



Deputy Holly Cairns,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Date: 14.03.2024

**PQ Number: 7734/24**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if his Department would conduct research to gain an accurate picture of how many people are suffering with eating disorders in Ireland and what resources are actually needed; and if a needs assessment for bed capacity will be carried out. -Holly Cairns**

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Dear Deputy Cairns,

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.

In January 2018, the HSE published a National Model of Care for Eating Disorders (MOC) in partnership with College of Psychiatrists' of Ireland and Bodywhys. In the absence of a pre-existing dedicated eating disorder infrastructure or strategy, this Model of Care document has been developed in order to guide the provision of high quality, accessible and value for money eating disorder services in Ireland. Key recommendations include:

- The development of a national network of dedicated eating disorder teams embedded within the mental health service
- A stepped model of outpatient, day patient and inpatient care provision based on clinical need
- The development of a skilled, trained workforce

The NCPED aims to establish an ED network (8 adult teams and 8 CAMHS teams) in accordance with the agreed Model of Care 2018. These consultant led multidisciplinary teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community and are the foundations of delivering quality eating disorder care across the stepped model of care. Today (March 2023) there are 11 NCPED teams at various stages of development across the HSE 5 CAMHS and 6 Adult teams.

Between 2016 and 2022 over €8M has been invested in ED teams. 100 WTE's have been funded to establish Eating Disorders teams and over 80WTE's were filled on 11th November 2023 before a pause on recruitment was commenced within the HSE.

The Model of Care published in 2018 is in need of review. This review will include a review of the resources required based on population increase and demand for service over the past 5 years. A funding stream and provider have to be identified this complete this significant body of work.

Adults who have an eating disorder diagnosis and require inpatient care can be referred to any of the HSE's acute inpatient mental health-approved centers around the country. CHO6 St. Vincent's University Hospital has 3 specialist inpatient beds. Additional need for inpatient beds for eating disorders has been reported in A Vision for Change and endorsed by NCP Model of Care. This need was also reported in the recent HSE Mental Health Bed Capacity Report. Adults presenting with an eating disorder can also be treated in an acute hospital if their physical health needs require this.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,



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Dr Amir Niazi  
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Clinical Design and Innovation  
Health Service Executive