



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta
Géaroibríochtaí

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Deputy Pauline Tully TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

14.09.23

Re: 37741/23

To ask the Minister for Health the optimal level of staffing required for medical scientists to fully staff HSE laboratories nationwide; and the current number of medical scientists employed in HSE laboratories nationwide. -Pauline Tully

Dear Deputy Tully,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Response:

There are approximately 2,300 WTE Medical Scientists employed across services in the HSE. There are no workforce estimates as to the optimal level of staffing required for Medical Scientists in the context of different service requirements, organisational configuration across Hospital Groups, skill mix and utilisation of other scientific grades for laboratory services.

The HSE is aware of the need to recruit additional Medical Scientists into the health service to ensure optimal staffing levels in laboratories. There are significant recruitment difficulties associated with the current recruitment of Medical Scientists and the HSE is aware of the impact this recruitment shortage currently has on laboratory services.

The HSE is working in close collaboration with the Department of Health and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to advance further training places for Medical Scientists. In respect of this, discussions are advancing with two Higher Education Institutes to put in place additional training places for both undergraduate and post graduate training opportunities for Medical Scientists. It is important that these training places will be in line with CORU related requirements and this work is also underway.

In addition, the HSE is also advancing initiatives to further enhance the recruitment of suitably qualified Medical Scientists both nationally and internationally.

The HSE will continue to work in collaboration with a range of stakeholders to address the shortage of available Medical Scientists.



For your information, the HSE regularly publishes workforce related data on all grades employed by the HSE (<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/workforce-reporting/health-services-employment-report-july-2023.pdf>).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ciaran Browne'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Ciaran Browne
Acute Operations – HSE