



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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7th November 2022

Deputy Pauline Tully,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Tully,

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: 53641/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of staff who have retired or resigned from children's disability network teams since all 91 teams became operational; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

Since 2019, more than 475 development posts have been allocated to children's disability services across the country. These posts have been assigned to teams based on a number of factors, including the existing ratio of staff to the number of children with disabilities in each area.

In addition, further to recent agreement with Government, the HSE and its CDNT Lead Agencies will receive funding for an additional 136.3 WTEs to provide services in 104 special schools.

These additional posts are intended to support the newly established CDNTs to prioritise intervention for children with complex needs in special schools.

The attached CDNT Staff Census and Workforce Review undertaken in 2021 has provided valuable information on the number of staff working in the CDNTs by discipline and grade. The detailed information available following this review is allowing targeted workforce planning by the HSE in consultation with lead agencies and the Children's Disability Network Managers to reinforce the skill mix of their teams so that we accommodate local population needs.

Information is not collated centrally by the HSE regarding the number of staff who have retired or resigned from children's disability network teams.

Each CDNT is managed by a lead agency. These agencies include the HSE, S38 organisations and S39 organisations. The detail regarding the lead agencies is provided below.



Lead Agency	No. of CDNTs
HSE	41
Enable Ireland	20
Brothers of Charity	6
Central Remedial Clinic	5
Avista (Daughters of Charity)	4
St Michael's House	4
Cope Foundation	3
St Gabriel's	2
St Joseph's Foundation	2
Stewarts Care	2
CoAction West Cork	1
Kare	1
Total	91

The Strategic Workforce Planning and Intelligence Department of the HSE, as part of the Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC), produce a series of monthly reports detailing the numbers of staffing, per grade type in disability services, broken down by CHO Area and by HSE and Section 38 provider organisations. The latest reports, which include staff turnover, can be accessed and downloaded on the following weblink:

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

The Health Service Workforce census figures give a broad indication of the numbers of Health & Social Care professionals employed in Disability Services, which includes personnel employed by the HSE and voluntary Service Providers funded under Section 38 of the Health Act.

It is important to note that these reports do not include staff employed by Service Providers funded under Section 39 of the Health Act.

In addition, it is important to note also, that the staff numbers reported on serve all age groups and the HSE cannot apportion the staff working in children's disability services specifically.

Each lead agency is responsible for their teams and for recruiting staff when vacancies arise on their teams or when development posts are allocated to their teams

Most of the disciplines working in CDNTs are similar to those working in other areas of the health services including Primary Care Services, Mental Health Services, Older Person Services and Acute Hospitals. The HSE and the various Lead Agencies experience ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades.

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. In addition, the HSE Community Operations Disability Services is working collaboratively with the CDNT lead agencies at CHO level to promote CDNTs as a workplace of choice in a competitive employment market. Each lead agency is responsible for recruitment of staff on their CDNTs and is using a variety of approaches to fill funded vacancies.

Options to support the recruitment of staff for the CDNTs currently being explored include:

- Targeted National Recruitment for CDNTs



- High profile international campaigns for therapy roles.
- Targeted International Recruitment for CDNTs with an agreed relocation allowance
- Sponsorship Programme for therapy grades
- Apprentice Programme for therapy grades
- Employment of graduates as therapy assistants as they await CORU registration
- Expansion of therapy assistants in the system with HSE supporting individuals to return to education to qualify as therapists.

A comprehensive PDS national team development programme has been provided for CDNMs and cascaded to all team members. This programme, which was designed to support the establishment of the new CDNTs and to support the implementation of the new model of service, will also support staff retention.

Data for the 2022 CDNT Staff Census and Workforce Review is currently being collated. It is intended that this updated information will be available in December 2022 allowing for a 2021 / 2022 trend analysis.

Yours sincerely



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

