



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.

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April 9<sup>th</sup> 2021,  
Deputy Michael Fitzmaurice  
Dail Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ Number: 15465/21**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of approved psychiatric nursing posts by speciality as per A Vision for Change recommendations; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael Fitzmaurice**

Dear Deputy Fitzmaurice,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Psychiatric Nursing offers a comprehensive career pathway from Staff Nurse to Clinical Specialist or Advanced Practitioner, together with leadership roles in nursing management. All 2020 nursing interns on clinical placement have been offered permanent contracts. There are significant difficulties with both recruitment and retention in mental health nursing in Ireland. Specialist mental health services have additional difficulties attracting registered nurses as most undergraduate nursing students nationally will not have a clinical experience in these specialist services during their preparation to be registered. Both CAMHS and Forensic services are working with higher education (HEI's) to increase undergraduate student exposure to their services. Given that few other countries prepare mental health nurses at undergraduate level; the international pool of nurses who are directly registerable with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland is low. Services have employed the services of a recruitment agency to target these countries with very limited results thus far. In preparation for international nurses the provision of adaptation and assessment is currently being explored.

While Vision for Change was very clear about the specified numbers of professionals that needed to be members of a mental health team, over time, the focus on numbers has become a barrier because of the issues described above. Problems arising from recruitment and retention are not specific to nursing. *Sharing the Vision* acknowledges these hurdles and proposes new ways of working that may support on-going service delivery in mental health. HSE continue to work with colleagues in the DoH and National Implementation Committee to look at how best to meet the individualized care of patients with mental health needs.



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## Mental Health Service Employment Report: February 2021

### Employment by Staff Group

Feb 2021 (Dec 2020 figure: 10,301)	WTE Jan 2021	WTE Feb 2021	WTE change since Jan21	% change since Jan21	WTE change since Dec20	WTE change since Feb20
Nurse/ Midwife Manager	1,248	1,239	9	0.7%	1	+38
Nurse/ Midwife Specialist & AN/MP	525	526	+1	+0.3%	3	+57
Staff Nurse/ Staff Midwife	3,095	3,104	+9	+0.3%	+28	+65
<i>Preregistration Nurse/ Midwife Intern</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>+93</i>	<i>+147.7%</i>	<i>+128</i>	<i>+16</i>
<i>Preregistration Nurse Intern (COVID19)</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>30.2%</i>	<i>+18</i>	<i>+18</i>
<i>Postregistration Nurse/ Midwife Student</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>				<i>+1</i>
<i>Nursing/ Midwifery awaiting registration</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>20.1%</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>26</i>
Nursing/ Midwifery Student	94	177	+84	+89.6%	+118	+9
Nursing/ Midwifery other	30	29	0	1.1%	2	1
<b>Nursing &amp; Midwifery</b>	<b>4,991</b>	<b>5,075</b>	<b>+84</b>	<b>+1.7%</b>	<b>+140</b>	<b>+168</b>

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

Yours sincerely,

Thomas O'Brien  
General Manager Mental Health Services