



Oifig an Chomhairleora Chliniciúil
Náisiúnta agus Ceannaire Grúpa do
Mheabhairshláinte

HSE, Ospidéal an Dr Stevens, Baile Átha
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Deputy Willie O'Dea,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Date: 17.04.2024

PQ Number: 12218/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he is aware that there are almost 200,000 people suffering from illness relating to eating disorders and that there are huge barriers to access proper treatment, as there are no dedicated public specialist units outside the three beds in St. Vincent's Hospital and these are catchment based; when the Eating Disorder Model of Care plan 2018 will be fully implemented; and what arrangements will be put in place for Limerick and the midwest. -Willie O'Dea

Dear Deputy O'Dea,

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, and the development of a skilled, trained workforce. In the context of the significant physical morbidity associated with eating disorders, this Model of Care also recommends a strong integration between primary care, mental health services and medical teams, including the bridging of the acute hospital and mental health service divide through mutual clinical commitments and shared pathways.

Currently the HSE is developing regional community-based specialist eating disorder services, provided by skilled multidisciplinary teams through the National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED). People with eating disorders can also currently receive their outpatient treatment through one of the 112 community AMHS (Adult Mental Health Service) teams and 76 CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) teams, on referral from their GP.

The HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED) aims to establish an eating disorder network (eight adult teams and eight CAMHS teams) in accordance with the agreed

Model of Care (2018). There are currently five of these specialist CAMHS teams and six Adult teams at various stages of development across the HSE - the teams are listed below. These consultant-led teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community and are the foundations of quality eating disorder care.

NCP-ED teams:

CHO 9: CAMHS –North Dublin

CHO 9: Adult team – North Dublin

CHO 2: CAMHS – Galway

CHO1: Adult – Sligo/Leitrim and Cavan/Monaghan

CHO 4: Adult team – Cork

CHO 5: Adult team – Kilkenny (Consultant post in final stages of recruitment)

CHO 7 CAMHS – Linn Dara community ED service – South West Dublin and Kildare

CHO 4 CAMHS – CAREDS – Cork

CHO 6 Adult – Dublin south east and Wicklow, based in South Dublin

CHO 6 CAMHS – Dublin south east and Wicklow, based in South Dublin

The most effective treatment setting is usually in the community, although a small number of people benefit from more intensive treatment through day programmes or inpatient care. Children and adolescents with an eating disorder diagnosis who require inpatient treatment can be referred to one of the CAMHS in-patient approved centres by their treating CAMHS consultant. Referrals are reviewed individually to determine the likely clinical benefits of admission as well as possible other treatment alternatives. There are four CAMHS in-patient acute units across the HSE; Linn Dara Approved Centre in Dublin, St Joseph’s Approved Centre in Dublin, Eist Linn Approved Centre in Cork and Merlin Park Approved Centre in Galway. Specialist eating disorder beds are available in Merlin Park Galway and Linn Dara. There are currently 20 dedicated eating disorder beds across the four 4 CAMHS units.

As part of the new CHI hospital development, there will be an additional 8 Specialist Eating Disorder beds as part of a new 20 bedded CAMHS inpatient approved centre which will be collocated within the new children’s hospital.

Adults who have an eating disorder diagnosis and require inpatient care can be referred to any of the HSE’s acute in-patient mental health approved centres around the country. Referrals are reviewed individually to determine the likely clinical benefits of admission as well as possible other treatment alternatives. If in-patient treatment is recommended by a clinician, every effort is made to prioritise urgent cases. CHO6 St. Vincent’s University Hospital has 3 specialist inpatient psychiatric beds.

In line with Sharing the Vision (StV), the national mental health policy, an expert group was set up to examine Acute Inpatient bed provision (including the NCPED for adult eating disorder beds) and to make recommendations on capacity, reflective of emerging models of care, existing bed resources and future demographic changes, with such recommendations being aligned with Sláintecare.

A report on acute bed capacity was produced and presented to the National Implementation and Monitoring Committee (NIMC) for StV.

The HSEs Chief Operations Officer has since established a Capital Planning Group for Mental Health Services, which has been tasked with:

- Identifying and prioritising mental health capital requirements over the next five to ten years based on existing and future service need, and on regulatory requirements.
- Completing a medium and long term strategic mental health capital estates plan aligned to the new RHA structures, which supports the implementation of StV.

In developing the estates plan, the Capital Planning Group has formally accepted the report of the Acute Bed Capacity Expert Group and will be guided by it in its deliberations, while also taking into account emerging models of care, clinical programmes, more flexible approaches to service provision and the broad range of service improvement being driven by Sharing the Vision implementation

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. We continue to work with each CHO including Midwest to progress new team developments as new funding comes on stream. We are awaiting confirmation of 2024 funding.

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
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