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**30<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Deputy Duncan Smith, TD,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2**

**Ref: PQ ref 31789/24**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of children in Wicklow currently awaiting an appointment for ophthalmology, by waiting times, in tabular form. -Duncan Smith**

Dear Deputy Smith,

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 and Children for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The current waiting time for the Paediatric Ophthalmology Service in CH East is below. The Consultant-led Ophthalmology team has a hub in Dun Laoghaire with satellite clinics provided in Wicklow (East) and Dublin South East. The data is recorded collectively for CH East, and it is not possible to isolate data specific to Wicklow clients. Wicklow clients account for approximately 33% of the overall service figures shown in Table 1 below. All of the 254 Ophthalmology new paediatric clients currently awaiting an appointment have been either scheduled, or have been offered an appointment in line with the clinically appropriate timeframe for their condition (noted at triage).

Table 1 Paediatric Ophthalmology Service CH East (CHO 6) Dublin South East, Dun Laoghaire, Wicklow (East) June 2024 Number of New Paediatric Ophthalmology Patients waiting for treatment by wait time. Wait time to access a new appointment is counted from date of referral to last day of reporting month (i.e. 30 <sup>th</sup> of June, 2024)			
	0-4 Years	5-17 years	Total 0-17
0-12 weeks	56	76	132
12-26 weeks	33	47	80
26-39 weeks	14	15	29
39-52 weeks	4	1	5
>52weeks	5	3	8
		Total	254



There is no waiting list for new patients to access the Consultant-led Ophthalmology service in Wicklow. Due to the nature of eye care, all referrals are triaged by an Orthoptist or a Clinical Optometrist according to their Clinical Prioritisation Category (CPC) as set out below.

**Paediatrics - New Patients (all areas Wicklow, Dublin South East and Dublin South)**

	P1 Urgent	P2 Semi-urgent	P3 Routine
Recommended timeframe to be seen from date of triage	3 months	6 months	12 Months

A recent analysis of the long waiters in paediatric ophthalmology in CH East noted;

- 1. There was no waiting list to access care.** All new patients are offered a new patient appointment in line with their Clinical Prioritisation Category (P1, P2, P3)
- 2. Did Not Attend / Can Not Attend Appointment Offered** – Parents/Guardians of children with longer recorded waiting times was due to having their appointment rescheduled as they could not/ or did not attend the appointment initially offered.
- 3. Hospital Discharges** - The Primary Care Eye Team receives new referrals for continued care from clients who have been discharged from the care of a hospital to the community Ophthalmology service. In such instances a child may be referred and listed for a review appointment in one years' time (clinically appropriate timeframe for their first new appointment)

Community Healthcare East is committed to ongoing review of clients who Can Not Attend and Did Not Attend to improve client access to care.

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,  
Adrienne Doherty

General Manager  
**Primary Care**