



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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

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28<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Deputy Catherine Murphy,  
Dail Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ Number: 45201/20**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the inpatient and outpatient services available for persons suffering from an eating disorder; the budget allocated for these services over the past three years; the amount of the budget that is underspent or exceeded; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Murphy,

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 inpatient and outpatient services available for persons suffering from an eating disorder**

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>

### **Current Service Provision**

Adults with eating disorders can access treatment from local community mental health teams. There are currently 111 adult community mental health teams nationwide where 90% of referrals are offered an appointment within 12 weeks. All referrals are triaged to identify need where urgent referrals are offered appointments sooner.



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There is a plan to have 8 adult ED teams across the country in line with Model of Care for Eating Disorders. Currently there is one partial team in place serving just CHO6. There are 3 dedicated adult Eating Disorder beds in SVUH. It should be noted that these beds are not National beds they are beds that have been dedicated to Eating Disorder in CHO6 for many years.

There are currently 2 Eating Disorder specialist community teams based in CAMHS, one in CHO4 Cork and Kerry Regional Eating Disorder Service CAREDS (operational since May 2019) and the other based in CHO 7 Linn Dara Community Eating Disorder Service LDCEDS (operational since April 2018).

Children and adolescents with an eating disorder diagnosis who require inpatient treatment can be referred to one of the 4 CAMHS inpatient approved centres. Referrals are reviewed individually to determine the likely clinical benefits of admission as well as possible other treatment alternatives. There are currently 20 dedicated eating disorder beds across the four 4 CAMHS units; Linn Dara, Dublin, St Vincents in Dublin, Eist Linn in Cork and Merlin Park, Galway.

As part of the new children's hospital development, there will be an additional 8 specialist eating disorder beds as part of a new 20 bedded CAMHS inpatient approved centre.

If an individual is concerned about themselves or someone known to them, they should be directed to their GP in the first instance for primary care screening assessment and examination. Their GP may then make recommendations which may include, if clinically indicated, referral to the secondary care mental health services for full eating disorder assessment.

### Budget for Eating Disorder Services

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

### Eating Disorder Posts filled by year as at Jan 21

	Filled in 2017	Filled in 2018	Filled in 2019	Filled in 2020	TOTAL



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

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