

Action 6: Expanding & Protecting our health workforce and essential workers

The Health Sector Workforce Subgroup is working to deliver on **Action 6, of Irelands National Action Plan in response to COVID-19**. The group is working to ensure that the Health Sector Workforce is supported to meet the increase in demand associated with the response. To date this group has had eight full member meetings and regular HSE teleconferences.

HSE Workforce Expansion in response to COVID 19

On 17th June, HSE provided an update on recruitment activity at a point in time. Below is a summary table of the information provided. The numbers change daily and in some cases are indicative as HR systems across the service are not compatible and it can take weeks for confirmed numbers. Data continues to be validated.

Table 1 HSE Recruitment at a point in time, as at 17th June 2020

Category	Total	Comment
Temporary Assignment Scheme -Staff from across civil and public service reassigned		
- Staff in redeployed role	62	In place
- Staff due to be redeployed	403	Not yet in place
- Total number that is expected to be required	405	
Be on Call for Ireland		
Successful at interview	1,918	
In clearance	1,075	
Completed clearance and job ready	843	
Awaiting assignment	177	
Awaiting service acceptance	783	
Candidates placed	166	

The HSE has provided the employment census for May. There has been an increase of 1,386 WTEs in that month, mostly due to COVID recruitment and increasing hours of existing staff. The table below shows the impact on Covid-related recruitment growth from March to end of May, through the initiatives of early entry for medical interns, student nurses being hired on temporary HCA contracts, medical scientist students, and rehired retirees. Please note, this reflects hires in the HSE, not agency staff hired through the Be On Call initiative.

Table 2. COVID related recruitment in May

Impact of recruitment initiatives	Progressed Through Recruitment to date Headcount	WTE May 2020	WTE change from April to May 2020	WTE change from March to April 2020	WTE change from Feb to March 2020
Total change		123,088	+1,386	+1,234	+193
<i>of which:</i>					
Medical interns*	926	932	+194	+88	N/A
Student Nursing & Midwifery Intern 4th year (COVID-19 HCA)**	1,424	1,220	+769	+452	N/A
Health Care Assistant year 1-3 (Student Nurse/Midwife COVID-19)	1,247	589	+467	+121	N/A

Medical Scientist, Undergraduate	80	29	+16	+13	N/A
Rehired Retiree		118	+20	+87	+11

*Most medical interns started in mid/end of May, so have not made it onto the payroll system, meaning the WTE growth shown from April to May is less than the reality

**4th Year Nursing & Midwifery students are counted at 50% of WTE value as they are pre-registration. Therefore, the net impact of the +769 WTE above, is more accurately assessed at +399 WTE taking account of the 370 WTE fall and increase to 100% WTE value.

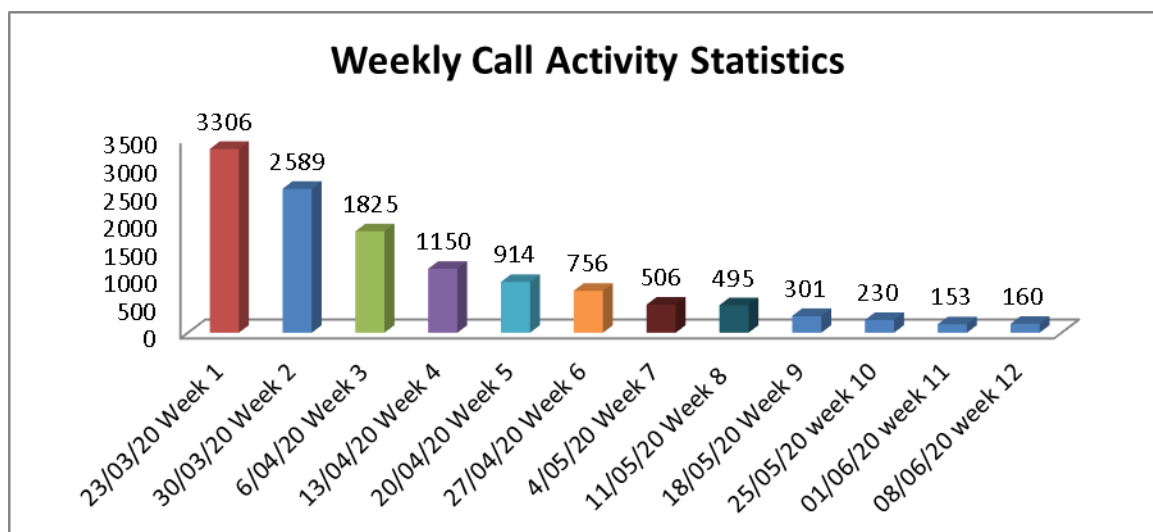
Training update on 17th June

Since 23rd March 2020, there have been 28,762 new registrations to the HSE e-learning platform. There have been 159,758 completions of COVID related courses, with 9,091 completions having taken place in the seven days preceding 17th June 2020.

Occupational Health supports for healthcare workers

The National EAP Team has provided counselling/psychosocial support to 234 HSE staff in the period between the 8th and the 14th of June 2020. A total of 83 advice and psychosocial phone consultations were required by line managers and service managers over this period. In addition, the EAP Counsellor/Therapists have delivered 151 structured video and telephone counselling sessions in the week between the 8th and the 14th of June 2020. The National EAP Team spent a total of 103 hours in Covid-19 related activity.

Table 3. Weekly call figures to the Covid-19 Helpline



Return to work protocol

The HSE have issued circulars outlining the guidance on returning to work safely, and have provided the “Guidance and FAQs for Public Service Employers during COVID-19: In relation to working arrangements and temporary assignments across the Public Service” by DPER.