



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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14<sup>th</sup> May, 2024

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan  
Dáil Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 19475/24 “To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the current number of positions waiting to be filled, including appropriate cover for maternity leave, in the fields of occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and psychology in the CH07 area; when it is anticipated that all available positions will be filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Durkan,

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:

The HSE has been through a period of significant workforce growth since end 2019. Successful recruitment campaigns in a number of disciplines have also meant that in many cases funded 2023 targets were reached and indeed exceeded ahead of year end. The unprecedented levels of additional Government investment in our health services in recent years has enabled the significant expansion in our workforce by +26172, equating to a 22% increase overall since December 2019. There was an 8,239 net increase in 2023 against a funded target of 6,100 net increase. Exceeding the funded level of new recruitment ahead of year end 2023 necessitated putting in place the recruitment measures with arrangements in place for (1) derogation of specific grades and (2) a process whereby services can seek derogation for posts, each of which is assessed by the relevant EMT member and where deemed appropriate submitted to the CEO for decision.

In respect of the CHO Dublin South, Kildare, West Wicklow area, I can confirm all critical posts are assessed with a request for derogation forwarded to the CEO for approval.

A number of such derogations have been received for this area including some for Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Psychology. This assessment facilitates good governance process in respect of the Pay and Numbers Strategy of the HSE.

All relevant posts will continue to be assessed in this manner and will be filled from existing recruitment panels which were formed during 2023.

Yours sincerely

**David Tully**  
Head of HR  
Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare & West Wicklow