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**Deputy Noel Grealish
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

42315/23: To ask the Minister for Health if a medical card holder, who cannot secure an appointment with a dentist providing medical card services in their area, can avail of any other scheme to help with the cost of emergency dental treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Grealish,

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.

Dental Treatment is made available to medical card holders over the age of 16 through the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS). Dentists who hold a contract with the Scheme provide a range of treatments which are funded by the HSE.

The DTSS is a “choice of dentist” scheme which does not require the patient to register with a particular dentist and enables medical card holders to attend any DTSS contractor directly without recourse to the HSE. Where access to a dentist is difficult, local HSE dental services assist patients who make enquires and make lists of DTSS contractors available to medical card holders. In exceptional circumstances the HSE directly assists patients to access emergency dental treatment by contacting private contractors or arranging treatment through HSE employed dentists.

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

Yours Sincerely,

**Anne M O Neill
AND, National Oral Health Lead - Operations**