



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
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Mental Health Service  
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23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019

Deputy James Browne TD  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2.

PQ 20855/19 Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of children presenting at emergency departments nationwide with self-harm injuries, suicide attempts and or overdoses in each of the years 2014 to 2018; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -James Browne

Dear Deputy Browne,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The HSE does not collect the information as requested. The Hospital Inpatient Enquiry (HIPE) System is a health information system designed to collect medical and administrative data regarding discharges from acute public hospitals. HIPE only includes information on admitted patients, inpatient and day cases; it does not collect information on Emergency Department or Outpatient activity.

I attach for your information the National Self Harm Registry Report for 2017 which gives some information on the number of presentations by young persons to the Emergency Department.

Where a person under 18 years presents to the Emergency Department following self-harm it is important that person receives a compassionate empathic response from the ED staff. They should receive a biopsychosocial assessment from a suitable qualified mental health professional prior to discharge from hospital. In children under 16 years of age it is recommended they should be admitted overnight to a paediatric ward. The paediatric team should ensure the child receives a biopsychosocial assessment prior to discharge from hospital. This recommendation follows international best practice such as NICE recommendations in the UK.

At present, due to differing levels of staffing for CAMHS teams around the country there are varying responses for children in the EDs. In some hospitals the child will be assessed by a Non Consultant Hospital Doctor, who can then discuss the case with the CAMHS consultant on call. In other services, there may be no CAMHS Consultant on call and the paediatric team will be advised to wait until the CAMHS consultant is available.



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Liaison Psychiatry teams are available in the 3 Dublin Paediatric Hospitals. In Temple Street Childrens University Hospital this service is provided in conjunction with the local mental health service for 24 hours, 7 days a week. In Crumlin and Tallaght Childrens University Hospitals, the liaison psychiatry service is available Monday to Friday 9-5. Outside those hours children are assessed by the paediatricians and admitted to a paediatric ward.

In Cork University Hospital, there is a liaison psychiatric nurse available Monday to Friday 9-5. This nurse is supported in her work by a Consultant from CAMHS. Out of hours an NCHD completes assessments and the CAMHS consultants provide input.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sinead Reynolds'.

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Dr Sinead Reynolds  
General Manager Mental Health Services