



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béil,  
31-33 Sráid Caitriona, Luimneach  
Teil: 061 464140

E: [nationaloralhealth@hse.ie](mailto:nationaloralhealth@hse.ie)

National Oral Health Office  
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick  
Tel: 061 464140

Email: [nationaloralhealth@hse.ie](mailto:nationaloralhealth@hse.ie)

**7 February 2023**

**Deputy David Cullinane  
Dáil Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2**

**PQ 2925/23 – 2930/23: To ask the Minister for Health the number of adults and children on HSE dental and orthodontic waiting lists (at end 2017, at end 2018, at end 2019, at end 2020, at end 2021, at end 2022), broken down by standard waiting times, by area in tabular form.**

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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.

### **HSE Dental Service**

HSE Dental Services are provided through 17 Dental Areas, all of which continue to provide routine services. The dental service prioritises treatment for people with special care needs, those who are medically compromised and provides emergency care for all eligible patients.

These services are delivered with a strong preventive ethos in order to minimise the incidence of dental disease in vulnerable populations. In particular this preventive approach involves the delivery of personalised oral health promotion for children and people with special care needs. Children are seen at ages that correspond with dental developmental milestones to identify opportunities for timely preventive interventions such as fissure sealants and the need for restorative treatment, as well as monitoring the eruption of the permanent dentition including possible orthodontic anomalies requiring referral for HSE orthodontic assessment.

Since the emergence of Covid-19, there has been a significant increase in delays in accessing routine treatment for those in target classes. This has resulted in backlogs emerging in the targeted schools programme. The scale of disruption to services nationally in 2020 meant that attendance for dental examinations by children was reduced to 36.5% of 2019 activity, while in 2021 the comparable attendance was 54.5% of 2019 activity.

Throughout the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, including in 2022, the HSE responded to a number of emerging problems, including testing capacity, contact tracing and the implementation of updated infection prevention and control guidance. Each of these has involved the HSE Dental Service, with extensive redeployment for testing and contact tracing, as well as for the mass vaccination programme. In some locations, access to clinical facilities was reduced due to repurposing for pandemic-related activities.

The cyberattack on the HSE system in summer 2021 also had significant impacts on Dental Services.

While most oral health staff have now returned to core duties enabling the safe resumption of services, Covid-19 continues to impact on service provision for patients and staff.

As part of targeting of resources, each dental service maintains a commitment to urgent/emergency treatment for the relief of pain, infection, and the sequelae of trauma. All children in targeted classes are offered dental examination, with individual care plans based on each child's needs. For routine and preventive services, patient groups are prioritised with children and adults with special care needs given the highest priority, followed by children in 6th class. Where service deficits are identified locally, clinical teams can be redirected to address those needs.

The extent of the backlog in targeted services and delays in providing preventive interventions and treatment for patients are concerns for the HSE, with services working to reduce the backlog in treatment appointments. Delays in assessments may reduce opportunities for preventive measures as disease is not identified early. Levels of scheduled examinations improved to 65% in 2022, but significant backlogs in treatment remain.

I wish to advise that the system does not hold data in the manner requested. Appendix 1 details KPI data for the Dental Service (end 2017 to end 2022). The reported metric is the number of new oral health patients in target groups attending for scheduled assessment.

### **HSE Orthodontic Service**

Orthodontic treatment waiting lists are collated and reported according to HSE eligibility criteria Modified IOTN, Grade 4 or Grade 5.

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. 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 Index are offered treatment with the HSE.

Number of patients waiting for assessment and treatment:

- 1) There are 8,289 patients waiting for assessment – wait times 0 months - > 24 months. Source Q4 2022 KPI data.
- 2) There are 4,246 Grade 4 patients waiting for treatment – wait times 1 month - >48 months. Source Q4 2022 KPI data
- 3) There are 5,579 Grade 5 patients waiting for treatment – wait times 1 month - >48 months. Source Q4 2022 KPI data.

Appendix 2 further details KPI Data for the HSE Orthodontic Service (2017 – 2022).

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**



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béil,  
31-33 Sráid Caitriona, Luimneach  
Teil: 061 464140

E: [nationaloralhealth@hse.ie](mailto:nationaloralhealth@hse.ie)

National Oral Health Office  
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick  
Tel: 061 464140

Email: [nationaloralhealth@hse.ie](mailto:nationaloralhealth@hse.ie)

**Appendix 1: No. of new Oral Health patients in target groups (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class) attending for scheduled assessment (2017 – 2022)**

CHO	LHO	Q4 2017	Q4 2018	Q4 2019	Q4 2020	Q4 2021	End December 2022
<b>National Total</b>		<b>135,622.</b>	<b>152,190</b>	<b>151,392</b>	<b>55,324</b>	<b>82,494</b>	<b>99,367</b>
<b>CHO 1</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>11,582</b>	<b>15,182</b>	<b>19,266</b>	<b>9,129</b>	<b>13,800</b>	<b>13,637</b>
CHO 1	Cavan Monaghan	5,404	2,836	5,116	3,571	3,135	4,250
CHO 1	Donegal	*NOT AVAILABLE	5,760	8,321	2,659	5,286	7,187
CHO 1	Sligo Leitrim	6,178	6,586	5,829	2,899	5,379	2,200
<b>CHO 2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7,160</b>	<b>12,455</b>	<b>12,145</b>	<b>2,904</b>	<b>6,156</b>	<b>7,073</b>
CHO 2	Galway	2,034	4,223	4,317	531	1,486	895
CHO 2	Mayo	3,005	4,258	3,690	1,264	2,057	2,027
CHO 2	Roscommon	2,121	3,974	4,138	1,109	2,613	4,151
<b>CHO 3</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>947**</b> INCOMPLETE	<b>10,480</b>	<b>11,632</b>	<b>3,385</b>	<b>4,153</b>	<b>6,125</b>
CHO 3	Clare	367	2,691	4,148	1,481	1,307	1,784

CHO 3	Limerick	272	3,507	2,544	963	1,283	1,528
CHO 3	North Tipperary East Limerick	308	4,282	4,940	941	1,563	2,813
<b>CHO 4</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>23,863</b>	<b>22,930</b>	<b>20,641</b>	<b>8,086</b>	<b>8,552</b>	<b>15,350</b>
CHO 4	Kerry	3,094	3,999	3,419	1,277	1,188	2,344
CHO 4	North Cork	4,917	4,691	4,105	1,710	1,494	3,252
CHO 4	North Lee	6,244	5,555	5,175	2,027	2,791	4,725
CHO 4	South Lee	6,993	6,365	6,369	2,415	2,233	3,763
CHO 4	West Cork	2,615	2,320	1,573	657	846	1,266
<b>CHO 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>19,698</b>	<b>19,174</b>	<b>18,638</b>	<b>6,621</b>	<b>11,973</b>	<b>12,484</b>
CHO 5	Carlow Kilkenny	3,220	4,384	4,992	1,690	3,418	3,075
CHO 5	South Tipperary	6,894	6,185	6,239	2,485	3,737	4,259
CHO 5	Waterford	4,170	3,652	3,919	1,608	2,972	2,909
CHO 5	Wexford	5,414	4,953	3,488	838	1,846	2,241
<b>CHO 6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,491</b>	<b>8,105</b>	<b>8,143</b>	<b>4,054</b>	<b>6,743</b>	<b>5,678</b>
CHO 6	Dun Laoghaire/ Dublin South East/Wicklow	8,491	8,105	8,143	4,054	6,743	5,678
<b>CHO 7</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18,675</b>	<b>21,355</b>	<b>25,180</b>	<b>9,534</b>	<b>12,059</b>	<b>15,151</b>

