



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 R: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Mental Health Service, St Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 Email: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Deputy Holly Cairns,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

16th March 2022

PQ Number: 10119/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of special public beds for eating disorders in each CHO; the number of consultants and multidisciplinary teams with expertise to treat eating disorders in each CHO; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Holly Cairns

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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.

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. In the absence of a pre-existing dedicated eating disorder infrastructure or strategy, this Model of Care document has been developed in order to guide the provision of high quality, accessible and value for money eating disorder services in Ireland. Key recommendations include the development of a national network of dedicated eating disorder teams embedded within the mental health service, a stepped model of outpatient, day patient and inpatient care provision based on clinical need, and the development of a skilled, trained workforce. In the context of the significant physical morbidity associated with eating disorders, this Model of Care also recommends a strong integration between primary care, mental health services and medical teams, including the bridging of the acute hospital and mental health service divide through mutual clinical commitments and shared pathways.

Most people can and do recover from eating disorders if they receive effective, evidence-based treatment from ED trained staff. 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. The MOC has a core focus on developing regional community based specialist eating disorder services provided by skilled multidisciplinary teams.

The NCPED aims to establish an ED network (8 adult teams and 8 CAMHS teams) in accordance with the agreed Model of Care 2018. 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



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community and are the foundations of delivering quality eating disorder care across the stepped model of care. In 2021, funding was provided to progress recruitment for the 2nd phase of teams in CHO4 (adult), CHO9 (adult) and CHO2 (CAMHS). This 2nd phase of teams are in advanced stages of recruitment and set up to establish a high quality service. A 3rd phase of specialist community team development in 2022 has begun in CHO9 CAMHS, CHO1 Adult and CHO5 Adult.

Adults who have an eating disorder diagnosis and require inpatient care can be referred to any of the HSE's acute inpatient mental health-approved centres around the country. Adults presenting with an eating disorder can also be treated in an acute hospital if their physical health needs require this. Under National Mental Health Policy Documents and in line with MOC the number of adult eating beds will increase, including an additional 3 beds in St. University Hospital, 5 beds in North Dublin, 5 beds in Galway and 5 beds in Cork. Timeframes for new beds will have to be identified. These beds will be linked to eating disorder hubs and provision will be in line with Sharing the Vision recommendations.

Children and adolescents with an eating disorder diagnosis who require inpatient treatment can be referred to one of the 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 4 CAMHS Units across the HSE; Linn Dara Approved Centre, Dublin, St Josephs Approved Centre in Dublin, Eist Linn Approved Centre in Cork and Merlin Park Approved Centre in Galway. Specialist eating disorder beds are available in Merlin Park Galway and Linn Dara AC.

There are plans for an Eating Disorder Unit in the new National Children's Hospital which will provide 8 additional beds.

Adults with eating disorders can access treatment from local community mental health teams. There are currently 112 adult community mental health teams nationwide. Children and adolescents with eating disorders can access treatment through CAMHS community teams. Every effort is made to prioritise referrals for people with eating disorders.

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

Yours sincerely,

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