



Pleanáil agus Faisnéis Straitéiseach d'Fhórsa
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19 October 2021

Deputy David Cullinane

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2

PQ 48042/21: To ask the Minister for Health the number of staff of the 14,700 announced in Budget 2022 which have been hired; the revised target for year-end; the breakdown of on-boarded staff by grade and section; the number recruited for Covid-19 test and trace services; the number hired on a permanent and indefinite basis; and the number hired on a temporary and fixed-term basis.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question in relation to staffing numbers part of which was forwarded to the Health Services Executive (HSE) by the Department of Health for direct reply.

Throughout 2020 and now in 2021, the Health Service, in its response to the national COVID-19 Pandemic, has and is continuing to deliver on a significantly ambitious recruitment and resourcing plan. Under NSP 2021 alone, an additional 16,000 WTE was approved, beyond the December 2019 reported employment levels. This, however, excluded any workforce requirement to manage a national vaccination rollout and further COVID-19 surge beyond level 3 measures, both of which have come to fruition for delivery in 2021.

Notwithstanding this most ambitious recruitment target in the history of the health service, and the delivery of a robust resourcing strategy, that saw substantial increases in recruitment capacity and capability, the combined impacts of the Q1 2021 COVID-19 surge, the vaccination rollout, and criminal cyber-attack, have collectively required the delivery of a substantial workforce resourcing response.

Under normal circumstances the Health Service has demonstrated capacity to deliver on average, an additional 3,500 WTE over recent years. This is inclusive of the requirement to grow at this level, whilst also maintaining existing employment levels notwithstanding an underlying average of 6%-7% staff turnover rate. This, requires in the order of 8,000 additional recruits just to maintain staffing at current levels.

The Deputy will be interested to note that, Employment levels at the end of September 2021, show there were 130,636 WTE (equating to 150,115 personnel) directly employed in the provision of Health & Social Care Services by the HSE and the various Section 38 hospitals & agencies. This figure represents a 10,819 (+9.0%) increase over the December 2019 outturn.

In addition to the unprecedented growth in direct health service employment levels since December 2019, there has been further resources amounting to over 3,200 staff recruited through external partners for vaccination, test and contact tracing. Undoubtedly the health service has delivered on a significant programme of workforce resourcing in the pandemic period to date with in excess of 14,000 additional resources already in place. However, as noted above, this workforce is a combination of resources recruited to meet the collective demands of the NSP 2021, the response to the Q1 covid-19 surge, the national vaccination rollout and the criminal cyber-attack. The latter three of which were not encompassed by the NSP or NSP resourcing strategy 2021. Consequently, the health service has undertaken a review of its planned recruitment target for 2021, with a revised projection from 30 May to year- end of 4,076 additional WTE, to reflect the requirements for the range of initiatives under NSP 2021 to year-end. The revised December 2021 target for directly employed staff is now set at 133,544 WTE.

Details by care group (section) and by staff group, as requested, for December 2019 and 2020, together with the latest available figures (September 2021) are as follows:

