



**Stiúrtóra Náisiúnta
Acmhainní Daonna**

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí,
Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens',
Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 W2A8.

**National Director
Human Resources**

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Richard O'Donoghue T.D.

20th March 2024

PQ 10537/24: To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that HSE clerical staff currently on career breaks and requesting to return to work are not reinstated due to the HSE recruitment freeze; if these issues will be addressed to allow these staff return to their current positions as they are already employees of the HSE; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Richard O'Donoghue

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent Parliamentary Question which was sent to the HSE for response.

As you will be aware we are currently engaged in finalising the HSE Pay and Numbers Strategy.

There has been unprecedented levels of additional Government investment in health in recent years and this has enabled significant expansion in our workforce by +26,172 WTE, equating to a 22% increase overall since December 2019, with 8,239 WTE of these arriving in 2023.

Despite this very welcome investment, the cost of running our existing services at current levels over 2024 will be a significant challenge in the context of the total funding available to the health service in 2024. Therefore our approach for 2024 is one that balances the requirement to manage within existing resources, ensuring every means is deployed to respond to need, with that of ensuring prudent controls are in place.

As we work towards finalising our Pay and Numbers Strategy, this will enable us to set out our available WTE target, that will inform decisions at local level on available WTE for filling by all means including career break returnees.

I trust this clarifies and is of some assistance.

Yours sincerely,

**Marie O'Sullivan
National HR**