

BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Holly Cairns

Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Date: 18th March 2021

PQ 11597/21- To ask the Minister for Health the number of staff in each public health department; the number of public health doctors on a monthly basis between 1 January 2020 and 1 February 2021, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cairns,

As of 12.03.2021, the HSE has eight Departments of Public Health resourced with 47.4 WTE Specialists in Public Health Medicine (SPHM) and Directors of Public Health (DPH) and a total staffing of 421.8WTE (permanent and temporary surge capacity) as follows:

Department of Public Health	SPHM (WTE)	DPH (WTE)	Total Staffing (WTE) as at 12.03.2021
East	8.4	3.0	94.8
South East	4.6	1.0	43.1
North East	3.1	1.0	55.1
Midlands	4	1.0	39.3
Midwest	4	1.0	47.4
North West	1.5	1.0	29.1
West	6.3	1.0	55.2
South	5.5	1.0	57.8
Total	47.4		421.8

Each Department of Public Health is led by a Director of Public Health. To strengthen the clinical governance within the East, which has been the epicentre of the pandemic with complexities due to urbanicity and ports of entry, three Directors of Public Health have been appointed to lead teams aligned to each of the CHO areas. I have sought data in tabular format as requested but it is not available.

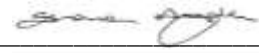
The pandemic has created a highly competitive recruitment environment in a historically very limited pool of specialised medical professionals. There is ongoing advertising and a candidate engagement strategy in place to aid candidate attraction, including recent targeted promotion of Specialist posts in the British Medical Journal. Until such time as the permanent positions are filled through the required competitive processes, temporary resourcing has been deployed via internal HSE redeployment and rehiring retired Specialists in Public Health Medicine.

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Through the Public Health Pandemic Plan, the Departments of Public Health have received significant investment of €10.5m in 2021 to recruit circa 170 WTE permanent staff across all grades which is underway.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharon Hayden", written over a horizontal line.

Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO