



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
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30th June 2021,
Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ Number: 21860/21

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he will order a general review of the use and overuse of psychiatric medication in children across all CAMHS and primary care health services and in particular to review the way a lack of resources for alternative approaches is driving the overuse of medication given the concern in relation to the rapid rise in the use of psychiatric drugs in children (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Richard Boyd Barrett

Dear Deputy Boyd Barrett,

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.

The HSE first published core lists for each of the Prescribed Long Term Illness (LTI) conditions (available on: www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/schemes/lti/aprovmed/) in 2014. The lists were updated in 2016. These core lists were developed following detailed consultation with Medical Officers, HSE Pharmacists and the HSE-MMP. **LTI Core list P** relates to Mental Illness (under 16).

Along with the LTI list, most clinicians use **BNF** (British National Formulary) as a guideline for medication prescribing, dosage, side effects and other information related to these medications.

Since 2012 HSE has invested to resource CAMHS services to be multidisciplinary in their functioning, approving posts in psychology, social work, occupational Therapist and other disciplines. Most CAMHS teams in the country have these posts approved with few challenges related to recruitment and retention.

Clinicians are trained to treat patients using Biopsychosocial model. Medication prescribing is one of the key element in the training of these clinicians. Even after completion of training, the training body (College of Psychiatrists in Ireland) provide CPD (Continuous Professional Development) for these clinicians to improve their knowledge throughout their career. Medication audits in teams is one way of managing medication prescribing within BNF recommendations.

It is the role of the HSE to ensure that all modalities are made available to the multidisciplinary team in the care of their individual patients, and it is up to the multidisciplinary team to decide on the development of the care plan – in conjunction with service user and their family – based on what is in the best interest of the patient. If a particular form of therapy is not available in a particular area, HSE even try to support the team to excess it privately.



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HSE will discuss the issue of use and overuse of medication with the CAMHS Faculty in the College of Psychiatry and make efforts to improve the Clinical Governance in these services.

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 that reads "Jim Ryan".

Jim Ryan
Assistant National Director
Head of Operations