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**Deputy Bernard Durkan
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 56233/21: To ask the Minister for Health the total number of children currently awaiting orthodontic treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Durkan,

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 HSE Orthodontic Service is provided in Regional Orthodontic Units. Access to treatment with the HSE Orthodontic Service is limited to those children with the most severe and complex orthodontic treatment needs. Referral for orthodontic assessment is usually made in 6th Class. The Modified Index of Treatment Needs (Modified IOTN) system is used in all regions to determine if a child will be accepted for treatment. There are a number of categories within the Modified IOTN system, and these are used to prioritise care, children whose treatment need is assessed as being in Grade 4 or Grade 5 of the Index are offered treatment with the HSE.


There is a high demand for Orthodontic services nationally. The demand for services exceeds the current capacity to provide the service, and therefore waiting lists apply across all Community Healthcare Organisations and in the SAOLTA Hospital Group area for this service.

A waiting list initiative (Framework Type Agreement 3983) to deal with long waiting times for access to orthodontic treatment commenced in 2016. Under Framework type agreement 3983, between 2016-2020, 1996 patients whose malocclusions are assessed as being Grade 4 of the modified IOTN were placed in treatment with private service providers. In 2021, under the successor Framework Type Agreement 11317, 756 patients whose malocclusions are assessed as being Grade 4 of the modified IOTN have accepted transfer to private service providers.

The number of patients on HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment as at Q3 2021 is detailed in Appendix 1 below. As a result of staff redeployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the reporting of treatment waiting times for 2021 in some regions is incomplete.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but if you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,



Joseph Green
AND, National Oral Health Lead - Operations

