



**Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta
Acmhainní Daonna**
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí,
Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens',
Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 W2A8.

**National Director
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Peadar Tóibín T.D.

3rd November, 2022

PQ 51705/22 To ask the Minister for Health the total number of nurses currently on sick leave; the number who cite stress as the reason for their leave; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Peadar Tóibín

Dear Deputy,

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

Data on all staff absences is collected nationally and is reported monthly as the HSE National Absence Report. This [link](#) provides detail on the HSE National Absence Report. This report is published monthly and provides data on all staff absences, with specific data by staff category, COVID-19 related absence, in addition to both certified and self-certified absence. National Absence is calculated as a percentage rate based on lost time (hours) over the available time (hours). It is not reported as headcount, but rather as a percentage rate of absence.

The below table provides the latest monthly data available on all staff absence, by staff category. This data also shows the rate of absence attributing to COVID-19 both as a percentage rate and as a percentage of the overall total of reported staff absence.

Table 1: Health Service Absence Rate by Staff Category, August 2022

Health Service Absence Rate - by Staff Category: Aug 2022	Certified absence	Self-certified absence	Non Covid-19 absence	Covid-19 absence	Total absence rate	% Non Covid-19 absence	% Covid-19 absence
Total	4.49%	0.54%	5.03%	0.81%	5.84%	86.08%	13.92%
Medical & Dental	1.17%	0.20%	1.36%	0.34%	1.70%	80.03%	19.97%
Nursing & Midwifery	4.89%	0.74%	5.62%	0.99%	6.61%	85.07%	14.93%
Health & Social Care Professionals	3.42%	0.34%	3.75%	0.75%	4.50%	83.33%	16.67%
Management & Administrative	3.63%	0.35%	3.98%	0.56%	4.54%	87.69%	12.31%
General Support	6.24%	0.53%	6.77%	0.79%	7.56%	89.60%	10.40%
Patient & Client Care	6.23%	0.68%	6.91%	1.02%	7.94%	87.09%	12.91%

Under the HSE Managing Attendance Policies an employee is not obliged to disclose the reason for the illness and there is no central data repository on the cause of absence. Information in relation to absenteeism is only collected in respect of the overall level of absenteeism and the reasons for the absence on sick leave are not recorded. Staff who are absent from work due to sickness or ill health for periods in excess of 2 days are required to submit medical certificates to their line manager for the duration of their absence. These certificates, which are confidential, are required to be dated, signed by the medical practitioner and they must state the expected duration of the absence and, where appropriate, the expected date of return. Doctors are not required to state the nature of the illness on the medical certificates. Therefore it is not possible to provide the Deputy with the information sought.

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,

**Marie O'Sullivan
National HR**