

5th April 2023

Deputy Pdraig O’Sullivan, T.D.,
 Dáil Éireann,
 Dublin 2

PQ ref 14256/23

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of speech and language therapist vacancies in CHO4; the number that have been filled; the number working full-time and part-time; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy O’Sullivan,

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.

Primary Care Service

CKCH	Staff Grade SLT	Snr SLT
The number of speech and language therapist vacancies	6.1 WTE	4.2 WTE
The number that have been filled	Campaign Ongoing	Campaign Ongoing
The number working full-time	35	25
The number working part-time	10	9

The figures provided in the table above reflect the position as at the end of February 2023. Please note that posts identified as being full time may also be utilizing statutory parental leave therefore the actual WTE will not be reflected in the above information.

Services for Older Persons

Residential Services:

Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) services to our residential units are provided through our colleagues in Primary Care under the clinical governance of an SLT manager where the unit is based. Vacancies are identified and filled by the relevant SLT manager and allotted to care groups including Services for Older Persons as required. Currently there are no identified SLT vacancies in the services provided to our residential units.

Non-Residential Services:

Within Non-Residential Services for Older Persons, the Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (ICPOP) has a number of SLT posts. The table below sets out the position as at February 2023:

ICPOP February 2023	Number of Posts	Number of vacancies	Number working Full Time	Number Working Part time
Speech & Language Therapists	4	1.5	2.5	0

Mental Health Services

Please see table below in relation to speech and language therapy posts in Mental Health Services. 1 WTE is equal to 35 hours per week and many staff may be on limited hours due to parental leave, etc.

Discipline	Vacancy WTE	Filled WTE	Approved WTE
Speech & Language Therapy Cork & Kerry	5.4	15.8	21.2

Disability Services for Older Persons

HSE Disability Services in CKCH provides funding to the Lead agencies through Service Level Agreements. Lead agencies are responsible for recruitment of staff within their organisation and the HSE does not hold HR records for these agencies. Therefore, HSE CKCH Disability Services is unable to advise if posts are filled on a full-time or part-time basis.

Please see below table for detail in relation to SLT posts within HSE CKCH Disability Services:

Role	Assigned	Vacant	Current WTE
Speech and Language Therapy	59.80	5.50	54.30

The HSE is currently experiencing difficulties in recruiting across all therapy grades, particularly in respect to entry therapy grades. There have been significant career opportunities across all therapy grades following national developments in the healthcare area such as the Enhanced Community Care Programmes and the Integrated Care Programmes in Chronic Disease and Older Persons. Our academic institutions provide graduates on an annual basis and this normally facilitates our requirements for registered therapist recruitment to our services however, the recent/current demand for suitably qualified candidates exceeds the supply available to the services. In this regard the HSE, at both local and national level, has embarked upon an international workforce planning exercise with an emphasis on the recruitment of scarce therapy grades. This was consolidated during June 2022 when an amendment to the current legislation governing international work permit applications was enacted whereby, these grades have been included under the Critical Skills Permit process. A HSE International Recruitment Framework is also now in place which has provided an avenue for recruitment for these grades. Our HR staff continue to explore all options to enhance the recruitment of these grades.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to me.

Yours sincerely,



Gabrielle O'Keeffe
Interim Chief Officer

