

16th July 2019

Deputy Margaret Murphy O'Mahony, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 27896/19

“To ask the Minister for Health his plans to improve mental health services in the West County Cork local health office area; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Murphy O'Mahony,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The West Cork Mental Health Service area has a total population of 56,892. The area is served by:

- The Centre for Mental Health Care and Recovery, Bantry General Hospital;
- High support residences in Skibbereen and Bantry
- 4 community bungalows in Skibbereen
- Resource Centres in Bantry and Clonakilty
- 3 Adult Community Mental Health Teams
- 1 Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Team

Adult Mental Health Services

Acute Inpatient services are delivered at Centre for Mental Health Care and Recovery (CMHCR) Bantry General Hospital University Hospital. In addition, community oriented services are provided through Day Hospitals, Day Centres and outlying out-patient clinics in the community throughout West Cork.

The Community Mental Health Teams aim to treat a person in their own home and community where possible. Community mental health teams provide services in out-patient clinics, day hospitals and day centres. Each sector based team has a process for managing referrals.

The ethos of the CMHT Service is to provide support and care to individuals and their families in their own home/community environment, embracing the principles of recovery and inclusion. We provide a multidisciplinary approach which is needs led and person centred.

West Cork Mental Health Services works very closely with local community groups and organisations, such as National Learning Network, Rehab Care, Employability and CoAction to help reduce stigma and promote mental health, hope and recovery. The team also works collaboratively with the Suicide Resource Officer for Cork/Kerry, Addiction Services and NOVAS.

CAMHS Services

CAMHS services are designed for children and adolescents presenting with moderate to severe mental health disorders. There are a total of ten sector based community mental health teams in Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and these CAMHS community based teams are supported by Eist Linn, Child and Adolescent Inpatient Unit. One of these teams covers the West Cork catchment area of which has a population of 19,171 young people under the age of 18 (Census 2016).

All referrals received to CAMHS services are triaged in a timely manner and the referral is either accepted or rejected at that point. Referrals accepted are wait listed in order of clinical priority and wait lists vary across each sector based community team. Urgent referrals to all teams are prioritised and the teams can also offer signposting depending on the nature of each referral. As of June 2019 there were 13 young people on the waiting list for this team of which, 11 were waiting > 6 months and 2 were waiting 6-12 months.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare strives at all times to provide the best quality, safest level of care to those with mental illness within available funding levels. An exercise was undertaken in September 2018 which identified that West Cork community based mental health services have a 95% staffing ratio against the recommended staffing levels based on national policy, Vision for Change. This is in comparison to an overall Cork Kerry Community Healthcare mental health services average of 72% staffing against the Vision for Change recommendations.

I trust this clarifies the query raised.

Kind regards,



Mr Kevin Morrison
General Manager, Mental Health Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare