



**Head of Service for Older Persons
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**

Health Service Executive
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Cúram Sláinte Pobail - Corcaigh & Ciarraí
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22nd May 2023

Deputy Pádraig O'Sullivan, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 21248/23

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of job advertisements for home care workers in CHO4 that the HSE has placed in 2022 and to date in 2023; the number of home care positions that have been filled to date in CHO4; the average timeframe between initial interview and commencement of employment, in tabular form; 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.

Provision of Home Support is a core service for older people and their families and is essential in supporting older people to continue to live within their communities. Cork Kerry Community Healthcare continues to work towards increasing Home Support provision across the region; however, difficulties have been experienced in relation to recruitment and retention of staff with certain areas experiencing increased pressures. Approved private providers, who work with the HSE in fulfilling Home Support service requests, are experiencing similar staffing issues. In addition to the recruitment challenges being encountered, there has been an ongoing level of retirements and resignations from the Health Care Support Assistant (HCSA) workforce across Cork and Kerry in recent years, partly due to the age profile of the workforce and also due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic – a number of HCSAs have opted for alternative careers.

In order to bolster staff resources and reduce waiting times for allocation of service, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare advertises on an ongoing basis for Health Care Support Assistants (HCSAs) throughout the region in an effort to recruit as many suitable candidates as possible. Due to the nature of the role of HCSAs, this recruitment is normally conducted at a very local level and is ongoing across the two counties. Furthermore, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare has appointed two specialist Health Care Support Assistant recruitment officers who have run extensive recruitment and advertising campaigns over the last 18 months.

Table 1 below sets out the number of job advertisements for home care workers in CHO4 that the HSE has placed in 2022 and to date in 2023; the number of home care positions that have been filled to date in CHO4 and the average timeframe between initial interview and commencement of employment:



Table 1:

CKCH HCSA Job Advertisements placed in 2022 and to date in 2023	4 published job advertisements - using print media, radio and social media
CKCH HCSA positions filled in 2022 and to date in 2023 (start dates agreed)	168 positions
Average time from successful interview to commencement of employment	Average Timeframe 3.5 months-4 months Some candidates may not commence employment within this timeframe due to delays in submission of overseas police clearance, delays in return of references from referees, Occupational Health delays, Garda Vetting clearance delays.

Our most recent regional HCSA recruitment campaign closed on the 12th April 2023 and interviews recently concluded with 47 applicants invited to interview in Kerry and 24 applicants invited to interview in Cork. 6 localised campaigns, which resulted from applications sent in outside of the timescales of the official advertisements, were also run in CKCH in 2022 and to date in 2023. All applications received have been processed.

Given the vulnerable population that HCSA staff provide service to, the recruitment clearance process is a rigorous process with a number of different elements to it which must be satisfactorily completed in advance of successful candidates commencing their roles as HCSAs.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare is acutely aware that there are capacity issues across both direct and indirect provision of Home Support throughout the region, particularly in some of our more rural locations. Improving access to home support is a service priority and, to that end, we continue to advertise on an on-going basis for healthcare support assistants in a concerted effort to recruit as many suitable candidates as possible.

I trust this clarifies the position. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Jackie Daly
Head of Service for Older People

