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14<sup>th</sup> August, 2020

Pa Daly, T.D.,  
 Dáil Éireann,  
 Dublin 2

**PQ ref 20598/20**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on the waiting list for ophthalmology in County Kerry; the average waiting time for an appointment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Daly,

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.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare clinics are provided throughout the county in many locations. This service is available to both adults and children. All referrals are triaged and categorised into Urgent or Routine and are called to clinics based on their priority.

Referrals are accepted from GP’s, Public Health Nurses, Area Medical Officers and Optometrists. Currently, in Kerry, the services is provide by a full time Community Ophthalmic Physician. There is a vacancy for a fulltime Senior Orthoptist and recruitment for the post is currently underway.

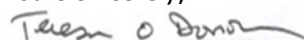
The table below lists the total numbers of clients waiting and a breakdown of the waiting timeframes.

<b>Waiting time</b>	<b>Total waiting as of end of June 2020</b>
0-12 weeks	69
> 12 weeks < 26 weeks	238
> 26 weeks < 39 weeks	128
> 39 weeks < 52 weeks	67
> 52 weeks	854
<b>Total on Waiting List.</b>	<b>1356</b>

The management of COVID 19 has had an impact on the waiting lists, as routine ophthalmology appointments were suspended for some time but have re-commenced since the beginning of June. However 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 ophthalmology services. 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**