



Mari O'Donovan,
Interim Head of Service,
Cúram Príomhúil
FSS an Iardheiscirt

Áras na Ceachan,
Páirc Ghnó agus Teicneolaíochta,
Bóthar na Modh Feirme,
Corcaigh. T12 XHT4

Mari O'Donovan,
Interim Head of Service,
Primary Care
HSE South West

Caha House,
Business and Technology Park,
Model Farm Road,
Cork. T12 XHT4

southwest.hse.ie
E: Mari.ODonovan@hse.ie

5th August, 2025

Mr. Michael Cahill, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 42230/25

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of dentists working in the school dental scheme within Kerry in the years of 2023, 2024 and to date in 2025, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy Cahill,

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.

The HSE Primary Care Dental Service provides dental treatment to eligible children, medical card holders, adults and children with special needs and others in the care of the HSE at various locations throughout Cork and Kerry. Children under 16 years of age are treated in HSE dental clinics and adults are treated by private dental practitioners contracted to the Health Services under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS).

The table below outlines the number of dentists, expressed in whole-time equivalents (WTEs), by staff category for the years 2023, 2024, and to date in 2025 in the Kerry Dental Service. Each role contributes to the delivery and oversight of dental services as follows:

General Dental Surgeons are primarily engaged in the delivery of emergency dental care, as well as targeted school-based dental services for priority age groups and special needs children.

Senior Dental Surgeons support the wider service by providing more complex or advanced care and offering clinical leadership to General Dental Surgeons.

Senior Dental Surgeons – Special needs deliver care to children and adults with special healthcare needs, often in community or multidisciplinary settings.

Principal Dental Surgeons are responsible for the overall management and operation of the public dental service. In County Kerry, they also currently carry out clinical work under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS), due to the challenges faced by medical card holders in accessing private dental care.

Principal Dentists and Senior Administrative Dental Surgeons provide leadership, strategic oversight, and service development support across the public dental system.

HSE Dental Personnel	2023 (WTE)	2024 (WTE)	2025 (to date, 31/7/25)
Principal Dental Surgeon	1	1	1
Senior Administrative Dental Surgeon	0.6	0.6	0.6
Senior Dental Surgeon – Special Needs	1	1	1

Seirbhís sláinte a thógáil a bhfuil ár bpobal bródúil aisti
Building a health service our community is proud of



Senior Dental Surgeon	0.4	0.4	0
General Dental Surgeon	8.06	8.06	8.06

Please note we are in the processes of looking for approval to recruit the senior dental surgeon post, which is recently vacated due to retirement.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mari O'Donovan
Interim Head of Service - Primary Care,
HSE South West