



Oifig an Príomhoifigeach
Eagraíocht Cúram Sláinte Pobail Lár Tire,
An Lú, An Mhí

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Oifig Cheantair, Bóthar Ardáin,
An Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí.

Office of the Chief Officer
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29th June, 2023

Mr. Robert Troy T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: Parliamentary Question - 30442/23

To ask the Minister for Health to address the long waiting lists for orthodontic treatment in Westmeath.

Dear Deputy Troy,

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. I have examined the matter and I outline the position as follows;

I can confirm that the Orthodontic Department in the CHO 8 Midlands area provides orthodontic treatment clinics in Portlaoise, Tullamore, Athlone and Longford. The services consists of three main waiting lists as follows;

- 1: Assessment Waiting List
- 2: Treatment Waiting List
- 3: Recall Waiting List

As at 31/05/23 there was a total of 317 patients on the Treatment Waiting List in the CHO 8 Area. Of this figure, 133 (41.96%) patients are awaiting treatment in the Westmeath CHO area.

There are currently two clinics providing orthodontic service in the Athlone clinic based at Clonbrusk Primary Care Centre, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. These weekly clinics run every Tuesday and Thursday and are led by one Specialist Orthodontist and one orthodontic nurse. There is a considerable wait for services due to the long standing deficit between the demand for services and the availability of trained staff.

Persons are prioritised for Orthodontic services on the basis of their clinical need. Persons in the Grade/Category 5 are deemed to have high clinical need and persons in the Grade/Category 4 are not deemed to have the highest clinical need.

Since 1 January 2021, the provisions of the EU Cross Border Directive (CBD) no longer apply to the UK. In order to mitigate the impact of the loss of access to care in the UK under the EU CBD scheme for persons resident in Ireland, the Government has agreed to provide for the implementation of a replacement scheme to be available in Northern Ireland only from 1st January 2021. The new Northern Ireland Planned Healthcare Scheme operates on the same



parameters as the EU Cross Border Directive scheme. All patients are made aware of this scheme and are facilitated with the necessary documentation should they wish to avail of same.

In 2021 the National Oral Health Office completed a tendering process to provide orthodontic treatment to HSE eligible patients (Modified IOTN Grade 4*) waiting longer than 4 years for treatment. This resulted in private service providers being contracted on Framework Type Agreement 11317 (a successor to Framework Agreement 3983) which will last for four years from 2021 - 2025.

In 2021, 84 people in the Midlands agreed to be transferred from the HSE waiting list to a private provider. In 2022, 453 persons in the Midlands agreed to be transferred from the HSE waiting list to a private provider. In 2023 (up to May 23) 200 persons in the Midlands agreed to be transferred from the HSE waiting list to a private provider. All the above patients have been removed from the HSE Orthodontic treatment waiting list.

While every effort is made to ensure service users attend clinics geographically close to their home address, we must ensure service users are offered treatment in the next available clinic requesting new patients. Therefore we will always experience service users travelling to clinics outside their geographical home address.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dervila Eyres', written over a horizontal line.

Dervila Eyres
Acting Chief Officer
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation