



Oifig um Cheannasaí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín
Luimneach
Teil: 061 483722

Office of the Head of Service for Primary Care
HSE Mid West Community Healthcare
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21st December 2022

Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare St., Dublin 2

Re.: PQ 61230/22 - “To ask the Minister for Health his plans to address the deficiency of vacancies being filled in the West Clare Primary Care Team and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Wynne,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

As advised in my response to PQ 60328/22, the Primary Care Teams (PCTs) in West Clare form part of the new Community Healthcare Network (CHN) i.e. the West Clare CHN. CHN1 covers West Clare, North Clare, Ennis town and surrounding areas. The population covered by the West Clare CHN is 70,652. I can also advise that Kilrush and Kilkee both have their own PCTs and both teams operate from Kilrush Health Centre.

I can also advise that the West Clare CHN was allocated an additional 19 new development posts, which included both clinical and administrative posts. These included the recruitment of a CHN Manager (1 WTE) and also a General Practitioner (GP) Lead (0.2 WTE). I can advise that 17 of these new development posts have been filled. The post of CHN Manager remains unfilled following unsuccessful recruitment campaigns in 2022, which means that the CHN is not yet operational, therefore, the staff within the PCTs still report directly to their individual service line managers. The post of GP Lead is currently being processed for filling.

Every Primary Care Team is made up of staff who provide the following core Primary Care services:

Occupational Therapy; Speech & Language Therapy; Physiotherapy; Social Work; Podiatry; Dietetics; Public Health Nursing.

I can advise that the following vacancies exist across the PCTs within the West Clare CHN:


Primary Care Service	Wholetime Equivalents (WTEs) vacant within CHN1	Length of time posts are vacant	Length of time vacancies have been advertised for:
Occupational Therapy	1.1 (0.6 parental leave)		Local arrangement in place to cover vacancy of 0.5 WTE
Speech & Language Therapy	0.8	12 months	Vacancy will be filled by February 2023.
Physiotherapy	1		New therapist starting 03/01/2023
Social Work	1	1 year	Recruitment on hold due to ongoing Industrial Relations issues

Please note that posts can be vacant for a number of reasons including difficulties in the recruitment/retention of staff and also staff on various leave types e.g. maternity leave, parental leave, sick leave etc.

There are ongoing recruitment campaigns across all disciplines which has facilitated the timely filling of frontline posts. We are very fortunate to have a number of live panels in place to support recruitment going forward.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,



Carmel McLaughlin
General Manager
Primary Care