



Oifig an Stiúrthoir Cúnta,  
Cúram Priomhúil Rochtain agus Comhthathú,

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5<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Deputy Clarke,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

PQ 41772/25 To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of having a clinical psychologist in each primary care network or GP practice

- Sorca Clarke

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Dear Deputy Clarke,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to respond directly to you in relation to Parliamentary Question PQ 41772/25, which you submitted to the Minister for Health.

Primary Care Psychology is a key component of community-based psychological services in Ireland. Originally developed from hospital and community care models focused primarily on one-to-one assessment and intervention, the service has evolved to deliver a broader range of interventions. These now include education, prevention, early intervention, and treatment of mild to moderate psychological difficulties. The service also plays a critical role in signposting and referral to secondary and tertiary services, both within psychology and across other healthcare disciplines.

Primary Care Psychology addresses a wide range of psychological and mental health challenges. Typical areas of support include parenting advice, help with child and adolescent emotional or behavioural difficulties, family issues, and therapeutic interventions for depression, anxiety, trauma, adjustment and loss, and other stress-related or relational problems.

Psychology is not delivered in every Primary Care Centre or GP practice. Instead, it is structured as a specialist service operating at an area level, within a team-based model of service delivery. Psychology teams may include Principal Psychologists, Senior Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists, Trainee Psychologists, and Psychology Assistants, all working collaboratively, rather than independently, to meet the needs of their service area.

In relation to cost, based on the August 2025 pay scales provided by the National Pay Unit of the HSE National Finance Division, the estimated fully burdened annual salary for one Whole-Time Equivalent (WTE) Clinical Psychologist is €90,751, this increases to €120,471 for the Senior Grade. This figure includes base salary, average premiums, expected overtime, allowances, and employer PRSI at 11.15%, and is calculated using the midpoint of the August 2025 pay scale for the grade. It reflects pay-related costs only and does not include additional non-pay or ancillary expenses.



In addition to the pay costs above it is reasonable to expect that there are other non-pay costs associated with the recruitment process i.e. advertising, interview boards, possible travel expenses etc. which would also be incurred. Additionally it is reasonable to assume that there may be ancillary support services associated with the new posts arising from the implied additional activity that would be undertaken as a result of the increased number of staff. Some of these services may be drawn from existing cost pools however there may be incremental costs incurred i.e. facilities costs, admin support, medical support teams etc. The estimated annual pay costs of employing additional staff must be considered in this context.

Based on current figures, the estimated annual pay cost of placing a Clinical Psychologist in each of the 96 Primary Care Networks would be €8,712,096, it would be expected that there would be an additional non-pay cost of approximately 20% equating to €1,742,419. Therefore the overall cost to the HSE to employ an additional 96 Clinical Psychologists would be approximately €10,454,515. Of course any such proposal would need to be fully evaluated within the broader framework of existing service delivery models, workforce planning constraints, overall skill mix, availability of suitably qualified staff and resource prioritisation across the health system. These factors have not been considered as part of this PQ response.

I trust this is of assistance.

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Seán McArt  
General Manager  
Primary Care Access & Integration