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24/04/2019

Deputy Michael Moynihan,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 12229/19 To ask the Minister for Health if he is satisfied that section 39 services are in receipt of adequate funding to provide necessary services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Michael Moynihan

Dear Deputy Moynihan,

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

The overall non-capital allocation to the HSE for 2019 is just over €16 billion; this represents a maximum amount of expenditure that may be incurred by the Executive during the forthcoming financial year. The services, levels of activity and performance detailed in NSP 2019 are consistent with this level of funding.

For 2019, a key priority is to ensure that the resources which have been made available to health and social care are targeted towards providing care and support for those patients and clients most in need, and ensuring that these services are delivered efficiently and effectively and are consistent with best available evidence. It is also important to note that value for money is a key driver in achieving maximum benefit from the available financial, staffing and infrastructure resources available.

The HSE acknowledges the role and contribution of non-statutory agencies in the development and provision of health and personal social services and is committed to the development of effective working relationships as enacted by the Health Act 2004. This Act provides that the HSE may, subject to available resources, and on such terms and conditions as it considers appropriate, fund the services provided by non-statutory providers.

The HSE has established a Governance Framework to cover funding relationships with all Non Statutory Agencies. The framework was introduced in order to implement the legislative provisions of the Health Act, 2004 and to reflect the requirements for public accountability whereby the HSE is legally obliged to account for all public expenditure on health and personal social services thus developing improved governance, accountability structures and value for money. It is the policy of the HSE, that all funding arrangements with non-statutory agencies are formalised by complying with this Governance Framework which has 2 components:

Part 1: A Service Arrangement that is signed every 3 years by both parties and sets out the legal requirements that the agency must comply with to receive funding for the provision of services.
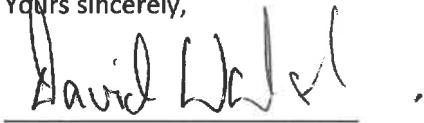
Part 2: A Set of 10 Schedules which must be completed and signed by the Agency and the HSE which sets out the detail of the service and the exact funding that the HSE is providing for the delivery of this service. This Set of Schedules also identifies the quality standards and best practice guidelines to be adhered to in the provision all services, along with process for managing complaints in relation to service provision.

The service arrangement between the HSE and a provider is an important contractual document that sets out the quantum of service delivery and activity which is funded by the state and underpinned by governance and quality policy frameworks.

Section 7 of the NSP 2019 (Pages 80-83) describe the measures that will be taken in order to maximise the delivery of safe service activity levels and sets out the approach to addressing the financial challenges in 2019. Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) will engage with provider organisations on the specific actions, which will be needed to form the basis of quantifiable and reportable value improvement measures.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

David Walsh,
National Director,
Community Operations