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Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

15th December 2022

PQ Number: 62839/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the nine community eating disorder teams expected to be operational by the end of 2022; if this target has been delivered; if there are any delays; and the reason; 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.

Eating disorders have the highest mortality and morbidity within mental health and they pose significant health, social and economic cost to people with eating disorders, to their families and to society. In January 2018 the HSE published a National Model of Care for Eating Disorders (MOC) in partnership with College of Psychiatrists' of Ireland and Bodywhys. The NCPED aims to establish an ED network (8 adult teams and 8 CAMHS teams) in accordance with the agreed Model of Care 2018. CAMHS ED team staffing is recommended at WTE 14.4 per 500,000-600,000. Adult ED Team staffing is recommended at WTE 13.4 per 500,000-600,000

Since 2016 over €8 million has been made available for Eating Disorder posts through programme for government funding. In 2020 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. Funding (2016-2019) was made available again in 2021 to start the 2nd phase of teams.

There are currently 3 eating disorders (ED) specialist teams in operation, 2 CAMHS teams serving Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CHO4) and Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow (CHO7) and an adult team in Community Healthcare East (CHO6). These multidisciplinary

teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community and are the foundations of delivering quality eating disorder care across the stepped model of care.

Funding was made available again in 2021 to start the 2nd phase of teams in CHO4 (adult), CHO9 (adult) and CHO2 (CAMHS). Recruitment of MDT teams requires 12-18 months duration in line with HSE recruitment procedures. The CHO 9 Adult ED team has been recruited and aims to be accepting referrals in Quarter 1 of 2023. Recruitment of staff to CHO 2 (CAMHS) and CHO 4 (Adult) teams has progressed well and is also nearing completion, however the consultant psychiatrist appointments remain outstanding following initial recruitment campaigns. Interviews were held in (November 2022) for the consultant psychiatrist for the adult CHO 4 team and with a successful candidate, this team will be operational in 2023. A recent campaign was unsuccessful in recruiting a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist in CHO 2 and this will be re advertised. Recruited clinicians for these teams are currently delivering eating disorder care to people with eating disorders in their existing community teams and receiving training via the NCPED. It is expected that both of these teams will be operational in 2023.

The HSE continues to work closely with NDTP, National Doctors Training and Planning, to take measures to ensure trained clinicians in Eating Disorders are available to take up posts. Psychiatry training posts are available in all existing community eating disorder teams. The recruitment process has been impacted by the challenges in recruitment and retention experienced currently across the health service. Despite this all CHOs who have been allocated funding remain committed to recruiting staff and delivering community eating disorder teams. The NCPED works closely with all CHOs to support this recruitment.

Funding was secured in 2022 to support commencement of recruitment for Eating Disorder Posts in a 3rd phase of additional teams in CHO 9 (CAMHS), CHO 5 (adult) and CHO 1 (adult). In CHO 1 there are 2 dedicated eating posts (Clinical Nurse Specialist and psychotherapist) which were funded prior to the MOC and these experienced clinicians will be included in the new CHO 1 adult team. Consultant psychiatrists (2 x WTE 0.2) have been identified and this team will also be operational in 2023. Recruitment for teams in CHO 9 and CHO 5 is well underway. The interview for the adult consultant psychiatrist in CHO 5 was held in November however the successful candidate did not accept the post. This post will have to be re-advertised. The campaign for the consultant child & adolescent psychiatrist in CHO 9 closed on 27/10/2022 and interviews are due to take place in December. Therefore 6 of the 9 funded teams to date are expected to be operational in 2023.

Eating Disorder team	Current status	Expected start date	Premises
CAMHS ED CHO4	Operating	Commenced May 2019	Dedicated premises opens Dec 2022
CAMHS ED CHO7	Operating	Commenced April 2018	
CAMHS ED CHO9	Consultant interview Dec 2022. Other MDT interviews ongoing	Q2 2023 subject to clinicians been in post.	Premises to be identified
CAMHS ED CHO6	Consultant and 4 MDT members recruited		Dedicated community premises to be

			completed by Q3 2023.
Adult ED CHO1 (2 Mini teams – Sligo/Leitrim and Cavan/ Monaghan)	In final stages of recruitment	Q2 2023 subject to clinicians been in post.	Premises to be identified
Adult ED CHO5	Consultant not appointed following interview in November will need to be re-advertised. Other MDT interviews ongoing		Premises to be identified
Adult ED CHO9	All recruitment completed	Q1 2023	Temporary team building. New premises identified and been retro-fitted.
Adult ED CHO6	Operating	November 2018	Dedicated community premises to be completed by Q3 2023.

NCPED recommendations to deliver 3 eating disorder teams per year to ensure sustainable phased recruitment and training. The HSE is provided funding on a yearly basis as per the estimates process. The fourth phase of teams have been identified and relevant CHOs have submitted business cases including advance planning to support recruitment and identification of team premises. We are awaiting allocation of funding from 2023 budget. Once we have received confirmation of a budget allocation we will work with CHOs to progress the remaining teams.

Capital costs associated with the introduction of new eating disorder teams is being provided through the HSE Capital budget which has heavy demands due to Regulatory and other Patient Care needs. All teams have between 12-14 team members and require the necessary facility infrastructure as described in NCP MOC. This is key to support clinicians in delivering the model of care. There has been progress in identifying premises and suitable locations, however buildings require substantial work to meet the MOC facility requirements and this has led to unexpected delays. Building work and leasing/buying of premises have all been impacted by increasing costs and low supply.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amir Niazi", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Dr Amir Niazi
National Clinical Advisor & Group Lead for Mental Health
Clinical Design and Innovation
Health Service Executive