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5th April 2022

Deputy Mark Ward,
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 14303/22: To ask the Minister for Health in relation to the €200 million provided to the HSE to address waiting lists and waiting times for acute and community services if progress has been made for persons accessing mental health services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Ward,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which the Minister for Health has referred to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

The 2022 Waiting List Action Plan was published by the Minister on 25 February 2022, which allocates €200m to the HSE and €150m to the NTPF and details 45 actions to reduce and reform waiting lists.

Funding has also been allocated to initiatives that will reduce specific community care waiting lists. These initiatives are seeking to maximise impact and further develop targeted proposals for 2022. At this time, a number of initiatives have been approved by the HSE in the following areas and are at varying stages of implementation with further proposals under consideration including in children's disability services:

1. Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC)
2. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
3. Primary Care Child Psychology
4. Orthodontics

As outlined above, some initiatives are targeted in the area of mental health service. Progress to date (as at the end of February) has seen an additional 650 children and young people removed from the waiting list for Primary Care Child Psychology as a result of this initiative.

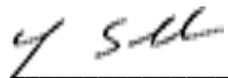
In addition to allocating in-year funding to support increased activity in 2022 in the community, the 2022 Waiting List Action Plan includes a number of key actions focused on addressing community care access and waiting lists, including:

- Design and implement the Integrated Community Case Management System (ICCMS) as a foundational case management system which will also support communication between healthcare providers and effective management, planning and delivery of services;
- Participate in the modernised scheduled care pathway programme of work related to current acute waiting lists and support the feasibility and implementation planning of pathway proposals to deliver more services in the community in line with the Sláintecare vision;
- Develop a process to complete a capacity and demand analysis across community waiting lists;
- To undertake an options appraisal of wider reforms, in line with the Sláintecare vision which may provide additional measures to reduce community waiting lists;
- Define and develop an implementation plan for agreement of appropriate maximum wait-time targets for community services in scope - the scope of which is to be agreed.

These actions are key foundational steps to enabling longer term fundamental reform, enhancing integration between acute and community services and improving access to care in the community, including mental health services.

I trust the above information is of assistance to you, however, should you require any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Yvonne Goff
National Director,
Change & Innovation