

Deputy Holly Cairns  
Dáil Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

21<sup>st</sup> November 2022

**PQ Number: 55433/22**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for health the measures that he is taking to address the staff shortages in the Cork University Maternity Hospital. – 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:

We have significant staffing deficits across all four units of the Irish South Women and infants Directorate at Cork University Maternity Hospital, University Hospital Kerry, University Hospital Waterford, and Tipperary University Hospital. We have deficits across various staff disciplines. We make every effort to actively recruit staff for all posts; this includes offering flexible working hours, training enhancement and tuition reimbursements. We also welcome ad hoc and word of mouth recommendations.

In the Directorate we have rolling recruitment campaigns for Midwifery, Nursing and HealthCare Assistants. Internationally we have recruitment orders in place for staff ongoing. Despite our best efforts to solve this issue the problem is ongoing. We have lost staff for various reasons, this includes retirements and the younger population opting to travel abroad.

As a Directorate we continue to look for innovative ways to help solve this problem. We are currently exploring various options that would help in solving this crisis i.e.

- Facilitating short term accommodation for incoming staff to help allow them to settle into new roles and new location
- We are also looking into the provision of crèche facilities with extended opening hours to facilitate 12 hour shifts for staff on-site/ off site with subsidised childcare costs.

We recognise that these are some of the main barriers to recruitment and retention of staff and we hope that by progressing these options it will make working in CUMH and the other hospitals in our Maternity Directorate more appealing to prospective staff.



Yours sincerely,  
John R. Higgins

***Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University College Cork  
Clinical Director Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate  
South/Southwest Hospital Group***