



Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.
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Deputy Pa Daly.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

09th May 2023

PQ Number: 17948/23

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the current status of the various reviews and audits with regards to all CAMHS services. -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.

CAMHS provide specialist mental health services to those aged up to 18 years, who have reached the threshold for a diagnosis of moderate to severe mental health disorder that require the input of multi-disciplinary mental health teams.

Seven audits were conducted in relation to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. These were as follows:

- (3) The HSE conducted three audits following the publication of the Maskey report (prescribing practice, CAMHS Operational Guidelines, qualitative research of experiences)
 - (1) Mental Health Commission review of CAMHS provision
 - (1) Clinical review of all open cases not seen for six months – HSE audit in response to the MHC report
 - (1) Physical health monitoring of patients on neuroleptic medication across all 75 teams – HSE audit in response to the MHC report
 - (1) College of Psychiatry of Ireland completed their own audit report on the functioning of CAMHS Teams

Please see below update in relation to current audits and reviews in CAMHS:

i) Audit of CAMHS prescribing practice

Independently chaired by Dr Collette Halpin, an expert team was established to conduct a review of prescribing practice in CAMHS. Membership of the expert group also included Dr Imelda Whyte, nominated by the College of Psychiatry, and Dr Suzanne McCarthy, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharmacy



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Practice, UCC. The expert team was administratively supported by the HSEs National Centre for Clinical Audit and Community Operations. Following a successful pilot, and supported by webinars, all CAMHS have undertaken a self-audit of a random selection of case files where the child or young person had been prescribed medication. There has been a 100% response rate from CAMHS teams in provision of requested information. As this was a self-audit, teams have had an opportunity to address and notify of any arising concerns, while the national analysis and expert report was being finalised. The national audit commenced in July 2022 and publication is expected by the end of Q2 2023.

(ii) An audit of compliance with the CAMHS Operational Guideline (2019)

An audit of compliance with the CAMHS Operational Guideline (2019) has commenced to include the design of a bespoke audit framework, a gap analysis of adherence to the COG, any regional or other factors impacting same, and conclusions on the requirement for targeted service improvement. The successful provider commenced work in August 2022 and a pilot of the audit framework has been completed. The audit was then rolled out to all community CAMHS teams and the four regional inpatient units nationally. The data is currently being analysed and it is expected that a report giving detailed analysis and recommendations will be completed by Q2 2023.

(iii) UCC Qualitative Research

UCC has been engaged as an academic partner to conduct qualitative research into CAMHS experiences. This research will involve a qualitative study of CAMHS experiences in order to determine the lived experience of service users, families and carers, staff, referrers and other key stakeholders interacting with the CAMHS service. The research methodology for this audit strand required ethical approval. The research has now commenced. It is expected the research will be completed by Q3, 2023.

HSE Audit in response to the Mental Health Commission Report

In February 2022, the Inspector of Mental Health Services announced the decision to carry out a review of the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in accordance with her powers under the 2001 Mental Health Act. The HSE has engaged fully in the review process, which will contribute to our ongoing work to improve services, in collaboration with staff, as well as children, young people and families who require the support of CAMHS.

Following from findings in the five reviewed CHO areas, the MHC made the following recommendation

- *'An immediate clinical review of all open cases in all CAMHS Teams, using the NICE Guidelines and the CAMHS Operational Guideline. Particular focus should be given to identifying and assessing open cases of children who have been lost to follow-up, and physical health monitoring of those on medication'.*

The HSE has commenced a review of open cases in each CHO Area as recommended by the MHC. This review of open cases will provide assurance that these children and young people are receiving



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appropriate care, reflective of their current and future needs. The review will include a focus on physical health monitoring of those who are on medication on the basis of relevant guidelines. It is anticipated that this will be complete by the end of May 2023.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sarah Hennessy', written in black ink.

Sarah Hennessy
General Manager
National Mental Health Services