

National Health and Wellbeing Policy Advisor (Mental Health Promotion)

Expressions of Interest are invited for secondment for an initial 3-year period to the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of the Department of Health (Healthy Ireland)

**TO ALL HR MANAGERS**

**HR Managers are requested to bring this notice to the attention of all eligible staff within their Organisation. Please note that the closing date for receipt of applications is midnight on 9th May 2025**

# Background

The overall purpose of the health service is to improve the health and well-being of people in Ireland by keeping people healthy, providing the healthcare people need, delivering high quality services and getting best value from health system resources.

The Department of Health’s role is to provide strategic leadership for the health service and to ensure that Government policies are translated into actions and implemented effectively. A multi annual programme of health reform is set out in Sláintecare and the objective is to deliver a health and social care service that meets the needs of our population and attracts and retains the very best healthcare professionals, managers, and staff.

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer has responsibility for the provision of strategic leadership, evidence-based analysis, and expert medical advice to the Department, Government, broader health system and regulatory and professional bodies and the development of policy and legislation regarding patient safety and quality in health care. It also leads the development and coordination of health and wellbeing policy including the development of policy to address communicable diseases, immunisation, vaccination, obesity, rare diseases, non-communicable diseases, smoking, alcohol misuse and bioethical issues.

The Health and Wellbeing Unit is part of the Office of the Chief Medical Officer. The Health and Wellbeing Unit leads the coordination of implementation of Healthy Ireland, the national framework to improve health and wellbeing (2013-2025).

Healthy Ireland works closely with colleagues across other Government Departments, the HSE and a wide range of partners and stakeholders, including Local Authorities, Sport Ireland and NGO’s. The Unit oversees the implementation of a number of policies and strategies under the Healthy Ireland umbrella, including the Obesity Policy and Action Plan, the National Physical Activity Plan, National Sexual Health Strategy and the Healthy Workplace Framework as well as managing the Healthy Ireland Fund, conducting the annual Healthy Ireland Survey, and running a national communications and citizen engagement campaign (see [www.gov.ie/healthyireland](http://www.gov.ie/healthyireland) for further information).

**Policy Context**

One of the emerging issues for Healthy Ireland post Covid-19 is mental health promotion, and this is now a priority. The promotion of positive mental health can be viewed within the broader context of subjective wellbeing and in 2020, a cross-government [Wellbeing Framework for Ireland](https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/260026/1dc8a216-7cd7-412a-87d3-10dcf0310789.pdf#page=null) was developed. Connecting for Life, Ireland’s national strategy to reduce suicide sets out a whole-of-government strategy for reducing suicide in Ireland and recognises the importance of mental health promotion. Sharing the Vision (2020), the Government of Ireland Mental Health Policy for Everyone is the most recent and major milestone in advancing mental health policy in Ireland and one of the commitments within this policy is to develop a national mental health promotion plan. The Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025 sets out the roadmap for improving and supporting the health and wellbeing of the people of Ireland. It aims to bring a concerted focus on life-long wellbeing and reduce health inequalities which requires a whole of society approach. Central to the implementation of the Framework is the need to empower people and communities to support their own health and wellbeing, including their mental health. To address this priority [*Pathways to Wellbeing the National Mental Health Promotion Plan*](https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/314724/dfd1c1f8-8e1b-4683-a14b-c5772153c8e4.pdf#page=null) was developed and published in December 2024.

The Department now wishes to recruit, through a process of secondment from the broader health community, a National Health and Wellbeing Policy Advisor (Mental Health Promotion) (“the Advisor”). Details of the role are set out below.

