



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
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**13<sup>th</sup> January 2021**  
**Deputy Mark Ward**  
**Dail Eireann,**  
**Dublin 2.**

**PQ Number: 44267/20**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the funding provided to a charity (details supplied) in 2020; if the amount was an increase on 2019; the services for which the funding was to be used; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mark Ward**

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

Pieta is an independent Section 39 Agency with a Board of Directors with responsibility to adhere to compliance with the law and support best practice in the governance, management and administration as set out by the Charities Regulator, including financial matters.

The HSE provides approximately 20% of Pieta's overall funding to deliver specific services/projects/programmes via a service level agreement (SLA). Service Level Agreements with Section 39 agencies such as Pieta, are negotiated each year. All such funding is restricted and provided for specific purposes which are agreed annually. The process of negotiating and agreeing SLAs with an organisation includes an ongoing and regular assessment of service activity levels against agreed schedules, and developing an understanding of associated costs, be they anticipated, or unanticipated. Other elements considered during this process include quality and safety, complaints, insurance, spending, performance monitoring, staffing and change control.

All HSE funding is allocated subject to a robust funding application process. Organisations can apply for funding through the funding application process which is subject to meeting various criteria and budget being available. All funded organisations must be able to provide evidence that they meet the mandatory governance requirements and that the service they provide is safe, evidence-informed and is of sound financial structure and practice. Funding from the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) is focussed on NGOs with national reach and/or applicability and that have clear alignment or collaborative participation in, national objectives in Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide.

In 2020 the HSE developed a structured approach in considering the financial challenges of Section 39 Agencies due to Covid-19. As part of this approach, the HSE developed a modus operandi, providing a methodology for a pro forma approach for analysis and recommendations to support decision making in respect of Section 39 Agencies that have made submissions to the HSE for both financial and non-financial supports during the Covid-



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19 pandemic. The HSE engaged with Pieta in this process to ensure, where appropriate, continuity of essential services as outlined in the current SLA for 2020.

The HSE 2020 funding allocation covers core Pieta services plus payment for additional hours related to Covid, and this is once off. The HSE agreed to provide a cash flow stream of funding, to resource the additional 300 counselling hours for high risk service users, on a monthly basis of €115K per month from July to December 2020, equivalent to €690k for the six months. The policy around these Government initiatives requires that the HSE does not seek to duplicate or overlap with such arrangements. The HSE response conforms to this policy requirement, and any additional funding supports from the HSE could only commence on the cessation of these government initiatives. Pieta will have to have an accelerated process of reconfiguration of their service and operational model to enable a more sustainable organisation structure going forward. The HSE will continue to engage with Pieta on this process

In 2020 Pieta House received a total of 2.529m in funding, compared with 2.030m in funding in 2019, an increase of under €500k for 2020.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr John Meehan

HSE Assistant National Director, Mental Health Strategy and Planning  
Head of National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)