



Priscilla Lynch
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9th December, 2021

Deputy Colm Burke,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 54990/21

"To ask the Minister for Health the estimated timeframe for when the new outpatient ophthalmology services for the South/South West HSE area currently being developed in Ballincollig, County Cork will be fully operational; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

PQ ref 54991/21

"To ask the Minister for Health if the new outpatient ophthalmology services for the South/South West HSE area currently being developed in Ballincollig, County Cork will have the capacity to keep up with the ever-increasing demand for ophthalmic services in the Cork and Kerry region; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

PQ ref 54992/21

"To ask the Minister for Health if the required funding will be made available within the next three months to the South/South West HSE area to enable it to fully equip the new outpatient ophthalmology services which are currently being developed in Ballincollig, County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy Burke,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

We have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) and the South/South West Hospital Group (S/SWHG) and are currently working collaboratively to develop a Regional Eye Care Service based in the new Primary Care Community Centre located in Ballincollig, Cork. This new service will provide a designated specialised infrastructure where all community procedures related to Ophthalmology will be performed and incorporate Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) working between multiple grades of ophthalmology staff to deliver the best outcomes for both children and adults.

This proposal is in alignment with the Model of Eye Care under the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Ophthalmology and the strategic direction and recommendations of the Primary Care Eye Services Review Group Report.

The NCP for Ophthalmology recommends the integration of hospital and community care, with clinicians and care providers working in teams, as the best approach to deliver care for patients and to address the structural deficits in the current system. The efficient operation of the MDT is critical to the delivery of primary eye care. Implementing a more community based model will improve access to care and will help address the current adult and paediatric waiting list issues. A clear governance

structure for the MDTs, with clinical audits, will ensure that the standards of clinical care are maintained.

Furthermore, this proposal is aligned to the Sláintecare Implementation Strategy 2018.

The building in which the Ophthalmology Unit will be located is on target to be ready by end of Q2 2022. Pending completion of the building works and approval of required funding to deliver the specialised eye care service, additional work will need to be completed on equipping, specialist ICT infrastructure, completion of Memorandum of Understanding across services, the transfer of personnel from various services and the completion of numerous recruitment campaigns. Therefore, the anticipated timeline for this service to be operational is Q4 2022.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Priscilla Lynch', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Priscilla Lynch
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare