

**Corporate Affairs Department**

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**10<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

Deputy Alan Farrell

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

Re: **PQ ref 44866/22** - To ask the Minister for Health his plans to fund and recruit more permanent genetic counsellor posts to the cancer genetics department in St. James's Hospital, in line with international standards; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Farrell,

In line with international standards, 20 permanent genetic counsellor positions are required to meet the national cancer genetics patient demand with timely access. The genetic counselling profession is not yet recognised with its own HSE grade, resulting in an ongoing challenge to recruit and retain genetic counsellors at different levels of experience. Currently there is no funded training pathway to become a genetic counsellor in Ireland.

Our service currently has 3.5 WTE clinical genetic counsellors to deliver care to approximately 2,700 patients on the growing waiting list.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Aisling Collins

Interim Chief Operations Officer