



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

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14th July 2022

Deputy David Cullinane,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ 35345/22

To ask the Minister for Health the targeted domestic recruitment campaigns that are in place to hire staff for children's disability network teams; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35346/22

To ask the Minister for Health the targeted international recruitment campaigns that are in place to hire staff for children's disability network teams; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35347/22

To ask the Minister for Health if he is considering introducing a sponsorship programme for children's disability network teams; the way that such a programme would work; the estimated cost of rolling out such a programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35349/22

To ask the Minister for Health if he is considering the use of a relocation allowance to support any international recruitment campaigns aimed at filling vacant posts for children's disability network teams; the estimated cost of providing such an allowance; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

In 2021, the remainder of ninety-one multidisciplinary CDNTs were established to provide services and supports for all children with complex needs within a defined geographic area.

Since 2019, more than 475 development posts have been allocated to children's disability services across the country. These posts have been assigned based on a number of factors, including the existing ratio of staff to the number of children with disabilities in each area.



Work is ongoing on mapping specialised services and supports, and paediatric supports available and gap analysis for children with highly complex needs, in order to develop standardised approaches to integrated pathways of support for CDNTs and Primary Care staff.

A Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) Staff Census and Workforce Review was undertaken in October 2021 and a final report has been issued to the Department of Health and relevant stakeholders. This report has provided valuable information on the number of staff working in the CDNTs by discipline and grade and staff vacancies at a point in time. Vacancies continue to be tracked monthly.

This information is supporting targeted workforce planning by the HSE in consultation with the CDNT Lead Agencies to reinforce the skill mix of their teams to accommodate local population need.

Most of the disciplines working in CDNTs are similar to those working in other areas of the health services including Primary Care Services, Mental Health Services, Older Person Services and Acute Hospitals. The HSE experiences ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades.

There is an acknowledgement Nationally that there are challenges with the supply of therapists and this has required the following disciplines of staff to be placed on the Critical Skills Occupations List.

- Psychologist
- Dietician
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech and Language Therapist

The HSE continues to explore a range of options to enhance the recruitment and retention of essential staff across all aspects of the health services. This includes national and international recruitment campaigns, sponsorship programmes etc. In addition, the HSE is working collaboratively with the CDNT Lead Agencies at CHO level to market CDNTs as an employer of choice in a competitive employment market. Each lead agency is responsible for recruitment of staff on their CDNTs and is using a variety of approaches to fill funded vacancies.

Yours sincerely



Bernard O'Regan
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations