



Office of the Head of Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare
HSE Offices, Lacken,
Dublin Road,
Kilkenny.

Telephone: +353 56 7784100

09/05/2024

Deputy Jennifer Murnane O' Connor TD
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin

PQ 21437/24

To ask the Minister for Health when the HSE expects the integrated eye care team to be fully established in CHO5 and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Murnane O Connor,

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

I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.

The HSE Primary Care Eye Services Review Group Report, published in June 2017, highlighted the limitations of the current model of service delivery and set out the way forward for a significant amount of eye services to be delivered in a primary care setting. The Report estimated that 60% of existing outpatient activity could be moved to primary care thus enabling hospital services to focus on patients who require more specialist diagnostics or treatments.

The National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology has developed a model of care which details how the realignment of eye services from the acute hospitals to the community will be undertaken. Included in current priorities is transferring the care of children aged 8+ years to the care of local private optometrists. A project team with a wide-ranging membership was established in late 2019 / early 2020 to progress this initiative. The work of the team was paused due to the requirement to focus resources on the COVID 19 pandemic. However, the project team has been reconvened and is progressing matters in relation to this initiative.

The HSE is currently in the process of implementing multidisciplinary Integrated Eye Care Teams. These teams facilitate assessment, diagnoses, management and treatment and in some cases pre-op/post-op care enabling most patients to be seen in their own locality. Where necessary, patients can be referred onwards to acute Ophthalmology services to receive the necessary specialist input.

Integrated Eye Care Teams continue to be rolled out nationally. To date, teams have been established in 6 of the 9 CHOs, namely; CHO 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9. Waiting lists have been substantially reduced in each of these areas as a result. Work is underway to establish teams in the remaining CHOs as well as further expanding the teams in the existing CHOs.

To date, funding has not been allocated to support the establishment and service provision of an Integrated Eye Care Team across CHO 5.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Anna Marie Lanigan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Anna Marie Lanigan
Head of Service-Primary Care/Assistant Director
South East Community Healthcare