



Oifig an Stiúrthoir Cúnta,
Cúram Priomhúil Rochtain agus Comhthathú,

Seomra 243, Ospidéal Dr Steevens,
Lána Steevens, Baile Átha Cliath 8.
D08 W2A8.

Office of the Assistant National Director, www.hse.ie
Primary Care Access and Integration @hselive

Rm 243, Dr Steevens Hospital,
Steevens Lane, Dublin 8. D08 W2A8.

T: 01 6352209/2682
E: community.primarycare@hse.ie

25th June 2024

Deputy Durkan,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 25874/24 - To ask the Minister for Health the extent to which backlogs in school health examinations are being addressed, including dental and ophthalmic; the extent of progress in addressing these backlogs over the past twelve months to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Bernard J. Durkan

Dear Deputy Durkan,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 25874/24) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

With regard to dental services, the HSE targets children in key school years (2nd, 4th and 6th classes), offering dental examinations, preventive care and restorative treatments for conditions noted. As part of targeting of resources, each dental service maintains a commitment to urgent/emergency treatment for the relief of pain, infection, and the sequelae of trauma. Children in targeted classes are offered dental examination, with individual care plans based on each child's needs. For routine and preventive services, patient groups are prioritised with children and adults with special care needs given the highest priority, followed by children in 6th class. In 2023 over 104,000 children attended for their scheduled assessment.

In relation to the hearing and vision checks, these are targeted at primary school children in junior infants. These checks are provided via the local Community Health Organisation nursing teams. Where staffing shortfalls arise, the HSE work to ensure that services are focused on identifying and supporting those who have the greatest need and by enabling staff to be deployed where necessary to support them. School health checks remain a priority and any parent with a concern should contact their GP or local Public Health Nursing service.

The HSE remains committed to school vision and hearing checks and continues to progress this in the best interests of child health. Local areas monitor performance and address issues as they arise.

I trust this is of assistance.

Seán McArt

General Manager
Primary Care Access & Integration