



Oifig an Cheann Seirbhíse  
Seirbhíse Meabhairshláinte an Mheán  
Iarthair Ospidéal Naomh Iosaef  
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**Re: PQ REF 2857/25: To ask the Minister for Health the additional measures to be implemented to improve the mental health service in County Clare; and if he will make a statement on the matter**

The HSE MW Mental Health Services provided in Clare are as follows:

Mental Health Services in Mid-West Community Healthcare provides the following services:

### **The Acute Psychiatric Unit, – University of Limerick Hospitals Ennis**

The Acute Psychiatric Unit (APU) is a 39 bed Acute Mental Health Unit located in the grounds of the University Hospital Limerick, Ennis. The APU is an approved centre providing care, support and treatment for individual who are experiencing symptoms of mental illness. The unit provides care, support and treatment for individuals who are experiencing symptoms of mental illness or mental distress. The APU is managed as part of the total Mental Health Services for the County however being attached to the General Hospital it offers its residents a wide range of medical and specialist services in addition to mental health services. The Unit is approved by the Royal College of Psychiatrists as a training area for doctors gaining experience in Psychiatry for the C.G.P. course and the M.R.C. Psych. Course. It is approved by NMBI as a training area for Mental Health Student Nurses.

### **Adult Community Mental Health Teams – Clare**

There are four (4) Adult Community Mental Health Teams in Co Clare supporting 1,864 people. These teams consist of multidisciplinary staff and are led by consultant psychiatrists. They have developed in line with 'Sharing the Vision' and the 'National Recovery Framework,' incorporating best practice methodologies to meet the needs of the population.

### **Psychiatry of Later Life Team- Clare**

There is 1 Psychiatry of Later Life (POLL) Team in Clare supporting 333 people. Mental Health Services (MHS) in the Mid West have introduced the role of POLL Liaison Consultant to ULHG. This Consultant working on his own has reduced the waiting time for ULHG to access POLL services from three days to 1.5 days. It is our intention to expand this service when resources allow into a full POLL liaison team. Mental health difficulties in older people are common and associated with significant morbidity and mortality. Typically, they form part of a complex collection of age-related needs, including physical health and social care.

## **Rehabilitation and Recovery Mental Health Services**

There is 1 Rehabilitation and Recovery Team in Clare, supporting 130 people, focusing on rehabilitation and recovery. The Rehabilitation and Recovery Service supports the following Residential Services:

- Cappahard Lodge- Approved Centre, in which there are 13 residents
- Ard Alainn and also includes step down facility provides active rehabilitation and recovery service to 7+ service users in residential settings with supports.
- Teach na Beithe- provides 24 hour supports for 7 residents
- Orchard Grove – (Respond) Ennis- provides 24 hour support for 9 residents
- Orchard Lodge – Kilrush- Move to MHID section (Not rehab and recovery service)
- St. Frances House, Shannon- Provides supports for 5 residents.
- Shannon Heights residence- Provides supports for 3 residents
- Mountain View-provides overnight support to 5 residents.
- Kilrush Day Centre- provides therapeutic activity for people in the surrounding areas assessed on individualised need.
- Ennis Day Centre- provides therapeutic activity for people in the surrounding areas assessed on individualised need.
- Outreach Team- this team has a total of 4 Clinical Nurse Specialists and a staff nurse who provide key working in a number of service users who live in their own homes. The team also has access to multitask attendants in the community.

The above rehabilitation and recovery areas include a combination of different tiers of supports for service user, depending on their assessed needs - including residential and day supports. Each service user has access to a full multidisciplinary team. Each service user has an individualised multidisciplinary care plan and a key nurse. The aim of this rehabilitation and recovery service is to provide multidisciplinary, recovery-focused care and enable people to lead independent, productive lives that are meaningful to them.

## **Intellectual Disability Residential Care Service- Cois Mara**

Cois Mara is a high support residential care centre providing 24 hour care for Residents with Intellectual Disability and Mental Health needs in Spanish Point. Cois Mara currently cares for 8 Residents

Therapeutic services and programmes are delivered in the residence, including weekly are therapy and multi-sensory activities.

