



Ceann Seirbhíse, Cúraim Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Pobail Cabhán Dún na nGall
Liatroim Muineachán, Sligeach
An Clochar, Sráid an Choláiste, Béal Átha
Seanaidh, Co Dhun na nGall, F94 TPX4

Head of Service, Primary Care
Community Healthcare Cavan Donegal
Leitrim Monaghan Sligo
HSE, An Clochar, College Street,
Ballyshannon, Co Donegal, F94 TPX4

www.hse.ie @hselive

t: 071 9834627 | 071 9834637

e: HOSPC.CHO1@hse.ie

22nd May 2025

Deputy Pearse Doherty
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 22538 25 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of children awaiting dental appointments in county Donegal, broken down by area and by length of time, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Doherty

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 of Health for response.

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position for Integrated Healthcare Area Donegal.

Clinical area	Numbers waiting to be called for treatment (fillings) (6th class)
Ballyshannon	58
Dungloe	146
Letterkenny	490
Donegal Town	210
Carndonagh	5
Buncrana	512
Falcarragh	30
Total	1451

Rather than a waiting list system the HSE Dental Services has traditionally operated as a targeted, school-linked service, whereby children in specific primary school classes are targeted for an oral health assessment and for primary care treatment arising there from. Children are eligible for emergency oral health care up to the eve of their 16th birthday. The provision of this service is a statutory requirement for the HSE but the number of children and cohorts examined are dependent on the available resources at any given time. At present emphasis is placed on the provision of routine dental care for the children in 6th class and is provided irrespective whether the child has a medical card or not.



The HSE Dental Services in Donegal has operated with a significant shortfall of dentists for a number of years, and have now commenced actively recruiting vacant posts in the Donegal Dental Services.

Donegal Dental Services are fully committed to providing oral health to children, however it is important to note that the services must be delivered within the resource allocation and funding available, with the level of activity and associated costs being managed in a way that ensures people with the greatest need are supported within overall expenditure of the delivery of the service while not exceeding the available funding allocated.

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

Yours sincerely

Aisling O'Neill
Acting Head of Service
Ceannasaí Seirbhíse, Cúram Príomhúil
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