



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta  
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin, Baile Phámar,  
Baile Átha Cliath 20, D20 HK69

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Deputy Ivana Bacik.  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

11<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**PQ Number: 38889/23**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health his plans to provide dedicated mental health supports for the 4.75% of persons in Ireland with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder.- Ivana Bacik**

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Dear Deputy Bacik,

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.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a group of disorders caused by prenatal alcohol exposure and are associated with a range of lifelong physical, mental, educational, social, and behavioural difficulties. Alcohol has an adverse effect on the developing brain, and on body organs. There is no safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy.

There are no dedicated mental health supports for adults in Ireland diagnosed with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Disability, primary care, paediatric services and mental health, are all involved in the provision of services for children and adults with FASD in Ireland.

Patients with FASD can have mental health issues as any other person in the community. Patients with FASD who present with moderate to severe mental health issues are referred to their local community mental health teams for assessment and treatment and will be managed mainly by General Adult Psychiatrists

The HSE has developed a position paper on the prevention of FASD which outlines 14 key actions for the HSE to be achieved within the next 5 years. This includes the development of a model of care for FASD. This body of work is been led by HSE Health and Wellbeing Strategy & Research.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/alcohol-programme/hseposition-on-prevention-of-fasd.pdf>



I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Mc Cusker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

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**Tony Mc Cusker**  
**General Manager**  
**National Mental Health Services**