

31st March 2021

Deputy Sean Sherlock,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 17381/21

“To ask the Minister for Health the psychology staffing figures by grade staff, senior and principal across each CHO4 specialist adult mental health team; the population served by each team; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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.

Community Mental Health Teams comprise of a multi-disciplinary team the nature of which is designed to ensure that service users are offered care and treatment for moderate to severe and often complex mental illness that requires a range of disciplines, skills and perspectives.

The strategic development of services is informed by our national mental health policy A Vision for Change and Connecting for Life: Ireland’s National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020. In relation to Adult Mental Health Services, Vision for Change outlines that the precise number of mental health professionals may vary in discipline according to the particular requirements of the sector population. Specific clinicians will often combine a number of skills and fulfil a number of roles within the Community Mental Health Team. The following table outlines the psychology wte staffing assigned to each community mental health team across Mental Health Services, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and the population size of the sectors served.

Team	Population size	Senior WTE	Basic WTE
City North East	28,094	0.5	1
City North West	28,943	0.9	0.6
Cobh/Glenville	38,790	0	1.5
Midleton/Youghal	53,863	0	1.6
Blarney/Macroom	42,416	0	1.5
Kanturk	19,826	0	1
Mallow/Charleville	39,405	0	2
Fermoy/Mitchelstown	33,495	0	0.8
Mahon/Blackrock	30,661	0.8	1
Douglas/Carrigaline	61,194	0.5	2

Team	Population size	Senior WTE	Basic WTE
Togher/Ballyphehane	25,104	0	1
Bishopstown/Ballincollig	44,247	0.9	1.6
Bandon/Kinsale	39,778	0	1.8
West Cork	57,052	1	1.6
Tralee	32,660	0.6	
Killarney	28,697	0.5	0.5
Dingle Castleisland	25,543	1	
South Kerry	29,629	0.5	
Listowel	31,178		1

At all times Mental Health Services strives to ensure that the staff profile and skill mix appropriately meets the needs of all service users. I can confirm that there has been approval to cover reduction of hours (e.g. parental leave) which has resulted in capacity to create temporary posts which in turn maximises service provision. There is currently 1 vacancy in North Cork and 1 senior post in North Lee east both of which are in the process of recruitment.


In addition to the psychology staff assigned to each of the sector based adult teams as outlined above, there are also a number of other specialty teams within Mental Health Services which provide a service and which would have psychology staff assigned to them. These specialist teams include Psychiatry of Later Life, Early Intervention Psychosis Open Dialogue, Rehab, Mental Health Intellectual Disability and Home Based Treatment Teams.

There are three Principal Psychologist's Specialists in adult mental health that report to the Principal Psychology Manager. They provide local operational governance by geographical location (one for North Cork and West Cork, one for North Lee and South Lee and one for Kerry). In addition to this governance role, the Principal Psychologists Specialist work clinically in specialist services (DBT and Personality Disorders, Early Intervention in Psychosis and Acute inpatient care respectively). A fourth Principal Psychologist Specialist appointment is pending recruitment via HBS in March 2020 which will further enhance governance support and clinical inputs in the region.

In relation to governance, the overall responsibility for Psychology Services for Adult and CAMHS falls under the management of the Area Principal Psychology Manager. He has strategic oversight of the service, takes a lead on service development and staff resourcing including the coordination of the 24 trainee psychologists funded in the Cork Kerry Area. These trainees rotate across the service and contribute to service provision in each of the community mental health teams under the supervision of senior and experience clinicians

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind Regards,



Mr Hugh Scully
A/General Manager
Mental Health Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare