



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
An Pháirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta, Caladh an Treoigh, Luimneach
Tel: 061 492068
E: nationaloralhealth@hse.ie
National Oral Health Office
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park, Castletroy, Limerick
Tel: 061 492068
Email: nationaloralhealth@hse.ie

19 March 2025

**Deputy Shay Brennan
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 9255/25 To ask the Minister for Health the immediate steps she will take to address the shortage of public dentists, given the 23% reduction in HSE dentists between 2006 and 2022; and if she will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy Brennan,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The ability to offer services to each of the school years has been limited due to availability of dental staff. As part of targeting of resources, each dental service maintains a commitment to urgent/emergency treatment for the relief of pain, infection, and the sequelae of trauma.

With the agreement of the Pay and Numbers Strategy between the Department of Health and the HSE, staffing levels (WTE) were set to those that were live in the system at the end of 2023. The resulting impact redefined any vacancies that arose prior to that date as no longer being in the system. Concurrently, any additional WTE live in the system at the end of 2023 were defined as part of the existing staffing levels. The Chief Officer and REOs have identified 34.7 WTE vacancies in 2024 across oral health services nationally, to be prioritized for filling. An additional 15 WTE new dental service posts were provided in the National Service Plan 2025. This provides a 49.7 WTE for recruitment to improve staffing levels within oral health teams nationally.

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

Yours Sincerely,

**Anne O'Neill
Assistant National Director, Oral Health**