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FSS Meán Iarthair

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16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Deputy Joe Cooney  
Lower Market St.  
Ennis  
Co. Clare

**Re: PQ 18902/25 - "To ask the Minister for Health if she will provide details of every dental service available to holders of medical cards through the dental services treatment scheme; the list of dentists that provide those services to medical card holders in Co. Clare; what obligations those dentists have with regard to provide all such services listed; and if she will make a statement on the matter."**

Dear Deputy Cooney,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

As advised in my response issued on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 to PQ 16658/25, private dental practitioners are contracted with the HSE under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) to provide dental services to patients (over 16) who hold a valid medical card. The Principal Dental Surgeon confirmed that a medical card holder is entitled to receive the following routine dental treatment under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS):

- One dental examination per annum;
- One dental cleaning per annum;
- Two restorations per annum (i.e. restoring a tooth to its original form and function), if such dental treatment will relieve dental pain;
- Root canal treatment of anterior teeth if required for clinical reasons;
- Acrylic denture(s) for the edentate or partial dentures if missing an anterior tooth or more than four posterior teeth if it includes a premolar;
- Dental extraction(s) – as many as required in a calendar year.

Some of the dental treatments available under the DTSS (e.g. dentures) require the prior approval of the Principal Dental Surgeon in the HSE area where the treatment will be carried out.



If a medical card patient is deemed to fall into the 'high risk' category by their DTSS dental practitioner, further restorations and dental cleaning can be carried out within a calendar year.

As advised above, private dental practitioners are contracted with the HSE to provide dental treatment to eligible patients (medical card holders) under the DTSS. Once a patient has been accepted by a dental practitioner, if the recommended dental treatment is available under scheme, it is provided free of charge to the patient if they hold a valid medical card.

The Principal Dental Surgeon advised that the following dental treatment is not available under the DTSS: dental cosmetic work; crowns; bridges; implants; root canal for premolar or molar teeth; metal dentures and others. The dental practitioner will be able to advise the patient what treatment is and isn't available to them under the scheme.

As previously advised, it is the responsibility of the medical card holder to secure the services of a DTSS contracted dental practitioner. Patients may have to contact a number of DTSS dental practitioners/practices before they are successful in finding a dental practitioner who has capacity to take them on. The patient may have to travel outside of their local area, county and/or HSE area to secure the services of a DTSS contracted dental practitioner. The Principal Dental Surgeon advised that it should be noted that there is a lack of dental practitioners nationwide and therefore, public and private patients are finding it difficult to secure the services of a dental practitioner.

In your representation, you have requested a list of DTSS contracted dental practitioners in Clare who provide dental services to patients who hold a medical card. However, as advised patients are not restricted in attending a DTSS dental practitioner in their local area, therefore, I am enclosing the full list of DTSS contracted dental practitioners for the HSE Mid-West area.

I trust the above information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,

**Carmel McLaughlin**  
**General Manager**  
**Primary Care**

**Encl.**