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Psychological Society of Ireland considers HSE Panel System of Recruitment Not Fit for Purpose

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI), the learned and professional body for psychology in the Republic of Ireland, wishes to express its concern about the current panel system of recruitment being used by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to recruit Psychologists and other health and social care professionals.

From consultation with its members, the PSI believes the current panel system is not fit for purpose and requires either a radical overhaul or should be scrapped.

In 2018, the PSI undertook a survey of members' experience of the panel system and found that the majority of respondents believe the current national recruitment system is not working well in relation to:

- Efficiency;
- Equity;
- Assessing competency. The system instead assesses the rote learning of textbook knowledge and training, and does not consider experience or Continuing Professional Development;
- No matching of skill or competency to local needs, or goodness of fit between employer and employee;
- Lack of consistency, accountability and transparency and experiences are of a system that is dysfunctional, rigid, inflexible and inefficient;
- Significant inconsistencies regarding interpretation and application of eligibility criteria.

Another significant concern is the HSE's decision, from 2022, to effectively ban any Psychologist trained outside of the state from ever working within the health service. Considering increasing waiting lists, lack of adequate funded training places for Psychologists and the ethics of such a decision, the PSI sees this as another significant recruitment failure.

The overwhelming conclusion of members of PSI, based on their experiences of the current national recruitment system, is that the system is not fit for purpose and requires a radical overhaul so that issues, with regard to the recruitment of Psychologists into mental health care and other settings, can be addressed.

The PSI President Ian O'Grady states that: "The panel system as it currently stands, denigrates the role of specific allied health professionals to a generic number not matched to a job for suitability or expertise, contributes to difficulties with staff retention, subsequent unacceptable waiting list times and is ultimately unfit for purpose."

ENDS.

For further information, or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Lisa Stafford

Head of Communications

087 945 2801 or lisastafford@psychologicalsociety.ie

To note:

- The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) is the learned and professional body for psychology in the Republic of Ireland. Established in 1970, the Society currently has almost 3,000 members;
- The PSI is committed to maintaining high standards of practice in psychology and to exploring new and innovative ways of furthering psychology.