# Key Responsibilities and Deliverables of the Post

It is expected that the successful candidate will demonstrate excellent interpersonal, communication, collaboration and influencing skills. Reporting to the Head of Health and Wellbeing, the Advisor will have the following key responsibilities (please note that this list is indicative and not exhaustive):

* Contribute to the Department’s long-term strategic planning on Mental Health promotion working across Mental Health and Healthy Ireland
* Lead on the implementation of the cross government National Mental Health Promotion Plan
* Coordinate the development and publication of the Mental Health Promotion Implementation Plan
* Lead on cross government engagement to agree actions, timelines and reporting mechanisms for each relevant department
* Work with policy leads in the Department to ensure mental health promotion is embedded in all polices
* Work with colleagues in the HSE to support the implementation of Stronger Together and ensure alignment with Pathways to Wellbeing
* Lead on engagement with external stakeholders including relevant voluntary organisations in relation to mental health promotion
* Work with key partners in the community and voluntary sector who are delivering on mental health promotion
* Advance the research agenda on mental health promotion with academic partners including the Sharing the Vision Mental Health Research Strategy
* Compile reports on mental health promotion as required
* Represent Ireland at EU/WHO and other international fora
* Contribute as required to the day-to-day work of the Department, including supporting the Minister and the Department regarding Parliamentary, Government and general support matters.
* Carry out any other duties as may be assigned by the Head of Health and Wellbeing.

# Qualifications / Experience Required

 Candidates must:

* + have a primary degree in Health Promotion/ Public Health or relevant area.
	+ have at least 5 years’ experience working in the area of health promotion

In addition the following are desirable

* A master’s degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline .
* Experience in the area of mental health promotion

# Candidates will also be expected to demonstrate the following:

* + An understanding of the importance of mental health promotion policy and where it sits within the overall delivery of health and wellbeing / health promotion initiatives
	+ Experience of working on national and/or international focused projects.
	+ Capability to critically analyse and interpret research and health related information and prepare reports.
	+ Project management skills
	+ Excellent inter-personal and team-working skills.

# Eligibility for the post

It is expected that candidates would be currently employed on a salary scale in the health system similar to that of the Assistant Principal Officer scale. For indicative purposes the salary scale for AP ranges from €80,668 to €100,530. Candidates will retain their existing terms and conditions and salary while working within the Department.

Prior to the successful candidate being offered a position, current supervisors will be required to certify that the candidate has worked well in his or her present post and has been satisfactory in general conduct and in respect of sick leave.

# Conditions of Assignment

* + The role is full-time and will be based in the Department’s HQ, Miesian Plaza, Dublin. The current minimum attendance in the office is 2 days per week.
	+ The secondment will be for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further 24 months. This arrangement will be reviewed after three months to ensure that it is meeting the expectations of both parties.
	+ In the event of an officer’s service not being satisfactory the secondment arrangement will cease, and the officer will return to his or her parent organisation.
	+ While on secondment an officer will continue to have access to promotional opportunities in his/her parent organisation.
	+ While on secondment an officer will not be eligible to compete in internal promotional competitions which are restricted to staff of the Department of Health.
	+ At the end of the period of secondment, the officer will return to his or her parent Department/organisation, in accordance with the redeployment arrangements applying at that time.
	+ The successful candidate must be in a position to take up duty in the Department of Health without undue delay.

# Application & Selection Process

**Application Process**

Applicants should submit a succinct CV (**maximum three pages**) highlighting relevant experience accompanied by a signed cover letter (**maximum one page**). The cover letter should set out their reasons for considering themselves qualified and suitable for the role. The CV should include the names of two referees but please note that they will not be contacted in advance of securing the candidate’s permission.

Applicants should note the importance of these two documents in terms of providing clear, concise, and relevant supporting information **specific to this role**.

Applications should be sent by email to Health\_Secondments@health.gov.ie by midnight on 9**th May, 2025**. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

**Selection Process**

It is likely that following a shortlisting exercise, based on the information provided in CVs and cover letters, a number of candidates will be invited to attend for interview.

It is intended that interviews will be scheduled for the week commencing **26th May.**

The interview will entail a discussion that is based on the role (as set out above) and the applicant’s experience and understanding specific to this. In addition, there are competencies which are common to the Assistant Principal role in the civil service which will also feature. These are: (1) management and delivery of results, (2) communication and interpersonal skills, (3) analysis and decision making.

Applications will be treated in strictest confidence. All enquires, applications, and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone outside those involved in that aspect of the process.

Department of Health

14th April 2025