



8th July 2022

**Deputy Duncan Smith,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

PQ 34126/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of podiatrists employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34110/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of nurses employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34112/22/ - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of community registered nurses employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34114/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of occupational therapists employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34116/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of physiotherapists employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34120/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of speech and language therapists employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34122/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of dieticians employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34124/22 - To ask the Minister for Health how far short of optimum staffing levels of psychologists employed in primary care centres across the country are; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Smith

The HSE has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The HSE recruits staff based on the number of posts approved for either new development or replacement posts.

The HSE is currently engaged in a major recruitment drive at local, national and international level to recruit a significant number of vacant posts, including the categories of staff listed above . A vacancy is a funded, approved post, not filled by direct employment, agency, overtime, secondment or any other means.

While we would not use the term optimum levels of staffing, we do aim to recruit the best possible number of approved funded posts as laid out in the National Service Plan.

The HSE holds information on the number of posts in place rather than optimum levels of staffing.

Employment levels at the end of May 2022, show there were 134,711 WTE (equating to 153,578 personnel), directly employed in the provision of Health and Social Care Services by the HSE and the various Section 38 hospitals and agencies and of which 71,569 WTE were in acute services, 57,175 WTE in Community Services (covering Mental Health, Primary Care, Older Persons and Disability Service) with the remaining 5,967 WTE in Central and National Services.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Yvonne Moore

Yvonne Moore
Interim Assistant National Director, HR Community Operations