



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

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25<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Deputy Pauline Tully,  
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Dublin 2.  
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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: 2554/23**

*To ask the Minister for Health the average length of time to fill a staff grade therapy post from the point that the vacancy arises; the average length of time to fill a staff grade therapy post from the point of offer of employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

**HSE Response**

There are ninety one Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) providing services for children with complex disability needs aged 0 – 18 years.

CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals (e.g., occupational therapists, psychologists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, social workers) and others disciplines (e.g., nursing).

Since 2019, more than 610 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. This figure includes 190 posts provided in 2022 as well as an additional 136.3 WTEs to restore pre-existing 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 HSE and Lead Agencies are operating in a very competitive global market for healthcare talent as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals across the globe.

There are ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades in all areas of the health services including Primary Care Services, Mental Health Services, Older Person Services, Acute Hospitals and Disability services.



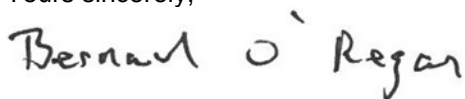
In partnership with our CDNT Lead Agencies, we continue to explore a range of options to enhance the retention and recruitment of essential staff into our CDNTs. The HSE Community Operations Disability Services is working collaboratively with our partnering Lead Agencies to promote CDNTs as a workplace of choice in a competitive employment market.

The lead agencies and the number of teams they lead are: HSE (41 teams), Enable Ireland (20 teams), Avista (formerly Daughters of Charity - 4 teams) Brothers of Charity (6 teams), Central Remedial Clinic (5 teams), St. Michael's House (4 teams), Cope Foundation (3 teams), St. Gabriel's (2 teams), St. Josephs Foundation (2 teams), Stewarts Care (2 teams), with CoAction West Cork and KARE leading 1 team each. Each lead agency is responsible for recruitment of staff on their CDNTs and is using a variety of approaches to fill funded vacancies.

In addition to national initiatives to support the recruitment of staff for the CDNTs, the HSE has launched International Recruitment campaigns for qualified healthcare professionals. To support these international campaigns, the HSE is working in partnership with CORU, the regulator, and government departments to maximise this pool. Some of the CDNT Lead Agencies are also progressing International Recruitment.

Within the CHO areas and lead agencies, recruitment is managed locally and the recruitment time from point of vacancy and point of job offer can vary. The pre-clearance stage to appointment time frame can take a number of weeks and is heavily candidate dependent. It is dependent on a number of factors including - the candidate returning documentation in a timely manner, the requirement in some cases for overseas clearances or visas, return of references and notice period to be worked. Pre-clearances can take a minimum of 2 weeks (if all documentation is submitted as requested), however it can take significantly longer if provision of the aforementioned documentation is delayed. It should also be noted that some candidates may be available for an immediate start with other candidates having to provide notice to a current employer. This can significantly impact the time to hire timeframes.

Yours sincerely,



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

