



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.

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18th February 2021
Deputy Pearse Doherty
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ 5914/21

To ask the Minister for Health the reason no funding was allocated to the National Eating Disorder Treatment Plan in 2020; the reason none of the €1.6 million allocated in 2019 was spent in this area; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Doherty,

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.

Most people can and do get better from eating disorders. While a small number of people benefit from more intensive treatment through day programmes or inpatient care, the most effective treatment setting is in the community. Dedicated community based eating disorder services, where multidisciplinary teams have specialist training can provide evidence based care and treatment.

The HSE developed and approved a Model of Care for Eating disorders that provides a blueprint for the development of specialist regional teams with skilled clinicians that can provide evidence based interventions collaborating with acute hospital physicians and GPs as required. Early intervention and evidence based treatment by multi-disciplinary specialist community eating disorder teams are recommended by the HSE Model of Care for Eating Disorders with a focus on both psychological and physical recovery. The Model of Care was launched in 2018 and continued implementation is vital to deliver access to high quality eating disorders in Ireland.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/mental-health/eating-disorders/moc/hse-eating-disorder-services-model-of-care.pdf>

Since 2016 €5.7 million has been made available for Eating Disorder posts through programme for government funding. Of that €1.77 million has been invested to date in Eating Disorder Specialist Posts (see table below). In 2020 unspent mental health development funding was required to meet unfunded cost growth in mental health services. As a result, nationally planned developments of eating disorder services had to be temporarily paused. Some of the paused funding was used for agency staffing (both medical and nursing) and to facilitate specialist placements for those with complex mental health needs including eating disorders. This was done in consultation with the Department of Health. In 2021 the balance of €3.94 million is now available to be invested in specialist Eating Disorder services. It is the intention of the HSE to progress the recruitment of these eating



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disorder specialist posts in 2021 and there are no plans to divert this available funding to other areas of service provision.

Funding - Eating Disorder Posts filled by year as at Jan 21

	Filed in 2017	Filed in 2018	Filed in 2019	Filed in 2020	TOTAL
PFG 2016	220,545	471,222	698,310	81,151	1,471,228
PFG 2017		79,272	84,104		163,376
PFG 2018		137,953			137,953
PFG 2019					-
TOTAL	220,545	688,447	782,414	81,151	1,772,557

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

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sinead Reynolds
General Manager Mental Health Services