



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

Office of the Head of Operations,
Disability Services/Social Care Division,
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369

31st March 2023

Deputy Sean Sherlock,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sean.sherlock@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 12428/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the estimated cost of hiring four additional administrative staff per children's disability network team, in tabular form.

PQ: 12429/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the estimated cost of filling all wholetime equivalent posts in each children's disability network team, in tabular form.

HSE Response

In 2021, the remainder of ninety-one multidisciplinary CDNTs were established in 96 Network areas to provide services and supports for all children with complex needs within a defined geographic area.

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.

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 completed its second annual Children's Disability Network Team Staff Census and Workforce Review in October 2022. The resulting report was finalised in February 2023 and has provided valuable information on the number of staff working in the CDNTs by discipline and grade.

A copy of this report is attached for your information.

An overall analysis of the data from 2021 and 2022 demonstrates an increase of 11% in the number of approved posts and a 2% increase in the CDNT workforce. This increase has been achieved in a



context where there is an average turnover rate of 9.6% in health and social care professionals each year.

The 2022 CDNT Staff Census and Workforce Review reported that there were 707.32 vacant opportunities across the 91 teams.

The majority of vacant posts are approved and funded, however, across the CDNTs vacancy as a result of maternity leave equates to 95.98 WTE (71.52 WTE on paid maternity leave and 24.46 WTE on unpaid maternity leave). As maternity leave cover is unfunded, it is not custom and practice to backfill these vacancies. The cost to backfill vacancies at staff grade arising from maternity leave would equate to circa. €5.8m inclusive of PRSI and Pension (excludes non pay costs).

In relation to clerical /administration staff, the CDNTs have a current allocation of 153.64 WTE which includes Grade III, IV, V and V1.

The cost associated with recruiting an additional four clerical / administrative grades for each CDNT will vary depending on the proposed grades for these staff.

The costs outlined in the table below are inclusive of PRSI, Pension and Non Pay costs.

Grade	WTE	Cost per Team
Grade 3	2	€ 101,707.71
Grade 4	1	€ 58,777.08
Grade 5	1	€ 75,612.48
Total		€ 236,097.27

This represents and uplift of 364 WTE at a cost of circa. €21.5m based on table above.

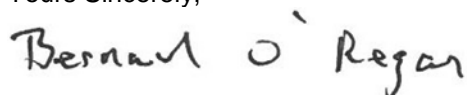
Retention and Recruitment

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

Filling the current staffing vacancies will take time. In the interim, the HSE continues to drive a number of initiatives to reduce waiting times for children and families. These include sourcing therapy assessments and interventions externally via private service providers.

The HSE remains committed to the delivery of appropriate services for children with disabilities and will continue to work with families and staff to develop services that meet their needs.

Yours Sincerely,



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

