

29th February, 2024

Mr. David Stanton, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 9628/24

“To ask the Minister for Health if he is aware of any new dental patients who are medical card holders finding it difficult to locate a dentist in the Cork area who will accept them as patients; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Stanton,

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 for Health for response.

The Primary Care Dental Service provides dental treatment to eligible children, medical card holders, adults and children with special needs and others in the care of the HSE at various locations throughout Cork and Kerry. Children under 16 years of age are treated in HSE dental clinics and adults are treated by private dental practitioners contracted to the Health Services under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS).

Adults medical card holders are eligible for routine dental care, from private General Dental Practitioners (GDP's) contracted to the Health Services, under the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS). The range of dental treatment available under the scheme is limited. However, people who are categorised as high risk, for example: adults with specified medical conditions, or special care needs, can avail of more extensive dental treatment.

Currently there are particular issues with the operation of Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS). This issue is a nationwide problem and is not unique to the Cork area. A significant number of private GDP's have resigned from the scheme. Many others are still participating in the 'scheme' but have restricted access to existing patients only and are not taking on new patients.

However, there are still a significant number of private General Dental Practitioners (GDP's) fully operating the scheme in Cork City and County. But some of these GD's may have waiting periods, for appointments, for new patients. A list of the dentists remaining in the Dental Treatment Services Scheme can be obtained from the HSE Dental Clinic, St. Finbarr's Hospital, Cork on 021 4923248 or 021 4923333.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Priscilla Lynch
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare