

06/01/20

**Deputy James Browne**  
**Dail Eireann**  
**Dublin 2.**

PQ Number: 53495/19

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of psychiatric nurses entitled to retire as of 11 December 2019; the number of same entitled to retire within the next five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Browne,

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 find hereunder data relating to age profile of Mental Health Nursing staff. The most recent report is for December 2018. The age profile reporting system is usually refreshed once a year. This report will be refreshed using December 2019 data once the December 2019 census figures are available.

5 year age band by Division (Dec 2018)									
							Census Headcount DEC 2018	Census Headcount DEC 2018	Census Headcount DEC 2018
Division\ 5 Year Age Range	< 20	50 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 69	>70	Overall Result	> = 55	Overall Result
Mental Health		630	634	262	37	5	5,112	938	5,112

The usual retirement age in contracts of employment is 65. Many have provisions for early retirement from age 60, or in some cases from age 55, and most have provision for early retirement on health grounds. In some cases, there is a statutory retirement age. These retirement ages arise in jobs that are established by law and the law sets out the maximum age of staff.

For nurses/midwives who entered the Public Sector pre-April 1, 2004, normal retirement age is 60. For nurses/midwives who entered post April 1, 2004, it is 65.

There have been no changes to the rules regarding the retirement of mental health nurses - those employed pre-April 2004, covered under Section 66 of the 1945 Mental Treatment Act, can retire from age 55 onwards. Those employed post-April 2004 have a retirement age of 65 with no doubling of service applying.

It is important to note that staff are not obliged to notify the employer (HSE) of their retirement plans prior to making an official application for retirement.

It is recognised that there is a current shortage of trained mental health staff nationally and evidence would suggest that this trend is not unique to Ireland, but is reflected within the European context [Deloitte, 2017]

The 2018 report of the Mental Health Workforce Planning Group examined the areas of (i) current supply and demand, and (ii) future supply requirements in accordance with emerging population and health service needs.

Please see link hereunder to report for ease of access

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/resources/workforce-planning-report-mhs.pdf>

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,



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Sinead Reynolds  
General Manager Mental Health Services