



Mark Ward TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

11th March 2021

PQ 12195/21

“To ask the Minister for Health the breakdown of ophthalmology waiting lists by CHO area between 2016 to the latest date in 2021, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mark Ward”

Dear Deputy Ward,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 12195/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring ophthalmology services, and to reduce waiting times for this important service. The HSE is committed to delivering efficient high quality ophthalmology services to all eligible service users. In full year 2020 a total of 61,238 children and adults were seen by HSE community ophthalmology services. The attached table shows the number of people waiting for Ophthalmology treatment at December in each year from 2017 to 2020 and also at January 2021. Note that the data at December 2016 is not available.

To address the current third wave of Covid infections there was a requirement to prioritise the level of services delivered during this period. Building upon the experience from earlier waves of the pandemic, Community Services have developed a prioritisation framework to support local decisions to be made on service prioritisation. This approach will ensure that services will be focused on identifying and supporting patients who have the greatest need and enabling staff to be deployed where necessary to support these patients. Where services are curtailed or reduced, this will be in line with clinical approval, a shared national position and with an appropriate risk assessment and communication with providers, service users and families. It is the intention of Community Services that full services would return as soon as is safe and practicable.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TJ Dunford', written on a light-colored background.

TJ Dunford

Head of Operations; Primary Care.
Community Operations.