

1st June, 2023

Pádraig Mac Lochlainn T.D.
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 21740/23 To ask the Minister for Health the plans of the HSE to replace the three eye doctors in the County Donegal ophthalmology service that have vacated their positions in recent times; and if the newly appointed consultants for this service will be based in County Donegal rather than County Sligo to oversee the full ophthalmic teams there, in order that they can continue, at the very least, to deliver the same level of care to an enormous existing service and to reduce the growing waiting lists in County Donegal.

Dear Deputy Mac Lochlainn

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 the following outlines the position for Community Healthcare Cavan Donegal Leitrim Monaghan Sligo.

Currently, there is one vacant Ophthalmic Physician post in Donegal. Primary Care Ophthalmology Services are actively trying to recruit a suitable candidate for the vacant physician post in Donegal.

A new Consultant Ophthalmologist commenced in a permanent post in Donegal, in November 2022 and is based fully in St Conal's Letterkenny. An Agency Consultant Ophthalmologist is currently covering the second post in Donegal.

The Community Ophthalmic Team based in St Conal's, Letterkenny provide Intravitreal Injection Therapy Clinics on weekly basis in Letterkenny University hospital. This service was previously provided in Sligo University Hospital up until 2022 and the local availability of this is of huge benefit to the local population who no longer have to travel to Sligo.

Also in LUH, the team provide a Day Service and an Emergency Service if and when required. The Medical Ophthalmic service provision in Donegal is provided by a team of Consultant Medical Ophthalmologists, Optometrists, Orthoptists, Nursing and Administration staff in close collaboration with the Sligo University Hospital Ophthalmology team, Diabetic Retinopathy Services, local GPs, PHNs and Independent Optometrists.

The Sligo University Hospital Ophthalmology department is the regional Centre for surgical, emergency and specialist ophthalmology services for the population of Donegal and provide

outreach emergency, cataract, glaucoma, medical retina and pediatric clinics in the Eye Department St. Conal's.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mandy Doyle
Ceannasaí Seirbhíse, Cúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Pobail Cabhán Dún na nGall Liatroim Muineachán Sligeach

Head of Service, Primary Care
Community Healthcare Cavan Donegal Leitrim Monaghan Sligo