## **Peer Support Workers**

We have recently introduced peer support workers who support patients in the community with the aim of offering support to patients with Mental Health Disorders, from peers who have lived experience

Peer support has proven to be a key component in supporting patients with Mental Illness to maintain their recovery, thereby, preventing relapse and reducing crisis presentation

## **Tenancy Support Workers**

We have Tenancy Support workers to assist patients with Mental illness to sustain their tenancies and accommodation, thereby, reducing homelessness and inappropriate social admissions due to lack of safe appropriate accommodation. In Clare, the Tenancy Support Service is integrated within the South Clare Community Mental Health Team

## **Individual Support Programme (IPS)**

The Midwest Mental Health Service has a long established working relationship with Clare Employability. This partnership enables the Mental Health Service to support the employment of an Employment Specialist to work directly with Community Mental Health Teams to support Service-users with employment placement opportunities. Employment Support Specialists to support people with Mental Illness within their employment or to re-enter the work force thereby, empowering patients in their recovery pathway which reduces crisis presentations.

## **Midwest Advancing Recovery in Ireland Education Service (Midwest ARIES)**

Mid-West ARIES is a recovery education service that provides Mental Health service users in the Mid-West Region with an inspirational and inclusive educational programme on recovery and well-being. ARIES is delivered by service users, family members, carers and Mental Health Professionals across the Midwest Mental Health Services, including the Acute Psychiatric Unit (**See Appendix 2**). In December 2024, Midwest ARIES won the HSE Excellence Award in December 2024 for the "*My Perinatal Self Care – Taking Care of Me*" booklet coproduced in partnership with the Perinatal Mental Health Team and service users.

- Twice weekly recovery education workshops in Ennis APU every Tuesday and Wednesday.
- Coffee and Connection once a month on the second Wednesday in Ennis APU.
- Monthly Coffee and Connection in Ennistymon Day Centre.
- New – Recovery education workshops starting in June in Ennis Day Centre.
- Mid West ARIES Website – access to booking events and contains downloadable resources for people using our service – [www.midwestaries.ie](http://www.midwestaries.ie)

## **Dual Diagnosis Clinical Programme – Regional Programme**

The Dual Diagnosis Clinical Programme aims to deliver a specialist integrated Model of Care for people (18-64) with Mental Health Diagnosis and who also experience addiction ( A Dual Diagnosis) in the Midwest Area. The Clinical Programme support individuals with a DD through a multidisciplinary, specialist DD service as recommended in A Vision for Change.

The Dual Diagnosis Clinical Programme commenced the provision of clinical services in Clare in Q1 2025. The DD programme works in partnership with the Community Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Services in Clare to provide integrated, person-centred care for people with a dual diagnosis. The Dual Diagnosis aims to achieve:

- Improved quality of care delivery to all those with Dual Diagnosis
- Improved access to assessment and treatment
- Improved value for money and cost effectiveness.

## **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Clare**

CAMHS provide specialist mental health services to children and young people with moderate to severe mental health needs. CAMHS accepts referrals from GPs and other services providers.

There are 2 CAMHS Teams in Clare – West Clare CAMHS and East Clare CAMHS- the Clare CAMHS Teams are based in the CAMHS Building in the Quin Road Business Park, Ennis. The two CAMHS Teams are multi-disciplinary and led by CAMHS Consultants. The CAMHS Consultants are supported by Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (NCHDs)

In general, all referrals of children and young people to CAMHS are prioritised according to the acuity of the presentation outlined in the referral. Increased numbers of children are currently presenting with acute mental health difficulties, including eating disorders and suicidal ideation. These young people require urgent interventions, and this can have an impact on those already on the waiting list.

