



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta  
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin, Baile Phámar,  
Baile Átha Cliath 20, D20 HK69

Office of the  
Assistant National Director  
Mental Health Operations

St Lomans Hospital, Palmerstown,  
Dublin 20, D20 HK69

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)  
[@hselive](mailto:@hselive)

t: 01-6207304

e: [PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie](mailto:PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie)

Deputy Réada Cronin  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

4<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**PQ Number: 14542/24**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health to outline the procedure by which cover is introduced, managed and guaranteed for maternity and other extended leave sought by psychologists and other mental-health practitioners in order to ensure continuity of services and so people on already-long waiting lists do not have to wait even further particularly as management of cover applies to children's care - Réada Cronin.**

---

Dear Deputy Cronin,

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.

The procedure for seeking approval for a replacement post is set out in the HSE document, Guidance for approval to recruit for Posts in the HSE & Section 38 Agencies.

This procedure applies to all replacements, including maternity leave and other extended leave, e.g. Carer's Leave, Career Break, Sick Leave etc.

Further information can be found at the following link:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/guidance-for-approval-to-recruit-20221.pdf>

Every effort is made to secure replacements in order to minimise impact on our services users. This is achieved in number of ways, preferably by direct employment. In addition, the HSE also has a number of Service Level Agreements with Recruitment agencies for all staff groups, including Consultants, NCHDs, Health and Social Care Professionals and nursing, these are particularly useful for the filling of short-term vacancies. Due to the current labour market shortage of scarce grades e.g. psychology; it is proving more challenging to secure replacements for specific purpose or temporary contracts.



I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Braham', written over a light grey rectangular background.

---

**Paul Braham**  
**Senior Operations Manager**  
**National Mental Health Services**