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**25 September 2023**

**Deputy Alan Kelly  
Dáil Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2**

**PQ 38481/23: To ask the Minister for Health the number of children and adults currently on the HSE dental and orthodontic waiting list in CHO 3 and 5.**

Dear Deputy Kelly,

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. Following engagement with the relevant Community HealthCare Organisations (CHOs 3 and 5) below outlines their current position;

#### **CHO 3 Response:**

The HSE Dental Service carries out dental examinations for children in the target/academic classes i.e. 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Class and 6<sup>th</sup> Class in Primary School and the necessary dental treatment is carried out in HSE Dental Clinics. The distribution and return of consent forms for School Dental Checks is arranged through the Primary Schools for the target classes in the relevant academic years.

The Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) was developed to enable medical card patients will full eligibility to access dental care from a range of contracted dentists. The dental treatment is carried out in the dental practitioners' dental practice. A GMS patient must secure the services of a DTSS dental surgeon themselves. This may involve travelling outside their own county/CHO area to attend a dental practitioner/practice who is in a position to take them on as a patient. Therefore, the HSE Dental Service is not in a position to provide details regarding the number of adults (GMS patients) in CHO3 who are waiting to be seen by a DTSS contracted dental practitioner.

The Principal Dental Surgeon has confirmed that there are currently 14,600 children awaiting a School Dental Check/dental examination in the CHO3 area. The PDS advised that this figure does not include the number of children in the target classes in the current academic year (2023/2024) as consent forms for this cohort of children have yet to be issued.

On completion of a child's sixth class School Dental Check, if the examining dental practitioner deems that a child meets the criteria for HSE Orthodontic Services, he/she will refer the child to the HSE Orthodontic Service for assessment. The Lead Orthodontist has given a breakdown in relation to the number of patients who are awaiting assessment and treatment by the HSE Orthodontic Service in the HSE Mid-West (CHO3) area. This information is outlined in the table below".

<b>Waiting Lists – HSE Orthodontic Services CHO3</b>	<b>No. of patients on waiting list</b>
Assessment Waiting List	27
Treatment Waiting List (Grade 5 patients – severe malocclusion)	735
Treatment Waiting List (Grade 4 patients – less severe malocclusion)	143
<b>Total no. of patients on Treatment Waiting Lists</b>	<b>878</b>

**CHO 5 Response:**

The no. of children currently on the HSE dental waiting list	86,176
The no. of adults currently on the HSE dental waiting list	251
The no. of children currently on the HSE orthodontic waiting list	2021
The no. of adults currently on the HSE orthodontic waiting list	235


Children in target classes are considered to be waiting for assessment and treatment from the 1st of September when they enter the target class. Therefore, an additional large cohort will have become eligible for 2nd, 4th and 6th class examination on 1/9/2023. Although 3 classes are targeted i.e. 2nd, 4th and 6th, when resources are limited 4th class is given lower priority.

Children who are medically compromised or who have special needs are seen more frequently.

Some of the figures for 2022/23 have not been returned from schools yet so these figures have to be fully validated. The figures for the current 2023/2024 year are an estimate, extrapolated from previous years.

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

Yours Sincerely,



**Dr Anne M O'Neill,  
HSE AND, National Oral Health Lead – Operations**