



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte  
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,  
Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.  
R: [PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie](mailto:PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie)

Head of Operations, Mental Health Service  
St Loman's Hospital,  
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.  
Email: [PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie](mailto:PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie)

Deputy Mark Ward.  
Dail Eireann,  
Dublin 2.

09<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**PQ Number: 26681/22**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost to fully implement the model of care for Mental Health Services for older people; and if he will make a statement on the matter - Mark Ward**

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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.

The population of older people (age 65 and over) in Ireland is projected to increase more than 3 fold between 2006 and 2046 (i.e. from 460,000 to 1.4 million). Mental health problems are very common in this age group with 10% suffering from clinically significant depressive symptoms, 5% with dementia over the age of 65 and a far higher prevalence in those over 80 years. Other disorders are equally common with anxiety present in 13%, either alone or in association with depression, alcohol misuse in up to 4% and schizophrenia in 1%.

Mental health problems are associated with increased morbidity and mortality, either as a result of the direct effects of mental illness (e.g. suicide) or as a consequence of complicating physical illness. This underscores the necessity for developing specialist mental health services for older people to focus on the diagnosis and treatment of the full spectrum of mental illness for this age group.

The Model of Care for Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People, which concerns itself with the provision of specialist mental health services for older people and how they interact with and complement general medical services for older people in primary and secondary care makes recommendations in relation to the service and its staffing (with recommendations on staffing of specialist community teams and Psychiatry of Old Age Liaison Services for Acute Hospital), facilities, training, service interfaces, and governance.

Pending the resourcing of dedicated Programme Management support to implement the Model of Care, work is ongoing by the National Clinical Lead to implement recommendations number 5 and 6 from the Model of Care – development of Community Mental Health Teams to meet the recommendations from A Vision for Change implementation plan, and the development of Psychiatry

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of Old Age Liaison Service in line with the staffing requirements outlined. A dedicated annual budget of €1.13m has been identified to support the roll-out of a number of pilot demonstration sites associated with recommendations 5 and 6.

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

Yours sincerely,



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