



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
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Email: PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie

Head of Operations,
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Deputy Róisín Shortall,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

13th June 2022

PQ Number: 27333/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the steps he is taking to address recruitment and retention issues in CAMHS services; if he will provide a breakdown of all vacancies with details of the teams involved; if he will provide an update on the implementation of Sharing the Vision particularly in respect of staffing; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Róisín Shortall

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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.

The HSE continues to invest in and enhance our services, while at the same time fully utilising opportunities offered by digital health technologies to mitigate recruitment challenges and modernise the delivery of mental health care. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) staffing and recruitment is impacted by the current shortage of trained Mental Health staff nationally - a trend which is not unique to Ireland. The availability of skilled staff is a significant issue in mental health services across all disciplines where demand outstrips supply and our workforce (particularly younger staff) are availing of employment opportunities outside of Ireland. Ongoing efforts locally, nationally and internationally, are continuing in order to ensure that all available avenues are explored to provide a staffing supply for Mental Health services, including CAMHS services. The HSE has been taking concrete steps to address these issues in workforce planning as well as training and recruitment enhancements.

A key priority of the HSE Resourcing Strategy, as set out in the HSE NSP 2022, is the implementation of a new recruitment operating model which is being implemented under the direction of the National Director of HR. This revised model is aimed at ensuring joint efforts, at local and national level, collectively deliver the most effective and efficient, appropriately resourced model in an evolving healthcare and health workforce demand landscape. At a strategic level, a workforce plan for psychiatry has been prepared by the HSE National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) for the period 2020-2030.

In terms of increasing capacity, the HSE has doubled the number of Higher Specialist Training (HST) posts to graduate this year (in July) from 22 to 46. 13 of these posts will be in CAMHS. The HSE is organising for



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these graduates to meet HSE Heads of Service and Executive Clinical Directors (ECDs) in Community Health Organisations (CHOs) around the country, in order to enhance the linkages with graduates in terms of vacancies and opportunities.

Additionally, between December 2019 and April 2022, the overall staffing of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Teams has grown by 118 WTEs (see table below)

Staff Category /Group	WTE Dec 2019	WTE Dec 2020	WTE Apr 2021	WTE Dec 2021	WTE Mar 2022	WTE Apr 2022	WTE change since Mar 2022
Total Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	779	829	858	863	893	897	+3

In regard to vacancy information, we do not hold concurrent data on vacancies, primarily due to the dynamic nature of our services and changing data therein coupled with the fact we do not have a fully integrated IT system to determine and report on agreed staffing establishments and positional management at the lowest level (i.e. grade level). Data collection systems are not currently configured to report on vacant posts as a post that is designated as vacant posts may be filled at a particular point in time by any combination of agency/overtime/locum staff.

Staff turnover also impacts on the number of staff in place at any one time (this can be for a range of reasons such as simply moving to a new location but still within the sector, retirements, resignations or employee preferences), also impacting the precise numbers for any one time.

Update on the implementation of Sharing the Vision (StV) particularly in respect of staffing

The first detailed implementation plan for StV (2022 to 2024) has been finalised and launched, outlining a programme of work for the next three years to deliver StV recommendations. The implementation plan sets out milestones across the period 2022 to 2024 against which this and future quarterly reports will measure progress. In parallel, the programme team has continued to develop programme implementation structures. Within the HSE, this will include development of work streams, where recommendations are grouped thematically, in order to fully realise potential synergies across the 83 recommendations where the HSE is the identified lead. These work streams will aid development of detailed delivery plans for individual recommendations, against which progress reporting can be further refined.



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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Ryan'.

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