

Department of Health Briefing

Purpose: Further to Request for Briefing Note for May Public Accounts Committee

Topic/s: Workforce / Employment Levels/ Workforce Plan

Prepared by: National HR – 08 05 2022

1 Workforce Employment Levels / Workforce Plan

- i. At the end of March 2023 employment levels stand at **139,838 WTE** (equating to 158,582 personnel) directly employed in the provision of Health & Social Care Services by the HSE and the various Section 38 hospitals & agencies.
- ii. This figure represents an increase of **+2,092 WTE /1.5%** Year To Date (YTD), with the largest YTD growth reported in **Nursing and Midwifery**.
- iii. Since December 2019, there has been unprecedented investment in health resulting in parallel unprecedented growth in our health workforce. Since December 2019 our employment levels have increased by **+20,020 WTE** representing a **+16.7%** increase. The largest WTE increase has been reported in the staff category of Nursing and Midwifery at **+6,281 WTE**. The largest percentage increase is reported in Management and Administration at **+26.8%**, with 80% of this growth reported in Acute and Community Services.
- iv. This growth is substantial and unparalleled in the context of the increases reported in our Turnover rate, rising to **+10%** in 2022, equating to a replacement requirement of 15,000+ posts before any net WTE increase is realised. The expectation in 2023, is that this turnover rate will reduce, owing to the specific factors that gave rise to the unprecedented increase in 2022 (relaxation of COVID-19 travel restrictions/ re-opening of countries borders/ travel).
- v. There is ongoing work to set out the Strategic Workforce Projections across our health service in collaboration with the ESRI, for which Phase I has already reported on Acute Hospitals. This work continues in 2023, with the key focus now on our Community Services. This work is strategic and therefore is designed to project the workforce requirements over the next 10 years.
- vi. Allied to this work, is the annual workforce planning cycle, undertaken in parallel with the National Service Plan. The workforce plan in 2023, akin to the previous years' expansion as noted in (iii) above, is to continue this expansion, with an estimated further net WTE increase of 6,010 WTE.
- vii. Under NSP and the draft 2023 Pay and Numbers Strategy HSE, the HSE has set out to grow by a net **6,010 WTE** based on the labour market supply projections. The target net growth is estimated by staff category and by division as set out in Table 1.0 below.
- viii. At March 2023, the YTD growth against this target is **+2,092 WTE** which is currently ahead of the estimated projection for March 2023 by **+306 WTE/ +0.2%**.
- ix. Based on the March outturn overall, five out of six staff categories are currently ahead of target at March. Patient and Client Care is the only staff category behind target in March at **-115 WTE**. The staff category most significantly ahead of target is **Management and Administration**, with over 50% of this target already achieved in the first quarter, ahead by **+278 WTE**. This is related to the relative greater availability of this workforce in the labour market, with a lower reliance on international supply.
- x. At divisional level, Acute Operations are ahead of target by **+437 WTE/ +0.6%**. All staff categories are reporting ahead of target at March, with Management and Administration (+118 WTE) and Patient and Client Care (+104 WTE) both substantially ahead.
- xi. Community Operations at March 2023 are reporting **-160 WTE** behind target, with four out of six staff categories reporting behind target, the largest of which is Patient and Client Care at **-218 WTE**.

Two staff categories are reporting ahead of target, General Support at +1 WTE, with **Management and Administration** significantly ahead of target at **+136WTE**.

xii. National Functions and Corporate Services are reporting marginally ahead of target at **+29 WTE**.

Table 1.0

Staff Category	Target Increase	Mar-23 Target	Change Mar	YTD Target Mar-23	Change 2023	Var to Mar 23	Var to Dec-23	% Var Mar	% Var Dec
Total	+6,010	+558	+651	+1,786	+2,092	+306	-3,918	+0.2%	-2.7%
Medical & Dental	+499	+81	+144	+52	+108	+56	-392	+0.4%	-3.0%
Nursing & Midwifery	+1,950	+169	+80	+842	+867	+25	-1,083	+0.1%	-2.4%
Health & Social Care Prof	+1,000	+78	+130	+184	+229	+45	-771	+0.2%	-3.7%
Management & Admin	+1,460	+103	+224	+463	+741	+278	-719	+1.2%	-2.9%
General Support	+100	+18	-3	+43	+60	+17	-40	+0.2%	-0.4%
Patient & Client Care	+1,000	+109	+77	+202	+87	-115	-913	-0.4%	-3.1%

