



Pleanáil agus Faisnéis Straitéiseach d'Fhórsa
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Deputy Emer Higgins

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2

PQ 11446/24: To ask the Minister for Health the number of therapists that have been recruited by the HSE, Section 38 or Section 39 organisations in the past three years; the measures taken to compensate for the loss of staff while recruiting replacements; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Higgins,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question in relation to staffing which was forwarded to the Health Services Executive (HSE) by the Department of Health for direct reply.

Firstly, I should point out that workforce reports are available through the Health Services Personnel Census (HSPC), which is the official employment count for the public health service and encompasses directly employed personnel for the HSE and the various section 38 Hospitals and agencies and *does not include section 39 agencies*.

The Deputy will be interested to note that, employment levels at the end of February 2024, show there were 147,968 WTE (equating to 166,981 personnel) directly employed in the provision of Health & Social Care Services and of which 6,719 WTE (7,667 personnel) were in the various therapy professions. This combined figure represents a 1,153 net WTE increase (+20.7%) since December 2020 when turnover has been accounted for. Turnover rates can have considerable impact on staffing levels with resignations, retirements, end of contracts and other reasons (including moves to other health sector employers) captured as a leaver from our service. This is a normal factor in employment and means that a proportion of posts become vacant during the course of the year. Where resources are available services can be supplemented by overtime, agency or cover by other colleagues. Lastly, health service turnover can be distorted by the multiplicity of employers and HSE payrolls where staff leaving one employer but remaining within the service are included in the statistics.

Details for each therapy as requested in tabular form by professional classification (therapy) are set out as follows:

Therapy Professions	WTE FEB 2024	WTE Change 2021	WTE Change 2022	WTE Change 2023	WTE Change to 29 Feb 2024	Change since Dec 2020	%change since Dec 2020	No. FEB 2024	Turnover 2021	Turnover 2022	Turnover 2023
Therapy Professions	6,719	+382	+373	+380	+18	+1,153	+20.7%	7,667	10.9%	13.8%	13.2%
Dietitians	852	+58	+60	+87	+9	+214	+33.6%	971	12.4%	18.2%	12.9%
Occupational Therapists	2,039	+138	+105	+103	-9	+336	+19.8%	2,289	10.6%	13.8%	13.5%
Orthoptists	36	+2	-0	-1	-2	-2	-5.0%	47	12.4%	22.0%	13.9%
Physiotherapists	2,389	+133	+136	+142	+20	+431	+22.0%	2,737	10.1%	12.1%	12.6%
Podiatrists & Chiropodists	131	+15	+26	+4	+5	+51	+63.7%	150	17.4%	10.7%	13.9%
Speech & Language Therapists	1,272	+36	+45	+45	-4	+122	+10.6%	1,473	11.1%	14.2%	13.8%

Source: Health Service Personnel Census

Note¹: Health Sector staffing figures relate to direct employment levels as returned through the Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC) for the public health sector (HSE & Section 38 agencies)

Note²: Figures relating to service levels are expressed as whole-time equivalents (WTE) and calculated to 2 decimals in order to take account of part-time working

Workforce reports are available through the Health Services Personnel Census (HSPC), which is the official employment count for the public health service. The latest published information is routinely published [here](#).

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,



Des Williams

General Manager