



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

St Canices Hospital
Dublin Road
Kilkenny

Telephone 353 56 7784494

20th May 2019

Deputy James Browne
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin

PQ 20230/19

To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding overcrowding at the Department of Psychiatry in University Hospital, Waterford and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 20231/19

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons awaiting transfer to the Department of Psychiatry at University Hospital, Waterford and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Browne,

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

I have reviewed that matter and the following is the position:

The 44 bed Department of Psychiatry (DOP) is the designated approved centre for acute inpatient services for the counties of Waterford and Wexford. This enables all acute inpatient admissions to be managed at a single site. There are no waiting/transfer lists for admission to the acute inpatient service - referrals to the Dept of Psychiatry are through a Consultant Psychiatrist who will make the clinical decision to admit based on the level of acute presentation/need.

It is acknowledged that there can at times be issues of overcapacity in the Department of Psychiatry. In this instance all additional controls (including staffing, alternative external placements) in relation to risk management are applied.

In addition to the Departments of Psychiatry, there is also a dedicated Psychiatric Liaison Team operating from the Emergency Department (ED) in University Hospital Waterford, Wexford General Hospital. All Service Users presenting to the ED who require psychiatric assessment will receive so within agreed timeframes as per the DOP/ED Guidelines. Onward referral pathways are agreed with all service users upon completion of psychiatric assessment in the ED. Pathways will include admission to acute unit, referral to relevant community mental health service team or referral back to GP.

Should you require any further information in relation to same, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

David Heffernan
General Manager - Mental Health Services
South East Community Healthcare