



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'
Baile Átha Cliath 8

Office of the National Director of Human Resources
Health Service Executive
Dr. Steevens' Hospital
Dublin 8
Teil/Tel: (01) 635 2319
Rphost/ E-mail: nationalhr@hse.ie

To: Each Member of the Directorate and Leadership Team
Each Chief Officer, CHO
Each CEO, Hospital Group
Each CEO, Section 38 Agency
Each Employee Relations Manager
HR Senior Staff

From: Rosarii Mannion, National Director Human Resources

Date: 2nd May, 2017

Re: HR Circular 010/2017 – Nurse/Midwifery Recruitment and Retention initiatives

Dear Colleagues,

A series of engagements involving HSE, Department of Health, and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, INMO and SIPTU Nursing, centring on the issue of Recruitment and Retention of Nursing and Midwifery staff have taken place recently. A key focus of these engagements has been the necessity to stabilise the nursing workforce, enhancing the environment for the recruitment of nursing staff into the public health service and the requirements needed to greatly improve retention of existing staff.

HR Circular 010/2017 is to confirm sanction for the implementation of the Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Plan for 2017, attached at Appendix 1 and to confirm delegated sanction to Directors of Nursing and Midwifery to fill posts up to the allocated and agreed WTE as set out in this Circular. This is to ensure the filling of all current vacancies and vacancies arising during 2017 (estimated at an annual 7%) of the nursing and midwifery workforce plan. This funded workforce plan provides for 37,043 WTE by the end of December 2017. Maternity leave replacement is also sanctioned in accordance with the funded workforce plan.

In addition, identified posts as set out in this circular will be required to be filled as a priority to maintain frontline patient services before year end 2017.

Delegated Authority

Full delegated authority for delivery of the 2017 funded workforce plan rests with the Directors of Nursing (DONs) Acute Hospitals (who will liaise with the Group DON's), DONs Mental Health Services, DON/Director of Services Long Term Care, DON Intellectual Disability, Directors of Public Health Nursing, .

Quarterly reports to the Department of Health

The Minister for Health has issued a direction to the HSE under Section 10 (1) of the Health Act 2004 to ensure that the additional agreed nursing and midwifery posts are encompassed and prioritised in the process for implementing and reporting on the 2017 National Service Plan (Appendix 2).

In particular, under section 10 (1) of the Health Act 2004 the Minister has directed that the 2017 nursing and midwifery workforce plan, as provided for in the management proposals dated 8th February 2017 (Appendix 3), be prioritised and encompassed in the arrangements for the implementation of the 2017 National Service Plan.

Under section 10(2) of the same Act, the Minister also requires the HSE to

- (i) report on the performance of this direction as part of the reporting arrangements for implementation of the 2017 National Service Plan.
- (ii) provide special reports by end June, end September and end December 2017 on recruitment of the posts provided for in the funded workforce plan. These quarterly reports will be shared with the INMO and SIPTU and lodged with the Workplace Relations Commission.

Funded workforce plans 2018 & 2019

Funded nursing and midwifery workforce plans will be implemented in 2018 and 2019 to meet service need. These funded workforce plans will be finalised before end November of each year. Relevant engagement will be undertaken with stakeholders.

Conversion of Agency

A key focus of this initiative is the necessity to maximise the process of conversion of posts, currently being filled through the employment of agency staff, into directly employed HSE staff. 736 nursing posts will be converted as per the attached Appendix 1.

Existing Employment panels

All nurses and midwives on existing panels will be offered permanent positions and their contracts must provide the same opportunities as those offered to newly graduated nurses and midwives as per funded workforce plan.

Emergency Departments new posts and vacant posts

Arising from the provisions of the WRC Agreement regarding Emergency Departments dated January 2016, an Expert Group Report issued in August 2016 identified a requirement for the recruitment of an additional cohort (107, number being finalised) of nursing staff to care for admitted patients without assigned beds in ED. The process of recruitment of the staff necessary to give effect to these recommendations will be commenced immediately. Additionally, the filling of 75 existing vacancies in ED's will continue.

Acute Hospital Service Development posts

A total of 74 new nursing posts will be filled in the Acute Division as set out in attached Appendix 1.

Filling of Vacancies (Nursing)

Vacancies arising from resignations/ retirements or maternity leave from amongst Nursing and Midwifery Staff will be filled in accordance with the Funded Workforce Plan. In line with the roll out of the Taskforce on Staffing and Skill mix for nursing (medical and surgical wards), full maternity leave replacement will be included in the calculation of nurse staffing in the years ahead.

Nurse Graduates

All 2016 and 2017 nurse and midwife graduates will be offered permanent contracts having regard to service need and subject to the usual satisfactory recruitment processes. This process will be worked through by the Recruitment and Retention Group commencing immediately to maximise retention of nurses and midwives. Existing nursing and midwife turnover rates are approximately 7% therefore graduate recruitment is expected to cover nursing exits. This is reflected in the overall number increase provided in the Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Plan. After one year of service an option of a career break will be available as per the career break scheme, this will form part of the contract of employment. This is to encourage retention in that new recruits will not resign for the purposes of travel but instead take the career break option with a view to returning to the Irish health service when the career break period expires. Where applications of this nature are refused they will be subject to review at Group/CHO HR level.

Advanced Nurse Practitioners

Health policy position is that the number of Advanced Nurse/Midwife Practitioners will be increased service -wide to support implementation of a Programme of change in a number of priority areas to facilitate an improved model of care. There will be an initial intake of 120 Candidate ANP's in September 2017 which will be funded at Candidate rate: CNM3. Each

consequential vacancy will be backfilled at the salary grade vacated. Further details will issue concerning the implementation of this initiative at a later date.

National Maternity Strategy

A total of 96 new midwife posts will be filled in 2017 to continue implementation of the National Maternity Strategy.

Retired/ Rehired

Nurses and midwives who return to work following retirement, will be entitled to return at the incremental point they were on when they left the system. With regard to those who retire at higher grade (CNM2, ADON, etc.), if they return to work at the grade occupied at the time of retirement, they will be paid at the incremental point of the scale they were on at the time of retirement. However If returning at a lower grade (e.g. staff nurse), they will be remunerated at the maximum point of this lower scale.

CNM1 Posts medical /surgical wards

This agreement provides for the conversion of 127 Staff Nurses in medical surgical wards in Acute Hospitals to CNM1. A separate circular will issue in respect of this process which is to commence on 1st July 2017.

Health and Safety

Specific work in relation to implementation of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, in each work location will commence with immediate effect. A separate circular will issue in respect of this process.

Pre-Retirement initiative

A separate circular will issue to give effect to the re-introduction of this initiative. This circular will seek application from the 1st July 2017.

Bring them home campaign improvements

Improvements to the existing scheme have been agreed and a separate circular will issue to give effect to these improvements.

This Circular is to be implemented with immediate effect as Department of Health/ DPER have confirmed support and agreement in relation to implementation. All queries in relation to this Circular should be directed to Seamus Treanor at email: seamus.treanor@hse.ie

Please ensure that the contents of this Circular and accompanying appendices are notified to all relevant personnel within your agency or employment.

Yours sincerely,



Rosarii Mannion,
National Director of Human Resources.