

11th February, 2021

Thomas Gould, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 4666/21

“To ask the Minister for Health average time from triage call to a doctor’s visit in SouthDoc Cork City in December 2019 and December 2020 respectively”.

Dear Deputy Gould,

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.

South West Doctors on Call Limited is an Out of Hours Family Doctor service for urgent medical care in Counties Cork and Kerry with its administrative headquarters and call centre in Killarney. It has a membership of over 500 GPs and a network of treatment centres of which eight are overnight and supported by a fleet of vehicles which are fully equipped for home visit situations.

It provides a service to a population of approximately 694,000 plus the 3.3M visitors to the area, and dealt with over 180,080 patient contacts in 2020. Although a number of these patient contacts were deemed to be emergency related, it is important to point out that while SouthDoc works closely with the Emergency Services is not the primary emergency service provider.

When a patient makes contact with SouthDoc, an electronic medical record is created which documents the patient’s details, clinical category and progression through the service. The patients’ clinical condition will dictate the type of care to be provided, eg, routine, urgent or emergency, and based on this the appropriate medical care is provided.

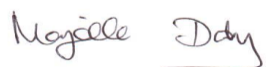
The Board of Directors of SouthDoc initiated a consolidated service delivery model on March 14, 2020 in response to the challenges posed by the emerging pandemic. The decision was based on clinical criteria to ensure the safety and welfare of patients, staff and doctors. In the interim all calls for Cork City and its environs are being processed with in the normal way with the patient electronic record being sent to a single Treatment Centre based in Kinsale Road.

An extract from South Docs operating system provides the following analysis which outlines the average time from the initial call through to the completion of the patient consultation. This time line includes the processing of the patients’ details by a Receptionist in the Call Centres, the clinical assessment by a Triage Nurse, and finally the consultation with the patient by the doctor.

2019 and 2020	Average duration of calls Hours:Minutes:Seconds
2019	02:23:08
December	
Cork Blackpool	02:21:52
Doctor Advice	01:38:23
Home Visit	02:26:20
Treatment Centre	02:24:18
Cork Southside	02:23:54
Doctor Advice	01:33:22
Home Visit	02:34:02
Treatment Centre	02:28:23
2020	01:12:46
December	
Cork City	01:12:46
Doctor Advice	01:12:04
Home Visit	01:45:33
Treatment Centre	01:13:25

If I can be of any further assistance please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Majella Daly,
A/Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare