



**Ceann Seirbhíse, Cúraim Príomhúil**  
Cúram Sláinte Pobail Cabhán Dún na nGall  
Liatroim Muineachán, Sligeach  
An Clochar, Sráid an Choláiste, Béal Átha  
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Deputy Charles Ward  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
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Dublin 2

**PQ ref 12610/25**

Recent figures provided by the HSE Regional Health Forum West to Cllr. Declan Meehan show that there are 476 people on the waiting lists for an occupational therapy appointment, 316 of these are waiting for more than one year. The information also revealed that there are currently 11 vacancies in occupational therapy in Donegal - eight in Primary Care, Adult Community Care service and three in Social Care.

***“To ask the Minister for Health her plans to address the considerable need for occupational therapy appointments in Donegal (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter.”***

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position Donegal Primary Care Occupational Therapy (OT) Service.

In light of the vacancy rates within all services across the community in Donegal, the following actions have been undertaken to enable OT staff to safely continue to provide a quality, client-centred service to the people of Donegal who are presenting with highest clinical need:

- Contingency Plan for Adult Primary Care OT Service implemented since September 2024, which outlines a number of actions and priority measures for safe clinical service provision
- OT Managers currently providing clinical cover for the Specialist Seating Service throughout Co. Donegal
- Escalation of risk assessments to senior management to outline the risk issues pertaining to continued OT service provision due to ongoing staffing issues relating to the HSE Pay and Numbers Strategy
- Plan to complete wait list validation by mid-2025 for Paediatric Primary Care Services
- Employment of agency OT to assist with Intellectual Disability Services and completion of Housing Adaptation Grant Assessments
- Implementation of triage and prioritisation initiatives within Primary Care Adult OT services to increase clinical capacity
- Caseload management reviews and professional supervision for OTs by OT managers and OTs within the team



- Review of referral data to inform service planning and allocation of limited resources by management team
- Staff health and wellbeing initiatives to support staff to perform their duties safely
- Engagement with union for support and clarity on service planning contingency arrangements
- Reallocation of clinical resources due to planned and unplanned leave in the form of cross cover by the OT staff team

The HR department have confirmed that four OTs (Bursary students) are due to graduate from Coventry in July and will take up a three-year contract with the OT service in either Primary Care or Disability in the next few months.

The HR department have also confirmed that all posts that have been approved for recruitment have been offered and accepted, with candidates undergoing the clearance process.

There are currently a number of vacant OT posts awaiting approval under the 3-stage recruitment approval process introduced as part of the HSE Pay and Numbers Strategy.

The following panels are currently in place:

- Senior OT: Panel with 21 candidates in place since 10/03/25 covering Paediatrics, Primary Care & Disability.
- Staff Grade OT: Panel with 40 candidates in place covering Paediatrics, Adult, Primary Care & Mental Health.
- Non-Primary Care: Interviews held 18/03/25 for Children's Disability Network Team.
- Mental Health: Interviews held 13/03/25 for Senior OT's.

I trust that this is of assistance, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely

**Mandy Doyle**  
**Ceannasaí Seirbhíse, Cúram Príomhúil**  
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