



Oifig an tUas. Pat Bennett,
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17th September, 2020

Mr. Brian Stanley T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: Parliamentary Question – 23382/20

To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that dentists in Portlaoise, County Laois are refusing to take medical card patients even though they are already patients and as a result there are no dental services for public patients in Portlaoise; the efforts being made to address same; and the location public patients should go to - Brian Stanley.

Dear Deputy Stanley,

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. I have examined the matter and outline response as follows.

I have consulted relevant colleagues and can confirm that prior to the pandemic seven Dental Surgeons in Portlaoise held a Dental Treatment Service Scheme (DTSS) contract. Subsequently three contractors tendered their resignations and have recently exited the scheme. The remaining practices in Portlaoise, who cater for DTSS patients, have been slow to take on any additional patients as they do not have the capacity to meet the increased demand. Hence access since late August has been reduced.

HSE Principal Dental surgeon has not received to date, any communications from a patient indicating they have been refused access to a dental practice which they previously had attended. If and when this occurs HSE Principal Dental surgeon can address the issue to the relevant practice. Patients who currently have a difficulty accessing a Dental Surgeon in Portlaoise may need to travel to a nearby town to source a DTSS contractor.

I trust the above is in order and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Bennett
Chief Officer CHO Area 8