



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,
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18th October 2022

Deputy Sorca Clarke,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sorca.clarke@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Clarke,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 48239/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number and type of therapist posts that are currently advertised; and the average length of time to fill therapy posts by therapy discipline.

HSE Response

Therapists, including occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech & language therapists are employed across all aspects of the health services. These therapists provide assessment and therapy supports for people of all ages across our acute hospitals, disability services, older persons services, mental health and primary care services.

The HSE's Strategic Workforce Planning & Intelligence unit provides timely data, information and analysis on the workforce and has overarching responsibility for the production of employment monitoring reports/Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC), National Absence Report and Staff Turnover Report.

Information obtained from the most recently published (end of August 2022) employment report indicates that there are 7,043 therapists (6,092 WTEs) employed across the health service. For further information, please see:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/workforce-reporting/>

It is important to note that these reports refer to staff numbers in the HSE and in Section 38 organisations and do not include staff employed in Section 39 organisations.

Currently, the HSE and its funded Service providers are experiencing ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades in all areas of the health services including Primary Care Services, Mental Health Services, Older Person Services, Acute Hospitals and Disability services.



The HSE continues to explore a range of options to enhance the recruitment and retention of essential staff across all aspects of the health services.

It has been clarified that specific detail with regard to the advertising of therapy posts in disability services is required.

Disability services are provided directly by the HSE as well as by its funded Section 38 and Section 39 providers. Staff, including therapists, are employed across a range of areas such as residential, respite, home support, day services and Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs).

Childrens disability services are provided, in the main, by the CDNTs.

In line with the Progressing Disability Services model, resources assigned to children's disability services are allocated to the 0 – 18 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) rather than to a dedicated early intervention team or dedicated school age team.

These 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).

Ninety one CDNTs provide services and supports for all children with complex disability needs within a defined geographic area. The October 2022 CDNT census and workforce review indicates that there were 1,173.29 WTE employed in clinical / therapy roles working on CDNTs.

Each lead agency is responsible for recruiting staff when vacancies arise. The HSE does not have access to data regarding the recruitment of staff in Section 38 and Section 39 organisations.

Information regarding public sector posts can be accessed at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/jobs/>

and

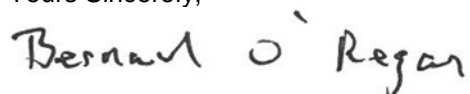
<https://publicjobs.ie/en/>

Section 38 and Section 39 organisations advertise separately via their websites.

The HSE is promoting both domestic and overseas recruitment to fill vacant posts. In addition, there are panels in place for occupational therapists, psychologists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists. These panels will be expanded further in November 2022.

Within the CHO areas, recruitment is managed locally and the recruitment time can vary. The pre-clearance stage to appointment time frame can take a number of weeks and is heavily candidate dependent. It is dependent on a number of factors including - the candidate returning documentation in a timely manner, the requirement in some cases for overseas clearances or visas, return of references and notice period to be worked. Pre-clearances can take a minimum of 2 weeks (if all documentation is submitted as requested), however it can take significantly longer if provision of the aforementioned documentation is delayed. It should also be noted that some candidates may be available for an immediate start with other candidates having to provide notice to a current employer. This can significantly impact the time to hire timeframes.

Yours Sincerely,



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