Reducing overall waiting times for CAMHS is a key priority for Senior Management in Mid-West Community Healthcare and we are making/have made a number of service investments in CAMHS to help achieve this. These include:

### **CAMHS Hub:**

A new consultant-led multidisciplinary CAMHS Hub was established in the Midwest Area in Q4 2024; the CAMHS Hub is based in Limerick City but will provide out-reach services as required. The CAMHS Hub is an alternative model to providing inpatient care, involving treatment at home or in a day hospital, and is designed to meet needs of existing CAMHS service users with complex needs from throughout the Mid-West.

The CAMHS Hub aims to:

- Provide brief Mental Health Interventions to support CAMHS teams in delivering enhanced responses to children, young people and their families/carers, in times of acute mental health crisis.
- Provide timely access to expert assessment and brief intervention for young people requiring urgent care.
- Provide individual support to young people with high risk acute mental health needs (step up) in collaboration with CAMHS Teams.
- Promote the use of telehealth as a blended approach to provide timely support and care to service users, family and carers.
- Ensure that the CAMHS Hub actively promotes and engages service user, family and carers in all aspects of care and recovery planning.
- Ensure that the CAMHS Hub actively engages in collaboration with CAMHS teams to support all service users accepted onto the CAMHS Hub caseload

In addition, if, while a young person is waiting for an appointment there is a significant deterioration in the mental state of the young person resulting in an acute mental health presentation requiring urgent assessment an urgent appointment maybe sought through the GP. This service is available from Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 5.00pm. The parents/guardians of all young people placed on the waiting list are informed of this in writing and the communication also includes advice on how to contact the service if the presenting difficulties escalate and/or if the mental health of the young person deteriorates.

### **Additional posts for CAMHS**

A number of additional posts are being progressed to strengthen CAMHS Teams across the Mid-West- these additional posts include a Specialist Principal Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapy Manager, Occupational Therapy Manager within the Midwest CAMHS.

A commitment to the development of a number of specialist CAMHS teams are in recruitment phase, *as follows:-*

**CAMHS Eating disorder Team:** Eating disorders have the highest mortality and morbidity within mental health and they pose significant health, social and economic cost to people with eating disorders, to their families and to society. Early intervention, evidence based care, and consistent support make a profound difference to the clinical and personal recovery of people who are affected by eating disorders, including to those in adolescence when so many eating disorders begin. Through its support of the National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders, the HSE has prioritised the provision of high quality, accessible and value for money eating disorder

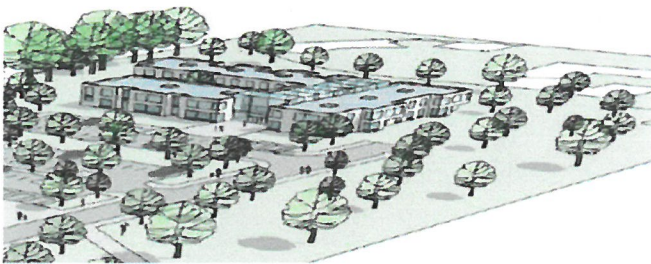
services in Ireland. In the absence of a pre-existing dedicated eating disorder infrastructure or strategy, this Model of Care document has been developed in order to guide the delivery of those aims

**Paediatric liaison Team:** The model of care in paediatric liaison psychiatry is split between emergency, inpatient and outpatient services, with some services being limited to normal office hours and others, e.g. in EDs, offering 24/7 on-call provision. In line with other CAMHS services, the paediatric liaison team should be multidisciplinary. The particular issues that benefit from input from a paediatric liaison psychiatry service include:

- self-harm and children presenting with suicidal ideation
- mental illnesses such as depression, psychosis and post-traumatic stress disorder
- psychosomatic diagnostic problems in children admitted primarily with physical symptoms but which, on assessment, have mainly psychological or social causation
- mood disturbance or psychotic symptoms due to chronic or long-term mental illness or which are treatment induced, e.g. drug-induced psychosis
- evaluation of children and adolescents who are having difficulties adhering to their medical treatment regimen
- evaluation and treatment of infants with feeding disorders and growth deficiency
- evaluation and treatment of children and adolescents with eating disorders and growth deficiency • pre-surgical psychiatric evaluation, e.g. surgery for epilepsy

### **CAMHS Day Hospital and Head Quarters:**

Capital Funding has been secured and work is underway with estates on the development of a CAMHS Headquarters and Day Hospital .Design Team has been appointed. We have done a service user engagement with young people regarding their vision for how this new building will look and feel.



