



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
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Deputy Nessa Hourigan,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

19th September 2022

PQ Number: 43609/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health his plans to ensure that vacant consultant psychiatrist posts are filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter – Deputy Nessa Hourigan

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

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.

A critical priority of the HSE Resourcing Strategy, as set out in HSE National Service Plan 2022 is the implementation of the national recruitment operating model. This revised model is aimed at ensuring the joint efforts, at both 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 in 2022 from 22 to 46. Graduates of the Higher Specialist Training Scheme have met with 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.

The HSE will be sourcing significant candidate numbers through the international market. An enhanced relocation package is on offer across all disciplines, including consultants. The relocation package includes allowances payable to meet initial costs for relocating, such as accommodation and flight allowance. Additional costs such as registration fees to regulatory bodies, Visa fees, aptitude test fees are also payable on behalf of the candidate.

The Mental Health Service Employment Report July 2022 shows (see table below) there is a total headcount of 426 consultants equating to a whole time equivalent of 384. This is a 9.0% (31 WTE) increase since December 2019. It is expected that further growth will occur in line with developments anticipated in Service Plan 2022.



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Staff Category /Group	WTE Dec 2019	WTE Dec 2020	WTE May 2022	WTE June 2022	WTE July 2022	% Change since Dec 2019	No. July 2022
Consultants	353	370	379	379	384	+9.0%	426

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services