

20<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Deputy Thomas Gould, TD,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ ref 39556/22**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the number of children and adults on the orthodontic waiting lists in Cork; the average waiting times for appointments; the number that are waiting more than six months; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Gould,

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.

The primary goal of the Health Service Executive (HSE) Orthodontic Service is to improve the appearance and function of misaligned or crooked teeth, with free orthodontic treatment being provided to children with the most severe orthodontic problems. Qualification for treatment is determined by nationally agreed eligibility guidelines based on an international grading system (IOTN). All referrals for the service are triaged and given a priority rating by the clinical team.

The emergence of COVID-19 in March 2020 has had a significant impact on the provision of all health services including orthodontic services throughout the Cork and Kerry region. As per our pandemic plan the HSE Orthodontic Service had to curtail service provision to emergency services only and staff were largely redeployed into COVID testing, contact tracing and the vaccination program.

See below table with the details of numbers currently on waiting list for orthodontic services in the Cork area.

<p><b><u>Cork Area:</u></b> <b>Assessment:</b> Total waiting at 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022: <b>2301</b> Total waiting 0 – 6 months: <b>630</b> Total waiting over 6 months: <b>1671</b></p>	<p><b>Treatment waiting list:</b> Total waiting at 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022: <b>1712</b> Total waiting 0 – 6 months: <b>197</b> Total waiting over 6 months: <b>1515</b></p>
<p><b><u>North Cork Area:</u></b> <b>Assessment:</b> Total waiting as of 01.07.2022: <b>113</b> Total waiting 0 – 6 months: <b>108</b> Total waiting over 6 months: <b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Treatment waiting list:</b> Total waiting as of 01.07.2022: <b>571</b> Total waiting 0 – 6 months: <b>24</b> Total waiting over 6 months: <b>547</b></p>

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Priscilla Lynch**  
Head of Service - Primary Care, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare