

30<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Mark Ward, TD  
Dáil Eireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 1408/24**

**To ask the Minister for Health the steps his Department has taken to encourage Traveller employment within primary and specialist community services; what training is available for Travellers to upskill within these services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Ward,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The National Traveller Health Action Plan 2022-2027 (NTHAP) contains a series of actions in support of the training and employment of Travellers. These actions are relevant to both the HSE and HSE funded Primary Healthcare for Traveller Projects (PHCTPs) based in Section 39 organisations (Traveller organisation, Local Development Companies and other NGOs). This work consolidates previous work in support of employment and training for Travellers in the HSE and HSE funded programmes. The HSE currently funds thirty-one Section 39 organisations employing approximately 220 Travellers on a part-time basis nationally.

The National Traveller Health Implementation Group (NTHIG) (established to oversee implementation of NTHAP) has established a Human Resource, Work Force Planning and Career Progression sub-group to further examine ways of supporting Travellers to take up employment in PHCTPs or to take on additional working hours.

An NTHIG training working group will commence work in 2024 to coordinate and standardise training for Community Health Worker staff in PHCTPs.

For the Deputy's information, since 2018, the HSE also funds the Eastern Region Traveller Health Union's (ER THU) Maynooth Education Pilot. It draws on an established and accredited university programme and equips Traveller students with the necessary skills to transition to third level, while at the same time complementing and supporting interdisciplinary learning. Students enrolled in the pilot are Traveller Health Workers employed through the ER THU vis-à-vis Traveller Primary Health Care Projects and/or associated THU initiatives.

During 2023, the HSE also supported work placements for Traveller students in the HSE.

The HSE is currently carrying out a programme of work to develop and support Ethnic Equality Monitoring within a range of health services, including workforce employment data systems, which will assist in the monitoring of the numbers of Travellers and other ethnicities in employment in the HSE.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph Doyle', written in a cursive style.

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Joseph Doyle  
National Lead, Social Inclusion