



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

Office of the Head of Operations,
Disability Services/Social Care Division,
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369
Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

8th April 2022

Deputy Pauline Tully,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Tully,

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: 16984/22

To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question Nos. 448, 449 and 450 of 24 February 2022, of the more than 475 staff development posts allocated since 2019 to children's disability services, the number of these that were clinical specialists; the number of clinical specialists working within children's disability services as of March 2022; the number of clinical specialist posts currently advertised for recruitment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ: 16985/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of therapy posts needed to have children's disability network teams at 100% staffing level; the current therapy staffing level in such teams in both numerical and percentage terms; the number of therapy staffing posts currently being advertised; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

In 2021, the remainder of ninety-one 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 (e.g., occupational therapists, psychologists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, social workers) and others disciplines (e.g., nursing). The reconfiguration into CDNTs and the resultant staffing mix was influenced by a number of factors including the staff resources of existing services and the expressions of interest process. Hence, some CDNTs may have other disciplines such as nurses, family support workers or early educators.

Regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend, every child with complex needs and their families have access to the full range of family centred services and supports of their 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 are provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community.

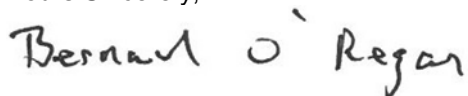
A table provided in the response to Parliamentary Question Nos. 448, 449 and 450 of 24 February 2022, provided detail regarding the number of development posts by whole-time equivalent allocated to CDNTs in 2019, 2021 and 2022. The Children's Disability Networks Governance Group at CHO level, decided the allocation of these posts by discipline, grade and team in line with the governance procedures for CDNTs.

A staffing census of the Children's Disability Network Teams is still currently being finalised. The data is currently in draft format and an examination and verification of the details is currently in progress. It is intended that this information will become available during April. This will provide a comprehensive overview of all staff, on CDNTs including details of their discipline and grade. This information will inform a workforce plan for the sector.

The additional posts provided for under the National Service Plans for 2021 and 2022 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.

Each CHO area will decide, in partnership with the lead agencies in the area, how these posts should be allocated across the CDNTS, the required disciplines and grades. These decisions and resulting recruitment plans are currently being finalised. Recruitment remains a challenge across all areas in the health sector which is compounded by the limitations of the employment market, however the HSE and its lead agency partners are continuously working to recruit staff for children's disability services.

Yours Sincerely,



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

