



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

Office of the Head of Operations,
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8th July 2022

Deputy Jackie Cahill,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: jackie.cahill@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Cahill,

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 35533/22

To ask the Minister for Health the total number of staff in CDNT4 and CDNT5; and if he will make a statement on the matter

PQ 35534/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of physiotherapist positions in CDNT4 and CDNT5; the number of these positions that have been filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35535/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of occupational therapist positions in CDNT4 and CDNT5; the number of these positions that have been filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35536/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of speech and language therapist positions in CDNT4 and CDNT5; the number of these positions that have been filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35537/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of psychologist positions in CDNT4 and CDNT5; the number of these positions that have been filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

The HSE acknowledges the challenges in meeting the demand for children's disability services and is acutely conscious of how this impacts on children and their families. An additional 190 posts have been allocated this year to Children's Disability Services in addition to the 185 posts in 2021, which



will support the implementation of family centred services across all CDNTs. These additional posts are intended to support the newly established CDNTs to prioritise intervention for children with complex needs.

In parallel, the recently published Department of Health Waiting List Action Plan provides for funding to address community waiting lists for children.

Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs)

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.

CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work and others. The team works closely together in a family centred model, focusing on the child's and family's own priorities. Every child with complex needs has access to a team, regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend.

Children and their families have access to the full range of services and supports of the CDNT according to their individual needs. This includes universal, targeted and specialist supports, such as individual therapeutic intervention and access to specialist consultation and assessment when needed. Supports will be provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community.

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.

Please see the attached Census Report for your information.

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.

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. In addition, the HSE is working collaboratively with the CDNT Lead Agencies at CHO level to progress recruitment initiatives for these teams. Each lead agency is responsible for recruitment of staff on their CDNTs and is using a variety of approaches to fill funded vacancies. The detail regarding lead agencies is provided below.

Lead Agency	No. of CDNTs
HSE	41
Enable Ireland	20



Brothers of Charity	6
Central Remedial Clinic	5
Avista (Daughters of Charity)	4
St Michael's House	4
Cope Foundation	3
St Gabriel's	2
St Joseph's Foundation	2
Stewarts Care	2
CoAction West Cork	1
Kare	1
Total	91

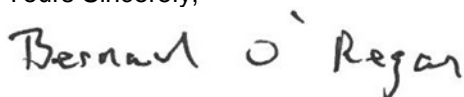
Options regarding the recruitment of staff for the CDNTs being explored in the first instance include:

- Targeted National Recruitment for CDNTs
- Targeted International Recruitment for CDNTs with the possibility of a relocation allowance
- Sponsorship Programme
- Apprentice Programme for therapy grades
- Employment of graduates as therapy assistants as they await CORU registration
- Expansion of therapy assistants in the system with HSE supporting individuals to return to education to qualify as therapists.

The Community Operations, Disability Services is actively developing business propositions for approval by HSE National Human Resource Services.

A comprehensive PDS national team development programme has been provided for CDNMs and cascaded to all team members. This programme, which was designed to support the establishment of the new CDNTs and to support the implementation of the new model of service, will also support staff retention.

Yours Sincerely,



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