



29th June 2020

Deputy Stephen Donnelly,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 10875/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons in each LHO area waiting for an ophthalmology appointment in primary care at the end of May 2020 or the latest date available; and the number waiting 0 to 12, 12 to 26, 26 to 52 and more than 52 weeks, respectively

-Stephen Donnelly

Dear Deputy Donnelly,

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 response.

The spread of COVID-19 is posing significant challenges for many service areas, including all Therapy Services. In light of these unprecedented challenges together with the Government's guidance on social distancing and on 'Cocooning' for those aged over 70, the HSE has had to reassess its operation of Community Therapy Services nationally, to ensure that the assessed needs of those clients with the highest priority are met.

As a result of the national effort across all Community Healthcare Organisations throughout the country, some aspects of normal monthly reporting have been delayed. Preliminary data currently available reflects the period to the end of May 2020. Please find attached Appendix 1 which contains, in tabular form, details of the waiting lists in Ophthalmology as of May 2020.

Please note the list of LHO areas at the bottom of the Appendix which did not return data, as some areas were not in a position to return data due to staff being redeployed to Covid-19 related duties. Please also note that because of this the overall accuracy of the waiting list data is impacted.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring therapy services, and to reduce long waiting times for these important services.

As this is an evolving and unprecedented situation, the HSE will keep matters in review and will advise clients and/or family members accordingly.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Pp

Siobhán McArdle,
Head of Operations Primary Care,
Community Operations