



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
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**2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021**  
**Deputy Matt Carthy,**  
**Dail Eireann**  
**Dublin 2.**

**PQ 2555/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that for the third year in a row much of the funding allocated for the treatment of eating disorders under the model of care for eating disorders has been diverted elsewhere by the HSE; the steps he has taken to help ensure the funding allocated to the treatment of eating disorders is not diverted once more in 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Carthy,

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.

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 approved the Eating Disorder Model of Care (MOC) in January 2018. The MOC is the blue print for the HSE to roll out specialist eating disorder services in Ireland to address the current unmet need for specialist eating disorder service within HSE. Outpatient specialist care is considered to be the most effective treatment setting for most people with eating disorders. The MOC has a core focus on developing regional community based specialist eating disorder services provided by skilled multidisciplinary teams.

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

The clinical program aims to establish an ED network (8 adult teams and 8 CAMHS teams) in accordance with agreed Model of Care 2018 and approved implementation plan over a 5 year period starting in 2018. All teams are MDT and consultant led. Clinicians must be of senior grade with interest in this clinical speciality.

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. 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



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Disorder services. It is the intention of the HSE to progress the recruitment of these eating disorder specialist posts in 2021 and there are no plans to divert this available funding to other areas of service provision.

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 blue ink, appearing to read 'Sinead Reynolds'.

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Dr Sinead Reynolds  
General Manager Mental Health Services