



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Airgeadais
Feidhmeannacht na
Seirbhíse Sláinte
Seomra 125, Ospidéal
Dr. Steevens
BÁC 8

Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Health Service Executive
Room 125, Dr Steevens
Hospital
Dublin 8

16th April 2021

Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re PQ 17535 21: *To ask the Minister for Health the total and average number of agency staff employed in each hospital in each of the years 2018 to 2020, in tabular form.*

Dear Deputy Farrell,

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. Your PQ above has been referred to me for response.

I regret to inform you that the number of agency staff employed is not centrally recorded by the HSE. HSE agency staffing resources are collated on the basis of expenditure.

Please see Appendix 1 below, the table shows agency expenditure by HSE Statutory Acute Hospital that might be of assistance to you. The data was sourced from the HSE Consolidated Financial Intelligence System and is for HSE statutory acute hospital division services only. Please note that the 2020 data is draft only and is subject to change within the year end audit process. Please note in view of the fact that there are still currently numerous ledger systems in operation in the HSE, some differences in coding may arise.

The shortcomings in the HSE legacy financial systems are well acknowledged and their replacement by a single standard financial system for the Health Sector is at the core of the Finance Reform programme initiated by the Department of Health.

In 2020 the HSE sourced additional agency staff primarily to support the expansion of the workforce in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and also to support service delivery and COVID-19 response due to increased staff absence due to COVID-19. Due to the immediate nature of the unprecedented emergency, coupled with the additional strain already being felt by the HSE recruitment services, it was necessary to engage outside agencies to assist in this work.

Agency expenditure is under constant review and the reduction and control of agency costs continues to be a particular focus for the Health Service. The effective management of variable pay costs forms a major element of operational cost-containment plans and is subject to continuous review at the performance meetings held under the performance and accountability framework. However, it is important to note that in

addition to the specific critical response to the COVID-19 pandemic there are a variety of reasons driving agency demand. These include, but are not limited to the replacement of short term illness, maternity leave and challenges to recruiting and retaining Clinical health professionals whereby the balance between high cost and high risk to service quality and safety is struck through agency and overtime use to provide/maintain necessary services.

The HSE is committed to minimizing the use of Agency staff but recruitment and retention of Clinical, Nursing and other key staff is a constant challenge and impacts adversely on our ability to maintain safe and effective services. Agency staffing is also used to allow for flexible services designed to meet specific Service User needs, variation in activity and as required where there is a short term critical service need.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at sarah.anderson1@hse.ie or tel: 087 9423319.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Anderson
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Appendix 1 to PQ 17535 21

Table 1

HSE Acute Hospital Division Agency Staff Costs by Statutory Acute Hospital only for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020				
<i>HSE Statutory Services Only</i>				
Acute Hospital Division - Hospital Group/Hospital Name		2018	2019	*2020
		€000s	€000s	€000s
Acute Hospitals Division		152,166	161,323	162,587
RCSI Hospital Group	Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital	9,090	8,623	5,217
	Connolly Memorial Hospital	6,752	6,063	4,743
	Cavan Monaghan General Hospital	8,815	6,666	5,679
	Louth County Hospital	1,144	1,033	600
	Monaghan General Hospital	73	206	28
	RCSI Hosp Grp HQ	4	1	-1
Dublin-Midlands Hospital Group	St Luke's Hospital	1,139	1,030	789
	Tullamore General Hospital	8,250	9,334	8,578
	Naas General Hospital	8,427	10,893	8,931
	Portlaoise General Hospital	10,788	10,727	11,821
	Dublin Midland Hosp Grp HQ	55	1	
Ireland East Hospital Group	St Lukes Kilkenny	3,767	5,029	5,236
	St Columcilles General Hospital	2,856	2,123	3,288
	Mullingar General Hospital	8,847	9,979	12,376
	Wexford General Hospital	3,246	3,141	5,078
	Our Ladys Hospital Navan	5,554	5,927	5,776
South/South West Hospital Group	Mallow General Hospital	1,307	1,415	1,086
	Cork University Hospital	6,708	7,323	6,502
	Waterford Regional Hospital	7,131	6,318	8,276
	Kerry General Hospital	7,691	6,337	4,880
	South Tipp General	4,599	5,195	5,577
	Bantry General Hospital	1,911	2,203	2,236
	Kilcreene Orthopaedic Hospital	30	41	389
	Cork Univ Hosp - Maternity	772	951	770
	South/South West Hosp Grp HQ	47	229	23
Saolta University Healthcare Group	UCH Galway	3,946	4,391	4,502
	Sligo General Hospital	6,153	5,763	5,011
	Letterkenny General Hospital	6,896	7,904	7,391
	Mayo General Hospital	4,278	4,068	5,831
	Roscommon General Hospital	2,273	2,633	1,780
	Portiuncula Acute Hospital	3,929	3,849	4,952
	Saolta HQ	0	0	81
UL Hospital Group	University Hosp Lmk	11,002	16,102	19,257
	Ennis Hospital	2,042	2,347	2,746
	Nenagh Hospital	1,475	2,118	1,756
	University Mat Hosp	939	1,003	956
	Croom Hospital	128	158	259
Regional & National Services	Regional & National Services	102	198	189

Source : HSE Consolidated Financial Intelligence System (CFI)

***Note :** Please note 2020 figures are draft only and are subject to change within the year end audit process

Please note in view of the fact that there are still currently numerous ledger systems in operation in the HSE, some differences in coding may arise.