



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.
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Head of Operations, Mental Health Service
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Deputy Pádraig O'Sullivan,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

10th August 2022

PQ Number: 40724/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the reason that CAMHS is excluding persons with autism with a primary diagnosis from the upcoming audit of its services; if this decision will be reviewed to include persons with autism; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Pádraig O'Sullivan

Dear Deputy O'Sullivan,

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.

Arising from the Maskey Report, the ongoing audit of medication practice is an independently chaired audit to include a random selection of 50 charts or proportionate to the medical caseload at CHO/CAMHS team level from a continuous 6-month predefined period. An Expert Audit Group has been established and is chaired by Dr. Colette Halpin. The audit tool and methodology have been finalised and a pilot has now commenced in four CHO Areas. The audit will be complete by Q4 2022.

HSE expert clinical advice was that an immediate audit of assessment and prescribing practice for ADHD be undertaken, in line with the findings of the Maskey Report. While the HSE preference was for the audit of prescribing practice to focus on ADHD, Minister for Mental Health and Older People Ms Mary Butler, requested that the HSE audit be based on a random sample of case files to include all diagnoses. Based on this therefore, the HSE agreed that the audit of prescribing practice would be expanded to include a review of prescribing for other diagnoses and medications.

This is an audit of Mental Health Services, specifically CAMHS services. The purpose of this audit is to satisfy, that children who are attending CAMHS services and who are on medication from the service, are prescribed medication according to best practice guidelines.

The majority of children with a primary diagnosis of autism are treated by disability services and primary care. There is no medication for the treatment of primary Autism. If a child has any mental health symptoms and are attending CAMHS services, and are on medication, they are included in this clinical audit.



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Separately, Mental Health Intellectual Disability (MHID) are covered under the audit, as appropriate. The methodology of the audit is that children with ASD who are on a CAMHS caseload may be selected for inclusion in the audit, based on the random nature of the selection process.

Further details can be found here: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/8f30e-minister-butler-clarifies-scope-of-camhs-audit/>

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Mc Cusker'.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services