

3rd November 2021

Deputy Pa Daly,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ Ref: 46552/21

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons who requested mental health services in University Hospital Kerry accident and emergency department in each of the years 2017 to 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Daly,

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.

We acknowledge that at times some people present in crisis and require immediate assistance. This assistance can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via GP, SouthDoc or the Emergency Department, University Hospital Kerry. In some instances the GP or SouthDoc can arrange a direct admission to the Mental Health Unit if deemed appropriate clinically. Persons experiencing a crisis often need acute medical intervention along with their mental health needs. For this reason these crisis services are based in areas with 24/7 medical cover

In addition, Mental Health Services development funding under the Program for Government (PFG) has enabled recruitment of 2 Clinical Nurse Specialists in Self-Harm, 2 Clinical Nurse Specialists in Liaison and a Consultant in Liaison based in the Emergency Department in University Hospital Kerry.

Kerry currently has four posts for Crisis Intervention Nurses working in Killarney, Tralee, Castleisland and Listowel respectively. These nurses are integrated members of the Community Mental Health Team, who work specifically with individuals presenting in crisis. They provide a 7 day service, as opposed to a weekend on call service as referred to above, with staff providing a one in four weekend rota.

The concept of Crisis Intervention Service is outlined in a Vision for Change (VfC, 2006). The Vision for Change does not refer specifically to a crisis team but rather speaks of crisis intervention as part of a Community Mental Health Team and indeed references the fact that it should be a multidisciplinary response.

Please see below table hereunder that outlines the number of individuals that required Mental Health service through the Emergency Department. Of note, data is not available from 1st January 2017 to 12th October 2017 as it was collected by a different mechanism and is not readily available.

| Year | No. persons required MHS through ED |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 13/10/2017 to 31/12/2017 | 201 |
| 2018 | 1024 |
| 2019 | 916 |
| 2020 | 833 |

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind regards,



Mr Kevin Morrison
A/Head of Mental Health Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare