

***General Manager's Office
Letterkenny University Hospital, Letterkenny,
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14th December 2021

Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: PQ 59002.21

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of clinical staff vacancies by staff grade currently for Letterkenny University Hospital; the length of time of each vacancy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Pádraig Mac Lochlainn"

Dear Deputy,

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.

Letterkenny University Hospital 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. In Letterkenny University Hospital there are 127 unfilled nursing and midwifery posts. In the 12 month period up to October 2021, the Saolta group increased its nursing/midwifery workforce by more than 200 WTE, 86 of these were for Letterkenny University Hospital. 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.

In relation to the query regarding the average length of time it has taken in the last year to recruit a replacement for a vacancy, in LUH recruitment of staff can take approximately 3-5 months from advert stage to the candidate commencing employment. This time can vary depending on clearances from occupational health and overseas candidates. In relation to new posts, approval process can take approximately 1-2 months. However, for Consultants the length of time for approval can take 3-4 months as this process is governed by the Consultants Appointments Application Process. This time period does not take into account the recruitment process for Consultants which is processed by the Consultant Appointments Unit.



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As majority of recruitment in LUH has been assigned back locally, there has been more flexibility in relation to advertising, knowledge of stage of clearances and HR processes

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

Yours Sincerely,

**Seán Murphy
General Manager
Letterkenny General Hospital**