireland in March 2020, it was necessary to suspend the school screening service and services for specific patient cohorts who require a general anaesthetic for routine dental treatment. A number of staff ordinarily providing these services have been redeployed to the Covid-19 testing centre in Cork.

The children’s emergency extraction service recommenced in June. This service currently has 450 patients on the waiting list in Cork city and county. The service for children and adults with special needs remains suspended. There are currently 130 children and 65 adults on the waiting list for this service. The school screening service also remains suspended.

While Cork Kerry Community Healthcare has a plan in place for the structured and phased return of all services, adherence to infection, prevention control measures to reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19 will result in fewer appointments being available per day. In the absence of additional resources being made available, this will further impact on the waiting times for the dental service. I appreciate the difficulties this creates for those waiting for a service and I acknowledge their continued patience and understanding.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Teresa O’ Donovan
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare