



5 February 2025

Michael Fitzmaurice T.D
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 46211/24 : To ask the Minister for Health the number of vacancies, by month and by grade, in his department, and in agencies under the aegis of his department, in 2023 and 2024; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Fitzmaurice,

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.

At the end of December 2024, employment levels show there were 148,268 WTE (equating to 166,104 personnel) directly employed in the provision of Health Services by the HSE and Section 38 hospitals & agencies. The Deputy will be interested to note that the overall increase in employment since December 2022 now stands at +10,523 WTE.

The Pay & Numbers Strategy for 2024 as agreed in July 2024 provided for the retention and funding for approx. 4,000 WTE, that were due to excess recruitment at the end of 2023 and the retention of once off funding provided for COVID-19 posts. This has enabled the retention of 4,000 posts across the publicly funded health system. This agreement has also provided clarity on the funded workforce for the health services, based on the agreement that as of December 31st, 2023 - all posts occupied and reporting WTE on the Health Service Personnel Census (HSPC) on this date are comprehended and considered as funded.

Added to this figure, in 2024, there was a total of 3,310 WTE additional new posts, comprised of new service developments and agency conversion. Each Health Region and National Service has received their current allocation of these new additional posts. This provides for an overarching WTE limit by Health Region, with decisions on priority vacancies for filling, devolved to the relevant Regional Executive Officer and National Director, within their overall WTE Limit.

Month-on-month data on vacancies is not collected centrally; however, our national turnover report provides data on the starters over leavers across our services, noting that this includes both internal as well as external movement. The table below provides the latest available reports on our staff turnover by staff category both for 2023 and also the year to date for 2024 (latest report Q3 2024).

Table 1
Turnover 2023 & Year to date September 2024

Turnover 2023 & YTD 2024	Turnover 2023	Turnover YTD Sept 2024
Turnover Rate	8.9%	5.7%
Medical & Dental	9.6%	7.3%
Nursing & Midwifery	8.7%	5.8%
Health & Social Care Professionals	10.9%	6.2%
Management & Administrative	8.7%	5.1%
General Support	8.0%	5.3%
Patient & Client Care	8.2%	5.8%



Table 2

Current Variance to the HSE WTE Limit

Staff Category	Dec 24 WTE Variance
Total	-3,039
Medical & Dental	+303
Nursing & Midwifery	-414
Health & Social Care Professionals	-282
Management & Administrative	-1,000
General Support	-450
Patient & Client Care	-1,196

As noted above, the Pay and Numbers Strategy introduced a WTE Limit across our services for which the reported monthly Health Service Personnel Census report is used to compare the current variance to the year-end WTE limit. This report is a combination of both vacancies that arise for replacement filling and also those that are new service developments for first filing. This report is available at staff category level. The final table below provides the latest variance as reported in December against the WTE year-end WTE limit.

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,

Dr. Philippa Ryan Withero

Assistant National Director Human Resources

Strategic Workforce Planning and Intelligence