



Stiúrthóir Rochtana
Oifig an Stiúthóra Náisiúnta um Rochtain
agus Imeascadh

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Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2.

19th September 2024

PQ 33960/24- To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons awaiting outpatient eye care appointments at present; the steps being taken to reduce this waiting list; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Éamon Ó Cuív

Dear Deputy Ó Cuív,

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.

Response:

In relation to your request above, The NTPF currently collects and collates information in respect of the Inpatient, Day Case, Planned Procedure (IDPP) and Outpatient (OP) Waiting Lists. Numbers are published each month and cover the period December 2014 to date. Their website can be found at <https://www.ntpf.ie/home/nwld.htm> which include Ophthalmology/eye care waiting lists.

Work is underway across hospital, community and integrated services to improve access for Patients to outpatient eye care.

Over the past 2 years, and as part of the Waiting List Action Plan (WLAP), services have been assisted with once off funding to address waiting lists and improve access for patients. The WLAP 2024 identified ophthalmology as one of the specialties to focus specifically on improving access for those Patients waiting the longest period of time. As with many specialities, demand for ophthalmology has grown significantly over the past



five years and challenges services to meet both new and existing workloads as well as to reform and innovate how they are delivering care.

The model of care for ophthalmology and the Review of Primary Eye Care services report detail the expansion and reconfiguration of ophthalmology services to address the need to expand capacity to meet demand.

The Integrated Eye Care Teams led by Consultant Medical Ophthalmologists, supported by Optometrists, Orthoptists, Nurses, Technicians, Administrators and Managers are expanding specialty services in the Primary Care Centres. The teams, working in conjunction with clinicians based in the acute hospitals are addressing paediatric waiting lists and expanding adult services to include cataract pre and post-operative clinics, glaucoma, medical retina and laser clinics. Within the hospitals, cataract only theatres are being developed, where the uniformity of procedures being carried out, leads to an increased flow of patients.

The new integrated eye care teams have been set up in a number of CHOs and are continuing to be implemented nationally.

I trust that this answers your question.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Trish King'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the 'g'.

Trish King,
Access & Integration