



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha, Cliath20.
T: 01-6207304 R: jim.ryan@hse.ie

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

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

28th March 2022

PQ Number: 8383/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the plans that are in place to roll out ACCES Team Homeless Mental Health Service across the State; 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.

Currently, health services for the homeless population are delivered by multiple providers including Statutory Services, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and charitable organisations. In addition to local Community Mental Health Teams and Acute Mental Health Units, HSE Mental Health Services have established Specialist Homeless Mental Health Teams, dedicated to meet the mental health needs of the homeless population. The Assertive Community Care Evaluation Service (ACCES Team), is one of two Specialist Homeless Mental Health Teams located in Dublin.

The ACCES Team is a mental health assertive community outreach team providing direct and accessible mental health care to those experiencing homelessness in Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow Community Healthcare (CHO 7). The team aims:

- To provide a multidisciplinary team assessment to homeless individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who are not linking in with local services;
- To provide high quality support to individuals in the community thereby avoiding hospitalisation;
- To promote stabilisation and relapse prevention;
- To work in partnership with other agencies to provide comprehensive and seamless care;
- To provide education and support to frontline staff;
- To offer a confidential, non-judgemental and patient centred approach;
- To heighten awareness and promote advocacy of the homeless population who have mental health issues.

The ACCES Team works with individuals between the age of 18 and 65 who have a severe and enduring mental illness. This includes individuals who have a dual diagnosis, i.e. those with mental health problems, in addition to alcohol or substance misuse.



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha, Cliath20.
T: 01-6207304 R: jim.ryan@hse.ie

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

Sharing the Vision Recommendation

Sharing the Vision A Mental Health Policy for Everyone (2020) sets out to create a mental health system that addresses the needs of the population, it is based on the principles of respect, compassion, equity and hope. The policy was developed in partnership with service users and families. Sharing the Vision Implementation Plan 2022 – 2024 has been published. Recommendation 58 and 59 address homelessness and mental health.

Recommendation 58 *“In order to address service gaps and access issues, a stepped model of integrated support that provides mental health promotion, prevention and primary intervention supports should be available for people experiencing homelessness”.*

This recommendation will continue the work of the existing steering group to support the implementation of the Stepped Model of Mental Healthcare. Actions include the completion of recruitment for outreach teams in CHO 7 and CHO Dublin North City and County (CHO 9) to widen access for those experiencing homelessness.

Recommendation 59 *“Assertive outreach teams should be expanded so that specialist mental healthcare is accessible to people experiencing homelessness”.* Actions include:

- Carry out needs analysis to define service deficit.
- Develop an implementation plan in line with the stepped model of mental health support for the homeless population.
- Advance the phased expansion of the existing service.

The implementation of both of these recommendations will progress under a dedicated workstream and the scope of implementation will be determined in consultation between the steering group for the Stepped Model of Mental healthcare and the dedicated Sharing the Vision workstream.

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