



Oifig an Príomhoifigeach
Eagraíocht Cúram Sláinte Pobail Lár Tire,
An Lú, An Mhí

Oifig na bPríomhoifigeach, An Chéad Urlár,
Coimhleasc Naomh Bríd, Bóthar Cheanannais
Bhaile Átha Fhirdia, Co Lú, A92 DRN0

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3rd August 2022

Deputy Ruairí Ó Murchú
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Re PQ 39192/22 - To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the backlog of appointments at the Ophthalmology services for children at the Louth County Hospital in Dundalk, County Louth; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Ruairí Ó Murchú

Dear Deputy Ó Murchú,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and outlined the position as follows.

The backlog is not related in any respect with Louth County Hospital Ophthalmology service which provides surgery relating to adult cataract and adult intravitreal injections service.

Ophthalmology Services for Children is a service delivered out of the Primary Care building Dublin Road Dundalk. A twin track approach is being adopted in Louth with the recruitment by Primary Care Management, of a Senior Grade Orthoptist along with assistance from the Service Lead, Dr. Smith. The commitment is to set in motion an innovative mechanism to reassign children over age 12 years to the local optician of their choice as a safety valve mechanism to increase capacity by freeing up appointment slots better assigned to new referral patients.

Additionally, the health care professionals within the Ophthalmic Services in Louth and Meath have volunteered to run a Waiting List Initiative to screen all those on the waiting list, this screening event will be run over two days and should also help to reduce the backlog.

Both initiatives are expected to greatly reduce the numbers waiting before next year's new cohort of referrals begin, with the return to school after the summer holidays.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Des O'Flynn
Chief Officer
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation