



Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Airgeadais

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
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22nd September 2025

Deputy David Cullinane TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re PQ 45222 25: To ask the Minister for Health the spend on agency staffing in each region, by service division in each of the years 2021 to 2024 and to date in 2025, in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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. Your PQ above has been referred to me for response.

Context

The available supply in the labour market for health workforce continues to be a challenge. This is not unique to Ireland, but rather a global health workforce challenge. Recruitment and retention of Clinical, Nursing and other key staff is a constant challenge and impacts adversely on the ability to maintain safe and effective services. Therefore, as part of the HSE's overarching resourcing approach whereby direct employment does not meet the needs of service delivery requirements, agency staff are utilised. This can be for a variety of reasons, including sick absence replacement, both long and short term, to replace vacancies currently being actively recruited to, to replace maternity leave etc.

In advance of the filling of these hours via direct employees, there is a need to prioritise critical services for replacement through agency and overtime. Collectively, these give rise to the utilisation of agency resources however while simultaneously running large scale domestic and international recruitment campaigns to fill through direct employment. At times the HSE have been unable to fill a vacancy even via agency. The agencies have indicated that they are experiencing difficulty in recruiting themselves due to a lack of availability and also accommodation availability and costs.

While operating within spend limits, the HSE Senior Leadership Team have committed to fully deliver on the planned activity levels as set out in the HSE National Service Plan including the Waiting List Action Plan and Urgent and Emergency Care Plan. This requires the dual approach of improving the productivity of key services and managing the level and affordability of our workforce through the application of both the HSE's Pay and Non-Pay control limits. This is particularly focused around staffing levels, including getting to levels of agency and overtime which is sustainable into the future.

The HSE is focussed on maximum delivery of the savings agreed to as part of the two-year funding agreement agreed by Government in July 2024. As part of the overall financial stabilisation of the HSE, significant progress has been made on pay in terms of planning, allocation and control and the new control environment ensures there is absolute clarity on



staffing parameters whilst embedding a culture of continuous improvement in productivity. There remains work still to do to achieve the level of agency and overtime savings required and fundamentally hospitals will be more challenged in terms of living within overall pay allocation including direct pay. The focus is on reducing this challenge.

Please see **Appendix 1**(separate excel file attached) which shows the HSE spend on agency staffing by Regional Health Area and Division in each of the years 2021 to 2024 and for the period January to July 2025 which is the most recent data available. The data provided was sourced from the HSE Consolidated Financial Intelligence system and is for HSE Statutory services only. Please note that the figures for 2025 are draft only and are subject to change within the year end audit process.

The majority of agency spend is salary and statutory pay costs such as PRSI, holiday allowance etc. In line with the Protection of Employees (Part -Time Work) Act agency staff have the right to the same basic employment conditions, this includes basic pay, shift premiums, unsocial hours and Sunday rates.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at sarah.anderson1@hse.ie or tel: 087 9423319.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Anderson

Bainisteoir Ginearálta | General Manager

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Appendix 1 to PQ 45222 25

HSE Total Agency Staff costs by Regional Health Area & Division for the years 2021 to 2024 and for the			
HSE Statutory Services Only		2021	2022
Regional Health Area	Division	€	€
Dublin and North East	Dublin and North East Total	72,905,420	85,284,181
	Acute Hospitals Division	24,665,713	32,353,743
	Primary Care Division	21,116,865	20,128,127
	Mental Health Division	11,972,940	14,184,181
	Local Demand Led Schemes	11,659	0
	Disabilities	6,358,743	6,858,594
	CHO HQs & Community Services	382,092	775,168
	Older Persons Services	8,315,036	10,750,735
	Health & Wellbeing Community	44,113	83,815
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	38,260	149,818
Dublin and Midlands	Dublin and Midlands Total	129,060,572	156,580,438
	Acute Hospitals Division	53,200,677	68,037,343
	Primary Care Division	28,156,637	27,078,596
	Mental Health Division	20,748,484	24,295,782
	Local Demand Led Schemes	46,790	92,349
	Disabilities	6,104,125	7,638,145
	CHO HQs & Community Services	461,285	932,493
	Older Persons Services	20,263,673	27,392,338
	Health & Wellbeing Community	17,877	897,899
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	61,024	215,493
Dublin & South East	Dublin & South East Total	108,641,445	125,914,081
	Acute Hospitals Division	39,350,389	45,213,339
	Primary Care Division	18,923,136	17,021,324
	Mental Health Division	21,425,179	25,456,631
	Local Demand Led Schemes	19,556	12,000
	Disabilities	10,019,572	12,285,588
	CHO HQs & Community Services	392,079	254,967
	Older Persons Services	18,089,634	25,216,151
	Health & Wellbeing Community	384,854	396,710
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	37,047	57,370
South West	South West Total	34,314,163	41,340,088
	Acute Hospitals Division	22,573,605	25,796,762
	Primary Care Division	3,265,565	3,361,412
	Mental Health Division	4,433,923	7,194,334
	Local Demand Led Schemes	0	0
	Disabilities	1,459,946	1,469,484
	CHO HQs & Community Services	594,242	409,312
	Older Persons Services	1,986,882	3,006,017
	Health & Wellbeing Community	0	13,138
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	0	89,628
Mid West	Mid West Total	51,907,962	44,789,801
	Acute Hospitals Division	36,078,489	25,885,275
	Primary Care Division	3,529,192	3,300,451
	Mental Health Division	5,849,730	6,682,480
	Local Demand Led Schemes	3,472	0

	Disabilities	471,999	516,445
	CHO HQs & Community Services	1,701	0
	Older Persons Services	5,965,727	8,346,659
	Health & Wellbeing Community	7,652	-2,003
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	0	60,493
West and North West	West and North West Total	82,583,021	100,269,297
	Acute Hospitals Division	39,611,798	45,559,321
	Primary Care Division	11,013,209	13,702,351
	Mental Health Division	6,248,356	7,868,462
	Local Demand Led Schemes	8,409	8,009
	Disabilities	15,450,306	18,966,135
	CHO HQs & Community Services	176,048	84,621
	Older Persons Services	9,829,357	13,795,400
	Health & Wellbeing Community	179,870	98,082
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	65,667	186,915
Corporate	Corporate Total	84,998,159	59,239,470
	Acute Hospitals Division	111,399	58,975
	Primary Care Division	716,231	992,735
	Mental Health Division	1,072,909	1,441,467
	Health & Wellbeing Division	34,827	16,047
	Support Services	16,452,090	26,750,906
	Disabilities	213,867	369,106
	Older Persons Services	69,383	168,698
	Clinical	66,327,452	27,803,222
	Health & Wellbeing Community	0	12,412
	Community Operations – regional/national	0	0
	Quality & Patient Safety – Community	0	0
	Access & Integration	0	1,254
	Public Involvement, Culture & Risk Mngt	0	1,624,650
National	National Total	3,968,326	6,376,517
	National Services & Schemes	3,968,326	6,376,517
Total Agency		568,379,068	619,793,873

Source : HSE Consolidated Financial Intelligence System (CFI)

***Note :** 2025 July YTD figures are draft only and are subject to change

e period January to July 2025		
2023	2024	*YTD July 2025
€	€	€
84,027,455	96,703,455	69,044,527
29,941,086	42,125,963	32,136,306
12,888,260	13,340,017	9,241,117
16,840,751	13,068,503	8,764,681
712	-121	0
8,899,093	10,523,757	7,255,161
910,797	889,158	445,438
14,104,874	16,243,362	11,050,696
374,350	306,789	16,692
67,533	206,027	134,435
177,670,883	186,993,742	121,538,784
72,835,205	89,184,105	62,494,825
30,439,567	26,196,184	17,527,408
31,734,731	32,146,045	21,195,271
18,887	55,602	26,468
8,006,001	7,439,996	4,582,854
978,705	1,168,119	727,968
31,077,966	28,533,943	13,568,559
2,052,407	2,109,427	1,233,806
527,413	160,321	181,625
125,228,047	146,240,016	95,646,635
41,847,331	49,577,078	33,043,639
13,816,483	12,895,116	8,495,191
26,701,880	30,336,087	17,780,167
3,740	4,101	3,152
15,360,028	20,905,018	15,334,594
111,372	28,994	60,999
25,929,345	30,892,421	20,503,050
1,406,905	1,601,853	425,843
50,962	-652	0
49,186,100	56,306,502	34,923,463
30,325,957	34,202,323	19,208,109
2,588,230	3,101,810	2,374,015
10,346,215	10,599,050	7,603,863
18,535	25,521	0
1,796,179	2,085,010	910,944
123,465	13,524	225,020
3,822,523	5,982,665	4,561,847
164,994	296,599	39,665
0	0	0
46,725,282	52,832,956	34,695,162
25,840,684	27,940,133	16,609,265
3,841,519	3,861,711	3,219,488
7,411,400	7,445,772	5,916,294
0	0	0

455,938	510,341	226,051
325,892	0	0
8,771,738	11,864,234	8,208,684
78,885	1,210,763	515,380
-774	0	0
124,142,500	155,019,700	100,181,274
52,689,557	61,025,606	37,864,924
14,769,916	20,394,709	12,352,996
9,997,210	11,767,281	6,837,805
6	0	-1,188
26,237,961	35,775,274	25,790,821
67,806	148,923	50,644
19,784,736	25,452,788	17,248,221
514,293	452,962	37,052
81,014	2,156	0
29,567,404	25,562,048	13,552,710
133,722	422,748	154,552
785,855	693,635	765,382
2,368,489	1,017,829	439,503
51,208	324,364	74,265
11,883,511	15,741,703	8,912,333
524,193	664,018	168,821
155,054	30,322	5,157
12,031,032	5,707,954	2,487,075
519	0	0
0	156,569	92,514
0	0	0
13,049	31,335	734
1,620,773	771,573	452,374
10,934,860	6,649,554	3,977,996
10,934,860	6,649,554	3,977,996
647,482,531	726,307,973	473,560,551