



**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.

12<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Deputy Pauline Tully,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie](mailto:pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Tully,

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

**PQ: 34652/24**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if action 5.1 of the Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023-2026 has been delivered; and the number of additional WTE senior posts recruited as part of this action.*

**PQ: 34653/24**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of CDNT staff vacancies that have been filled to date as part of the Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023-2026.*

**HSE Response**

**Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People**

The HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People, approved by the HSE Board and launched by the Government and the HSE in October 2023 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.

It sets out the overall aim for Children's Disability Services, provided by the HSE and its partner agencies, for every child to have a childhood of inclusive experiences where they can have fun, learn, develop interests and skills, and form positive relationships with others in a range of different settings.



The Roadmap, which is now in its implementation phase, has established four Working Groups which report into a Service Improvement Programme Board every month which in turn reports to the Roadmap Oversight Group chaired by the Minister of State, Anne Rabbitte.

The WGs have wide membership including HSE, Section 38 and 39 front line disabilities staff and management, parent voices, staff reps, Primary Care, CAMHS and Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth. The WGs have agreed their Terms of Reference and their Project Charters for the Roadmap Actions within their scope.

**Working Group 3: Workforce** – has responsibility for developing and ensuring the delivery of a recruitment strategy for all CDNTs regardless of the Lead Agency; Retention of existing CDNT staff; Deployment of Students/Trainees/New Graduates; and Development of Existing Staff.

The Roadmap contains 60 actions of which include a robust suite of 21 staff retention and recruitment actions.

**With regard to the questions asked, please see the table below.**

5.1	<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>Complete recruitment of an additional 136.3 WTE senior posts prioritised in the senior recruitment action (2.2) to progress the requirement to restore the health and social care supports that were historically provided in some special schools as directed by the Government.</p> <p><b>Update</b></p> <p>Update July 2024: 80.80 WTE HSCP posts have been recruited. Special schools are mostly closed for the summer months, the onsite therapy hours were delivered instead with the child and family on their IFSP goals prioritised by the family.</p>
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In addition, please see the attached CDNT Staff Census and Workforce Review 2023 gives a picture of the staff working in our children's disability teams on October 11th 2023. The data collated as part of the CDNT Staff Census and Workforce Review is informing for a and the initiatives that are being developed under the Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People.

The 2023 census and workforce review shows,

- Total number of filled whole time posts - 1,437 up 3% on last year
- Total number of filled therapy posts - 1,179
- Total number of vacancies nationally at 11/10/23 - 817.23

Year	Total approved whole time posts	% Increase year on year	Total filled whole time posts	% Increase year on year	No of therapy posts
2023	2,255	7%	1,437	3%	1179
2022	2,102	10%	1,395	2%	1183
2021	1,892		1,367		1173

With regard to senior posts, please see pages 28 and 29 of the CDNT Census. The largest allocated grade on the CDNTs is at senior level where there are 693.10 filled WTE and 395.53 vacant WTE positions (1088.63 total)

## Retention and recruitment

The HSE and disability providers continue to focus on staff retention and recruitment. There is an acknowledged national and international shortage of health and social care professionals with the necessary qualifications and experience. Seven of the disciplines working in children's disability teams have been included on the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment's Critical Skills Occupations List\*. Despite this challenge the HSE and partner disability



organisations have increased the capacity of CDNTs by 3%. There has been further net growth across the Disability services in 2024.

Jobs are being actively offered to candidates. To support interest in these roles, staff from the CDNTs delivered a series of webinars in July, to help prospective employees learn about the roles we're offering, inter-disciplinary team working and the children and families we support. There was large attendance from Ireland and abroad.

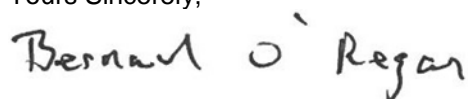
The HSE Careers Hub is highlighting working in Children's Disability Network Teams. The HSE is actively engaging with undergraduates through the Higher Education Institutes, spotlighting disability roles in career and recruitment fairs and generating future interest in working in the disability services with outreach into secondary schools.

The number of clinical placements in CDNTs has been increased and will continue to grow to encourage health and social care undergraduates to choose a job in children's disability services post- graduation.

The HSE with the partner voluntary agencies are developing new disciplines to optimise workforce potential with access to these roles pitched at lower entry level and opportunities to pursue further education in an apprenticeship model.

The HSE is fully committed to the delivery of the Roadmap actions over the lifetime of the plan.

Yours Sincerely,



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

