



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta
Géaroibríochtaí

Aonad 4A, Áras Dargan, An Ceantar Theas,
An Bóthar Míleata, Cill Mhaighneann, Baile
Átha Cliath 8, D08 NN9V

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25th May 2022

Deputy Brid Smith

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2.

PQ 24002/22 * To ask the Minister for Health the approximate waiting times for patients who, following cataract surgery develop issues and require further laser surgery (details supplied); the number of persons who are currently waiting for this procedure in the public system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. Details Supplied: YAG laser surgery to remove the build-up of fluids on the affected eye

Dear Deputy Smith,

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.

Response

In response to your query relating around the approximate waiting times for patients who, following cataract surgery develop issues and require further laser surgery (details supplied); the number of persons who are currently waiting for this procedure in the public system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. Details Supplied: YAG laser surgery to remove the build-up of fluids on the affected eye.

The National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Ophthalmology has determined that in line with Government policies such as Future Health, the majority of services should be provided within the primary care setting. As such, integration of acute and primary care services is essential in order to allow for rebalancing of access and delivery of eye care services from acute hospitals to primary care. The aim is to provide high-quality, consistent, efficient and effective care. The development of a regionalised model being the best means of achieving this aim.



The Model of Care developed for Ophthalmology recommends the integration of Hospital and Community Eye Care services and further endorses:

- The development of Primary Care Eye care teams and well equipped Eye Care clinics in CHO Areas.
- The development of a hub and spoke model of service delivery, with investment in a technology driven patient record system to enable integrated care.
- The development of clear and concise clinical referral pathways in order to minimise unnecessary referrals.
- The development of stand-alone high volume consultant led cataract theatres, with appropriate support staff and equipment to facilitate efficient eye care service delivery.

Significant work is underway in ophthalmology to reconfigure the delivery of services based on the updated model of care and reflecting the SlainteCare principles of expanding services outside of the acute setting.

Under the reconfigured model specialty services are being expanded in the Primary care Centers and Integrated Care Hubs. Implementation of the expanded services is underway in CHO 4, 6, 7, & 9 and is being rolled out nationally. A key service is the delivery of pre and post-operative care for cataract patients in the new hubs. This will include the provision of Yag and SLT laser treatment for patients who require it. Approx. 35-40% of cataract patients will have some level of fluid buildup usually within 2 years of having their procedure done. The provision of laser treatment has commenced in CHO 7 and will be implemented across the CHO networks.

The NTPF collect and collate National information relating to waiting lists and in response to this PQ they have provided the information in Appendix I. This information represents cataract waiting list data by hospital and time bands as at end of April 2022. The NTPF are unable to provide information relating superficially to YAG laser surgery.

I trust that this answers your question.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trish King". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped flourish at the end.

Trish King
General Manager
Acute Operations



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Appendix I Cataract waiting list data by hospital and time bands as at end of April 2022

Row Labels	0-6 Months	6-12 Months	12-18 Months	18 Months +	Small Volume Time Band	Grand Total
Galway University Hospitals	449	53	11	14		527
Letterkenny University Hospital	14	13				27
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital	1446	470	67	44		2027
Nenagh Hospital	84	7				91
Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital	771	38	12	7		828
Sligo University Hospital	333	66	25	34		458
Small Volume Hospital					18	18
South Infirmery Victoria University Hospital	357	108	5			470
St. Vincent's University Hospital	245	9				254
University Hospital Limerick	241	118	84	36		479

University Hospital Waterford	504	64	10	45		623
Grand Total	4444	946	214	180	18	5802

Note small volumes indicates that the figures are <5 and patients could potentially be identifiable and as such they are grouped for reporting purposes to ensure patient confidentiality.