



8th March 2022

Deputy Réada Cronin
Dáil Eireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 10869/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of dentists in the medical card scheme in County Kildare in each of the past five years; the number who have left the scheme in each of those years; the number of persons waiting in each year in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter -Réada Cronin

Dear Deputy Cronin,

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 requested information is not available for County Kildare in isolation, as Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) contracts covering the county are held for Dublin South West, Kildare West Wicklow (DSWKWW). The number of contracts will vary monthly as contractors exit and leave the scheme, therefore the data in the table below represents the number of contracts as at December of each year. Data in respect of those awaiting treatment on the DTSS is not held by the HSE.

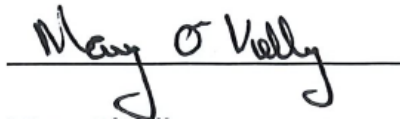
Year	No of Dentists as at 31/12
2021	77
2020	94
2019	104
2018	110
2018	108

Due to a withdrawal of private dentists from the DTSS, and increased waiting times for dental appointments following the impact of COVID-19, patients are experiencing delays in accessing treatment. To access care, patients may have to travel beyond their locality to access DTSS dentists where they can identify available appointments.

If a patient is unable to access a DTSS dentist, in the case of a **dental emergency** then the HSE dental service DSWKWW will provide **emergency care**. It should be noted that the HSE Dental department is not in a position to provide routine care to medical card holders who are unable to secure a DTSS dentist appointment.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but if you have any queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary O'Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

Mary O'Kelly
Head of Service, Primary Care
Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow Community Healthcare