



**Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna**

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí Sláinte

Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'

Baile Átha Cliath 8

**Office of the National Director of Human Resources**

Health Service Executive

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David Cullinane T.D.

24<sup>th</sup> March, 2022

**PQ 12808/22 To ask the Minister for Health the detail of the workforce planning strategies commissioned or put in place by the HSE since its establishment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -David Cullinane**

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question in relation to workforce planning strategies which was forwarded to the Health Services Executive (HSE) by the Department of Health for direct reply.

Workforce planning is a broad term that encompasses a range of approaches and activities within and across organisations to ensure that the workforce has the right capacity, capability, values and behaviours to deliver high quality health and social care to the population they serve. As the workforce in the HSE accounts for approximately 50% of the annual budget it is imperative that staff are deployed in the most productive way and supported to continuously seek to improve the services/care they provide.

Workforce planning approaches and activities incorporated in the HSE since its inception include, but are not limited to those that support:

- The determination of appropriate staffing to provide quality care to those who access services
- The attraction and recruitment of staff
- Staff retention and/or return
- Staff engagement
- Staff health and well being
- Staff training and development – including leadership development and specific programmes to support workforce planning
- The provision of placements and support for a variety of undergraduate and post graduate students undertaking professional programmes
- Development of clinical and non-clinical career pathways
- Development of new roles, role substitution
- The development of guidance to support change
- Development of digital people solutions to attract and on-board staff
- Development of the HR profession
- Initiatives to support Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
- National clinical programmes which develop new models of care and associated staffing as appropriate
- The development of workforce data and analytics to support organisational management and workforce planning and reporting.

Some activities are undertaken at individual organisation or Hospital Group/Community Healthcare Organisation level and others are led nationally. Some are undertaken uni-professionally and some cross discipline. Approaches are determined by the resources and expertise available and linked to the National Service Plan.

The Deputy may also be interested to know that workforce planning activities are underpinned by a national Framework. The *Working Together for Health: A National Strategic Framework for Health and Social Care Workforce Planning* was developed by a Cross-Sectoral Group led by the Department of Health, supported by the HSE and was published in 2017. [bb9d696ba47945e6b065512356fcb6c3.pdf \(assets.gov.ie\)](#)

The Framework was designed to assist agencies to better understand and prepare for the future workforce needs across the health and social care system to meet planned and projected service need and was underpinned by a suite of strategic principles. It also outlines a clear five step approach for strategic workforce planning. Full realisation of the principles requires ongoing significant investment and support from all parts of the sector, including healthcare and educational providers, professional and regulatory organisations and government departments.

The deputy may be interested to note that the Department of health have also commenced a programme of work funded through the EU TSI which seeks to enhance the capacity for health and social care workforce planning across the system. The HSE is actively supporting and engaged in this work.

The current *People Strategy 2019 – 2024* [People Strategy 2019 - 2024 - HSE.ie](#) was developed following a detailed consultation process and sets out the future direction for the development of our people services across the healthcare system. The Strategy contains nine priorities within the core themes of Leadership, Capability and Talent. A key focus of the People Strategy is to build a resilient workforce that is supported and enabled to deliver the Sláintecare vision. This dedicated focus on workforce planning, enhancing leadership and accountability, and building organisational capacity is intrinsic to the work of the Strategic Workforce Planning and Intelligence Unit within National HR. A key deliverable is the development of strategic workforce projections. The Deputy may also be interested to know that there is currently a commissioned project with the ESRI to project the future workforce, for a suite of staff grades to meet future healthcare demand. The first Phase of this work is focused on Acute Services with a report of this work is due for publication before the end of Q2 2022.

Collectively our strategic planning efforts are key to informing our service planning requirements and funding, and most importantly our implementation of Sláintecare.

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,



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**Marie O'Sullivan**  
National HR