



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.
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Deputy Pa Daly.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

11th July 2022

PQ Number: 33076/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if the use of teleclinics to conduct CAMHS consultations is part of the strategy to resource CAMHS teams; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Pa Daly

Dear Deputy Daly,

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.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges for the delivery of health services; both in terms of the provision of services and continuity of care. Given the emphasis placed on ensuring social distancing where possible in the community, and as part of efforts to reduce transmission of coronavirus to healthcare workers, solutions to allow clinical consultations take place remotely were required. In this context Attend Anywhere or Blue Eye, were utilized as an alternative modality.

Prior to COVID-19, the HSE were exploring options in relation to telemedicine, in response to a European wide shortage of CAMHS Consultants, and a number of longstanding Consultant vacancies in CAMHS teams across the country.

The MHID CAMHS team in Cork introduced telemedicine in 2019 to reduce the need for children with mental health and intellectual disability to travel to clinics, and allow for assessment in their own home, or in the school they attend. This was a very welcome development for families, a number of whom reported the travel to regular clinic appointments as extremely challenging for these young people and their families.

As part of the response to ongoing Consultant vacancy in Kerry CAMHS, and in line with recommendation 18 of the Maskey report, a very successful telemedicine clinic was established in January 2022.

All children and families are given a choice as to whether they are happy to participate in a telemedicine clinic and are asked prior to the appointments to give their consent. The team have a standardised



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operating policy in place to ensure that the tele medicine clinics operate in a clinically safe and effective manner. A professionally trained member of the CAMHS team is present in the room at the team base in Kerry with the child and parents throughout the consultation and feedback to date from young people and their parents has been positive.

The service is now established for 6 months and the team plan to evaluate the use of telemedicine in the coming weeks.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Mc Cusker'.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services