



Príomhoifigeach Cliniciúil
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Patrick Costello
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

7th November 2024

PQ43999/24-Deputy Patrick Costello- To ask the Minister for Health how many genetic counsellors are currently funded and active in the health service; whether there will be any increase in genetic counsellors in the upcoming year; the details of when they will be in post; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Costello,

Thank you for your representation.

The title 'Genetic Counsellor' does not have a specific HSE grade code and as a result they cannot be included in the HSE staff census. The HSE is aware of Genetic Counsellors working in the health service, for example in the Department of Clinical Genetics in Children's Health Ireland and in the Cancer Genetics Service at St. James's Hospital. Given this role does not have a specific grade code, the numbers employed are not reflected in the HSE staff census.

The HSE's National Genetics and Genomics Office recognises the need for specific grade codes for Genetic Counsellors and is working through National HR to progress the allocation of these codes. One of the benefits of the codes is that they will allow for an accurate census of the genetic counsellor workforce.

The National Strategy for Accelerating Genetic and Genomic Medicine in Ireland recognises the fundamental role genetic counsellors play in supporting both specialist clinical genetic services and local integrated multidisciplinary teams. The strategy prioritised strengthening local access to genetic counselling in line with Sláintecare principles. Last year as part of the implementation of the Strategy, the HSE's National Genetics and Genomics Office secured funding for 3 new genetic counsellor posts which are currently in various stages of the recruitment process. Confirmation of the increase in Genetic Counsellors in the upcoming year is not available at present as the HSE National Service Plan is in development.



I hope this provides you with some assistance.

Yours sincerely

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

Ms Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the Chief Clinical Officer