



27 August 2010

Ms Mary Maguire  
Meetings Administrator  
Corporate Services Department  
South Dublin County Council  
County Hall  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24

Dear Ms Maguire

The Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney TD has asked me to thank you for your recent letter concerning changes to the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS).

The Government's decision to limit the funding available to the DTSS was made in view of the current position of the public finances and the 60% increase in expenditure in the DTSS over the past five years. The Health Service Executive (HSE) has introduced measures to contain DTSS expenditure at the 2008 level of approximately €63 million. There are no plans to reverse these changes.

Under the new measures the range of treatments available are being prioritised. These measures have been introduced to protect access to emergency dental care for medical card holders and to safeguard services for children and special needs groups. Services for high-risk patients and those requiring exceptional care continue to be available. The remaining care provision is subject to prior approval, which will be required from a clinician in the HSE, who will prioritise for:

- High risk and exceptional patients,
- Those requiring emergency care, and
- Patients who are considered to have greater clinical urgency and/or necessity in receiving care.

The HSE will monitor the ongoing effect of these changes from a clinical and budgetary perspective. The dental and oral health services currently provided through the HSE Public Dental Service will not be affected by these changes to the DTSS.

I trust that this clarifies the matter for you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Darragh Scully". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Yours sincerely".

Darragh Scully  
Private Secretary