



Oifig um Cheannasáí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín,
Ráithín, Luimneach V94 D1W9
Teil: 061 483226

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22nd April 2024

Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare St.
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 15746/24 - “To ask the Minister for Health further to PO No. 580 of 27th February 2024, what the ratio of Public Health Nurse to population is in Co. Clare; whether it is below the national average; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Wynne,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The Director of Public Health Nursing (DPHN) for Co. Clare has confirmed that the Public Health Nursing (PHN) service in Co. Clare is allocated across 32 PHN areas. PHN services for the following areas, Clonlara, Parteen, Westbury and Killaloe are covered by the Limerick PHN service and therefore, these areas are not included in the PHN allocation for Co. Clare.

The DPHN advised that according to the 2016 Census the population of Co. Clare (excluding the areas mentioned above) was recorded as 98,532. Based on this information the average caseload for each PHN area across Co. Clare is 3,079 patients.

It should be noted that nursing services in the community are delivered by PHNs and Community Registered General Nurses (CRGNs). In Co. Clare, the PHN caseload is managed by the PHN who is supported by a CRGN. On average the ratio of CRGN to PHN in Co. Clare is 1:2.5 i.e. there is one CRGN available to support every 2.5 PHNs/PHN areas. Based on this information, there is approx. 13 CRGNs available to support the 32 PHNs who provide community nursing services in Co. Clare.

A report issued in 2005 (Hanafin & Crowley) found that the average ratio of population per PHN in Ireland was 1:4000. Summary data from the 2022 Census would indicate that there has been an 8% increase in the population overall. The DPHN has advised that based on this data, the average caseload for each PHN in Co. Clare would increase by approximately 0.2%.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Costello
Head of Service Primary Care