

4th March, 2025

Mr. Liam Quaide, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 5791/25

"To ask the Minister for Health the number and grade-principal, senior, staff grade, assistant grades of psychology posts she intends to advertise for each local health area-north Lee, south Lee, west Cork, north Cork and Kerry-in the Cork and Kerry primary care services this year; the projected dates of that recruitment drive; and the contract type-permanent or temporary-in each instance".

Dear Deputy Quaide,

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.

The recruitment pause was lifted on 15th July 2024 and the HSE South West is now operating under the Pay and Numbers Strategy 2024. During the recruitment embargo REO derogation was received to fill all vacant psychology posts. The HSE South recruitment department have multiple local, regional, national, international campaigns ongoing with a view to filling all vacant psychology posts in the region.

The Cork North Principal Psychology Manager took up post in November 2024. The Principal Psychology Manager for South Lee, West Cork and Kerry has continued to try to advance filling of vacant posts via national panels. In addition, the following vacant posts have been expressed out by NRS and a number of posts have been accepted with commencement dates between January and March 2025. As can be seen below, despite post approval, there continues to be a significant number of vacant posts across Primary Care services in the region.

Authorising Region	Service Area	Location	Role Title	Status	WTE + Contract Type
South West	Primary Care	CHO 4 - Primary Care, South Lee	Senior Psychologist	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	CHO 4 - Primary Care, Cork North	Principal Psychology Manager	Recruitment Complete; In post since Nov 2024	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	CHN 10	Clinical Psychologist	Post accepted	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	South Lee - WLI	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	South Lee - WLI	Senior Psychologist	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, permanent

South West	Primary Care	Kerry - WLI	Psychology Assistant	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	South Lee	Psychology Assistant	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	South Lee	Psychology Assistant	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	Kerry	Psychologist, Senior	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	MHS North Cork	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	South Lee - Paeds	Clinical Psychologist	Recruitment Complete. Start date 17/02/2025	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	Kerry	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	South Lee	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	South Lee - WLI	Clinical Psychologist	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	South Lee	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	1 WTE, permanent
South West	Primary Care	North Lee	Psychology Assistant	Unable to fill	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	North Lee	Psychology Assistant	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	North Lee	Psychology Assistant	Recruitment Complete	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	Social Inclusion Services	Staff Grade Psychologist	Actively recruiting	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	Cork North - Blackpool	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	1 WTE, temporary
South West	Primary Care	Blackpool/ St Mary's Primary Care Centre Cork City	Clinical Psychologist	Unable to fill	0.6 WTE, temporary

The current recruitment plan:

- Local interviews will take place in April 2025 to target 7 graduates from the UCC Doctoral programme mapping these graduates to critical vacancies in staff grade posts across CAMHS and Primary Care from September 2025. All contracts will be permanent appointments.
- Any C.V. received locally will be processed and local interviews held to appoint to critical priority posts.
- National Recruitment efforts will continue with new staff and senior campaign due to be held in July and December 2025 respectively.

The immediate focus is on recruitment to fill vacant posts unfilled since expression to National Recruitment Service (NRS) in October 2024. Efforts to recruit newly qualified staff through local campaigns, support and retain current staff in permanent posts, and ensure there is an appropriate skills-mix in psychology teams, are currently in progress.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mari O'Donovan
Interim Head of Service - Primary Care,
HSE South West