



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

Head of Operations, Mental Health Service
St Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.
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Deputy Pa Daly,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

10th October 2022

PQ Number: 46806/22

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to some CAMHS patients being seen by consultant psychiatrists via video-link or tele-clinic without prior notice that this would be the format of the consultation, or without being advised that they have the right to refuse this format; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Pa Daly

Dear Deputy Daly,

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.

Prior to the Covid 19 pandemic, the HSE were exploring options in relation to telemedicine, in response to a European wide shortage of CAMHS Consultants, and a number of longstanding Consultant vacancies in CAMHS teams across the country. During the pandemic, in line with international best practice, the use of telemedicine was rolled out to both CAMHS and Adult Community Mental Health teams.

The MHID CAMHS team in Cork introduced telemedicine in 2019 to reduce the need for children with mental health and intellectual disability to travel to clinics, and allow for assessment in their own home, or in the school they attend. This was a very welcome development for families, a number of whom reported the travel to regular clinic appointments as extremely challenging for these young people and their families.

As part of the response to an ongoing Consultant vacancy in Kerry CAMHS and in line with recommendation 18 of the Report on the Look Back Review of CAMHS Area A, otherwise referred to as the Maskey Report (January, 2022) <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/south-kerry-camhs-review/report-on-the-look-back-review-into-camhs-area-a.pdf>, this telemedicine clinic approach was also extended to the North Kerry CAMHS Team on 4th April, 2022.



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All children and families are given a choice as to whether they are happy to participate in a telemedicine clinic and are asked prior to the appointments to give their consent. If they do not wish to have a consultation by means of tele-clinic they are offered a face to face consultation with another Consultant as soon as this can be arranged. The team have a standardised operating policy in place to ensure that the tele medicine clinics operate in a clinically safe and effective manner. A clinically trained member of the CAMHS team is present in the room at the team base in Kerry with the child and parents throughout the consultation and feedback to date from young people and their parents has been positive.

The service is now established for 9 months and the team plan to evaluate the use of telemedicine in the coming weeks. I have attached an information letter and consent form which are given to all families involved in telemedicine in Kerry CAMHS which explains the above in further detail.

I trust this information is of assistance

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Mc Cusker', written in a cursive style.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services



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