Staff Category /Group	WTE Dec 2019	WTE Sep 2021	WTE change since Dec 2019	% change since Dec 2019	No. Dec 2019	No. Sep 2021	No. change since Dec 2019
Total Health Service	119,817	130,636	+10,819	+9.0%	137,770	150,115	+12,345
Medical & Dental	10,857	12,017	+1,159	+10.7%	11,607	12,921	+1,314
Consultants	3,250	3,560	+310	+9.5%	3,564	3,913	+349
Registrars	3,679	4,100	+420	+11.4%	3,771	4,253	+482
SHO/ Interns	3,116	3,560	+443	+14.2%	3,165	3,635	+470
Medical/ Dental, other	812	798	-14	-1.7%	1,107	1,120	+13
Nursing & Midwifery	38,205	40,983	+2,778	+7.3%	43,861	47,336	+3,475
Nurse/ Midwife Manager	7,984	8,694	+710	+8.9%	8,760	9,562	+802
Nurse/ Midwife Specialist & AN/MP	1,996	2,427	+431	+21.6%	2,257	2,734	+477
Staff Nurse/ Staff Midwife	25,693	27,072	+1,379	+5.4%	29,816	31,218	+1,402
Public Health Nurse	1,537	1,527	-10	-0.6%	1,845	1,849	+4
Nursing/ Midwifery Student	644	922	+278	+43.2%	796	1,581	+785
Nursing/ Midwifery other	350	339	-11	-3.1%	387	392	+5
Health & Social Care Professionals	16,774	18,614	+1,840	+11.0%	19,219	21,688	+2,469
Therapy Professions	5,234	5,771	+537	+10.3%	6,068	6,774	+706
Health Science/ Diagnostics	4,500	4,894	+394	+8.8%	5,024	5,466	+442
Social Care	2,710	3,050	+340	+12.6%	3,214	3,565	+351
Social Workers	1,165	1,265	+100	+8.6%	1,309	1,445	+136
Psychologists	1,004	1,079	+75	+7.5%	1,144	1,264	+120
Pharmacy	1,038	1,250	+212	+20.4%	1,170	1,409	+239
H&SC, Other	1,123	1,306	+183	+16.3%	1,290	1,765	+475
Management & Administrative	18,846	21,198	+2,352	+12.5%	21,082	23,576	+2,494
Management (VIII & above)	1,842	2,121	+279	+15.2%	1,893	2,191	+298
Administrative/ Supervisory (V to VII)	5,199	6,430	+1,231	+23.7%	5,595	6,907	+1,312
Clerical (III & IV)	11,805	12,647	+842	+7.1%	13,594	14,478	+884
General Support	9,416	10,059	+643	+6.8%	10,914	11,562	+648
Support	8,234	8,870	+636	+7.7%	9,696	10,332	+636
Maintenance/ Technical	1,182	1,189	+6	+0.6%	1,218	1,230	+12
Patient & Client Care	25,719	27,766	+2,047	+8.0%	31,087	33,032	+1,945
Health Care Assistants	17,396	19,166	+1,770	+10.2%	19,992	22,089	+2,097
Home Help	3,569	3,526	-43	-1.2%	5,712	5,170	-542
Ambulance Staff	1,828	1,909	+82	+4.5%	1,874	1,997	+123
Care, other	2,926	3,164	+238	+8.1%	3,509	3,776	+267

Division	WTE Dec 2019	WTE Sep 2021	WTE change since Dec 2019	% change since Dec 2019	No. Dec 2019	No. Sep 2021	No. change since Dec 2019
Total Health Service	119,817	130,636	+10,819	+9.03%	137,770	150,115	+12,345
Acute Services	62,537	69,247	+6,710	+10.73%	69,969	78,079	+8,110
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Community Health & Wellbeing		167	+167	-100.00%		198	+198
Mental Health	9,954	10,377	+423	+4.25%	10,859	11,507	+648
Primary Care	10,599	12,205	+1,605	+15.15%	12,749	14,718	+1,969
Social Care	31,535	32,916	+1,381	+4.38%	38,562	39,412	+850
Community Services	52,089	55,665	+3,577	+6.87%	62,170	65,835	+3,665
Health & Wellbeing	574	627	+54	+9.35%	648	689	+41
Corporate	3,035	3,739	+704	+23.20%	3,308	4,089	+781
Health Business Services	1,583	1,358	-225	-14.23%	1,675	1,423	-252
H&WB Corporate & National Services	5,191	5,724	+533	+10.26%	5,631	6,201	+570

Source: Health Service Personnel Census

Note 1: Health Sector staffing figures relate to direct employment levels as returned through the Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC) for the public health sector (HSE & Section agencies)

Note 2: Figures relating to service levels are expressed as whole-time equivalents (WTE) in order to take account of part-time working

The final quarter of any year normally sees the greatest level of growth following the qualification and registration of not only our pre-registration nursing and midwifery students on clinical placement but also other newly qualified health & social care professionals.

In relation to the final part of the Deputy's question, I wish to point out that many staff hold specified purpose or fixed term contracts, during training (i.e. many NCHDs, student nurses & midwives and Health & Social Care trainees or placement staff), as an interim measure including covid purposes, absence and maternity cover, service demands, filling vacancies etc. The proportion of staff recorded as having an indefinite duration (ID) i.e. permanent contracts at 30 September 2021 was 81% with the balance holding fixed-term or specified purpose contracts.

The HSE conducts a monthly census of public health services employment across all services covering the HSE and Section 38 Voluntary Hospitals & Agencies. The Health Services Personnel Census (HSPC) is the official employment count for the public health sector and is routinely published at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/workforce-reporting/>.

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,



Des Williams

General Manager