



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](mailto:jim.ryan1@hse.ie)

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

Deputy Martin Browne.  
Dail Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

09th March 2022

**PQ Number: 7152/22**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the services that are available for persons diagnosed with avoidant, restrictive food intake disorder; if his attention has been drawn to instances in which persons living outside of CHO4 are unable to access the services provided to address this condition and as a result, a family has been left with no option but to secure such services for children under 12 years of age in the UK; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Martin Browne**

---

Dear Deputy Browne,

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.

For reasons of patient/client confidentiality, the HSE does not comment on the clinical nature of individual cases.

CAREDS is the Child and Adolescent Regional Eating Disorder Service for Cork and Kerry, which provides specialist eating disorder care for young people under the age of 18 years who have an eating disorder. CAREDS is an outpatient service based in Cork. Young people must be physically well enough to be outside of hospital care in order to attend the service.

CAREDS is part of the HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCPED) and CAMHS in Cork and Kerry and work closely with mental health, medical teams, liaison psychiatry and general practitioners to provide specialist eating disorder care across the region. When young people have additional mental health needs, it operates a shared model of care with their local CAMHS service.

The most common types of eating disorders treated are Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa, and also support people with Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) and Binge Eating Disorder when specialist input is required.

Two CAMHS Inpatient Units, Linn Dara in Dublin and Merlin Park in Galway admit children under the age of 13 years, and Linn Dara has provided treatment to a number of children with a diagnosis of ARFID.

During ARFID treatment, a variety of therapies, services and interventions may be used and may involve a number of approaches.



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](mailto:jim.ryan1@hse.ie)

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

No child has been sent abroad for treatment of Eating Disorders since 2019.

A key aim for the HSE Model of Care for Eating Disorders Services is improving access to assessment and treatment for people with eating disorders in Ireland. Active wait list supports are available to those waiting assessment including the HSE self-care App for eating disorders and Bodywhys support services. Emergency referrals continue to be prioritised. The National Clinical Programme remains committed to supporting the delivery of community specialist eating disorder teams and funding is available in 2022 for continued progress.

**CAMHS** (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) – is the general mental health service for children and adolescents, which is not an exclusive eating disorder treatment team. There are personnel within the CAMHS team that have the expertise to make an assessment of an eating disorder, and where there is low to moderate risk, treat the person within the team.

Eating disorder assessment involves a multidisciplinary assessment at a clinic. If the CAMHS/ED team assessment concludes that there is no diagnosis of an eating disorder, the team may discharge the person back into the care of the GP, if there is no other condition that needs treating there.

If the child or adolescent is diagnosed with an eating disorder, then the next referral step is dependent on the level of risk assessed by the team.

- A person diagnosed with a low / moderate risk will be treated within the outpatient service. If the person responds well to this outpatient treatment plan, they will, when ready, be referred back into the care of the GP (step down), or if the person does not improve, they will be referred into the more intensive day programme (step up).
- A person diagnosed with higher risk may be referred specifically for a more specialised treatment or day/ inpatient care. If the Child and Adolescent ED treatment team assessment diagnose an ED, the person will be treated within the eating disorder outpatient team structure.
- The person moves up or down these steps depending on their clinical needs and how they are responding to treatment.

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

Yours sincerely,

**Jim Ryan**  
Assistant National Director - Head of Operations  
National Mental Health Services