



1st October 2019

Deputy John Curran, TD
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

PQ: 37743/19

To ask the Minister for Health the number of new treatment episodes from residential and rehabilitation services which have been commissioned in 2017, 2018 and to date in 2019; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Curran,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your 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 current National Drugs Strategy "Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025" identifies that since 2007 the number of residential beds has increased significantly, largely due to the increased provision of beds in community-based residential facilities. Additional HSE funding over the past number of years has resulted in an increased number of residential addiction beds providing treatment and aftercare services. The most recent figures available (including private provision) estimate current provision at 793 residential beds, comprising 19 inpatient unit detoxification beds, 127 community-based residential detoxification beds, 4 adolescent residential detoxification beds, 625 residential rehabilitation beds and 18 adolescent residential beds.

For the Deputy's information the table below identifies the number of cases treated in residential centres for alcohol and other drugs in 2016 and 2017 as recorded by the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) (see attached Appendix on the NDTRS). Data for 2018 will not be available until October 2019.

Table: Number of cases treated of alcohol and other drugs in residential centres, 2016 to 2017, NDTRS

	2016	2017
Total number case treated per year	4879	4706



Finally, it is acknowledged that there is a need to provide wider geographic access to addiction services and to continue to diversify the range of treatment options available to meet current and emerging needs.

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 'Joseph Doyle', written in a cursive style.

Joseph Doyle
National Planning Specialist

Appendix

National Drug Treatment Reporting System

Treatment for problem alcohol and drug use in Ireland is provided by statutory and non-statutory services, including residential centres, community-based addiction services, general practices and prison services.

For the purpose of the NDTRS, treatment is broadly defined as ‘any activity which aims to ameliorate the psychological, medical or social state of individuals who seek help for their substance misuse problems’. Clients who attend needle-exchange services are not included in this reporting system. From 2004 onwards, clients who report alcohol as their main problem drug have been recorded by the system. These data have been presented in an earlier paper in the HRB Trends Series (Fanagan et al. 2008). Drug treatment options include one or more of the following: medication (detoxification, methadone reduction, substitution programmes and psychiatric treatment), brief intervention, counselling, group therapy, family therapy, psychotherapy, complementary therapy, and/or life-skills training.

Compliance with the NDTRS requires that one form be completed for each new client coming for first treatment and for each previously treated client returning to treatment for problem drug use. Service providers at treatment centres throughout Ireland collect data on each individual who attends for first treatment or returns to treatment in a calendar year. The HRB compile anonymous, aggregated data, which are analysed and reported at national and EU levels.

The main elements of the reporting system are defined as follows:

All cases treated – describes individuals who receive treatment for problem drug and/or alcohol use at each treatment centre in a calendar year, and includes:

- *Cases assessed only* - describes individuals who were assessed but who did not progress to treatment
- *Previously treated cases* – describes individuals who were treated previously for problem drug/alcohol use at any treatment centre and have returned to treatment in the reporting year;
- *New cases treated* – describes individuals who have never been treated for problem drug/alcohol use; and
- *Status unknown* – describes individuals whose status with respect to previous treatment for problem drug/alcohol use is not known.

In the case of the data for ‘previously treated cases’, there is a possibility that individuals appear more than once in the database: for example, where a person receives treatment at more than one centre or at the same centre more than once per year.