



Office of the Head of Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare
HSE Offices, Lacken
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16th May 2023

Mr. Denis Naughten TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 21798/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of vacant physiotherapy roles in children's primary care services in CHO5; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 21810/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of vacant speech and language therapy roles in children's primary care services in CHO5; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 21819/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of vacant psychotherapy roles in children's primary care services in CHO5; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 21829/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of vacant optometry and ophthalmology roles in primary care services in CHO5; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 21839/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of vacant occupational therapy roles in children's primary care services in CHO5; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Naughten,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which were submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have examined the matter and the following composite response outlines the current position.

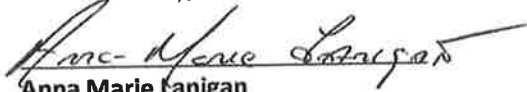
South East Community Healthcare (SECH) (formerly CHO 5)	No. of vacant posts in children's primary care services	Note
Physiotherapy	Total 6.5 WTEs	<u>Reasons for vacancies include:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorised Leave <p>For 1 WTE a candidate is currently being processed</p>
Speech & Language Therapy	Total 15.8 WTEs	<u>Reasons for vacancies include:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing to fill posts following expressions of interest • Authorised Leave <p>For 1 WTE a candidate is currently being processed</p>
Psychotherapy	0	There are no approved permanent psychotherapy posts for children in Primary Care services in South East Community Healthcare
Optometry and Ophthalmology	0	<p>The plan for Ophthalmology Services nationally is to have an Integrated Pathway for Patient care with the Regional Hospital base located in Waterford University Hospital. Fully staffed teams are required in each CHO region. This team will comprise of: 1 WTE Optometrist (required) and 1 Senior Orthoptist per county and also 2 Consultants for the region.</p> <p>The posts have recently been sanctioned as new developments at national level and funding has been made available to draw down under the Modernised Care Pathway.</p> <p>The required Ophthalmology & Optometry staff to roll out the Integrated Eye Care Programme is an additional Ophthalmologist, full time Orthoptist & Full time Optometrist per Community Services area in CHO 5.</p> <p>That is a minimum to establish a Team with expertise to provide Paediatric, Glaucoma, Retinal & General Ophthalmology in the Community.</p>
Occupational Therapy	Total 7.4 WTE	<u>Reasons for vacancies include:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting expression to new national panel

As with other areas, services within South East Community Healthcare (SECH) are continuing to experience significant recruitment challenges. It is a very competitive market (both nationally and internationally) and there are challenges both locally and nationally in SECH Primary Care in filling posts.

SECH continues to express posts out to current national panels and continues to prioritise local recruitment campaigns. International recruitment is also being actively pursued and all options are being explored for recruitment of vacant posts.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Marie Lanigan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Anna Marie Lanigan

**Head of Service-Primary Care/Assistant National Director
South East Community Healthcare**