



26th February, 2024

Deputy Darren O'Rourke, TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 6159/24

To ask the Minister for Health the number of WTE staff members required to sufficiently staff an ophthalmology department within model 4 Hospitals.

Dear Deputy O'Rourke,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Ophthalmology on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

A regional ophthalmology tertiary care service provides acute and elective inpatient and ambulatory care with 24/7 access to emergency eye services for the management of all urgent presentations.

The service is delivered by an eye team consisting of consultant medical and surgical ophthalmologists, supported by non-consultant hospital doctors (NCHDs), nurses, optometrists and orthoptists. The skill mix and number of personnel/staff required varies according to regional resources and population size, to ensure that all acute medical and surgical ophthalmological emergencies are managed within an appropriate time frame.

The cost of examination, imaging and operating equipment, together with the distinct and separate skill mix of the multidisciplinary team (MDT) is such that the regional eye services are concentrated in 7 separate sites around the country, which may or may not be located on the site of a model 4 hospital. This enables the efficiency and safety of the service provided, the concentration of medical and nursing specialist expertise and optimises the service delivery by the specialist team to all linked hospitals.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Anne Horgan
General Manager

