

14th October 2024

Deputy Danny Healy-Rae. T.D.,
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 38503/24:

"To ask the Minister for Health the steps being taken to address HSE staffing issues in Kerry (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Details Supplied: Due to the HSE embargo there are currently 5 vacant posts for nurses waiting to be filled at Tralee Community Hospital, Co. Kerry. I ask the Minister what is being done to address this problem.

PQ ref 38504/24:

"To ask the Minister for Health the steps being taken by the HSE to address an issue in relation to vacant posts (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter"

Details Supplied: Due to the HSE embargo there are currently 6 vacant posts for nurses waiting to be filled at the Killarney Community Hospital (District Hospital) I ask the Minister what is being done to address this problem.

PQ ref 38505/24:

"To ask the Minister for Health the steps being taken to address HSE staffing issues in Kerry (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter"

Details Supplied: Due to the HSE embargo there are currently 3 vacant nursing posts waiting to be filled at the Dingle Community Hospital, Co. Kerry. I ask the Minister what is being done to address this problem.

PQ ref 38506/24:

"To ask the Minister for Health to address an issue in the HSE (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter"

Details Supplied: Due to the HSE embargo there are currently a number of beds not in use at Kenmare Community Hospital in Kerry, until they have the necessary staff in place they will not be able to open the beds, as many people are waiting for respite and medical attention I ask the Minister what is being done to address this serious problem.

PQ ref 38509/24:

"To ask the Minister for Health to address a staffing issue with the HSE (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter"

Details Supplied: Due to the HSE embargo there are currently two vacant nursing posts waiting to be filled at the Cahirciveen Community Hospital in Kerry, I ask the Minister what is being done to address this problem.

PQ ref 38520/24

"To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE will address an issue in relation to a director of nursing (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter"

Details Supplied: Due to the HSE embargo there is currently no Director of Nursing in place at Tralee Community Hospital in Kerry, I ask the Minister what is being done to deal with this matter.

Dear Deputy Healy-Rae,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Challenges exist in recruiting staff to some of our more rural locations and these challenges were an issue before the recruitment pause was put in place. Nursing staff shortages can temporarily occur in our community hospitals as a result of retirements, resignations and various other leave including flexible working time arrangements which are available to our staff.

Following the cessation of the recruitment pause within the HSE, HSE South West has undertaken many recruitment initiatives, at both a national and international level, to fill nursing positions at our community hospitals. An international recruitment campaign in June of this year resulted in the matching of 8 newly-recruited nurses to positions within our Kerry Community Hospitals. These new staff are a very welcome addition to our service and are scheduled to commence employment in our services in the coming weeks.

We are also progressing further recruitment drives across all staffing grades (where needed), to ensure services in our Kerry Community Hospitals continue to offer the best care to residents and their local communities.

In relation to **PQ ref 38503/24**, two of the afore-mentioned recently recruited nurses are scheduled to take up positions at the Tralee Community Nursing Unit in the coming weeks.

With regard to **PQ ref 38504/24**, additional staff will be required when services transfer from the existing units to the new Killarney Community Nursing Unit. Workforce planning is progressing across all staff disciplines to ensure the required complement and skill mix of staff will be in place to facilitate the operational schedule.

In relation to **PQ ref 38505/24**, two recently recruited nurses are scheduled to take up positions at West Kerry Community Hospital in the coming weeks.

With regard to **PQ ref 38506/24**, Kenmare CNU is registered to accommodate 35 residents at present; however 7 beds have not opened due to recruitment challenges as outlined above. The opening of more beds at this unit would be subject to adequate staffing levels being in place, to ensure the safety of our residents and staff; as the number and skill-mix of staff has to be appropriate to meet the needs of the patients and residents. Any increase in capacity would also require registration of the additional beds with HIQA.

In relation to **PQ ref 38509/24**, Three recently recruited nurses are scheduled to take up positions at Cahirciveen Community Hospital in the coming weeks.

With regard to **PQ ref 38520/24**, we are currently in the process of filling the Director of Nursing post at Tralee Community Nursing Unit following a successful recruitment campaign.

In summary, we are committed to maintaining and increasing the staffing complement at all our community hospitals in County Kerry in order to safeguard quality healthcare service delivery in our local units and communities. In tandem with our workforce planning arrangements, recruitment initiatives have been approved and are being progressed to fill posts across our services at both a national and international level to optimise the availability of candidates to fill nursing positions.

We are working to a recruitment plan to optimise services and capacity in our Kerry Community Hospitals/Community Nursing Units. The opening of additional beds at any of our units does require adequate staffing levels to be in place, including an appropriate number and skill-mix of staff, to ensure the safety of both our residents and our staff. Any increase in capacity at any of our units would also require registration of the additional beds with HIQA.



We continuously review our services in line with population health planning and Sláintecare principles to ensure the ongoing development of modern services across the Kerry region.

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

Yours sincerely,



Jackie Daly
Head of Service for Older Persons

