



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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29th December 2020

Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: mark.ward@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Ward,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ 44453/20

To ask the Minister for Health if all HSE disability services staff that were redeployed to other duties during the lockdown have now fully returned to their own team and operational; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response.

In preparing for and responding to COVID-19 and to fully align with Public Health guidance as recommended via the NPHET, the HSE and its partner service providers put in place a range of measures. These included the prioritisation of vital residential and home support services whilst curtailing or closing certain services such as day services, as well as certain clinical supports in order to; a) prioritise essential public health services at CHO level and b) ensure continued delivery of the referenced residential and home supports provision.

Effective redeployment of health service employees was a core element of the response in the HSE to COVID-19. Hospital groups and Community Health Organisations (CHOs) temporarily redeployed staff to support their business continuity plans, emerging services developing in direct response to COVID 19 and in response to the health and availability of staff in their own organisations.

Having said that, some services continued with therapists working with service users and their families remotely and using technology in new and effective ways.

In the same way corporate and national services, together with Tusla, also made staff available to support the overall HSE effort during this time.

The HSE's National HR-Strategic Workforce Planning and Intelligence Unit collects information regarding the redeployment of some grades of staff. Many grades and categories of staff were redeployed and some continue to be redeployed to other services such as contact tracing and testing.

In relation to Disability Day Services, locations reopened in August 2020 and at that time there was still a significant number of day service staff redeployed. Early in October, an additional €7.5m funding

was received from DOH to fund 605 posts to enable day service staff to return to day service locations and still maintain the continuity of residential services.

In November 2020 it was confirmed that the funding allocated for these 605 posts would continue for 2021.

Recruitment is being advanced in regard to these posts and it is expected that almost 200 of these posts will be filled by end of December 2020 with the remaining posts due to be filled in the first quarter of 2021.

The positive impact of these posts is already evident with an increase in the quantum of service being provided to existing day service users. At the end of September, service users were in receipt of in excess of 40% of their original service and by end of November this had increased to 53%. It is anticipated that when all 605 posts are filled, services will have resumed to in excess of 60%.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Cathal Morgan,
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations**