



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta  
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**Date: 03<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**

**Deputy Marian Harkin,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Dublin 2.**

**PQ Ref: 21758/22**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of dispensing doctors in Ireland from 2017 to 2021, inclusive; the number who are located in rural areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Marian Harkin**

Dear Deputy Harkin,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question which was passed to the HSE for response.

Dispensing Doctor status is accorded in very limited circumstances in rural areas where there is no pharmacy in the vicinity (three miles or more to the nearest Community Pharmacy). The Doctor dispenses to persons who opt for this service. The Doctor is paid a dispensing fee for each such person.

The number of Dispensing Doctors is currently 49. Dispensing GP Arrangements and enhanced fees were introduced in 1999. Under these arrangements a dispensing doctor must dispense medications to a minimum of 70% of the items prescribed for patients on his/her dispensing panel in return for which the GP receives a capitation payment per patient. The criteria for the scheme provides that a dispensing doctor who does not dispense the minimum of 70% dispensing/prescribing level in three successive years will cease to be a dispensing GP. The HSE routinely reviews prescribing performance objectives for General Practitioners, who have a dispensing status.

Please find on the attached table breakdown of the number of dispensing doctors in Ireland from 2017 to 2021, inclusive; by CHO area.

**Yours sincerely,**

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**Geraldine Crowley,  
Assistant National Director,  
Enhanced Community Care Programme &  
Primary Care Contracts**

CHO	Area	No. Dispensing Doctors 2017	No. Dispensing Doctors 2018	No. Dispensing Doctors 2019	No. Dispensing Doctors 2020	No. Dispensing Doctors 2021
CHO Area 1	Donegal	13	11	11	11	12
	Cavan / Monaghan	2	2	2	1	1
	Sligo / Leitrim / West Cavan	1	1	1	1	1
CHO Area 2	Roscommon	3	2	3	3	3
	Galway	11	10	10	10	10
	Mayo	9	8	7	8	7
CHO Area 3	Clare	4	4	4	4	4
	Limerick	4	4	3	3	2
	North Tipp./East Limerick	0	0	0	0	0
CHO Area 4	Kerry	2	2	2	2	2
	North Cork	0	0	0	0	0
	North Lee	0	0	0	0	0
	West Cork	0	0	0	0	0
	South Lee	0	0	0	0	0
CHO Area 5	Wexford	2	0	0	1	1
	Waterford	0	0	0	0	0
	Carlow/Kilkenny	2	2	2	2	2
	South Tipperary	3	3	3	3	3
CHO Area 6	Dublin South East	0	0	0	0	0
	Dun Laoghaire	0	0	0	0	0
	Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0
CHO Area 7	Dublin South City	0	0	0	0	0
	Kildare / West Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0
	Dublin West	0	0	0	0	0
	Dublin South West	0	0	0	0	0
CHO Area 8	Meath	0	0	0	0	0
	Longford / Westmeath	1	1	1	1	1
	Laois / Offaly	0	0	0	0	0
	Louth	0	0	0	0	0
CHO Area 9	Dublin North West	0	0	0	0	0
	Dublin North Central	0	0	0	0	0
	Dublin North	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total		57	50	49	50	49

