



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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Deputy Catherine Murphy TD,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

6<sup>th</sup> January 2022

PQ6187922\* *“To ask the Minister for Health the number of young persons between the ages of 0 to 18 years who have travelled overseas for specialist ophthalmology treatment not available in Ireland between 2019 and to date in 2022; and the number of these who travelled under the EU Cross Border Directive.”*

Dear Deputy Murphy,

Thank you for your parliamentary question above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply.

Access to planned healthcare abroad is provided through the Treatment Abroad Scheme (TAS), the HSE Cross Border Directive Scheme (CBD) and the Northern Ireland Planned Healthcare Scheme.

The TAS allows for an Irish based public hospital consultant to refer a public patient to the public health system of another EU/EEA member state, the UK or Switzerland for treatment which is not available in Ireland.

In general, the CBD allows public patients to access healthcare in another EU/EEA country, which they are entitled to access in Ireland. The patient pays for the treatment up front and claims reimbursement upon return to Ireland. Reimbursement is at the cost of the treatment abroad or the cost of the treatment in Ireland whichever is the lesser. Public patient pathways as they apply to accessing the same healthcare in Ireland apply to accessing the healthcare abroad under the CBD.

The NIPHS allows public patients to access healthcare in the private healthcare sector in Northern Ireland, which they are entitled to access in Ireland. The patient pays for the treatment up front and claims reimbursement upon return to Ireland. Reimbursement is at the cost of the treatment in the private healthcare sector in Northern Ireland or the cost of the treatment in Ireland whichever is the lesser. Public patient pathways as they apply to accessing the same healthcare in Ireland apply to accessing the healthcare abroad under the NIPHS.

The tables below provide the available applicable data as requested:

## HSE Treatment Abroad Scheme Data

Year	No. of Patients
2019	14
2020	18
2021	17
2022	20


## HSE Cross Border Directive Scheme and Northern Ireland Planned Healthcare Scheme Data

Years	No. of Patients
2019-2022	8

As the number of patients per year are very low, it is not possible to provide a year by year breakdown to ensure patient confidentiality.

If you have any queries, or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0872668759 or via [catherinet.donohoe@hse.ie](mailto:catherinet.donohoe@hse.ie).

Yours sincerely,

  
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PP Catherine Donohoe  
A/Assistant National Director