**Mid West Mental Health Service funds the following Section 39 Partner Agencies who provide a range for services to communities in the Mid West:**

- Aware
- Ais Eiri
- Bushy Park / Clarecare
- Clare Suicide & Bereavement Support
- GROW
- Irish Advocacy Network
- Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board
- Limerick Institute of Technology

- Mental Health Ireland
- North Clare Mental Health Ireland
- Pieta House
- Shine Ireland
- Clare Employability – Individual Placement Service /Employment Supports
- Focus Ireland – Intensive Tenancy Support Services in Community Mental Health Services

Please see the attached Appendix for further information regarding some of the activation and recovery programmes available to our services users both community and inpatient.

Yours Sincerely,

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**Nuala Kelly**  
**Head of Service - Mental Health Services,**  
**HSE Mid West**

## **Appendix 1: Overview of Midwest ARIES in Clare MHS**



### **Mid-West ARIES Recovery Education Service.**

We provide a range of courses in person, online and self-paced 24/7 for people in our communities across CHO3, people in our HSE residences and inpatients in our acute psychiatric hospitals. All of our courses are open to people aged 18 years and over.

**Online and In Person courses for the public delivered across different locations across CHO3.** (Also available to people in in our acute psychiatric hospitals)

- Understanding Acute Mental Health Services for Families, Carers and Supporters
- Managing Wellbeing & Mental Health Recovery
- Let's Talk Resilience
- Pt. 1 Exploring Self Care
- Pt. 2 Building My Self Care Toolkit
- Pt. 3 Building My Self Care Toolkit
- Let's Talk Depression
- How Can I Find Meaning in My Life and Feel More Empowered?
- Creativity for Wellbeing
- Pt. 1 Exploring Anxiety
- Pt. 2 Managing Anxiety
- Family Recovery in Mental Health
- Journaling for wellbeing
- Self-care – Building My Resilience
- Let's Talk Resilience
- How Do I Keep Connected and Stay Hopeful to Support My Wellbeing
- Getting the Best from My Mental health Appointment
- Understanding Mental Health Services
- Understanding Diagnosis, Exploring My Identity.

#### **Acute psychiatric settings.**

- I am more than My Illness – Identity and mental health
- Let's Talk Resilience
- Personal Recovery Goals
- Preparing for discharge and Moving On
- Managing My recovery
- Connection and Hope
- Let's Talk Self Care
- Creativity for Wellbeing
- Let's Talk Anxiety
- Finding Meaning, Feeling Empowered

### **Staff Training – Recovery Principles and Practice.**

This training is provided to all staff in the Mental Health Service, HSE staff and community partners in CHO3.

### **Mid-West ARIES Self-paced courses available 24/7 on any internet enabled device.**

- Link to our online Self-Paced Course “My Self Care - Taking Care of Me” - <https://tinyurl.com/selfcaremidwestaries>
- “Understanding Acute Mental Health Services for Families, Carers and Supporters - Online Self-Paced Course: <https://tinyurl.com/UnderstandingACMHS>

### **Also available online.**

- Mid-West ARIES YouTube Channel for a Range of Wellbeing Playlists – <https://youtube.com/c/midwestaries>
- Mid-West ARIES Podcast "The Wellness Panel" – <https://anchor.fm/midwestaries> also available on Spotify and all other platforms.
- Monthly Webinars – Also attended by people in our HSE residences and Acute Psychiatric Hospitals
- Monthly Virtual Café for people in our HSE residences and Acute Psychiatric Hospitals.
- To book our online workshops and webinars: <https://midwestaries.eventbrite.ie>

### **Social Media Channels.**

- Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/MidWestAries>
- Instagram  
<https://www.instagram.com/midwestaries/>
- Twitter  
<https://twitter.com/MidWestAries>