



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
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**Deputy David Cullinane,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.**

4th April, 2022

PQ Ref: 12379/22 - To ask the Minister for Health if the community paediatric ophthalmology waiting list initiative at the Grangegorman primary care centre (details supplied) will be expanded to other CHO areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - David Cullinane

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

I refer to your parliamentary question which was passed to the HSE for response.

The Primary Care Eye Services Review Group (PCESRG) Report was launched on 28th June, 2017. The Report sets out the current levels of service, models of service provision and the consultation process undertaken with patients, advocates, ophthalmic staff and representative bodies. It also highlights the limitations of the current model of service delivery and sets 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 paediatric eye care teams in CHOs 6 & 7 as well as expanding the paediatric eye care team in CHO 9. These teams would include ophthalmologists, optometrists, orthoptists, nurses and technicians.

The HSE recognises the success of the initiative by the Community Paediatric Ophthalmology Service at the Grangegorman Primary Care Centre in addressing a waiting list for care, and accordingly, it was the winner of the Innovation in Service Delivery Award at the recent HSE Health Service Excellence Awards. As you're



aware, this initiative at the Grangegorman Primary Care Centre saw over 2,700 children on the list screened in just three weeks. It also enabled the training of the optometrist and orthoptist into expanded roles. Further details are available at the link below:

https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/our-health-service/making-it-better/community-ophthamology-initiative-sees-over-2-700-children-screened-in-three-weeks.html?utm_source=broadcast&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=story_telling&utm_content=community_ophthamology_initiative

The progress of the teams in CHOs 6, 7 & 9 is under review and will guide future rollout of teams across other parts of the country.

In late 2019 / early 2020, a project team was established to progress the extension of the Community Ophthalmic Services Scheme (COSS) to children aged 8+, an initiative with a wide ranging membership including representation from the DOH. A programme to progress the project was established and had commenced its work programme but unfortunately, due to the requirement to prioritise resource to respond to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to pause this programme.

There is now a renewed commitment to progress the Community Ophthalmic Services Scheme (COSS) project to children aged 8+ through the reconvening of the project team, with the augmentation of the membership, as required, to bring the project to fruition, while ensuring alignment with the appropriate scheduled care initiatives.

I trust the above 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**