



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Catherine Connolly

Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

17/09/2021

PQ 43639-21 – Deputy Catherine Connolly: To ask the Minister for Health the number of consultants in public health medicine employed to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Connolly,

Thank you for your representation.

In Q2 2021, the HSE, the Department of Health, and the Irish Medical Organisation reached agreement to the introduction of a fundamentally reformed and strengthened model for public health in Ireland in line with international best practice and the recommendations of the Crowe Horwath report and the establishment of the grade Consultant in Public Health Medicine for the first time in Ireland aligned to this model.

In line with this agreement, the 84 Consultant in Public Health Medicine posts will be established on a phased basis between June 2021 to December 2023:

- 34 priority posts in place by end June 2022, with priority focus on Health Protection and Regional Consultants;
- 30 posts in place by end June 2023
- 20 posts by end December 2023.

A Public Health Consultant Recruitment Working Group mobilised to progress documentation and approvals required to enable recruitment at pace of the first tranche of priority posts. In line with the HSE's statutory responsibilities under the Health Act 2004, all consultant posts require approval by the Consultant Application Advisory Committee. A parallel process has been agreed for all public health posts, until such time as the Health Act is amended to include consultants working outside hospital settings.

In line with this approval process, each post requires approval of a business cases, performance measures, a job specification, an indicative work plan, and confirmation of finance, prior to the issue by National HR of a Letter of Approval to commence recruitment for the post. While this process introduces a lead time to recruitment, it ensures that the significant investment made by the HSE in all consultant posts is optimised for the health system.

Campaigns for all 34 WTE posts are expected to be launched in Q3/4 2021, to have posts in place by June 2022 in line with the timelines agreed with the DoH and IMO. The campaign for the National Director of Public Health (1 WTE) is live and the campaign for the Area Directors of Public Health (6 WTE) is expected to launch in late September.

I hope this provides you with assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO