



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
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Conarthaí Príomhchúraim
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
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Deputy Dara Calleary
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

21st November 2023

PQ 43746/23 To ask the Minister for Health for an update on the non-EU doctor scheme; how many GPs have been recruited to date; to provide a breakdown, by county, of the number and location of GPs recruited; how many more are planned to be recruited in 2023 and 2024; the criteria for placement of recruited doctors across the country; what the national average of GPs-to-CHO population in the State currently stands at; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Calleary,

I refer to your parliamentary question, which was passed to the HSE for response. The HSE are collaborating with the ICGP to implement an initiative approved by the Medical Council for recruitment of non-EU doctors. The scheme has already commenced and it is anticipated that almost 100 non-EU GPs will participate in this programme by the end of 2023. This has a very immediate impact on GP shortages. The new additional posts for 2023 will work in General Practice for a 2 year period, following which they can take up an Irish GMS contract. The initiative is targeted at rural areas, areas of urban deprivation and those difficult to fill posts in various geographical locations across the country. Learning from implementation of this initiative in 2023 will inform our approach to further recruitment of non-EU general practitioners over the next few years.

The role of the Non-EU GP Scheme is to:

- Identify and recruit suitable non-EU GPs, in accordance with the programme criteria, for rural GP practices
- Facilitate supported and supervised practice
- Assist the non-EU GP to undertake the ICGP (MICGP) exam, leading to Specialist Registration with the Irish Medical Council
- Encourage the retention of the non-EU GP in Irish general practice

Further information about the programme is available:
https://www.icgp.ie/go/in_the_practice/non_eu_programme .

To date 68 Non-EU GPs have started the programme and are now working in rural GP practices. A further 8 Non-EU GPs are currently being placed, bringing the total to 76. Another cohort will start before the end of 2023 at which point we anticipate that almost 100 non-EU GPs will be participating in the programme. In 2024 it is planned that another 250 GPs will be recruited by year end.

The below table outlines the total number of GPs recruited to date and their breakdown by county.

Breakdown, by county, of the number and location of GPs recruited	Carlow	1
	Cavan	1
	Clare	6
	Cork	14
	Donegal	3
	Galway	1
	Kerry	4



	Kildare	4
	Kilkenny	1
	Laois	4
	Limerick	1
	Longford	1
	Louth	1
	Mayo	2
	Meath	3
	Monaghan	1
	Offaly	5
	Sligo	1
	Tipperary	2
	Westmeath	7
	Wexford	4
	Wicklow	1
	Total	68

The Non-EU GP scheme is a programme of support and supervision for experienced GPs. The Non-EU GP must meet certain eligibility criteria, be successful at interview and have satisfactory references before they are placed. GP practices apply to 'host' a non-EU GP, must meet certain eligibility criteria and commit to employing and supporting the non-EU GP. The programme is supporting rural GP practices. Practices outside Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford cities, who meet specific criteria, are eligible to apply.

A breakdown is provided below regarding the number of GPs to population by CHO and nationally.

GPs per 10k per CHO:

CHO	Scaled CHO population*	Scaled GPs to 3,545**	% of GPs	GPs per 10k per CHO
1	421,155	267	7.53	6.34
2	487,761	362	10.2	7.41
3	414,494	296	8.34	7.13
4	742,913	555	15.65	7.47
5	549,243	353	9.97	6.43
6	423,204	366	10.33	8.65
7	750,598	492	13.89	6.56
8	666,572	385	10.85	5.77
9	668,621	469	13.23	7.01
Total nationally	5,124,561	3,545	100	6.92

*Scaled population using CSO 2022 preliminary population of circa 5.1m & CHO breakdown ratios

**PCRS figures for GPs with HSE public contracts as of 1st Sept 2022 totalling 3,068 scaled to match estimated 3,545 total GPs (including private - where breakdown per CHO data does not exist).



I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Crowley', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
Primary Care Contracts**