



Oifig an Chomhairleora Chliniciúil
Náisiúnta agus Ceannaire Grúpa do
Mheabhairshláinte

HSE, Ospidéal an Dr Stevens, Baile Átha
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Deputy Holly Cairns,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

17th October 2025

PQ Number: 54356/25

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health to provide an update on the promised provision of adult inpatient beds for eating disorder treatment; to provide the current number of adult inpatient beds for eating disorder treatment available; to detail the location and applicable catchment area for each; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Holly Cairns

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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 HSE has prioritised eating disorder services as part of National Clinical Programmes (NCPs) and has established a specific clinical programme for eating disorders. The NCPs aim to develop person-centred, integrated care through a clinician-led, evidence-based approach to service reform. The need for specialist services is reflected in Sharing the Vision and more recently in the Programme for Government.

The HSE core focus is on developing regional community-based specialist eating disorder services across CAMHS and adult populations, provided by skilled multidisciplinary teams, through the National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders.

There are currently five CAMHS teams and six adult teams in operation and at various stages of development across the HSE. During 2025 3 additional services are in recruitment. These consultant-led teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community and are the foundations of quality eating disorder care. Over 100 eating disorder clinicians have been recruited since the establishment of the NCP for eating disorders. This is in contrast to pre-2018 when there were less than 5 HSE clinicians in dedicated eating disorder posts. Every year more children, adolescents and adults are accessing assessments and treatment with HSE regional community-based specialist eating disorder teams.

Inpatient services are one element of a stepped model of care and will be most cost effective and efficient when aligned with specialist adult community eating disorder teams who can provide day programmes. This will ensure shortest required length of stay, increased inpatient capacity and improved clinical outcomes. Therefore the NCPED continues to have a focus on developing adult community eating disorder teams and day programmes which will be essential to the functioning of inpatient services.

The HSE recently finalised a report focused on Inpatient Bed Capacity for Adults with Eating Disorders and future eating disorder bed provision. This included a review of data on bed usage in HSE acute hospitals, HSE approved centers, private placements and treatment abroad. The recommendations of the report are currently being considered by the Department of Health in the development of the forthcoming 10-year capital plan for Mental Health Services. Minister Butler will prioritise funding for the beds in the mental health allocation of the National Development Plan 2026-2030.

In the interim adults who have an eating disorder diagnosis and require inpatient care can be referred to any of the HSE's acute inpatient mental health approved centres around the country. The HSE funds beds within private hospitals with dedicated eating disorder programmes for adults where recommended by an adult psychiatrist. One Adult Eating Disorder Team also provides care to its catchment area 3 specialist eating disorder beds in St Vincent's University Hospital. The HSE does fund a very small number of specialist eating disorder beds via the Treatment abroad Scheme (TAS) where clinically indicated for severe anorexia nervosa and is not routinely used.

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