CHO 7	Dublin South City	3,743	2,768	3,175	1,627	2,363	3,456
CHO 7	Dublin South West	3,204	3,957	5,242	2,136	2,860	2,812
CHO 7	Dublin West	4,711	6,596	5,420	2,014	3,561	4,446
CHO 7	Kildare West Wicklow	7,017	8,034	11,343	3,757	3,275	4,437
<b>CHO 8</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>23,961.</b>	<b>20,963</b>	<b>17,842</b>	<b>3,829</b>	<b>6,124</b>	<b>8,581</b>
CHO 8	Laois Offaly	4,354	3,656	3,154	720	2,188	1,902
CHO 8	Longford Westmeath	4,852	4,173	4,317	875	2,633	2,212
CHO 8	Louth	5,348	5,423	5,547	1,100	709	1,812
CHO 8	Meath	9,407	7,711	4,824	1,134	594	2,655
<b>CHO 9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21,245</b>	<b>21,546</b>	<b>17,905</b>	<b>7,782</b>	<b>12,999</b>	<b>15,288</b>
CHO 9	Dublin North	8,997	8,527	7,419	2,456	2,828	4,562
CHO 9	Dublin North Central	3,863	3,958	2,676	2,003	2,561	2,845
CHO 9	Dublin North West	8,385	9,061	7,810	3,323	7,610	7,881

## Appendix 2: The number of patients on HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment (2017-2022)

Table 1: Q4 2017 HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment							
GRADE 4 Modified IOTN	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-36 months	37 - 48 months	48+ months	Totals
Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)	50	67	69	146	108	108	548
SIMMS Tallaght	*DATA UNAVAILABLE*						
Midlands	*DATA UNAVAILABLE*						
DNE	131	209	428	422	378	153	1721
South	111	193	385	266	140	28	1123
South East	117	189	383	319	233	7	1248
Mid Western	64	116	182	308	81	11	762
North West	41	49	75	77	20		262
Western	157	185	565	280	426	0	1613
	<b>671</b>	<b>1008</b>	<b>2087</b>	<b>1818</b>	<b>1386</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>7277</b>
GRADE 5 Modified IOTN	1-6 months	7-12 months	13-24 months	25-36 months	37 - 48 months	48+ months	Totals
Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)	94	90	97	128	82		491
SIMMS Tallaght	*DATA UNAVAILABLE*						
Midlands	*DATA UNAVAILABLE*						
DNE	194	363	470	111	48	136	1322
South	294	330	438	73	70	0	1205
South East	196	307	458	333	219	15	1528
Mid Western	86	133	202	337	127	49	934
North West	137	102	22				261
Western	187	133	266	162	135	0	883
	<b>1188</b>	<b>1458</b>	<b>1953</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>6622</b>

**Table 2: Q4 2018 HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment (Combined Grade 4 and Grade 5 Wait List Numbers)**

	Waiting < 2 years	Waiting 2-4 years	Waiting > 4 years	Totals
Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)	573	383	54	1010
Former South West (St James's)	1228	1145	95	2468
Midlands	1201	566	370	2137
DNE	1751	788	344	2883
South	1513	649	5	2167
South East	1412	1385	253	3050
Mid Western	792	873	49	1714
North West	488	76	0	564
Western	1137	1052	0	2189
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10095</b>	<b>6917</b>	<b>1170</b>	<b>18182</b>

**Table 3: Q4 2019 HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment (Combined Grade 4 and Grade 5 Wait List Numbers)**

		Waiting < 2 years on the treatment waiting list	Waiting 2-4 years on the treatment waiting list	Waiting > 4 years on the treatment waiting list	Totals
<b>Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)</b>		533	475	36	1044
<b>Former South West (St James's)</b>		967	1132	55	2154
<b>Midlands</b>		624	534	910	2068
<b>DNE</b>		1,682	1148	503	3333
<b>South</b>		1,738	810	0	2548
<b>South East</b>		1,224	1345	454	3023
<b>Mid Western</b>		743	786	154	1683
<b>North West</b>		486	104	0	590
<b>Western</b>		1,087	622	0	1709
<b>Totals</b>		9084	6956	2112	18152

