



Oifig na Seirbhísí Sláinte Meabhrach
FSS an Iardheiscirt

Teach Caha, Párc Ghnó & Teicneolaíochta,
Bóthar na Modh Feirme, Corcaigh, T12 XHT4

Office of Mental Health Service
HSE South West

Caha House, Business & Technology
Park, Model Farm Road, Cork,
T12 XHT4

southwest.hse.ie

T: 021-4868268
E: Declan.Cronin@hse.ie

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Deputy Pa Daly,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 39975/25

“To ask the Minister for Health if a clinical child psychologist has been appointed for CAMHS in Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Daly,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted for the Minister for Health for responses. I have examined the matter and the above tables outline the position.

As you may be aware there is a national and international shortage of qualified psychologists and rural areas such as Kerry can be more difficult to recruit into. Notwithstanding this, we have appointed a Principal Psychologist who supports the governance of CAMHS Psychologists in Kerry and Specialist services such as CAREDs and Eist Linn, in addition to working 0.5 clinically in the South Kerry team. We have successfully filled a Senior Grade post in South Kerry with the appointee due to start in February 2026 (post maternity leave). We also have a Psychology Assistant post in place and a Clinical Psychology training post aligned to South Kerry CAMHS commencing from September 2025. This trainee, having completed training, will take up a longstanding staff grade vacancy in the South Kerry team.

In North Kerry, we currently have a Psychology Assistant in post, a trainee Clinical Psychologist position due to commence in September 2025 and a vacant Staff Grade and Senior Grade Psychologist post. The Staff Grade Psychologist post has been offered to a national and local panel in the past 12 months and has been unable to fill. It will go to a new Staff Grade Psychologist National panel, which will go live in September 2025. The Senior Grade Psychologist post has gone to a national panel and was unable to fill. It has now been expressed to a local Senior Psychology panel and we are hopeful it will be filled via this process. Failing same, it will go to a new national Senior Psychology panel due to be formed in February 2026.

Given the critical needs for psychological support and the dearth of qualified psychologists in Kerry, we have worked in partnership with Southwest Counselling Services to offer in-reach psychotherapy sessions. The Principal Psychologist Specialist currently supervises 2 therapists (each 1.5 days) to offer specific interventions to young people under her governance and supervision. Although not replacing the need for professionally trained psychologist, it is providing some access to psychological support services while we continue our efforts at recruitment. Every avenue is being explored to optimise access to psychology in the Kerry area at present.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Declan Cronin
Acting Head of Service
Mental Health Service