



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
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**Deputy Ken O'Flynn
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 10371/25 *To ask the Minister for Health the current procedure for emergency dental treatment for children under the age of 16 years when dental clinics are closed; and there plans to improve accessibility to urgent dental care for young patients.*

Dear Deputy O'Flynn,

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 HSE makes dental treatment services available to children through 17 dental areas and over 150 dental clinics. Each dental area makes emergency dental care available to children under the age of 16. Where a local dental clinic is not currently staffed, emergency care will be available in an alternative location within the dental area.

Emergency care is for the relief of pain (e.g. toothache, trauma) and infection. Contact should be made with a HSE dental clinic if an urgent care appointment is required and they will arrange an appointment for that day or the next day.

The HSE's 2025 National Service Plan aims to continue to develop services and implement waiting list initiatives across a range of dental and orthodontic services and maximise activity across these services to manage waiting lists and waiting times. The service plan supports the implementation of the Government's National Oral Health Policy, Smile Agus Sláinte, including the development of comprehensive oral healthcare packages for roll-out to children aged from birth to seven years of age.

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**