

31st May, 2022

Deputy Neasa Hourigan,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 24690/22

“To ask the Minister for Health his views on the provision of 42 24-hour staffed residential mental health placements along with a rehabilitation mental health team in the north Cork HSE catchment area while east Cork, with a similar population size, is due under current HSE plans to have all or most of its 24-hour staffed placements removed while continuing to lack a rehabilitation mental health team; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

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.

The HSE Corporate Plan defines specific actions that will be taken to build primary and community services to help care for people at home, especially older people and people with chronic conditions. It also supports the provision of integrated care at a local level where possible, including the expansion of community diagnostics. The plan aims to progress the implementation of the new mental health policy ‘Sharing the Vision’ by reducing the numbers in institutional type settings and providing more appropriate community-based accommodation. As outlined in A Vision for Change Section 8.5 - Recovery and Rehabilitation mental health services for severe and enduring mental illness:

“Individuals with severe and enduring mental illness are recognised as an especially vulnerable group of adults, in need of intensive treatment and care in order for the individual to regain their selfhood and their place in society. Mental health services for this group should be provided by multidisciplinary CMHTs, with one team per 100,000 population. These teams should provide intensive treatment and rehabilitation, and should have a number of members delivering assertive outreach care. In-patient beds and other parts of mental health services in the catchment area should be accessed during acute episodes if required”.

Also as referenced by Dr Sinead O’Brien in her evidence to the Oireachtas Committee from Section 12.10 in Vision for Change – Accommodation needs of people with severe mental health illness:

“The need for 24-hour-staffed residences will decrease once the cohort of former long stay hospital service users has been catered for. In the long term, there will a

requirement of approximately 30 places in large urban areas, with fewer required in areas with low deprivation levels. Some may be designated to provide social respite care”.

Furthermore, the Model of Care for People with Severe and Enduring Mental Illness and Complex Needs was launched by the HSE in September 2019. It outlines a care pathway designed to meet the needs of people with severe and enduring mental illness and complex needs. It describes a rehabilitation care pathway that helps individuals who have had prolonged episodes of severe and enduring mental illness to experience recovery and regain the skills and confidence required to live an independent life. Specifically the Model of Care outlines the following:

“In many mental health services, community residences are organised around a ‘High Support Hostel’ model of care. Potentially, these residences can become mini-institutions. To prevent this, services will develop alternative Community Rehabilitation Residences which, although continuing to provide intensive MDT support, are primarily geared towards active rehabilitation and recovery”.

In line with this policy, it is the intention of the HSE to implement, as part of the overall Model of Care in Midleton, the development of community accommodation supporting 10 residents. This will be done following an options appraisal of the Owenacurra site and any other appropriate sites in the vicinity, e.g Midleton Community Hospital complex, for the purpose of developing this new accommodation. This facility would be supported by a Rehabilitation team currently being established in Mental Health Services, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare with a focus on assisting those with Mental Health needs including those with enduring Mental illness to achieve their full potential. The model for this service would be rehabilitation focussed also, with healthcare professional staff supporting the residents.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind Regards,



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