



Oifig na Bainisteoir Limistéir Chomhtháite
Cúraim Sláinte Chorcaí Thuaidh agus
Thoir.

FSS Iardheiscirt, Áras na Ceachan, Páirc
Ghnó agus Teicneolaíochta, Bóthar na Modh
Feirme, Corcaigh

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21st October 2025

John Paul O'Shea, TD
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 54436/25

"To ask the Minister for Health for a detailed breakdown of waiting lists for ophthalmology services in Cork; and if she will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy O'Shea,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for the Minister for Health for response.

As of July 2024, all elective and emergency eye care services in Cork have been moved to a new, dedicated centre at the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital. This new unit also works in conjunction with the Regional Medical Eye Care Service, which provides community-based eye services from the Primary Community Care Centre in Ballincollig.

WAITING LISTS

Inpatient Daycare (No.s without a procedure date as at 1.10.2025)

	0 – 3 Mths	3 – 6 Mths	6 – 9 Mths	9 – 12 Mths	12 – 15 Mths	15 – 18 Mths	18 – 24 Mths	24 – 36 Mths	Total
Ophthalmology Active WL	436	123	7	4	1	2	3	1	577

Outpatient Waiting List

Status	0-3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	12-15 mths	15-18 mths	18-21 mths	21-24 mths	24-36 mths	36-48 mths	48+ mths	Total
No Appointment Date	1534	1206	793	704	733	499	350	247	611	176	0	6853
Has Appointment Date	299	56	16	11	13	25	12	25	54	19	9	539
TOTAL	1833	1262	809	715	746	524	362	272	665	195	9	7392



Paediatric Waiting List

The Paediatric Ophthalmology Service at Ballincollig Primary Care Centre currently has 1,254 children on its waiting list. This represents a significant reduction in waiting times following the relocation of services to the Ballincollig Primary Care Centre and the implementation of Modernised Care Pathways, supported by targeted investment in equipment and staffing.

All children on the waiting list are currently waiting less than 52 weeks and are being seen in a timely manner in accordance with clear prioritisation criteria with highest priority cases seen within 4-12 weeks.

The introduction this month of the grade of Orthoptist will also have a significant impact on current waitlist as this is a skilled post that has proved difficult to fill.

Waiting List Action Plan

As part of the framework of the national Waiting List Action Plan (WLAP) 2025, HSE South West management is pursuing several avenues to reduce waiting lists for ophthalmology services. These efforts are designed to align with and contribute to the national WLAP and Sláintecare goals.

Key initiatives for ophthalmology include:

- **Centralisation of services:** All elective and emergency eye care services are now centralised at the new unit at SIVUH. This aims to streamline and improve the efficiency of care.
- **Community-based care:** The SIVUH unit works with the Regional Medical Eye Care Service in Ballincollig, which provides a range of community-based services. This model is designed to deliver care in primary settings, freeing up hospital resources for more complex cases.
- **Addressing paediatric waiting lists:** In early 2025, an initiative was launched to reduce extended waiting times for children needing ophthalmology appointments.
- **Waiting list management:** Officials at SIVUH are actively managing their outpatient and inpatient waiting lists. They encourage patients to promptly cancel or reschedule appointments they cannot attend to ensure resources are used as efficiently as possible.



As a result of these initiatives wait times have improved across all patient types, moving closer to the 5.5-month weighted average target:

- **Outpatient:** The average wait time has decreased by 1.9 months, from 12.8 to 10.9 months.
- **Inpatient:** A significant 2.1 month improvement reduced the average wait time from 3.4 to 1.3 months.
- **Day Case:** The average wait time was reduced by 0.5 months, from 2.4 to 1.9 months.
- Sláintecare targets also showed positive momentum:
- **Outpatient Waitlist:** The number of patients waiting more than 10 weeks was reduced by 1,645, from 7,503 in January to 5,858 in October 2025.
- **Outpatient Compliance:** Compliance improved by 6.6%, reaching 20.7% by October 2025.
- **Inpatient Compliance:** This category saw the largest improvement, with compliance increasing by 26%, from 61.5% to 87.5%.
- **Day Case Compliance:** Compliance saw a 3.7% increase, rising to 75.2%.

HSE South West Management is continuing to pursue all options to improve patient access to ophthalmology services and reduce waiting times in Cork.

Yours sincerely,

Sonya Cotter

Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East

HSE South West