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**Deputy Verona Murphy
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 45000/21: To ask the Minister for Health the number of dentists that have left the dental treatment services scheme in the past 24 months; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Murphy

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.

Adult medical card holders have access to dental services under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) through care provided by private dentists that hold DTSS contracts with the HSE.

The data is not readily available in the manner requested. Data analysis on DTSS resignations commenced week beginning 6th March 2020. The number of dentists that have withdrawn from the DTSS for the period 06/03/2020 – 06/08/21 is 247.

The HSE is aware that some medical card holders have experienced difficulties in accessing dental treatment under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme.

Where this is made known to the HSE, each enquiry and representation is followed up by local community services who seek to assist medical card holders.

As well as assisting medical card holders, the HSE is working closely with the Department of Health in relation to the operation of the scheme, and addressing difficulties faced by some patients accessing services.

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**