



Oifig an Chomhairleora Chliniciúil
Náisiúnta agus Ceannaire Grúpa do
Mheabhairshláinte

HSE, Ospidéal an Dr Stevens, Baile Átha
Cliaith 8, DO8 W2A8

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Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Date: 23rd April 2024

PQ Number: 1335/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health for an update on the National Clinical Programme funding for self-harm and suicide related Ideation; the level of new funding for self-harm and suicide related ideation; and when the National Clinical Programme will be operating at full capacity. -Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

Published in 2016, the National Clinical Programme for the Assessment and Management of Patients who present to the Emergency Department aims to ensure that any person who present to the ED following self-harm or with suicidal ideation will receive a prompt bio-psycho-social assessment. Delivered by specialist mental health nurses, this programme provides support and advice on suicide prevention to next of kin, links the patient with the next appropriate care, and ensures both the patient and their GP will receive a written plan of care. It commenced in a number of sites from 2014.

An updated Model of Care National Clinical Programme for Self Harm and Suicide related Ideation provides a framework to improve services for all who self-harm or present with suicide-related ideation, regardless of where they present. Launched by Minister Butler in February 2022 it outlines in detail the response for people who present to the emergency department including services for children and adolescents with Self-harm and Suicide Related Ideation. The Model of Care ensures that those presenting to the ED receives a compassionate, empathic, validating response, and a therapeutic assessment and intervention from a suitably trained mental health professional. Every effort is made to ensure that a family member or supportive adult is involved in assessment and safety planning, and that they are followed up and linked to appropriate next care.

Since March 2023 the programme has been provided in all 26 Emergency Departments (EDs) with 24-hour service. All presentations to emergency departments are triaged by emergency medicine nurses before onward referral to mental health Clinical Nurse specialist and or Mental Health Liaison team. To date the programme has funded 48.5 CNS posts across 26 EDs

(open 24/7) and in the 3 paediatric EDs in Dublin, 6 CNS based in primary care delivery SCAN service and 0.5 Consultant Psychiatrist- Liaison Mercy Hospital Cork and 0.2 Assistant Director of Nursing National.

While continuing to maintain and further improve the NCP within the acute hospital EDs, the updated NCP SH MOC now extends into the community. An important feature in the Updated MOC is the incorporation of the existing Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse (SCAN) service within the NCP SH. It will be rolled out nationally in the coming years as a collaboration between GPs and specialist mental health professionals, with the aim of delivering a service of similar quality for people who present in suicidal crisis in primary care settings.

Further information and associated documents can be assessed at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/self-harm-suicide-related-ideation/>

The programme is implemented in 26 emergency departments with 24 hour and at CHI Tallaght. To date the programme has funded 48.5 Clinical Nurse Specialists posts. The MOC recommends one CNS post per 200 presentations of self-harm to the ED per annum. Data is reviewed annually and submission made as part of HSE estimates process for additional posts where required.

There are currently 22 SCAN nurse posts at CNS grade across 13 counties. The model of care recommends one SCAN practitioner per 75,000 population. 0.2 Consultant Psychiatrist is required per 300,000 population. Based on a total population of 5.127M this equates to 17 Consultant posts and 68 nurses. At least 17 of the additional nurses posts required should be at Advanced Nurse Practitioner grade (one per 300,000 population) to allow for career progression, supervision at regional level and training and education.

A submission was made as part of 2024 estimates process. At this point we have not confirmation of any additional funding for 2024.

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

Yours sincerely,



Dr Amir Niazi
National Clinical Advisor & Group Lead for Mental Health
Clinical Design and Innovation
Health Service Executive