



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 R: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Head of Operations,
Mental Health Service, St Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 Email: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Deputy Mark Ward.
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

29th March 2022

PQ Number: 12916/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide a detailed plan for increasing adult eating disorder beds; the locations they will be based; when they will be expected to be in place; 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.

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. An additional 3 funded teams in 2021 are in recruitment and will come on stream this year. The NCPED recommends delivering 3 eating disorder teams per year to ensure sustainable phased recruitment and training.

Adult community eating disorder teams will begin by providing outpatient care then progress to developing Intensive treatment programmes (day patient care) and ultimately provide specialist inpatient care. Although there is good evidence that inpatient psychiatric care is not required for most people with eating disorders, it is recognised that a small number of people, mainly with restrictive eating disorders will require access to inpatient care for structured refeeding and/or stabilisation. Inpatient psychiatric admission will be indicated when treatment in outpatient and day patient levels of care has been unsuccessful. It will be indicated for those who most need it and with a greater severity of illness (those at severely low weight, comorbidity that requires inpatient psychiatric treatment and those who require 24 hours structured refeeding and stabilisation). For safe integrated care the MOC recommends that adult inpatient psychiatric beds are co-located within acute hospitals. The inpatient psychiatric beds will be developed to provide nutritional rehabilitation through nasogastric feeding.

The Adult Eating Disorder team in CHO 6 is currently based at St Vincent's University Hospital. The community base will be within the Mount Carmel Community Hospital campus and will deliver outpatient and day patient services. The 3 specialist inpatient beds currently operational and linked with the adult eating disorder team (for the catchment area of CHO 6) will remain within St Vincent's University Hospital acute psychiatric unit. Adults who have an eating disorder diagnosis and require inpatient care can be referred to any of the HSE's acute inpatient mental health-approved centres' around the country. Adults presenting with an eating disorder can also be treated in an acute hospital if their physical health needs require this.

Under National Mental Health Policy Documents and in line with MOC the number of adult eating beds will increase, including an additional 3 beds in St. Vincent's University Hospital, 5 beds in North Dublin, 5 beds in Galway and 5 beds in Cork. Timeframes for new beds will have to be identified. These beds will be linked to eating disorder hubs and provision will be in line with Sharing the Vision recommendations. Currently a sub group under NIMC is reviewing bed capacity, including eating disorders bed provision.

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

Yours sincerely,



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