



Pleanáil agus Faisnéis Straitéiseach d'Fhórsa
Ionad Gnó Shoid
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Health Service Executive
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28 May 2024

Deputy Peadar Tóibín

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2

PQ 21951/24: To ask the Minister for Health how many occupational therapists have been employed in the health service in each of the last 15 years.

PQ 21952/24: To ask the Minister for Health how many physiotherapists have been employed in the health service in each of the last 15 years.

PQ 21953/24: To ask the Minister for Health how many speech and language therapists have been employed in the health service in each of the last 15 years.

Dear Deputy Tóibín

I refer to your recent parliamentary questions in relation to therapy staffing which was forwarded to the Health Services Executive (HSE) by the Department of Health for direct reply.

Health Services Personnel Census (HSPC) reports on direct employment in the provision of Health & Social Care Services by the HSE and the various Section 38 hospitals & agencies. Staff are reported on the basis of staff category and staff group. HSPC details at the end of April, show that there were 6,770 WTE (equating to 7,679 personnel) therapy professionals directly employed in the provision of our services and *of which*:

- 2,054 WTE (2,295 individuals) or 30.3% were Occupational Therapists.
- 2,398 WTE (2,733 individuals) or 35.4% were Physiotherapists.
- 1,286 WTE (1,475 individuals) or 19.0% were Speech & Language Therapists.

As requested by the Deputy, final year-end figures as reported for each of the past 15 years (31 December 2009 onwards) together with the latest available (30 April 2024), for *all therapy professionals* are as set out in the following table:

Therapy Professionals: 2009-2024

Date	Dietitians	Occupational Therapists	Orthoptists	Physiotherapists	Podiatrists & Chiropodists	Speech & Language Therapists	Therapy Professions
Dec 2009	407	1,103	27	1,469	40	776	3,822
Dec 2010	405	1,203	27	1,538	42	839	4,054
Dec 2011	395	1,197	27	1,534	43	835	4,030
Dec 2012	389	1,176	23	1,534	48	798	3,969
Dec 2013	383	1,264	24	1,497	51	838	4,058
Dec 2014	409	1,311	27	1,583	54	870	4,254
Dec 2015	455	1,403	29	1,691	54	907	4,540
Dec 2016	493	1,475	28	1,729	67	1,030	4,823
Dec 2017	515	1,528	33	1,810	69	1,103	5,057
Dec 2018	582	1,584	34	1,849	70	1,113	5,232
Dec 2019	574	1,597	35	1,851	72	1,103	5,232
Dec 2020	638	1,702	38	1,958	80	1,150	5,565
Dec 2021	696	1,840	40	2,091	95	1,186	5,947
Dec 2022	756	1,945	40	2,227	121	1,231	6,320
Dec 2023	843	2,048	38	2,369	125	1,276	6,700
Apr 2024	863	2,054	39	2,398	131	1,286	6,770

Source: Health Service Personnel Census

Note¹: Health Sector staffing figures relate to direct employment levels as returned through the Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC) for the public health sector (HSE & Section 38 agencies)

Note²: Figures relating to service levels are expressed as whole-time equivalents (WTE) in order to take account of part-time working.

It is important to point out that while, these figures are set within a background of increasing staff numbers when compared to recent years, not all the information is directly comparable. As well as the impact of the economic crisis and global recession particularly in the years up to 2014, the HSE has for example subsumed various agencies and services as well transfers out to other agencies over the extended timeframe covered by this request. The unwinding of the financial emergency measures has in the recent reversal of the Haddington Road Agreement also added to the requirement for additional staff to replace lost hours. There also has been substantial service developments, coupled with the demands brought by an ageing population, significantly increased regulatory & legislative requirements, in addition to increased levels of care and the expansion of the workforce required in the immediate and enduring response to COVID-19. In more recent times the additional requirement to meet the needs of international migrants and refugees such as our Ukraine response has also driven demand.

Workforce reports are available through the Health Services Personnel Census (HSPC), which is the official employment count for the public health service. The latest published information is routinely published [here](#).

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,



Des Williams

General Manager