



Oifig an Chomhairleora Chliniciúil  
Náisiúnta agus Ceannaire Grúpa do  
Mheabhairshláinte

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

Office of the National Clinical  
Advisor and Group Lead for Mental  
Health

HSE, Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8,  
DO8 W2A8

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)  
[@hselive](mailto:@hselive)

e: [ncagl.mentalhealth@hse.ie](mailto:ncagl.mentalhealth@hse.ie)

Deputy Donna McGettigan,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025

**PQ Number: 43000/25**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if she will implement responsive protocols for emergency medication management for postpartum women experiencing acute mental health symptoms, especially when specialist services are unavailable; and if she will make a statement on the matter.**

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Dear Deputy McGettigan,

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.

The *Model of Care for Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services* (2017) provides for the development of a national network of services, including six hub sites and thirteen spoke sites which are now in operation. In line with this Model of Care, the development of a specialist Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) on the campus of St Vincent's University Hospital is being progressed.

Emergency medication management for women in the postpartum period is provided in line with established clinical protocols used in general adult mental health services. The postpartum period does not delay or negate the use of appropriate emergency treatments. In situations where specialist perinatal teams are not available, care is provided by community mental health teams or, where required, in an inpatient setting. These teams can seek advice from specialist perinatal services, though this is not normally necessary.

Women who do not deliver in a hub site with direct access to a Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service can be referred to their local community mental health team, who will prescribe and manage treatment in line with national protocols. The ongoing development of the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service, with six hubs and thirteen spoke sites nationally, is intended to strengthen pathways and reduce variation in access.

New treatments such as brexanolone and zuranolone are expected to become available in Ireland in the near future. Protocols for their use will be established nationally, and access is expected to be improved through the continued expansion of specialist perinatal services.



I trust this information is of assistance to you

Yours Sincerely,

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