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PQ Ref 19991/20

To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide a schedule of meetings to include date, location and attendees online and in person between an organisation (details supplied) and the HSE from 1 July 2019 to date in 2020; the amount of funding provided to the organisation in the past three years to date in 2020; if a service level agreement exists between the HSE and the organisation; if concerns have been brought to his attention of the HSE in relation to governance and oversight at the organisation; and if he will provide for the shortfall of hours in relation to therapy hours delivered.

Details supplied: Pieta House

Dear Deputy,

The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) has been requested to respond to your question above.

Background

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). The HSE developed a structured approach in considering the financial challenges of Section 39 Agencies due to Covid-19. As part 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-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.

A schedule of meetings to include date, location and attendees online and in person between an organisation (details supplied) and the HSE from 1 July 2019 to date in 2020

The following are key engagements with Pieta related to this process. It excludes “lower-level” meetings with HSE personnel that were related to ongoing services or projects, and were unrelated to the financial negotiations.

Date	Item	Attendees	Location
26/11/19	Discussion of 2020 funding and SLA	Pieta, HSE Mental Health Finance, HSE NOSP	NOSP Offices
17/04/20	Discussion of Pieta audit report	Pieta Director of Finance & Operations, HSE Mental Health Finance	Telecall
From April	Ongoing correspondence on challenges related to Covid-19 (no face-to-face meetings due to public health restrictions)	Pieta, Pieta Chairman, HSE Community Strategy and Planning, HSE Mental Health Finance	Mail, telephone
17/06/20	Discussion of current Pieta financial position	Pieta, HSE Mental Health Finance, HSE Mental Health Operations, HSE NOSP	Online meeting
31/07/20	Additional Covid-19 funding agreed	Pieta, HSE Mental Health Finance, HSE Mental Health Operations, HSE NOSP	Online meeting

The amount of funding provided to the organisation in the past three years to date in 2020

HSE funding to Pieta over the last three years, is detailed below. The HSE 2020 funding allocation covers core Pieta services plus payment for additional hours related to Covid, and this is once off (see page 5).

Pieta	2018	2019	2020
HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) <i>*breakdown below</i>	1,897,551	2,030,909	2,560,919
HSE Mental Health, CHO Mid West <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local suicide/self harm , prevention, intervention and postvention services 	47,345	47,345	47,345
HSE Mental Health, CHO Dublin West <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local suicide/self harm , prevention, intervention and postvention services 	51,638	51,638	51,638
Total	1,996,534	2,129,892	2,659,902
* HSE NOSP breakdown			
Suicide intervention services (counselling)	651,700	651,700	651,700 (Core) 690,000 (Covid once off)
Suicide bereavement services (counselling, Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service, 24 Hour Helpline)	1,024,676	1,024,686	1,024,686
Once off - capital contribution	221,175		
Once off – Cavan Monaghan outreach service		56,723	
Once off – UCD research		50,000	
Once off – Pilot Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service		247,800	194,533
HSE NOSP Total	1,897,551	2,030,909	2,560,919

If a service level agreement exists between the HSE and the organisation

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.

If concerns have been brought to his attention of the HSE in relation to governance and oversight at the organisation

Given the outcome of the analysis and the resulting financial gap for the organisation, one of the recommendations of the HSE review is that the Board of Pieta put in place a comprehensive review of its structure and operations to develop a sustainable model for the organisation going forward.

It was also outlined that the Board will need to ensure that the reconfiguration plan includes provision for sustainable fundraising models that will allow the service level align with available funding income. It would also need to reflect the impact of the Covid-19 economic situation in the medium term with an expected overall reduction in fundraising income for charitable organisations in Ireland.

The HSE has kept the Department of Health informed of all discussions and financial arrangements made with Pieta.

If HSE will provide for the shortfall of hours in relation to therapy hours delivered

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. This equates to an annual figure of €1,380k if it were continued and it in response to the current Covid-19 situation only.

Government Wage Subsidy Scheme

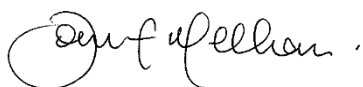
The policy around these Government initiatives requires that the HSE does not seek to duplicate or overlap with such arrangements. The HSE response conforms to this policy requirement, and any additional funding supports from the HSE could only commence on the cessation of these government initiatives.

Following meeting on 31/07/20, the payment schedule was approved and commenced and will be reviewed on a monthly basis thereafter.

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.

I trust this information is useful for you. Please do revert should you require anything further.

Yours sincerely,



Mr John Meehan

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