



27th January 2021

Deputy Róisín Shortall,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 3935/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on a waiting list to see a community ophthalmic physician by CHO and age category; and the breakdown by the length of time they have been waiting in tabular form.

- Róisín Shortall

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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 spread of COVID-19 is posing significant challenges for many service areas, including all Therapy Services. In light of these unprecedented challenges together with the Government's guidance on social distancing and on 'Cocooning' for those aged over 70, the HSE has had to reassess its operation of Community Therapy Services nationally, to ensure that the assessed needs of those clients with the highest priority are met.

As a result of the national effort across all Community Healthcare Organisations throughout the country, some aspects of normal monthly reporting have been delayed. Please find attached Appendix 1 which contains, in tabular form, details of the waiting lists in Ophthalmology as of December 2020, which is the latest available data at this time.

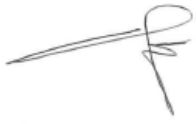
Please note the list of areas at the bottom of the Appendix which did not return data, as some areas were not in a position to return data due to staff being redeployed to Covid-19 related duties. Please also note that because of this the overall accuracy of the waiting list data is impacted.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring therapy services, and to reduce long waiting times for these important services.

As this is an evolving and unprecedented situation, the HSE will keep matters in review and will advise clients and/or family members accordingly.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TJ Dunford', written on a light-colored background.

TJ Dunford,
Interim Head of Operations Primary Care/A.N.D.
Community Operations