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Deputy Niamh Smyth
Adelaide Road,
Baileborough,
Co Cavan

8th October 2020

Re: PQ28122/20:

To ask the Minister for Health if a Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse will be provided in counties Cavan and Monaghan

Dear Deputy Smyth

I refer to your recent correspondence in relation to the above. 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

Cavan Monahan Mental Health Services have previously sought to recruit a Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse (SCAN). The benefits of the SCAN nurse post would provide rapid response to GP's across both Cavan and Monaghan where there is a presentation with suicidality or an episode of self-harm. The SCAN Nurse role would incorporate the co delivery of training in regards to STORM and advanced STORM training for the assessment of suicidal ideation and self-injurious behaviour.

The requirement for a SCAN Service is included as part of the Cavan Monaghan Connecting for Life Strategy June 2017 [CM-CFLS], specifically under the following actions 3.3.7(b) and 4.1.5 respectively, with local efforts continuing to progress this important aspect of the delivery service.

This resource was included within a suite of resources that the CM-CFLS had highlighted and the highest priority to progress initially was the establishment of a Suicide Liaison Officer and a Suicide Bereavement Counselling Service. These services were identifiable gaps for the two [2] counties therefore developments in this priority area under the CFLS were progressed and the following services are now in place for Cavan Monaghan:

Service Development – Suicide Prevention and Postvention

- Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service now in place since July 2019 through National Service Agreement between HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention [NOSP] and Pieta House, funded by HSE.
- In March 2020 the Suicide Bereavement Counselling and Crisis Intervention Service for people at risk of suicide and self-harm in Cavan and Monaghan was established. This Service will be delivered on an outreach basis by Pieta House through

employment of a Therapist for 16 hours per week to support people across the two counties.

- The Bereavement Counselling Therapist [The Therapist] who is currently in place provides one to one bereavement counselling to people who have been bereaved by suicide, as well as one to one counselling to those experiencing suicidal ideation, who have attempted suicide, or those engaging in self-harm. Naturally as we currently operate within a Covid environment this service is delivered through telephone support for now, in line with appropriate infection control measures.
- This post is jointly funded by HSE NOSP through a National Service Agreement with Pieta House. Pieta House are contributing matched funding to the overall cost of the suicide bereavement counselling and crisis intervention service from their fundraising activity.
- The National Clinical Programme for Self-Harm is operational as part of the Psychiatric Liaison Team in Cavan General Hospital. The Liaison Team are assessing people presenting in the Emergency Department [ED] or any hospital ward with suicidal ideation or self-harm and facilitating referrals to the Acute Psychiatric Unit where appropriate.
- Of note the turnaround time for emergency referrals to the CM MHS Community Mental Health Teams has improved and work continues at Primary Care level in relation to liaison with GP's to support appropriate referral pathways into Mental Health Services.

If you have any further queries on this matter please let me know.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Dykes', written in a cursive style.

Teresa Dykes
General Manager
Mental Health Services, CH01.