

22nd July, 2024

Ms. Holly Cairns, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 29621/24

“To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 364 of 18 June 2024, if the information sought will be provided (details supplied); the exact breakdown of psychology posts, per grade, advertised for the north Lee, south Lee, west Cork and north Cork primary care child/adolescent psychology services in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023; the dates that these recruitment drives commenced and their outcomes, that is, the number of posts filled and the number of posts that remained vacant in each instance; the form of recruitment used; and the grade of psychologist recruited or not recruited, in tabular form.”

Details Supplied: In light of the fact that recruitment to the Cork primary care psychology services in the past four years would involve a limited number of posts and these would have been approved by local senior management, and therefore the details would be accessible to the Head of Service whether the recruitment was sought through national panels or local interviews.

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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.

As per the response to PQ ref 26107/24, the requested information is not available as data relating to national recruitment drives is not held by the local department.

Staffing levels change regularly during any year due to career progression, resignation and/or statutory leave and therefore the available WTE can be affected throughout that year. The table below outlines the number of psychology staff in situ as at December 2020-2023.

The GM and Line Managers for Psychology services would have actively progressed any vacancy to the NRS for filling from their panels as they arose during the years 2020-2023. Where staff were transferred or seconded to another post (e.g. WLI), the backfill vacancy was progressed for filling. In addition local Interview / Recruitment processes were undertaken to fill critical vacancies further to confirmation that posts were 'unable to fill' via NRS National Panels. As there were significant challenges in recruiting staff to Psychology posts (particularly temporary posts), all options available were explored to enhance staffing.

- Posts were progressed to National HBS panels at intervals across the years (2021-2023) but we were unable to fill temporary posts from existing panels
- Local Recruitment processes were undertaken following inability to fill from national panels
- Local recruitment process included EOI from staff within HSE psychology services CKCH; EOI correspondence to graduating cohorts of relevant doctoral programmes UCC/MIC/UL/NUIG; review of CVs received; consideration of HSE/S38/S39 EOI re overtime/SPC existing staff; Agency / LinkedIn profiles; Psychology Graduate Interest Group re Psychology Assistant posts

Staff for the WLI were recruited mainly through local recruitment processes and temporary higher appointment of seconded internal Primary Care staff identified through local interview processes.

In late 2023 and ongoing, as a result of the recruitment embargo vacancies in new and development posts have not been progressed for filling nor has cover been achieved for statutory leave.

No. of Psychology Staff Members In-situ at year-end

Year - 2020	NL	SL	NC	WC	KY	WLI Teams x 2
Principal Psychologist	1			1		No Waiting List
Senior Psychologist	0	1	1	1	1	Initiative Projects in
Staff Grade Psychologist	5	4	2	1	2	year 2020
Psychology Assistant	3	3	1	1	2	
Year 2021						
Principal Psychologist	1			1		
Senior Psychologist	0	1	1	1	0	0
Staff Grade Psychologist	4	5	2	1	1	2
Psychology Assistant	2	2	1	0	1	0
Year 2022						
Principal Psychologist	1			1		
Senior Psychologist	1	1	1	1	1	2
Staff Grade Psychologist	4	1	2	1	2	2
Psychology Assistant	1	0	1	0	1	2
Year 2023						
Principal Psychologist	1			1		
Senior Psychologist	1	1	1	1	1	1
Staff Grade Psychologist	1	1	1	1	2	2
Psychology Assistant	2	1	2	1	1	2

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Priscilla Lynch
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare