



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,  
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Deputy Mark Ward.  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

20<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**PQ Number: 60424/22**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of mental health support workers to be recruited by CHO area including trainee staff; the current number peer support workers employed by CHO area; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Deputy Mark Ward**

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Dear Deputy Ward,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The HSE are committed to the development of more recovery-oriented services as outlined in our national policy *'Sharing the Vision'* through the infusion of lived and recovery experience into the design, delivery and evaluation of our services. Peer support working is a key driver of this integration of lived experience into services. Peer Support Workers (PrSW) work directly with service users to support them in their recovery journey utilising their own experience to provide hope and offer practical support.

In 2017, the HSE introduced PrSW with their own direct lived experience on to a limited number of teams in selected areas as a learning initiative. In 2021, the HSE introduced family peer support workers with direct experience of supporting someone with a mental health challenge.

In November 2022, the Department of Health recognised peer support working as a formal role within the service and signed off on grade codes for entry-level PrSW and senior, Team Leader Peer Support Workers.

Over the past 2 years, further funding, has been secured, by the HSE through PFG to expand peer support working in our services. There are currently 59 funded WTE's for peer support working across HSE services. However, there has been some challenges in filling all these posts due to governance and other capacity challenges. However, the development of the senior Peer Support Worker Role and the grade codes should significantly address these issues facilitating strong recruitment of PrSW's in 2023.



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The table below outlines the current PrSW posts filled and vacant posts across the nine CHO areas.

CHO	PrSW employed WTE	Vacancy WTE	Family Peer support WTE in pace	Vacancy
1	2.0	1.5	0	1
2	7.5	0	4.0	0
3	1.5	2.5	0	1
4	3.0	2.0	0	1
5	4.0	0	2.0	0
6	1.0	2.0	0	1
7	1.0	2.0	0	1
8	0	3.0	0	1
9	4.0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

Following on from the creation and ratification of a new Team Leader Peer Support role, recruitment will take place for a Team Leader Role across all CHO's in 2023.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

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**Michael Ryan**  
**General Manager**  
**HSE Community Operations**  
**Mental Health Engagement and Recovery**