Staff Category/ Service Area	Target Increase	Mar-23 Target	Change Mar	YTD Target Mar-23	Change 2023	Var to Mar 23	Var to Dec-23	% Var Mar	% Var Dec
Medical & Dental	+411	+84	+125	+78	+133	+56	-278	+0.5%	-2.6%
Nursing & Midwifery	+1,589	+155	+113	+562	+642	+80	-947	+0.3%	-3.2%
Health & Social Care Prof	+456	+4	+46	+28	+89	+60	-367	+0.6%	-3.8%
Management & Admin	+546	+55	+111	+175	+293	+118	-253	+1.0%	-2.1%
General Support	+100	+18	-4	+43	+62	+19	-38	+0.3%	-0.5%
Patient & Client Care	+298	+51	+108	+76	+181	+104	-117	+1.2%	-1.4%
Acute (incl. NAS)	+3,401	+366	+500	+962	+1,400	+437	-2,000	+0.6%	-2.6%
Medical & Dental	+80	-2	+17	-26	-29	-4	-110	-0.2%	-4.8%
Nursing & Midwifery	+350	+8	-34	+274	+220	-54	-130	-0.3%	-0.8%
Health & Social Care Prof	+514	+71	+81	+157	+135	-22	-379	-0.2%	-3.8%
Management & Admin	+506	+10	+74	+177	+313	+136	-193	+1.8%	-2.4%
General Support			+5		+1	+1	+1	+0.0%	+0.0%
Patient & Client Care	+701	+58	-30	+125	-93	-218	-794	-1.1%	-3.8%
Community Services	+2,151	+145	+114	+707	+547	-160	-1,604	-0.3%	-2.7%
National Functions & Central Services	+459	+47	+38	+116	+145	+29	-314	+0.5%	-4.7%

2 Resourcing to Meet our Workforce Plan – both Short and Longer Term

In order to meet the growing workforce requirements for the health services, the HSE has developed a national programme to develop and implement a resourcing strategy for the health services. The vision for this programme is to empower the services to attract, develop, retain and engage the workforce that will deliver safer better health and social care services for the people of Ireland. A holistic approach to the programme is being taken to address the significant challenges and is anchored in five strategic pillars:

- Engaging and retaining our workforce
- Attracting a high performing and diverse workforce
- Building the healthcare talent for the future
- Support the health and wellbeing of our workforce
- Building a positive and inclusive work culture

This strategic plan is being developed and is being driven from and by the services through five professional led groups:

- Medical and Dental
- Nursing and Midwifery
- Health and Social Care Professions
- Patient and Client Care & General Support
- Management Administration and Technical

These groups have identified the resourcing challenges across the services and the corresponding actions that needs to be taken to address these. They have also taken consideration of existing work and ideas from other jurisdictions and industries. This will result in a Resourcing Strategy for the HSE. There are a number of areas that have been identified for immediate and priority attention. These priority areas include:

Future Workforce Projections

Develop future workforce projections for each staff category in collaboration with the Department of Health.

In 2022, significant work was completed with the ESRI to identify the work force projections for the acute services. Similar work is currently being undertaken for the community services which should be completed in early 2024. This will give an overarching view to the work force requirements

Improved Workforce Data

There is also significant work on developing consistent data and intelligence on workforce movement which will help in understanding why people leave the organisation, or move. This will be a significant benefit for the development of targeted retention strategies

Increasing National Supply

Although full workforce projections will not be available until 2024, the HSE fully understands that there is a significant gap between supply and demand and therefore is working with our colleagues in the Department of Health to increase the numbers of training places across key professions with an initial and immediate focus on HSCPs, Nursing and Midwifery and Medicine. The HSE is working with the DOH to ensure that the appropriate clinical infrastructure is in place to meet this requirement.

Maximising Irish Graduates

The HSE is actively targeting Irish undergraduates to support their early employment in the health services. This has included guarantees of offers of permanent employment to Nursing, Midwifery and HSCP graduates together with job offers prior to their professional registration.

International Recruitment

The national pool across most professions is insufficient to meet the demands and the additionality of new places in Irish colleges will not be realised in the workforce for at least four years. The HSE will continue to have a growing dependence on the international market and this will expand beyond the traditional areas of Nursing and Medicine into the HSCP disciplines. To support this, the HSE are working in partnership with the DOH and CORU, the regulator, to ensure that the clinical infrastructure is available

to facilitate candidates receiving their license to practice. All international recruitment to the Irish publically funded health services is completed in line with the WHO ethical recruitment guidelines. To further support the recruitment of international candidates, the HSE is developing support material to ease the transition of these overseas candidate's into the Irish health services and their lives in Ireland

Support Staff

Increased numbers of support staff in the community will be a significant challenge. To this end, the HSE is developing a series of pilot programmes using local government agencies to identify and grow local talent

Talent and Attraction

The HSE recognises that we are operating in a fiercely competitive global market for healthcare talent and therefore significant investment will be made in developing talent and attraction strategies ensuring that the HSE is an employer of choice both nationally and internationally

This includes significant targeted international marketing across particular professions, most notably Medical Consultants for difficult to fill posts. This also includes an international marketing campaign to highlight the benefits of the new consultant contract

The HSE recognise the importance of improving the digital infrastructure to ensure that candidates can easily engage with the organisation. To this end, there are significant plans in that regard.

For example, the HSE recently developed a Career Hub which provides a one stop shop for perspective candidates, either nationally or internationally, to register their interest in future jobs within the health services. These candidates receive alerts when roles are advertised but it will also facilitate direct marketing for particular cohorts on various campaigns or developments. This Career Hub also provides information on living and working in Ireland and candidate friendly support for preparing for an application etc. This is a first step in a multi-phase project.

The HSE fully recognise the multi-faceted approach that is required to meet the resourcing needs for the health and social care services of our growing population.