



Eagraíocht Cúram
Sláinte Pobail
Tuaisceart Chathair &
Tuaisceart Chontae
Bhaile Átha Cliath

Community Healthcare
Organisation
Dublin North City &
County

Ceannasaí Seirbhíse Meabhairshláinte,
Eagraíocht Cúram Sláinte Pobail
Tuaisceart Chathair & Tuaisceart Chontae
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29th June 2020

Mr. Dessie Ellis TD
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Email: dessie.ellis@oireachtas.ie

PQ 8072-20 To ask the Minister for Health the status of the availability of psychiatric services at James Connolly Memorial Hospital, Blanchardstown for those that present at the hospital with mental health issues; his views on whether it is acceptable that on 19th May 2020 up to seven persons that presented to the hospital with mental health issues had to wait up to 24 hours before they were assessed; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Representation which you submitted for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position and apologies for the delay in response

While I am not in a position to respond to the specific query relating to 19th May 2020 as I have not received details of the seven patients without specific patient identifiers, however, I can confirm the following.

During office hours mental health services are provided within the Emergency Department in Connolly Hospital by the Liaison Psychiatry team. The Liaison Psychiatry team is composed of a Consultant, three Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (NCHDs) and a Clinical Nurse Specialist. In addition two Clinical Nurse Specialists, provided as part of the HSE National Clinical Programme on Self Harm, are available to attend and review patients in the Emergency Department following an episode of self-harm.

In the Emergency Department in Connolly Hospital, Dublin North City Mental Health Services provides an on-call team who attend for mental health assessment outside of office hours. This consists of an NCHD based on-site and is available to review patients in the Emergency Department, as well as a Consultant who is available from home and can attend when necessary. This service is provided 365 days of the year.

In 2019, there were 1,476 referrals to Mental Health from the Emergency Department, which is an average of four patients per day. This is a demand led service and the number of people who need the service varies from day to day. When patients present to the Emergency Department they are prioritised on the basis of need. Mental Health assessments may be delayed while patients receive other necessary medical interventions.

We will continue to work with our Emergency Department colleagues and monitor the waiting times in the Emergency Department with a view to minimising delays.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Anne Marie Donohue
A/Head of Service Mental Health