



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
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Deputy Colm Burke
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 41811/25:

To ask the Minister for Health the breakdown of the current levels of funding allocated to oral health promotion initiatives; if she will consider increasing support for organisations (details supplied - Dental Health Foundation Ireland) in recognition of their vital role in delivering preventive oral health programmes nationwide, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Burke,

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.

I wish to advise the Deputy the data is not available as requested. The table below provides the budget for the Public Dental Service for 2025. The budget provided to the HSE for dental service provision includes dental treatments and current oral health promotion provided on an individual patient basis. It is not possible to identify a specific level of funding to oral health promotion initiatives.

Full Year Dental Budget Summary	2025 €'000
Budget Pubic Dental Service	67.520

The publication of Smile Agus Sláinte - the National Oral Health Policy identifies key actions requiring the development and investment in oral health promotion across a range of ages and patient groups. Implementation of the oral health services for children in the policy will focus initially on children between 0 and up to 7 years of age emphasising the development of comprehensive, prevention-focused oral healthcare services for children supported by an additional €4.75 million in funding. International best evidence and practice suggests that a number of measures are vital to further address tooth decay in children. These include supporting families to reduce the volume of sugar in young children's diets and supporting a healthy overall dietary pattern along with water fluoridation and other fluoride therapies. This requires a multi-agency approach, as well as earlier and more frequent access to public oral healthcare services for children.

In line with developments under the NOHP, dental teams will be supported by the State to provide advice on caring for children's teeth and gums and on supporting food and drink habits in line with the WHO Global Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan. The National Oral Health Policy outlines the actions required to develop these supports, which are included in the 2025-2027 Implementation Plan for the National Oral Health Policy, due for publication in 2025. The development of new oral health promotion initiatives will require engagement across the oral health system which will include oral health professionals, health professionals, patients and interested agencies of which the Dental Health Foundation is one.

Specifically in relation to the agency mentioned - The Dental Health Foundation is an independent registered charity, with a key aim to support improvement in oral health in Ireland through advocacy and oral health promotion. The Dental Health Foundation is part funded through a HSE Grant Aid Agreement under Sections 38 and 39 of the Health Act 2004. The Dental Health Foundation have a stated objective of supporting the implementation of the National Oral Health Policy, and a stated commitment to working closely with state bodies, the oral health care profession, consumer groups, oral health care industry, the community and education sectors. It is reasonable to expect that they will be involved in developments of oral health promotion under the NOHP.

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