



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
An Pháirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta, Caladh an Treoigh, Luimneach
Teil: 061 492068

E: nationaloralhealth@hse.ie
National Oral Health Office

Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park, Castletroy, Limerick
Tel: 061 492068

Email: nationaloralhealth@hse.ie

26 August 2024

**Deputy Peadar Tóibín
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 22049/24: To ask the Minister for Health a breakdown, in tabular form, of the number of special care dentists, by county, and the numbers of dental patients with additional needs and/or anxiety attending special care dentists who required a general anaesthetic, for each of the past five years, by county.

Dear Deputy Tóibín,

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.

The HSE Community Dental Service provides care to children and adults with additional needs. People with additional needs requiring special care dentistry are those with a condition, disability or activity restriction that directly or indirectly affects their oral health and is impacted by the personal and/or the environmental context of the individual.


Patients with additional needs are given an oral health examination and have their treatment provided possibly using additional adjuncts where necessary and if available. Adjuncts to care include Inhalation Sedation, IV sedation and Dental General Anaesthetic (GA).

I wish to advise the Deputy the data on patients requiring GA over the last five years is not readily available as requested and is not held in that way in all dental areas. The decision to refer a patient for treatment under GA is based on patient treatment need and their ability to cooperate/accept that treatment in a dental surgery, it is not based solely on having additional needs. Referral pathways within the services tend to group patients according to age (under 16/over 16) and treatment required (simple extraction/dental restorations/oral surgery). Referral to GA waitlists is not limited to special care dentists. A data request has been sent to the system for updated GA wait list information which can be made available, however, it will not answer the detail in your request above.

The number of special care dentists employed by the HSE in special care posts, at end Dec 2023, is detailed in Table 1. While all dentists have the capabilities and skill range to see patients with lower levels of complexities, patients with additional needs and higher levels of complexity will be seen by designated dentists in posts in special posts.

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

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dr Anne O'Neill".

Anne O'Neill
Assistant National Director, Oral Health

Table 1: No. of special care dentists employed in special care posts (end Dec 2023)

CHO Area	Number of Senior Special Care Dental Surgeons
CHO1 Donegal	0
CHO1 Cavan/Monaghan	1
CHO1 Sligo/Leitrim	1
CHO2 Mayo/Roscommon	2
CHO2 Galway	1
CHO3 Midwest	2.6
CHO4 Cork	5.2 WTE
CHO4 Kerry	1
CHO5 Carlow/Kilkenny/Sth Tipp	1
CHO5 Waterford/Wexford	1.8 WTE
CHO6 Wicklow/Dun Laoghaire/ Dublin SE	1.8 WTE
CHO7 Dublin Sth City / Dublin West	2.5
CHO7 Dublin Sth West/ Dublin West/ Kildare/ West Wicklow	2
CHO8 Longford/Westmeath/Laois/Offaly	2
CHO8 Louth/Meath	1.6 WTE
CHO9 Dublin North West & Dublin North City	2.5 WTE
CHO9 Dublin North County	1 WTE