



Bainisteoir Ginearálta,
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Deputy William Aird TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin.

22/07/2025

Re: PQ ref 40440/25 - To ask the Minister for Health if she will provide an update on the status of the National Ophthalmology Programme as it relates to children residing in County Laois; if she is aware that these children are currently required to travel to a health centre in Athlone for outpatient services, a distance of approximately 80km; the steps being taken to establish paediatric ophthalmology services in County Laois given the ongoing impact on families; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Aird,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The Eye Clinic is currently held in Athlone as an outreach service as there is no community ophthalmic physician in post. The long-term plan is that this service will be moving under the Ophthalmic Service within the Community which the Community is currently scoping for same.

Recruitment for Consultant Ophthalmologist is under way and start date will be confirmed when recruitment clearances are complete.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dolores Fall
Deputy Hospital Manager

