



**Oifig an Stiúrthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
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**Deputy Colm Burke,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.**

22nd March, 2022

PQ Ref: 5017/22 - To ask the Minister for Health if consideration will be given to the implementation of the healthcare innovation Sligo cataract scheme nationally in which community optometrists co-work with hospital surgeons in order to improve public eye health and address the waiting list for public eye-care which remains high at 46,000; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Colm Burke

PQ Ref: 8630/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the progress of his Department and the HSE in prioritising the development of primary care eye teams in CHO6, CHO7 and CHO9 in 2022 with a view to extending these teams to other CHOs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Colm Burke

Dear Deputy Burke,

I refer to the above parliamentary questions which were passed to the HSE for response.

The Primary Care Eye Services Review Group (PCESRG) Report was launched on 28th June, 2017. The Report set out the levels of service, models of service provision and the consultation process undertaken with patients, advocates, ophthalmic staff and representative bodies and set out the way forward for a significant amount of eye services to be delivered in a Primary Care setting. The recommendations from the PCESRG Report also complement the Model of Care developed by the National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology.

The Primary Care Eye Services Review Group Report remains current and the HSE continues to implement the following services:

- Establishing adult and paediatric primary care eye teams in CHOs 6 and 7.
- Establishing an adult primary care eye team and expanding the paediatric primary care eye team in CHO 9.
- Equipped CHOs 6, 7 & 9 to support their new and/or expanded primary care eye teams.
- Completing a proposal to transfer the care of children aged 8+ years to the care of local private optometrists.



To date, implementation of the Report has focused on establishing eye care teams and services in CHOs 6, 7 and 9. These teams would include ophthalmologists, optometrists, orthoptists, nurses and technicians.

The HSE continues to support the Primary Care Eye Teams in CHOs 6, 7 and 9. Staff working within the adult primary care eye teams will manage patients with cataract and other eye conditions to reduce hospital waiting lists. Overtime, it is anticipated that some of this work will transition to local community optometrists, similar to the Sligo model. The progress of the teams in CHOs 6, 7 & 9 is under review and will guide the plan for future rollout of teams across other parts of the country in 2022 and beyond.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Crowley', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
Primary Care Contracts**