



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
Clár Cúraim Pobail Feabhsaithe &
Conarthaí Príomhchúraim
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte

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Deputy Johnny Guirke
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

10th September 2025

PQ: 41443/25 To ask the Minister for Health the number of GPs currently practicing in County Meath; the GP-to-population ratio for the county; how this compares with the national average and with neighbouring counties such as Louth, Kildare, and Westmeath; her Department's assessment of the impact of this disparity on patient access; the specific actions being taken to improve GP coverage in Meath; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Guirke,

I refer to your parliamentary question, which was passed to the HSE for response.

There are approximately 3,187 GPs with a public contract (2,558 GMS & 629 others*) and c.800 GPs including those who work privately, GPs in training and International Medical Graduate (IMG) participants as at the 01st of June 2025. It is estimated that there are approximately 7.4 practicing GP's per 10k of the population in Ireland. As of the 1st June 2025, 89 GPs in Meath hold a GMS (76) or other (13) contract as noted below with the HSE (source PCRS).

*Number of GPs included in the above that are not contracted to the GMS Scheme who are registered to provide services under the Primary Childhood Immunisation Scheme, the Health (Amendment) Act 1996, Methadone Treatment Scheme and National Cancer Screening Service.

Please find attached Appendix 1 details of the breakdown of GPs by Community Health Organisation area, noting that information on the number of GPs is available by CHO area, Local Health Office (LHO) area and not per county.

The HSE is actively working to increase the number of GPs through various initiatives detailed below.

Expansion of GP Training

The HSE is working closely with the Irish College of General Practitioners on a range of measures to expand the GP Workforce and in developing a sustainable model of General Practice for the future in line with Sláintecare. GP Training Places have increased from an intake of 259 in 2022 to 286 in 2023 and an intake of 350 in 2024 and again in 2025. The total number of trainees undertaking the four-year programme will increase from the current 1,044 to 1,300 in 2026 – a 25% increase. Funding has been provided in the 2024 budget to enable the HSE and the ICGP to implement this initiative at pace.

**International Medical Graduate (IMG) Programme**

The International Medical Graduates (IMG) Programme, is an initiative supported by the ICGP, HSE and the IMO aimed at expanding GP workforce in rural and urban disadvantaged areas. As of Q2 2025, 152 candidates have started with the IMG Programme with over 100 of these currently working in General Practice. Recruitment is ongoing in 2025. This has a very immediate impact on GP shortages. The new additional posts work in General Practice for a 2 year period, following which they can take up an Irish GMS contract. The initiative is targeted at rural areas, areas of urban deprivation and those difficult to fill posts in various geographical locations across the country. IMG candidates are in place across all the Health Regions, and the initiative has helped ease the pressures on GP Practices in areas such as the southwest, southeast, midlands and western seaboard.

General Practice Strategic Review

The Minister for Health has established a Strategic Review of General Practice. The Review is being led by the Department of Health, with support from the HSE and input from key stakeholders, including the IMO and ICGP. The Review is examining the issues affecting general practice including GP training, GP capacity, Out of Hours services reform, the eHealth Agenda, and the financial support model for general practice. The Review will then identify the arrangements necessary to improve the current system of GP care as part of a primary care-focused health service and in line with the Sláintecare vision on access.

Following its conclusion, a report will be presented to the Minister for Health giving an assessment of the challenges affecting general practice and setting out the actions needed to provide for a more sustainable GP service. Meetings of the Joint Department of Health/HSE Steering Group are ongoing and engagement with relevant stakeholders is currently underway.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

**Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
Primary Care Contracts**



Appendix 1: Source: HSE Primary Care Reimbursement Services (PCRS)

<https://www.spcrs.ie/portal/annual-reporting/>

Community Healthcare Organisation	No. of GPs June 2025
CHO Area 1	241
Cavan / Monaghan	71
Donegal	101
Sligo / Leitrim / West Cavan	69
CHO Area 2	329
Galway	206
Mayo	89
Roscommon	34
CHO Area 3	262
Clare	56
North Tipp. /East Limerick	53
Limerick	153
CHO Area 4	486
South Lee	152
North Lee	125
West Cork	47
Kerry	103
North Cork	59
CHO Area 5	311
Carlow/Kilkenny	91
Waterford	83
South Tipperary	57
Wexford	80
CHO Area 6	334
Dun Laoghaire	121
Dublin South East	117
Wicklow	96
CHO Area 7	465
Dublin South City	131
Dublin South West	117
Dublin West	85
Kildare / West Wicklow	132
CHO Area 8	343
Laois/Offaly	82
Longford Westmeath	90
Louth	82
Meath	89
CHO Area 9	416
Dublin North	170



Dublin North Central	138
Dublin North West	108
Total	3,187
Number of GPs included in the above that are not contracted to the GMS Scheme who are registered to provide services under the Primary Child Childhood Immunisation Scheme, the Health (Amendment) Act 1996, Methadone Treatment Scheme and National Cancer Service.	629