

10th May 2024

Deputy Brendan Griffin, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 19820/24:

“To ask the Minister for Health the up-to-date breakdown of all staffing types at West Kerry Community Hospital; the net recruitment progress that has been made in each category in each year since 2019; the current bed complement; the breakdown of bed types; how many people are currently waiting for a bed in the hospital; what recruitment efforts are being made for each category of staff, including healthcare assistants and nurses; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Griffin,

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.

West Kerry Community Hospital (WKCH) provides 24- hour nursing care to both male and female residents whose dependencies range from low to maximum care needs. Long-term care, respite, convalescence and palliative care is provided.

The current breakdown of staff at WKCH (April 2024) is set out in the below table:

Staff Grade	WTE – April 2024
Nursing Staff	16.06
HCA's / Support	21.24
Catering Staff	5.38
Admin/mgt	1.00

Recruitment in each staff category since 2019 is set out in the below table:

Year	Staff Grade:
2019	2 Nursing staff, 1 Catering staff
2020	3 Nursing staff, 1 Health Care Assistant
2021	1 Nursing staff
2022	5 Nursing staff, 3 Health Care Assistants, 3 Catering staff
2023	5 Nursing staff, 1 Admin staff
2024 – to date	1 Nursing staff

A WKCH permanent staff nurse recruitment campaign recently took place and successful candidates have been panelled. Since the introduction of the current recruitment pause, all vacancies are being filled in accordance with National HR policies and derogation processes. Pending derogation approval, we will then make every effort to fill sanctioned posts as quickly as possible.

WKCH is currently registered to accommodate 46 residents with 35 beds allocated for long stay residential residents and 11 beds allocated for short stay patients (including 2 Respite beds). Palliative care residents are also accommodated within these short stay beds. Four people are currently wait-listed for a long-term care bed at WKCH.

WKCH, in common with other health facilities, can temporarily experience staffing shortages as a result of staff resignations/retirements. However, we constantly endeavour to mitigate deficits and ensure that safe staffing and appropriate skill mix levels are maintained against the background of the current recruitment pause and the limited supply of candidates in the area. Our priority is the delivery of safe high-quality care to our residents at all times and facilitation of clear pathways for the transition of patients from the acute sector to the community.

Staff shortages in recent years across all disciplines have been combatted through the launch of various successful recruitment campaigns and the hospital returned to staffing levels which met operational requirements. Hospital management diligently monitors rosters to ensure the safe delivery of care. As outlined above, the introduction of the temporary recruitment pause currently requires a derogation to be sought when filling vacancies - once a derogation is approved, we then endeavour to fill sanctioned posts as quickly as possible.

WKCH provides a valuable service to people living in the West Kerry area and we are committed to continuously reviewing our services in line with population health planning and Sláintecare principles to facilitate the ongoing development of modern services across the West Kerry region.

I trust this clarifies the position. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Jackie Daly
Head of Service for Older People

