



Oifig an Cheann Seirbhíse
Seirbhíse Meabhairshláinte an Mheán Iarthair
Ospidéal Naomh Iosaef
Sráid Mulgrave
Luimneach
V94C8DV

Office of Head of Service,
HSE Mid West Mental Health Services
St Joseph's Health Campus
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Donna McGettigan
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

7th August 2025

RE PQ 42999/25: To ask the Minister for Health if she is aware of the chronic understaffing within the Limerick perinatal mental health team, with only one psychiatrist and one psychologist currently serving the entire mid-west region; if she will review and increase staffing levels to meet the region's postnatal mental healthcare demands; and if she will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy McGettigan

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above representation, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service (SPMHS) in University Maternity Hospital Limerick was set up in 2018 and is one of the six perinatal mental health hub teams across the country. In 2024, we received 960 referrals from various healthcare professionals and services including obstetricians, midwives, GPs and other psychiatrists. Approximately 20% of all women who delivered in UMHL in 2024 were referred to the SPMHS. Our clinical activity is comparable to some of the larger maternity hospitals in Dublin. The higher than expected clinical activity may reflect higher needs of patients in the Midwest, with higher rates of social deprivation and female suicides in the region.

SPMHS doctor and psychology resources in the region currently consist of one Consultant Psychiatrist, one Clinical Psychologist and one Non-Consultant Hospital Doctor (who commenced on the 5th August 2025). This resourcing aligns with the national Model of Care for Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services, first published in 2017. The Model of Care is currently being reviewed, and we are hopeful that the consideration of contemporary trends, specific local demands and evolving service needs will facilitate an enhancement of the Mid West SPMHS team in the future.



In the meantime, we remain fully committed to delivering care as promptly and efficiently as possible within the constraints of existing capacity.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Claire Collier', written over a horizontal line.

Claire Collier
A/Head of Service - Mental Health Services,
HSE Mid West