



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
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Deputy Holly Cairns,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

26th May 2022

PQ Number: 25326/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 1091 of 22 March 2022, the way that a public appointment to a HSE psychology post can be both in line with the legislation governing recruitment and not covered by HR policy; the exact reference from the legislation in question which allows for appointments to HSE psychology posts that have not been advertised to eligible candidates on the relevant national recruitment panel in the first instance; the exact reference in employment law or HR policy that grants the right for alternative recruitment routes to be decided by each CHO area on the basis of service need for some posts; if this practice has been agreed with unions; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Referred PQ 15053/22: To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question Nos. 825 and 826 of 1 February 2022, the precise specialisms in adult mental health psychology and the exact criteria referred to in the response which warrant a bypassing of the national recruitment panel system for HSE psychologists; if these specialisms and criteria have been agreed to by the HSE's national human resources department and trade unions as constituting exceptions to the national recruitment panel system for HSE psychologists; and if so, the location in which these details are recorded and collectively signed off in policy form – Holly Cairns

Dear Deputy Cairns,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

This reply is in relation to standardised recruitment processes for the appointment of Staff and Senior grade Psychologists in the HSE. Appointments to these grades typically take place on foot of offers to the national panels for staff grade and senior grade. In some circumstances due to the specialist nature of the roles, a bespoke panel may be instigated at local level.

The HSE has standardised recruitment guidance processes for the operation of panels which meet public service legislative needs. In this way HSE HR practices meet legislative obligations under which HSE recruitment processes operate. Legislation does not determine panel management processes but



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determines that recruitment must be fair and based on merit. HSE recruitment practices operate under recruitment guidelines which specify that when filling a post from a panel that the selection process must adequately examine the specialty area in which the post is being filled, if this does not, then a new panel must be created. Recruitment offices in the CHOs operate under this principle. The CHO recruiter follows guidance from the Service Manager in determining if an existing panel can adequately fill a particular post while highlighting the need for fair practice and appointments based on merit. The specific needs and requirements of the post, determines if an existing panel can be used or if a new selection process should be instigated.

The HSE operates under general recruitment principles which staff representatives bodies are aware of. In certain circumstances, the HSE may agree specialist recruitment processes for certain disciplines. In answer to your Parliamentary Question in the case of Psychologists, general recruitment principles apply.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Ryan
Assistant National Director - Head of Operations
National Mental Health Services