Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
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Deputy Neasa Hourigan.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

11th May 2023

PQ Number: 19486/23
PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he will outline data gathering undertaken from 2020-2023 inclusive on levels of mental health difficulties amongst older cohorts by either the HSE or his Department; the data gathering that is planned for 2023-2024; and if he will make data on this issue publicly available. -Neasa Hourigan

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Mental health problems amongst older people are associated with increased morbidity and mortality, either as a result of the direct effects of mental illness or as a consequence of complicating physical illness. The majority of older people with mental health issues are managed by a broad range of disciplines in the community with referral to specialist, secondary mental health services only if clinically necessary. The integration of care, including community services, is described in the Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (HSE, 2018).

The HSE's Performance Reports provide an overall analysis of key performance data from Acute Hospitals, Mental Health, Older Person Services, Disability Services, Primary Care, Palliative Care, Social Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing as well as Finance and HR. The activity data reported is based on Performance Activity and Key Performance Indicators outlined in the National Service Plan. Within Mental Health, as in other services, performance is managed through the data collected by the HSE Business Information Unit. National Mental Health services routinely collect activity data across Psychiatry of Later Life (POLL) services on a monthly basis. Activity is defined as follows:

- Referrals
- New Cases Seen/DNA
- Cases Discharged/Closed
- Open Active Cases
- Total Cases Seen/DNA/CNA

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Please be advised that the data/information in relation to POLL services from 2020 is made publically available and can be found by consulting with the HSE's Performance Reports which can be found here:

https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/performancereports/

Please note: the Q4 report for 2022 is yet to be published. Q1 report for 2023 is still being finalised and has not been published on the HSE website

Acute inpatient data is collected by the Health Research Board (HRB). The National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting System (NPIRS) gathers data on patient admissions and discharges from psychiatric hospitals and units throughout Ireland, which are on the Register of Approved Centres under the Mental Health Act 2001. The data collected have been reported in the Activities of Irish Psychiatric Services since 1965 and continue to play a central role in the planning of service delivery. These findings inform national policy, health service management, clinical practice, and international academic research in the area of mental health. According to analysis conducted by the HRB, depressive disorders were the main primary and secondary diagnoses for admissions among people aged 65 years and older for each of the years 2020 to 2021 reported to NPIRS. There was a higher proportion (58%) of admissions among women relative to men. There was a 6% increase in admissions among people aged 65 years and older from 2,593 in 2020 to 2,738 in 2021. The dataset pertaining to admissions for 2022 is not closed, therefore this information is not available.

** Please note the information above has been provided by the HRB. The NPIRS should be acknowledged in any publication where NPIRS data is used. Further information on HRB data analysis and various publications can be found here: https://www.hrb.ie/

Any further queries or requests for information should be directed to the HRB directly.

Integrated Community Case Management System (ICCMS)
Currently, there is no uniformed ICT system across HSE Community Services and data is collected manually therefore detailed levels of acuity etc. are not collected. The HSE is in the process of introducing an Integrated Community Case Management System (ICCMS) which will allow this type of data be routinely collected electronically in the future.

What is the ICCMS?
The ICCMS is expected to be the core Community Health ICT system, which will support the patient journey through our services. The programme is in the early stages, with permission to tender from the Digital Government Oversight Unit received in June 2022. This permission allows the project team to develop granular scope and tender documentation. Once complete, the team will issue the tender and work through the procurement process.

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What will the Integrated Community Case Management System do?
The ICCMS will:

- Be capable of recording and storing Patient/Service User Demographics.
- Support Engagement and Communication with patients/service users and within the Service.
- Support the Clinical Engagement with patients/service users and within the Service.
- Provide functionality to support alerts and notifications.
- Include a Reporting and Analytics module

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

_____
Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services