



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
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Deputy Carol Nolan.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

22nd September 2022

PQ Number: 43142/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the steps his Department is taking to urgently assess the number of acute inpatient psychiatric beds required to ensure timely admission of patients presenting with acute psychiatric illness; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Carol Nolan

Dear Deputy Nolan,

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.

From a short-term perspective, there is no wait time for admission to an acute inpatient psychiatric bed. All patients/service users who present are assessed by the Mental Health Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and if they require an urgent admission based on clinical need, this is provided. If an inpatient unit has reached maximum capacity and a patient/service user requires admission, a vacant bed is sought in other inpatient units within the relevant CHO area. If no beds are available, then a bed is sought in other units in other CHO areas. If a patient/service user has attended the Emergency Department then the patient/service user remains in the ED with regular psychiatric review and 1:1 specialising depending on the level of risk.

In the medium to long-term, National Mental Health have invested in the continued development of Mental Health Services which has been aimed at:

- Modernising Mental Health Services that historically were centred on institutional care
- Promoting positive mental health at all levels of society, intervening early when problems develop, and providing accessible, comprehensive and community-based Mental Health Services for those who need them



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From a longer-term perspective Recommendation 46 of *Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone* (2020) recommended the establishment of An Expert Group to examine Acute Inpatient (Approved Centre) bed provision in the Republic of Ireland. In line with this, the National Implementation Monitoring Committee (NIMC) approved the establishment of the Acute Bed Capacity Specialist Group. The group was set up to examine Acute Inpatient (Approved Centre) bed provision, (including PICU's) and to make recommendations on capacity reflective of emerging models of care, existing bed resources and future demographic changes, with such recommendation's being aligned with Slaintecare.

The group held its first meeting in August 2021 and has met on a number of occasions, with Sub-Groups also put in place, since its establishment. The scale of the work is quite considerable given that the number of acute beds required is very much dependent on the model of care for Mental Health and availability of community based services which divert service users away from inpatient facilities.

Due to some delays experienced and a changeover of key personnel involved, the Specialist Group reconvened on 14th September 2022 to review and discuss the draft report. It is expected that this report will be finalised by end of Q4 2022.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2e46f-sharing-the-vision-a-mental-health-policy-for-everyone/>

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services