

19th May 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

I was asked to comment on a Parliamentary Question on operational standards and processing of complaints at the National Gender Service.

The National Gender Service operates within an established Clinical Governance structure. The National Gender Governance Committee sits quarterly and reports to the supervisory Clinical Governance Committees in St Columcille's Hospital in Loughlinstown, where all clinical activity occurs, and St John of God Community Services, through which approximately 50% of staff are employed.

Service User feedback and complaints are reviewed at every National Gender Service Clinical Governance Committee meeting. A dedicated National Gender Service Complaints Policy is in place, and compliance with policy is reviewed at our Governance meetings.

It has been noted over the last 12 months by the Committee that there were some processing issues in some complaints.

The Complaints Office at St Columcille's Hospital retired in recent months and to date has not been replaced. Recruitment is ongoing to re-staff the Complaints Officer position. Interim arrangements for management of complaints have been put in place by Ireland East Hospital Group pending recruitment.

There have been processing issues noted by the National Gender Service Clinical Governance Committee with respect to those processed by the Complaints Officer at St John of God Community Services. The concerns were reported to the Regional Director of St John of God Community Services. An investigation is ongoing to determine if there were any compliance issues.

Anyone concerned about the processing of their complaint should contact the relevant Complaints Officer directly. If the response is unsatisfactory, then they should be directed to the Ombudsman.

I trust the above is useful in answering this query.

Yours Sincerely,



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