



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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Deputy Mark Ward.  
Dail Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

16<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**PQ Number: 12520/22**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the status and cost of developing care pathways for persons specialist eating disorder issues; 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.

In January 2018, the HSE published a National Model of Care for Eating Disorders (MOC) in partnership with College of Psychiatrists' of Ireland and Bodywhys. In the absence of a pre-existing dedicated eating disorder infrastructure or strategy, this Model of Care document has been developed in order to guide the provision of high quality, accessible and value for money eating disorder services in Ireland. Key recommendations include the development of a national network of dedicated eating disorder teams embedded within the mental health service, a stepped model of outpatient, day patient and inpatient care provision based on clinical need, and the development of a skilled, trained workforce. In the context of the significant physical morbidity associated with eating disorders, this Model of Care also recommends a strong integration between primary care, mental health services and medical teams, including the bridging of the acute hospital and mental health service divide through mutual clinical commitments and shared pathways.

Most people can and do recover from eating disorders if they receive effective, evidence-based treatment from ED trained staff. While a small number of people benefit from more intensive treatment through day programmes or inpatient care, the most effective treatment setting is in the community. The MOC has a core focus on developing regional community based specialist eating disorder services provided by skilled multidisciplinary teams.

The NCPED aims to establish an ED network (8 adult teams and 8 CAMHS teams) in accordance with the agreed Model of Care 2018. There are currently 3 eating disorders (ED) specialist teams in operation, 2 CAMHS teams serving Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CHO4) and Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow (CHO7) and an adult team in Community Healthcare East (CHO6). These multidisciplinary teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community and are the foundations of delivering quality eating disorder care across the stepped model of care. CAMHS



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ED team staffing is recommended at WTE 14.4 per [500,000-600,000.Adult](#) ED Team staffing is recommended at WTE 13.4 per 500,000-600,000. Estimated costs for staff of a full MDT team is 1.2M – this varies as salaries change year on year.

Since 2016 €7.9 million has been made available for Eating Disorder posts through programme for government funding. Of that, €3.3 million has been invested to date in Eating Disorder Specialist Posts. This has resulted in the set-up of the 3 existing Eating Disorder teams and to progress recruitment for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of teams in CHO4 (adult), CHO9 (adult) and CHO2 (CAMHS). This 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of teams are in advanced stages of recruitment and set up to establish a high quality service. The balance of €4.8 million remains available for continued investment in specialist Eating Disorder posts including a 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of specialist community team development in 2022 CHO1 adult, CHO5 adult and CHO9 CAMHS.

The NCPED recommends delivering 3 eating disorder teams per year to ensure sustainable phased recruitment and training. The HSE provides funding on a yearly basis as per the estimates process. However, the availability of skilled staff is a significant issue in mental health services where demand outstrips supply in both the national and international contexts. The HSE is working closely with NDTP, National Doctors Training and planning, to take measures to ensure trained clinicians in Eating Disorders are available to take up posts.

For all CHOs where funding has been allocated, The NCPED is continuing to work closely to support recruitment, set up clinical pathways and provide education and training to clinicians. All sites are committed to filling the posts and creating these community eating disorder teams. It is anticipated that by the end of 2022, the Eating Disorder Network of community teams will have significantly expanded.

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

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**Dr Amir Niazi**  
**National Clinical Advisor & Group Lead for Mental Health**  
**Clinical Design and Innovation**  
**Health Service Executive**