



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
An Pháirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta, Caladh an Treoigh, Luimneach
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22 July 2025

Deputy Shónagh Ní Raghallaigh
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 38337/25:

To ask the Minister for Health if there are plans to allow foster children to be included in the dental scheme beyond primary school; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Ní Raghallaigh

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 Health Service Executive delivers dental services to children under the age of 16, provided through 17 Dental Areas. The service provides emergency dental access to children between 0 and 16 years, a targeted service for children through the school dental programme (6th, 2nd and 4th classes) and adult medical card holders with additional needs through the special care programme. The service offers dental examinations, preventive care and restorative treatments for conditions noted. The ability to offer services to each of the school years has been limited due to availability of dental staff. 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.

The Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) provides access for medical card holders to dental examination and treatments through a contracted care arrangement with independent dentists. The scheme is available to current medical card holders over 16 years of age, who may access care from any of the Dentists on the DTSS list. This list is available at local HSE Dental clinics. Included in Tusla's fostering supports, is the entitlement that each child in foster care will have their own medical card.

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

Yours Sincerely,

Anne O'Neill
Assistant National Director, Oral Health