Table 4: Q4 2020 HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment (Combined Grade 4 and Grade 5 Wait List Numbers)

		Waiting < 2 years on the treatment waiting list	Waiting 2-4 years on the treatment waiting list	Waiting > 4 years on the treatment waiting list	Totals
Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)		*	*	*	*
Former South West (St James's)		811	1009	357	2177
Midlands		538	503	784	1825
DNE		1,032	722	493	2,247
South		1,262	907	119	2,288
South East		789	1286	986	3061
Mid Western		479	804	351	1283
North West		318	253		571
Western		990	823	174	1987
<b>Totals</b>		<b>6219</b>	<b>6307</b>	<b>2913</b>	<b>15439</b>

\* Former East Coast (Loughlinstown) Data not available

**Table 5 HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment: Q4 2021**

GRADE 4								
		1-6 mths	7-13 mths	13-24 mths	25-36 mths	37-48mths	Over 48 mths	
DML	Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)*	12	2	98	344	94	45	
DML	Former South West (St James's)*	40	22	53	271	136	129	
DML	Midlands	67	33	53	157	141	360	
DNE	DNE	1	9	57	116	83	80	
SOUTH	South	127	72	255	582	326	289	
SOUTH	South East	100	67	80	166	168	441	
WEST	Mid Western	52	27	47	123	104	90	
WEST	North West*	32	29	58	50	17	32	
WEST	Western	132	5	168	300	219	0	
		563	266	869	2109	1288	1466	6561
GRADE 5								
		1-6 mths	7-13 mths	13-24 mths	25-36 mths	37-48mths	Over 48 mths	
DML	Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)*	60	6	156	139	129	56	
DML	Former South West (St James's)*	86	47	114	254	126	113	
DML	Midlands	146	28	87	56	49	29	
DNE	DNE	8	26	114	195	208	183	
SOUTH	South	160	73	190	639	278	71	
SOUTH	South East	146	100	105	261	266	493	
WEST	Mid Western	89	44	53	142	146	93	
WEST	North West*	119	59	60	81			
WEST	Western	160	40	189	199	82	0	
		974	423	1068	1966	1284	1038	6753

\* Data for Q4 not available, Q3 Data inserted

**Table 6 HSE Orthodontic waiting lists for treatment: Q3 2022**

<b>GRADE 4 Modified IOTN</b>	<b>1-6 months</b>	<b>7-12 months</b>	<b>13-24 months</b>	<b>25-36 months</b>	<b>37 - 48 months</b>	<b>48+ months</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)	39	29	9	32	20	18	147
SIMMS Tallaght	71	44	39	56	75	41	326
Midlands	49	58	56	140	108	282	693
DNE	34	75	116	62	53	125	465
South	78	112	195	380	431	172	1368
South East	97	78	148	97	170	433	1023
Mid Western	38	47	65	76	65	21	312
North West	7	31	40	65	78		221
Western	180	175	50	223	35	0	663
	<b>593</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>1131</b>	<b>1035</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>5218</b>
<b>GRADE 5 Modified IOTN</b>	<b>1-6 months</b>	<b>7-12 months</b>	<b>13-24 months</b>	<b>25-36 months</b>	<b>37 - 48 months</b>	<b>48+ months</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Former East Coast (Loughlinstown)	79	31	52	60	7	56	285
SIMMS Tallaght	109	89	60	146	156	89	649
Midlands	45	57	17	11	10	23	163
DNE	59	186	212	137	227	269	1090
South	137	165	160	333	425	110	1330
South East	140	124	216	121	261	590	1452
Mid Western	51	67	113	83	151	126	591
North West	18	36	75	86			215
Western	192	204	90	162	32	0	680
	<b>830</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>1139</b>	<b>1269</b>	<b>1263</b>	<b>6455</b>