



Féidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig um Cheannasaí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil  
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair  
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,  
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín  
Luimneach  
Teil: 061 483722

Office of the Head of Service for Primary Care  
HSE Mid West Community Healthcare  
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25<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Deputy Cathal Crowe  
4 Francis St.  
Ennis  
Co. Clare

**Re.: PQ 9991/22 “To ask the Minister for Health the reason for discontinuation of dental treatment for medical card holders in Kilrush, Co. Clare; when he expects this service to be reinstated; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.**

Dear Deputy Crowe,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The Principal Dental Surgeon has confirmed that adult medical card holders (aged 16 and over) are treated under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS), which is governed by a schedule of fees and conditions as laid down by the Department of Health. The HSE has an oversight role in the DTSS in approving of proposed treatments that are requested by the contracting dental surgeon for an eligible medical card holder. The dental treatment is provided by contracted private dental surgeons who see the patients in their private dental practices/surgeries.

The Principal Dental Surgeon has confirmed that medical card holders can attend any DTSS contracted dental practitioner in the country if they are in a position to take him/her on as a patient. Therefore, medical card holders from Kilrush can travel outside of their local/CHO area if they can find a contracted dental practitioner who can take them on. He has also advised that he has recently approved dental forms under the DTSS which were submitted by a dental practice in Kilrush and that he is not aware of any discontinuation of adult dental treatment for medical card holders in the Kilrush area. If a medical card holder attends a contracted dental surgeon outside of the Mid West CHO area (CHO3), the Principal Dental Surgeon CHO3 will have no input in or record of that treatment being approved.

The Principal Dental Surgeon has also confirmed that school going children are seen for dental examination through the HSE School Dental Scheme. Children are called for dental examination when they are in the ‘target classes’ i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes in Primary School. Due to the pandemic a backlog has occurred for those children in the target classes in the school years 2019/2020, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. The HSE Dental Services are working through the waiting lists to address the backlogs that have occurred. The Principal Dental Surgeon has also advised that children outside of the target classes (i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> class and 6<sup>th</sup> class children) can attend their local HSE Dental Clinic for emergency consultations/treatment where necessary and the dental surgeon will treat the presenting dental issue (pain) at the clinic.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,

*P.P.* Mary O'Malley  
General Manager Primary Care