

5th March, 2024

Mr. Thomas Gould, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 9673/24

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients seen in SouthDoc, Blackpool in January 2024, January 2023 and January 2022, respectively, in tabular form."

Dear Deputy Gould,

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.

Please see below total number of patients seen in SouthDoc Blackpool in January 2022 – January 2024 as requested.

Total number of patients seen in SouthDoc Blackpool			
	January 2022	January 2023	January 2024
No. of Patients seen in Blackpool	1469	1466	394

When a patient initiates contact with SouthDoc, an electronic medical record is created which documents the patient's details, clinical category and ensures the safe progression through the service. This facilitates safe consultations. The advent of telemedicine has provided an additional access opportunity for patients to the service. Teleconsultations are available regardless of the location of the patient. At the conclusion of each consultation, the patient's medical record is forwarded electronically to the patient's own GP thus ensuring continuity of care. There is also interchangeability between all SouthDoc treatment centres to ensure the safe provision of patient care and this includes The Blackpool Treatment Centre

SouthDoc provides and continues to be committed to the continuation of the provision of the Out of Hours service in Blackpool. SouthDoc continues to provide care and access to care to the out of hours services in the area. Blackpool Treatment Centre continues to be available to patients by appointment only, and there are no plans to alter the availability of this centre from service and/or for when in-person consultations are deemed clinically necessary by a Doctor.

It is important to emphasise that if an individual in the Blackpool area requires care, that care will be provided by tele consult, appointment only either in the Blackpool Treatment Centre, Kinsale Road Treatment Centre, or via Home Visit depending on clinical condition of the patient as assessed by the consulting Doctor.

In summary, the SouthDoc out of Hour's service remains available to all patients and full access to the services provided by them. The SouthDoc Treatment Centre in Blackpool will continue to be available by appointment only for in-person consultations.

Any patients that may require a Home Visit due to their clinical condition will be treated accordingly. That the volume of patients being treated in Blackpool Treatment Centre reflects the overall processing of patients, rather than any other service change. The Treatment Centres remains active and available and reflects patient needs

All patients continue to be dealt with by appointment only and this will remain unchanged.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Priscilla Lynch', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

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