



25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Deputy David Cullinane,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 21135/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of recruiting and retaining one occupational therapist; the number needed to adequately staff health services and to identify the areas of need; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**PQ 21136/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of recruiting and retaining one physiotherapist; the number needed to adequately staff health services and to identify the areas of need; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**-David Cullinane**

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The estimated cost of recruiting an additional Occupational Therapist (Grade Code 3298) is €51,936 per annum, and the estimated cost of recruiting an additional Physiotherapist (Grade Code 314X) is €53,353 per annum.

These estimates were provided by the National Pay Unit of the National Finance Division and are calculated using the mid-point of the January 2020 HSE pay scales. From this, an average annual fully burdened salary is calculated (i.e. including average premium and employers PRSI) for the Grade and position noted. It is also adjusted upwards to take into account 2020 pay awards and pay cost pressures and includes the 2% pay increase due in October 2020.

In addition to the pay costs above it is reasonable to assume that there are other non-pay costs associated with the recruitment process i.e. advertising, interview boards, possible travel expenses etc. which would also be incurred. There may also be ancillary support services associated with new posts arising from the implied additional activity that would be undertaken as a result of the increased number of staff. Some of these services may be drawn from existing cost pools however there may be incremental costs incurred i.e. facilities costs, admin support, medical support teams etc. These have not been included in the estimates above.

The estimated annual pay costs of employing additional staff must be considered in this context.

The Occupational Therapist is a core member of the multidisciplinary Primary Care Team who aim to support independence and good quality of life within the home and the community. They work with clients of all ages, their families and carers, to regain, maintain or improve their physical, mental and social care abilities, enabling them to reach their full potential by re-learning skills, assessment and adaptation of the home, improving ability to take in and utilise information, exploring leisure or work needs and providing education on the use of enabling equipment.

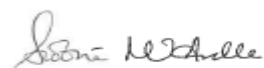
The Physiotherapist is a core member of the Primary Care Team concerned with human function and movement, maximising potential, restoring well-being to people following injury, pain or disability. Based in the community, they work with clients of all age groups and uses mainly physical means such as exercise, manipulation, mobilisation, massage and electrical modalities to help patients, improve independence and achieve their full potential

The Capacity review 2018 emphasised a requirement for greatly increased levels of investment in primary and community-based care and added impetus to health and wellbeing initiatives. The “future state” analysis still shows an estimated requirement for a 47% increase in the next 15 years in primary care workforce (including GPs). Workforce was considered to be a critical limiting factor, especially given existing challenges in recruiting and retaining primary care staff

There is approximately 523 Occupational Therapists and 558 Physiotherapists employed in the Primary Care/Community Care setting. In addition, there are Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists employed in other settings such as Mental Health Services, Disability Services, Older Persons Services and the Acute Hospital services or others with specialist expertise such as pulmonary rehabilitation, cardiac rehabilitation and paediatrics.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



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Siobhán McArdle,  
Head of Operations Primary Care,  
Community Operations