



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,
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Deputy Duncan Smith.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

02nd February 2023

PQ Number: 1787/23

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the facilities and specialists that a GP can refer a person to by each CHO, in cases in which the person believes they have ADHD and wish to be diagnosed and appropriately treated by a psychiatrist and get access to medication; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Duncan Smith

Dear Deputy Smith,

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.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Once viewed as a childhood disorder, it is now widely accepted that ADHD persists into adulthood in a proportion of individuals, resulting in functional impairments such as higher rates of academic failure, impaired social functioning, difficulty with emotional regulation, and increased substance misuse (Willcutt et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2016; Beheshti et al., 2020, Groenman et al., 2017; Sundquist et al., 2015).

As Mental Health services are specialist, secondary care services a GP referral is required to access those services. The ADHD in Adults National Clinical Programme's Model of Care was launched on the 14th January, 2021. When fully implemented, 11 Adult ADHD Clinics will be established to provide assessment and multi-modal treatment in the CHOs in line with the Model of Care.

Treatment of adults with ADHD should be multimodal (Kolar 2008; Knouse 2008; Murphy 2005; Weiss 2008) i.e. a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial interventions the purposes of which are to reduce core symptoms of ADHD (inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity and also mood lability) whilst teaching the individual skills and strategies to overcome functional impairments.



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The specific aims of the Clinical Programme are:

1. To provide for the assessment of adults with symptoms suggestive of ADHD by trained and skilled staff.
2. To provide multi-modal treatment involving a combination of pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions.
3. To ensure that young people attending CAMHS for ADHD who continue to have significant symptoms of ADHD and/or co-morbid mental illness who require treatment can be transferred to adult mental health services. That this transfer is planned in advance to ensure it occurs smoothly.
4. That all of the above is delivered through a clearly defined and integrated clinical pathway.

Up until 2022 the Department of Health (DOH) provided funding to the National Clinical Programme for 3 of the 11 Adult ADHD NCP Sites (2.5 teams), these are now operational and cover the following areas:

- CHO1: Adult ADHD team for Sligo/Leitrim/Donegal
- CHO3: Adult ADHD team for Limerick/Clare/North Tipperary
- CHO6: Adult ADHD team covering Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East and Wicklow (North, South and East).

These teams are now operational and seeing adults from their area.

Through the HSE's 2022 estimates process a further 3.5 new teams have been funded and are currently in development. Information will be updated as soon as staff have been recruited and services have been set up and available to see patients. This will bring the number of specialist Adult ADHD teams up to 50% national coverage. Additional funding will be required for full national coverage for specific Adult ADHD teams.

Until local Adult ADHD Clinics are fully established in line with the Model of Care, all Adult Mental Health Teams (AMHTs) should continue to assess and treat people referred with ADHD who are known to have high rates of co-morbid mental health disorders, particularly anxiety and depression. Local AMHTs should respond to referrals from adults with possible ADHD, including patients who have transitioned from CAMHS, in the same way as they do for other mental disorders. These services have been advised to refer to NICE guidelines 2018, 2019 on the assessment and management of children, adolescents and adults with ADHD for guidance.

Information on the HSE Mental Health Services can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/>



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The HSE's ADHD in Adults webpage including the National Model of Care can be accessed here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/mental-health/adhd/>

Other support services and useful information can be viewed on the following webpages:

<https://adhdireland.ie/for-adults/>

<https://adhdfoundation.org.uk>

<http://www.addiss.co.uk/about.html>

<https://additudemag.com>

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Mc Cusker'.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services