



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

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5th October 2022

Deputy Paul Murphy,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: paul.murphy@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Murphy,

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 47080/22

To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the plan to move therapists from the children's disability network team to special schools; if any obstacles have arisen in the transfer; and the action that is being taken to overcome them.

HSE Response

190 posts were allocated to Children's Disability Services this year. In addition, further to recent discussions with An Taoiseach and relevant Government Ministers, the HSE and its CDNT Lead Agencies will receive funding for an additional 136.3 WTEs to provide services in 104 special schools.

The decision with regard to the restoration of on-site health supports in special schools was confirmed on 19th August 2022. The HSE immediately communicated this decision to the nine Community Healthcare Areas (CHOs), the CEOs of the lead agencies managing the 91 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) and other stakeholders.

These additional posts along with the 185 posts allocated in 2021 are intended to support the newly established CDNTs to prioritise intervention for children with complex needs as well as those in special schools.

The HSE has committed to a timeframe for the reinstatement of the 136.3 WTEs, which will be in three phases commencing in September 2022 in order to provide a quantum of resource into special schools from September 2022. Each lead agency and Children's Disability Network Manager will engage with relevant special schools in their area to discuss arrangements for the provision of services.

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 is working collaboratively with the CDNT Lead Agencies at CHO level to market CDNTs as an employer 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 regarding the recruitment of staff for the CDNTs being explored include:

- Targeted National Recruitment for CDNTs
- High profile international campaigns for therapy roles.
- Targeted International Recruitment for CDNTs with the possibility of a relocation allowance
- Sponsorship Programme
- 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.

Yours sincerely



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