

2nd July, 2024

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

PQ ref 26107/24

“To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 611 of 21 May 2024, for an 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 the years 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023; the dates that these recruitment drives commenced and their outcomes, namely, the number of posts filled and the number of posts that remained vacant in each instance; and the grade of psychologist recruited or not recruited, in tabular form”

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.

Staffing levels change regularly due to career progression, resignation and/or statutory leave and therefore the available WTE can be affected throughout the year.

Information relating to national recruitment drives is not held by the local department, however the General Manager and Line Managers for Psychology services would have actively progressed any vacancy to the National Recruitment Service for filling from their panels during the years 2020-2023. Where staff were transferred or seconded to another post (e.g. Waiting List Initiatives), 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 National Recruitment Service National Panels. As there were significant challenges in recruiting staff to Psychology posts (particularly temporary posts), all options available were explored to enhance staffing.

For local recruitment processes posts were advertised through a range of channels to identify eligible candidates, through a defined communication Expression of Interest / Competition Notification. This 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.

The table below outlines the current funded WTE by grade in Cork primary care child/adolescent Psychology services and the WTE vacancies as at June 2024.

June 2024	N Lee & N Cork				S Lee ,W Cork & Kerry					
	Funded WTE		Vacant WTE		Funded WTE		Vacant WTE			
Principal Psychologist	1		1		1		0			
	N Lee		N Cork		S Lee		W Cork		WLI National & Local	
	Fund ed	Vacant	Funde d	Vacant	Funde d	Vacant	Funded	Vacant	Funde d	Vacant

Senior Psychologist	1	0.2	1	.15	1	0.17	1	0	2	2
Psychologist Staff Grade	3.6	2.8	2	2	4	3.0	1	1	3	2.5
Psychology Assistant	5	3.0	2	0.4	5	5.0	1	0	2	0.4
CHO 4 Cork Kerry Community Healthcare										
June 2024				Funded WTE			Vacant WTE			
Psychology – Student Clinical (HSE Funded)				3.0 CKCH PC Sept 2022			0			

In late 2023 and ongoing, as a result of the recruitment embargo, vacancies in new and development posts have not been filled nor has cover been achieved for statutory leave. We are awaiting derogation of posts in both core psychology services and the waitlist initiative.

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