



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Office of the Head of Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare
HSE Offices, Lacken
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17th November 2020

Ms. Kathleen Funchion
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 35648/20

To ask the Minister for Health the length of time and the number of children that are waiting for a dental appointment in counties Carlow and Kilkenny in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Funchion,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the current position.

Carlow Kilkenny Waiting lists							
	1 st March – 31 st October	2020-2021 cohort			2019-2020	2018-2019	
	Day of contact with clinic	0-12 weeks	12-26 weeks	26-52 weeks	52-104 weeks	104+ weeks	Total
Primary school classes		6,202			5,880	2,103	14,185
Dental hygienist waiting time				328			
General anaesthetic children		4	4	14			
General anaesthetic Special Care children		6	7	10			
Emergency Children	1190						

Children who present as emergencies are largely seen on day that they make contact. Since 1st March, 1,190 children presenting as emergencies have been treated. Emergency patients are given priority and as their care now takes longer to provide, this impacts on time available for other cohorts.

The current figures are based on the children from the 2018/2019, 2019/2020 school cohorts that have not been seen plus the 2020/2021 cohort that became eligible in September 2020. As specified, school classes are targeted in September of each year, the whole target class cohort goes on the waiting list. This makes the waiting list distributions different from other services such as hospital consultant waiting lists where numbers are added more gradually. When staffing resources are adequate, children are called from the waiting list during the school year, aiming to have cleared that list by the following September. This year however, 2019/2020 is still being worked through and some 2018/2019 target classes.

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on dental services. In February 2020 before Covid-19, in Carlow/Kilkenny 96% of patients had first visit for active treatment within 3 months of assessment. However, due to Covid-19, in October this figure was 36%. General Anaesthetic services have not resumed other than for 2 patients in Kilkenny Carlow with special needs who were allowed access as the children were in continuous pain which could not otherwise be resolved. In addition, dental staff in CHO5 were redeployed for Covid-19 testing services. Furthermore, the extra procedures (e.g. patient triage, temperature testing, extra cleaning of surgeries and protocols to socially distance, reduce footfall and wearing of additional PPE) involved as a result of Covid-19 impact on efficiency of service delivery.

Please be assured that the HSE Dental Service monitors the waiting list on an ongoing basis in the overall context of available resources and prioritisation criteria.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Jeanne Hendrick
A/Head of Service-Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare