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Deputy Alan Kelly
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin

4th March 2021

Re: PQ 9724/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of adult mental health respite care facilities in CHO1 for persons living in County Cavan.

Dear Deputy Kelly

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 Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position in relation to Cavan;

I can confirm that Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service [CM MHS] does not have a facility in Cavan designated solely for respite care. Pre the Covid 19 pandemic, mental health respite care was provided in a number of our long term residential facilities across Cavan and Monaghan. However, provision of respite has had to be suspended since the Covid 19 pandemic began in 2020.

The decision to suspend this respite service was taken in the context of the required and safe Public Health measures to prevent Covid 19 outbreaks in residential care settings. This has proven to be a good outcome for the people who reside full time in these residential facilities.

Some of these measures CM MHS have adopted have included the reduction in footfall into various facilities, testing and isolation of new admissions into the acute in patient service in Cavan and strict adherence to the Covid 19 infection prevention controls. Therefore in this context, CM MHS considers it safer, for the long-term residents of our residential facilities, to suspend the provision of respite care. While all health services are challenged to respond in the current environment, over all the community team services and inpatient admissions have not been suspended since the initial restrictions were introduced in March 2020.

This situation is review weekly and respite care will be made available again when it is safe to do so, mindful of all national public health and infection control guidance.

However, the people from Cavan continue to be supported by the CM MHS through Community Mental Health Teams and Key Workers by a variety of alternative service delivery including outreach, in home visits and increased telephone calls.

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

Yours sincerely

Teresa Dykes
General Manager
Mental Health Services, CHO1.