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**21 November 2022**

**Deputy Sean Canney  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2**

**PQ 55279/22: To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to cases where dental patients with medical cards are being taken off dentists' medical card patient lists due to the patient not attending the dentist within the past three years and when they attended the dentist in 2019 but were unable to do so in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid restrictions; if this is permissible under the scheme; his views on whether this practice is acceptable; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Canney,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

Adult medical card holders have access to dental services under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) through care provided by private dentists and clinical dental technicians that hold DTSS contracts with the HSE. The DTSS is a "choice of dentist" scheme which does not require the patient to register with a particular dentist and enables medical card holders to attend any DTSS contractor directly without recourse to the HSE.

Therefore unlike the GP system medical card holders are not registered or linked to a specific dentist and if their usual dentist is unable to see them they can attend any other contracted dentist of their choosing.

Where access to a dentist is difficult, local services assist patients who make enquires and make lists of DTSS contractors available to medical card holders.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but if you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

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**Joseph Green  
AND, National Oral Health Lead - Operations**