



OPENING STATEMENT

Joint Committee on the Future of
Mental Health Care

Recruiting Clinicians for Mental
Health Services



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Introduction

Thank you for your invitation to address the Joint Committee on the Future of Mental on the topic of the processes involved in recruiting clinicians for Mental Health Services.

As you are aware there is a major crisis in the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Mental Health Services. This has had a significant impact on the delivery of services resulting in for example:

- Inadequate Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- Lack of properly resourced Community Teams
- No 24-7 Community Crisis Teams.
- 120% bed capacity in Admission Units resulting in the indignity of Service Users sleeping on chairs and mattresses in Kilkenny and Waterford Services.

A recent survey of PNA branches, suggests there is approximately 500 nursing vacancies in the Mental Health Services.

Services with the highest levels of vacancies. St. Joseph's Portrane 64 vacancies

- Tallaght/St Loman's 52 vacancies
- Louth/Meath 38 vacancies
- Waterford 26 vacancies

Nursing shortages in mental health services are expected to exacerbate significantly in the next four years. According to HSE figures in December 2016, 34.2% of the Mental Health Nursing workforce are expected to retire in the next four years, amounting to a total of 1752 nurses.

Taking into consideration the number of imminent retirements the following is our understanding of the HSE's convoluted recruitment process.

(Appendix 1 & 2 Attached)

As outlined this is a very cumbersome and frustrating process. The feedback from our members including our Senior Nurse Managers is that to replace a nurse leaving the service can take between six months and a year. In fact, we have evidence in a CAMHS Service in CHO8 that two development posts are still not filled permanently 3 years on.

In summary this presentation illustrates what appears to be 25 steps to recruit a nurse in the Mental Health Services with a multitude of signatures required to complete the process. This "*system*" of recruitment is totally unsustainable to ensure the delivery of an effective Mental Health Services.

Thank you.