



BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Frankie Feighan
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

29th July 2025

PQ37771/25 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of dedicated WTE clinical research staff employed by the Health Service Executive; the plans for additional recruitment in 2025 and 2026 of dedicated clinical research staff; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Feighan,

Thank you for your representation.

Within the health service the term “Clinical Research Staff” encompasses a wide spectrum of roles, responsibilities, and employment arrangements—many of which do not fall under a single staff category or payroll code. Please see outline below of the types of roles that may reasonably fall within this category:

- **Clinicians who conduct Research:** These are medical, nursing, midwifery and health and social care professionals (HSCPs) whose core employment is in clinical service delivery, but who also engage in research.
- **Dedicated Research and Innovation Roles:** Some HSE staff are employed specifically to conduct, coordinate, or manage research and innovation projects.
- **Research Infrastructure and Support Staff:** These staff support the design, governance, and delivery of research activities and often operate at organisational or national level.

Strengthening Research Roles and Support across the HSE

As part of the implementation of the [HSE National Framework for the Governance, Management and Support of Research \(2021\)](#) (the ‘RGMS Framework’) and other national research infrastructure initiatives, the HSE is working to map, categorise and formalise research roles more systematically. This will ultimately allow for more comprehensive and transparent reporting in future.

The HSE is actively advancing the governance, infrastructure and leadership structures needed to support a sustainable and impactful research environment across all care settings. This work is being progressed through several aligned initiatives, with a particular focus on ensuring



research staff and activities are recognised, supported and embedded across the health system. Key actions include:

- Establishing Regional Research Directorates and regional research offices to lead governance, ethics, and partnership development.
- Reforming the Research Ethics Committee (REC) system and streamlining approval processes.
- Fostering strategic partnerships with the third level sector and research funders to align research priorities and infrastructure.
- Ensuring that research investment supports national policy implementation in areas like mental health, cancer, and genomics.

These reforms reflect the HSE's commitment to building a learning health system where research is effectively managed and has real, measurable impact —across all disciplines and all regions.

I hope this provides you with some assistance.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ana Térres
Head of Research and Evidence
Health Service Executive