



Priscilla Lynch
Head of Service, Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare,
Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co. Cork
Email: Priscilla.Lynch@hse.ie

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Deputy Michael Healy-Rae, TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 51994/22

"To ask the Minister for Health the reason that there is no dental emergency treatment for adults with disabilities (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Details Supplied: "Minister there is an ongoing crisis in Kerry whereby adults with special needs have no access to emergency dental treatment. I recently had a case whereby a special needs person had violent pain and they were told they had to wait for a bed in UHK so that the tooth could be extracted. They eventually got a bed and an extraction took place in UHK but he had to go through so much trauma before this took place. Surely Minister this needs to be looked at now and this should not happen."

Dear Deputy Healy-Rae,

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 Care Dental services team provides dental treatment services to eligible children, medical card holders, adults and children with special needs and others in the care of the HSE at various locations throughout Cork and Kerry. Children under 16 years of age are treated in HSE dental clinics and adults are treated by private dental practitioners contracted to the Health Services under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS).

The vast majority of dental treatment under general anaesthetic at University Hospital Kerry takes place on a scheduled basis but on rare occasions emergency access to theatre is requested by the dental service to address specific clinical scenarios. Whilst this access is often granted, it cannot always be facilitated due to demands for emergency access required within University Hospital Kerry. The Principal Dental Surgeon for Co. Kerry will raise this issue with management at University Hospital Kerry in order to explore the issues involved and see if service improvements can be achieved in this regard.

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