

7<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Deputy Louise O'Reilly, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ 17509/24**

**To ask the Minister for Health the impact of the recruitment embargo on stroke services; the number of positions that cannot be filled; if services will be affected; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Stroke on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position in relation to implementation of the HSE's National Stroke Strategy (2022-2027)<sup>1</sup>.

The HSE's Stroke Strategy (2022-2027) provides a blueprint for the required investment over a 5 year timeline (2022-2027), to improve stroke services and deliver on key priorities under four pillars comprising:

1. Stroke Prevention;
2. Acute Care and Cure;
3. Rehabilitation and Restoration to Life;
4. Education and Research.

Two recommendations outlined in the Stroke Strategy received approval for recruitment in the Letter of Determination (LoD) 2023, for 24.9 whole time equivalent (WTE) staff. This was to increase resource capacity for acute services and early supported discharge (ESD) rehabilitation teams.

Progress was made in 2023, by the recruitment of 11.5 WTEs, as follows:

Pillar 2: Acute Care and Cure

- Improved access to specialist acute stroke care;
- Improved access to endovascular thrombectomy (EVT) for stroke patients with large vessel occlusion by expanding interventional neuroradiology services in Cork University Hospital (CUH).

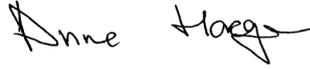
Pillar 3: Rehabilitation and Restoration to Life

- Improved access to rehabilitation in stroke patients' own homes by establishing/expanding Early Support Discharge (ESD) Teams.

The remaining 13.4 WTEs are delayed due to the HSE recruitment moratorium. The LoD 2023 approved the recruitment of these posts. However, these posts are currently unfunded. As a consequence, they are paused due the recruitment moratorium.

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

Yours sincerely



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**Anne Horgan**  
**General Manager**

**References:**

1. HSE National Stroke Strategy (2022-2027): <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/clinical-strategy-and-programmes/national-stroke-strategy-2022-2027.pdf>