



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.

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11th April, 2023

Ms. Imelda Munster T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: Parliamentary Question – 11123/23

To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide a breakdown of waiting lists for dental surgery and orthodontics for CHO8, by county and by year from January 2019 to January 2023; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Munster,

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 outlined the position as follows;

The Public Dental Service CHO8 continues to provide a targeted service in line with priorities set out by the National Oral Health Office (NOHO). The ability of the service to meet these priorities is based on available resources.

In light of available resources, the Public Dental Service CHO8 targets adults and children with special needs, the schools dental programme targets only those children in sixth class national school and provides emergency care to children outside of target until aged sixteen years.

Also, with further resignations of dental contractors within the Dental Treatment Service Scheme (DTSS), the Public Dental Service now must also provide emergency care to adult medical card holders who are unable to access treatment within the community. The HSE Dental Service has continuously assisted patients in seeking dental care from participating DTSS contractors. However more recently, these requests from patients have become more frequent as many fail to access care and in many cases there is no option of redirecting patients to alternative DTSS contractors due the ever increasing resignations from the scheme.

In meeting the above targets over the past 12 months, and as a result of COVID-19 pandemic with associated staff redeployment, the Public Dental service CHO8 is in fact currently 5 years behind in calling sixth class children for assessment and treatment in county Laois, 3 years behind in counties Louth, Meath and Offaly and 2 years behind in counties Longford and Westmeath. To ensure a fair and equitable service, children are being called in order of their position on the waiting lists which is depicted overleaf.



Current number of 6th class students to be called	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Laois	1119	1537	1717	1524	1500
Offaly	0	0	333	1204	1204
Longford	0	0	0	389	654
Westmeath	0	0	0	894	1538
Louth	0	0	502	2639	2734
Meath	0	0	980	2586	2952

In relation to recruitment, there would appear to be a national shortage of both Dental Surgeons and Dental hygienists owing to the significant challenges faced nationally in attempting to fill vacant posts, either through recruitment campaigns or using numerous recruitment agencies.

A further three recruitment campaigns have commenced in an attempt to recruit full time General Dental Surgeons, a Senior Dental Surgeon and Senior Dental nurses to the CHO8 Dental service.

ORTHODONTIC WAITING LISTS

Data report ran 03/03/2023 – Total number is based on those on the Grade 5/Grade 4 treatment waiting lists as at 31st January each year from 2019 – 2023, i.e. patients that are eligible for treatment within the HSE, based on orthodontic clinical need as per ITON classification, Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need. Grade 5 & Grade 4, (5 being the most severe).

MEATH – ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT WAITING LIST

The Regional Orthodontic Unit, Meath whilst within CHO8, is still aligned to previous North East Regional Structure and also caters for patients referred from Cavan (CHO1) and Meath Primary Care Dental Services and both are therefore included in figures overleaf.



LOUTH – ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT WAITING LIST

The Regional Orthodontic Unit, Louth whilst within CHO8, is still aligned to previous North East Regional Structure and also caters for patients referred from Louth and Monaghan (CHO1) Primary Care Dental Services and both are therefore also included in figures below:

Date	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
31/01/2019	23	39	62
31/01/2020	41	39	80
31/01/2021	20	37	57
31/01/2022	75	74	149
31/01/2023	102	81	183
Total	261	270	531

MIDLANDS– ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT WAITING LIST

The Midlands Orthodontic Unit, CHO8, includes the counties of Longford, Laois, Offaly and Westmeath

Date	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
31/01/2019	5	55	60
31/01/2020	2	33	35
31/01/2021	48	92	140
31/01/2022	72	88	160
31/01/2023	9	5	14
Total	136	273	409

Date: 31/01/2019	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
Westmeath	3	23	26
Longford	2	8	10
Laois	0	7	7
Offaly	0	15	15
Tipperary	0	1	1
Kildare	0	1	1
Total:	5	55	60



Date: 31/01/2020	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
Westmeath	2	10	12
Longford	0	10	10
Laois	0	5	5
Offaly	0	6	6
Tipperary	0	0	0
Kildare	0	2	2
Total:	2	33	35

Date: 31/01/2021	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
Westmeath	26	29	55
Longford	16	17	33
Laois	3	20	23
Offaly	3	21	24
Kilkenny	0	2	2
Kildare	0	2	2
Roscommon	0	1	1
Total	48	92	140

Date: 31/01/2022	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
Offaly	11	31	42
Meath	0	1	1
Kildare	6	0	6
Carlow	0	3	3
Total	72	88	160



Date: 31/01/2023	Grade 5	Grade 4	Total
Westmeath	3	2	5
Longford	0	0	0
Laois	2	1	3
Offaly	2	1	3
Tipperary	2	0	2
Kildare	0	1	1
Total:	9	5	14

I trust the above is in order and 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 be 'Des O'Flynn', written in a cursive style.

Des O'Flynn
Chief Officer
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation