

12th July 2022

Deputy Holly Cairns
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 34580/22

“To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 555 and 556 of 5th October 2021, the number of service users treated and assessed by the CHO4 adult eating disorders mental health team to date by discipline; the number of service users currently attending the team for treatment; the average duration of treatment; the management structure for the team; and if he will make a statement on the matter..”

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.

Cork Kerry Mental Health Services received PFG funding to develop an Adult Eating Disorder team in Cork and Kerry in 2021. Recruitment for these posts was initiated earlier this year and a number of campaigns are underway at this point to recruit the staffing required for this specialist team. A four-year implementation plan has been approved to allow for phased recruitment and training. The availability of skilled staff is a significant issue in mental health services where demand outstrips supply in both the national and international contexts.

By way of update in relation to staffing within the team, I have been advised a Psychiatrist with special interest in Eating Disorders had accepted the post and was due to commence in May 2022 but advised in April that they would now not be taking up post. We have advertised the permanent post with Public Appointments Service and the locum post is also advertised in BMJ and Lancet without any applicants. We have also approached recruitment agencies and have yielded no candidates to date. We are continuing with efforts to recruit the clinical lead for the adult eating disorder team.

Until a consultant lead is recruited for the eating disorder team other members of the multidisciplinary team who have been recruited to date have been reassigned and some are operating in a model similar to a “hub and spoke” team model. For example the Psychologists and NCHD are working within various general adult teams where they are prioritising eating disorder patients and offering therapeutic interventions with these patients. Once the Consultant post is filled and taking into account that this is a new team, there will be a short period of time required for this team to prepare Standardised Operational Procedures etc. and for the new team to operate safely and start accepting referrals. They will be moving to a dedicated newly developed space on the ground floor of Fastnet House, Model Farm Road, Cork.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind Regards,



Mr Kevin Morrison
A/Head of Service
Mental Health Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare