



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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

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30th June 2021
Deputy Mark Ward
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ Ref: 24059/21

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of providing an inpatient perinatal service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

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's Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service (SPMHS) Model of Care was launched on the 30th November 2017 <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/specialist-perinatal-mental-health/>. The model of care describes the clinical pathway for this service starting with screening for mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosis at the first visit to the maternity service, called the booking visit. It ensures that women will receive a response tailored to their mental health issues. Given the documented adverse effects on separating mothers from their babies, the provision of a mother and baby unit (MBU) is recommended in the Model of Care for Ireland.

The implementation of this specialist service, including the MBU, is part of the National Maternity Strategy (DOH 2016: Appendix I) and is being done in conjunction with the National Woman and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP). Currently there are no Mother and Baby Units in Ireland. This means that any woman developing a severe mental illness within a year of having a baby is invariably separated from her baby, if she requires admission for inpatient care and treatment.

Given the overwhelming clinical and economical evidence against separating mothers and babies during the post natal period, the National Model of Care recommends that one mother and baby unit be developed in Dublin in the Ireland East Hospital Group. This would serve as a national tertiary referral unit. This recommendation is based on the current population of the greater Dublin area (Dublin, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow) of 1.8 million projected to increase to 2.2 million by 2031 (Dublin, Chamber of Commerce 2017). This site is also easily accessible via the M50 and N11. It is proposed this be sited in the psychiatric unit based on St Vincent's University Hospital Campus, Dublin. Whilst the National Model of Care recommended a 6 bedded unit with the capability of expanding to 10, both the HSE Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service Oversight and Implementation Group and the joint CHO6 Mental Health Service/St. Vincent's University Hospital Group consider it preferable, given the current delay in some capital project completion, to develop and operate the facility as 10 beds from the start.



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As the MBU will provide for mothers with the most serious forms of mental illness, it must be sited within a mental health facility. It should be part of but separate from an acute adult inpatient unit. This will ensure there is mental health expertise available at all times, including the on-call period. There is also back-up immediately available to respond to the needs of any women becoming acutely disturbed as part of her mental illness. Such expertise and back up would not be available in an alternative setting such as a maternity hospital.

The development of Ireland's first MBU is at an early stage with an outline proposal going to the Board of St. Vincent's University hospital in the coming weeks.

The development site location of near Elm Mount, SVUH campus is the preferred option, however the exact location on this site has not yet been agreed. Therefore it is difficult to estimate exactly what the build cost might be. The amount outlined below is an early estimate of this cost.

The WTE cost is based on the MBU business plan developed to support this development and reflects staff paycales in 2021. This may also need to be adjusted closer to the MBU being operationalised.

Mother and Baby Unit - Dublin (in development)		
Capital build costs	(estimate - not final)	12,000,000
MBU 22.5WTE cost	based on 2021 paycales	<u>1,500,000</u>
	Total	13,500,000

For more information on the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service please see the following link [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

Dr Amir Niazi
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Clinical Design and Innovation
Health Service Executive