



13/05/2025

Deputy Paul Donnelly  
Dáil Éireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ Number:** 24289/25

**Question:** To ask the Minister for Health the number of WTE consultant ophthalmologists working in the public health service; her plans to expand this number; and the international recommended best practice ratio for ophthalmologists to population and current ratios.

Dear Deputy Donnelly,

Please see below total number of Consultants by Headcount and WTE working in Ophthalmology at December 2024:

- **Current HSE Consultant Workforce:**

Medical Discipline	Headcount	WTE
Medical Ophthalmology	15	13.8
Ophthalmic Surgery	69	56.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>69.9</b>

Source: DIME, December 2024

- **Future Expansion Plans:**

The National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology (NCPO) is currently reconfiguring service delivery to align with the Model for Care for Ophthalmology.

As part of this process, the HSE and NCPO have identified future consultant demand and are finalising plans for increased training output to supply this demand.

This work will be published in the coming months, where future workforce demand estimates will be available, in conjunction with a roadmap to reach these targets.

Source: [Model of Care for Ophthalmology - HSE.ie](#)

- **International Best-Practice:**

There is no currently accepted international best practice population ratio, as models of eye care are significantly different across different jurisdictions.

- **Population Ratios:**

As of December 2024, the consultant/population ratio (in WTE) for HSE-funded services was approx. the following:

Medical Discipline	WTE per 100k population
Medical Ophthalmology	0.26

Ophthalmic Surgery	1.05
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<b>Total</b>	<b>1.31</b>
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Sources: DIME, December 2024. [CSO Population and Labour Force Projections 2023-2057 – Scenario M2](#)

Yours sincerely,

Leah O'Toole

Assistant National Director