



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



Chief Operations Officer,
Saolta University Health Care Group,
Old Nurses Home,
University Hospital,
Newcastle Road.
Galway.
Tel: 091 893800

Rose Conway-Walsh T.D.
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

14th December 2021

PQ62840/21 To ask the Minister for Health the number of clinical staff vacancies by staff grade currently for each hospital in the Saolta Hospital Group; the length of time of each vacancy; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Conway-Walsh,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question/Public Representation which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The Saolta University Health Care Group has clinical staff vacancies across all grades to varying degrees. Vacancy levels fluctuate throughout the year as a result of creation of new posts, retirement, maternity leave, career breaks, promotion and staff leaving to take up positions elsewhere.

The largest level of vacancies remains with nursing staff. Recruitment of nursing staff is a significant challenge both nationally and internationally. Across the six hospitals there are just over 600 unfilled nursing and midwifery posts. Nursing staffing levels across all our hospital sites, and the improvement of these levels, is a priority for the Saolta group. In the 12 month period up to October 2021, the Saolta group increased its nursing/midwifery workforce by more than 200 WTE. This is an increase of 5.3%. The group is also actively progressing a significant overseas nursing recruitment campaign with a strong intention to have additional resources coming into the service within months. Interviews are ongoing at present with an expected arrival date of January 2022 for the first group of recruits. These nurses will be on site from their arrival with an adaptation programme being facilitated by the Saolta Group.

The next largest level of vacancies lies with Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCPs) including Radiography, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy and Laboratory. There are just over 150 vacancies in these categories across the Group. Recruitment campaigns are ongoing.

With regard to Medical/Dental, there are approximately 45 vacancies across the Group. Again, recruitment campaigns are ongoing.

The length of vacancy of posts can vary due to a number of factors including occupational health clearance, Garda clearance, work permits and overseas clearance.

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

Yours sincerely,



**Ann Cosgrove,
Chief Operations Officer,
Saolta University Health Care Group**