



19 Mar 2025

Alan Kelly T.D
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 9549/25 : To ask the Minister for Health to provide the total number of staff vacancies within the HSE, including the acute sector on 1 July 2024, and 1 February 2025, broken down by grade; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Kelly,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question in relation to staffing which was forwarded to the Health Services Executive (HSE) by the Department of Health for direct reply.

At the end of June 2024, employment levels show there were 148,256 WTE (equating to 166,675 personnel) directly employed in the provision of Health & Social Care Services by the HSE and Section 38 hospitals & agencies. At the end of January 2025 this figure rose to 148,380 WTE (equating to 168,290 personnel). The Deputy will be interested to note that, the overall increase in employment since December 2019 now stands at +28,567 WTE (+23.8%).

The Pay & Numbers Strategy (2024), for Department of Health funded services only, as agreed in July under the auspices of a 2 year expenditure agreement, provided for the retention and funding for approx. 4,000 WTE, that were due to excess recruitment at the end of 2023 and the retention of once of funding provided for COVID-19 posts. This has enabled the retention of 4,000 posts across the publicly funded health system. This agreement has also provided for clarity on the funded workforce for the health services, based on the agreement that as at December 31st 2023 - all posts occupied and reporting WTE on the Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC) on this date are comprehended and considered as funded.

Added to this figure in 2024, is a further 3,310 WTE additional new posts, comprised of new service developments and agency conversion. This has provided for a total workforce in 2024, of **129,753 WTE** across Department of Health funded services only which was the maximum WTE limit in 2024. In addition, owing to the 2 year expenditure agreement (2024/2025) there are a further 3,553 WTE in new service development posts approved under the National Service Plan 2025. This brings the total funded workforce WTE to a maximum of **133,305 WTE** in 2025. Each Health Region and National Service, is currently receiving their latest allocation of this maximum WTE limit inclusive of these latest new service development posts.

As noted above, the Pay and Numbers Strategy introduced a maximum WTE Limit, which is currently, for year end 2025 at 133,305 WTE, across our services. The monthly Health Service Personnel Census report is used to compare the current variance to this year-end WTE limit. This report is a combination of both vacancies that arise for replacement filling and also those that are new service developments for first filling. This report is available at staff category level only. Table 1 below provides the variance against the year end 2024 WTE limit at the end of June 2024. Table 2 below, provides the same report for the end of January reporting period, against the 2025 WTE limit. A minus figure denotes the quantum of WTE available for recruitment. The Deputy may wish to note further, that at January 2025 reporting period, there are a significant number of new service developments that are currently in the process of commissioning across services.



Finally, the Pay and Numbers Strategy for Disability funded services is due for finalisation at the end of Q1 2025, and when complete, is expected to set out the variance similar to that reported for Department of Health funded services. In the interim, as vacancies are not collected centrally for disability services, our national turnover report provides data on the starters over leavers across our services, noting that this includes both internal as well as external movement. The below Table 3 provides the latest available reports on our staff turnover for disability services, by staff category both for 2023 and also the year to date for 2024 (latest report Q3 2024).

Table 1

Variance to the HSE WTE Limit at end of June 2024

Staff Category June 24	Dec 24 WTE Variance
Total Variance	-3,145
Medical & Dental	-154
Nursing & Midwifery	-443
Health & Social Care Professionals	-297
Management & Administrative	-501
General Support	-196
Patient & Client Care	-399
<i>to be commissioned</i>	1,155

Table 2

Variance to the HSE WTE Limit at end of January 2025

Staff Category January 25	Dec 25 WTE Variance
Total Variance	-6,882
Medical & Dental	166
Nursing & Midwifery	-623
Health & Social Care Professionals	-281
Management & Administrative	-1,120
General Support	-536
Patient & Client Care	-1,494
<i>to be commissioned</i>	2,994

Table 3

Turnover 2023 & Year to Date 2024 in Disability Services

Turnover in Disabilities	2023	2024 (YTD Sept 24)
Total Turnover	9.7%	6.3%
Medical & Dental	4.6%	9.6%
Nursing & Midwifery	9.3%	6.2%
Health & Social Care Professionals	11.1%	6.2%
Management & Administrative	10.5%	6.2%
General Support	7.8%	3.6%
Patient & Client Care	9.1%	6.6%



Workforce reports are available through the Health Services Personnel Census (HSPC), which is the official employment count for the public health service. The latest published information is routinely published [here](#).

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Grennan

General Manager (Interim)