



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta
Géarobríochtaí

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Date: 02 /02 /2024

Deputy Paul Kehoe, TD

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2

PQ No. 3620/24

To ask the Minister for Health for an update on the number of neurological nurses that have been recruited to the HSE; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Kehoe

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:

The National Clinical Programme for Neurology (NCPN) recognises that skilled and highly trained staff add value to Neurological services and NCPN endorses the expansion of the workforce dedicated to Neurology and in line with the Neurology Model of Care (2016) and Sláintecare. NCPN acknowledges that many of the programmes work streams in recent years have focused on the expansion and streamlining of services with investment in neurological nursing roles.

In 2023, the HSE submitted proposals for additional nursing posts to continue the development and implementation of modernised care pathways resulting in additional nurse specialist posts been appointed for Headache, Motor Neuron Disease and Epilepsy in 2023. Some of these posts were initially supported and funded through the Sláintecare Integration Fund pilot. As of Dec 2023, of twelve nursing posts where funding was allocated through the modernized care pathways, five posts have been appointed. NCPN understands that the other posts have been impacted by the HSEs recruitment embargo in Dec 2023.

Separate to the modernised care pathways, NCPN submitted proposals through the HSEs estimates process in 2022 for the expansion of the neurology nursing workforce. In May 2023, funding letters were issued to hospitals to progress the recruitment of an additional twenty-one neurology nursing posts. These posts are at the Clinical Nurse Specialist and Advanced Nurse Practitioner grades and are in the speciality area of Multiple Sclerosis, Huntington Disease, Neuromuscular Disease, Parkinson's Disease and Epilepsy. As of December 2023, five of the twenty-one posts where funding letters were issued to hospitals have been appointed. The remaining posts have been impacted by either the HSE's recruitment embargo (Dec 2023) or by recruitment issues such as 'no suitable candidate' applied for the nurse specialist post advertised. Hospitals where the later was the case, hope to re-advertise and progress these posts in 2024.



I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emma Benton', with a small flourish at the end.

Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations