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**Deputy Pádraig O'Sullivan
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 5750/23: To ask the Minister for Health if he will consider affording children on the orthodontic waiting list the opportunity of continuing treatments once they turn 18 years of age, given that many will have to wait years for treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Sullivan,

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.

The HSE Orthodontic Service is provided in Regional Orthodontic Departments. Access to treatment with the HSE Orthodontic Service is limited to those children with the most severe and complex orthodontic treatment needs. Referral for orthodontic assessment is usually made in 6th Class, so orthodontic assessments are limited to those aged under 16. The Modified Index of Treatment Needs (Modified IOTN) system is used in all regions to determine if a child will be accepted for treatment. There are a number of categories within the Modified IOTN system, and these are used to prioritise care, children whose treatment need is assessed as being in Grade 4 or Grade 5 of the Modified Index are offered treatment with the HSE.

Following assessment, if a child has been accepted for treatment, the treatment will be offered to the patient even if the child has reached 16 years of age or over before treatment commences.

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

Yours Sincerely,

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