



**Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,**  
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,  
An Chéad Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15,  
Áras Phlásóg na Rós, Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,  
Páirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta,  
Caladh an Treoigh,  
Luimneach.

**Office of the Assistant National Director,**  
National Disability Team,  
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,  
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,  
National Technology Park,  
Castletroy,  
Limerick.

24<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Deputy Martin Browne,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [martin.browne@oireachtas.ie](mailto:martin.browne@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Browne,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

**PQ: 30649/24**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the way he plans to address the low number of successful applicants who took up roles within CNDTs following the recruitment drive which ended in January of 2024, and the fact that the majority of applicants, 75% were already employed in the public health and social care services; the measures taken to ensure that the filling of positions by such workers does not cause shortages elsewhere in the system; and if he will make a statement on the matter..*

**HSE Response**

The CDNTs are currently providing services and supports for over 46,595 (End of June BIU metrics) children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow. However, there are significant challenges for CDNTs including:

- Significant staffing vacancies
- Growth in numbers of children with complex need
- Growth in demand for Assessment of Need, diverting further resources away from interventions

Since 2019, more than 610 development posts have been allocated to children's disability services across the country. However, we also know that there are over 700 vacant whole time equivalent posts in our CDNTs. The HSE Community Operations Disability Services is working collaboratively with the CDNT lead agencies at CHO level to promote CDNTs as a workplace of choice in a competitive employment market.

The HSE's *Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People*, launched in October 2023, now in implementation phase, is a targeted Service Improvement Programme to achieve a quality, accessible, equitable and timely service for all children with complex needs as a result of a disability and their families.



The Roadmap, includes a robust suite of 60 actions, including 21 on CDNT Retention and Recruitment targets, and many of which are now in train.

## **Recruitment Campaign**

Despite the recruitment pause in November 2023, the CEO of the HSE made derogations in relation to recruitment for a range of essential services including clinical posts for CDNTs.

The first media advertising campaign for Children's Disability Network Teams – '*Be part of our team, Be part of their lives*', commenced in January 2024.

The roles being recruited were, newly qualified and experienced dietitians, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, speech and language therapists.

A simple online application process accessed via [www.hse.ie/cdnt](http://www.hse.ie/cdnt) meant roles in disability partner organisations (Sec 38s and 39s) could be included. This was important as each lead agency is responsible for their own recruitment. The HSE is a lead agency for 41 of the 93 teams.

Working with our contracted agencies and following extensive input from parents and staff in the HSE and disability partner organisations, we created an advertising campaign that helped us engage with our target audience effectively.

The campaign yielded 495 applications across the 6 professions outlined above.

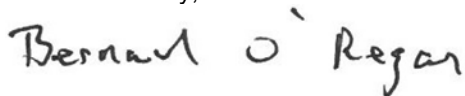
59% of the applications were for senior grades and 41% were for staff grade entry level positions. As the public sector is the main employer of these grades, the majority of applicants (75%) were already employed in the public health and social care services. As is their right and will and preference, these internal candidates were mainly seeking opportunities for either a promotion, or to move locations or to move care settings.

To date, 30 applicants who were successful at interview have accepted jobs and have or are commencing work in the CDNTs.

The HSE is operating in a very competitive global market for healthcare talent as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals across the globe. The demand for these HSCP professions significantly outstrips supply both nationally and internationally. The HSE Resourcing Strategy '*Resourcing our Future*' was launched in May 2023 to ensure a sufficient domestic supply of health care staff. The strategy is being implemented by the services locally to maximise the resourcing and delivery of publicly funded health services for the future.

A new Assistant National Director of HR, Disabilities Workforce and Resourcing Lead has taken up post 7 weeks ago. She is prioritising CDNT vacancies at this time, working closely with HSE, Section 38 and Section 39 Lead Agencies, learning from the Q1 Targeted CDNT Recruitment campaign, to streamline the HSE recruitment process, open up the HSE HSCP panels to S38/39 organisations, develop the Therapy Assistant recruitment campaign amongst a number of other initiatives.

Yours Sincerely,



**Bernard O'Regan**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**National Disability Team**

