

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare  
Office of Head of Primary Care  
HSE Community Services Building  
Rathass  
Tralee  
Co. Kerry  
V92 YA25

Tel: 066-7184516  
Email: [Teresa.ODonovan2@hse.ie](mailto:Teresa.ODonovan2@hse.ie)

29<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

Michael Healy-Rae, TD  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 23370/20**

**“To ask the Minister for Health if he will address a matter (details supplied) regarding an out-of-hours doctor service in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**Details Supplied: Minister there used to be a south doc service in Listowel in Co Kerry in the past and this service is no longer available so if a person requires a doctor outside of hours they will have to travel to Tralee which is 26 km trip**

Dear Deputy Healy-Rae

SouthDoc provides an out of hours family doctor service for urgent medical care in Co. Kerry. During 2019 the service dealt with 222,000 patient contacts across both counties Cork and Kerry and provided care ranging from Nurse Advice, Doctor Advice, treatment centre and home visits.

In response to the COVID Pandemic, in March 2020, the Board of Directors of SouthDoc and management of Cork Kerry Community Healthcare agreed a range of contingency plans and protocols to allow the service respond to the challenges being posed by the emergence of COVID-19 in Ireland.

These measures include:

- Patient contact to be curtailed as much as possible.
- All calls to be triaged.
- Nurse and Doctor Telephone advice to be provided where clinically indicated.
- Patients who are clinically assessed as requiring a face to face consultation with a doctor be offered an appointment at one of the following treatment centres in Kerry; Killarney, Caherciveen, Dingle or Tralee

Since June 2020, in line with the Government phased re-opening plans, the majority of treatment centres have re-opened. While Listowel treatment centre remains under review, patients from that catchment area avail of Nurse and doctor advice as appropriate and where face to face clinical assessment is required they are provided with an appointment in the Tralee Treatment centre. This remains under regular review by the South Doc Board of Directors.

All contact to the service remains unchanged i.e. 1850 335 999.

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

Yours sincerely,

*Aisling Lenihan*

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**Aisling Lenihan**  
**A/Head of Service - Primary Care,**  
**Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**