

**Minutes of Regional Health Forum West meeting held on  
Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2021 at 1.30pm by Zoom.**

Miontuairiscí chruinniú an Fhóiraim Sláinte Réigiúnaigh a tionóladh Dé Máirt, 23 Feabhra 2021 ag  
2.00in trí súmáil isteach

**Chairperson:** Cllr John Carroll

**Co-Chairperson:** Cllr Gerry McMonagle (Vice Chairperson)

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Present (continued)</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>
Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire	Cllr Michael Kilcoyne	Cllr Pat Burke
Cllr Declan Bree	Cllr Donagh Killilea	Cllr Frankie Daly
Cllr Ciaran Brogan	Cllr Seamus Morris	Cllr John Egan
Cllr Bill Chambers	Cllr Cillian Murphy	Cllr Felim Gurn
Cllr Tom Conaghan	Cllr Declan McDonnell	Cllr Sean Hartigan
Cllr John Connolly	Cllr Martin McLoughlin	Cllr Dara Mulvey
Cllr Gerry Crawford	Cllr Daithí Ó Cualáin	Cllr Dan McSweeney
Cllr Susan Crawford	Cllr John O'Hara	Cllr Peter Ryan
Cllr Tom Crosby	Cllr Dr Evelyn Francis Parsons	Cllr Kevin Sheahan
Cllr John Cummins	Cllr Peter Roche	Cllr John Sheahan
Cllr Albert Doherty	Cllr Tony Ward	
Cllr Paddy Farrell		
Cllr Francis Foley	<b>Apologies</b>	
Cllr Blackie Gavin	Cllr Liam Carroll	
Cllr Donal Gilroy	Cllr Martina O'Connor	

**In attendance:**

Tony Canavan, Executive Lead, Regional Health Forum/CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

Ann Cosgrove, Chief Operating Officer, Saolta University Health Care Group

Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Midwest Community Healthcare

John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO, Area 1

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director of Estates (West)

Norah Owens, Regional Health Forum Office

Marian Cavanagh, Regional Health Forum Office

Anna Lyons, Regional Health Forum Office

**757/92/21 Minutes of previous meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2020**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were proposed by Cllr Albert Doherty and seconded by Cllr Martin McLoughlin and adopted.

**758/92/21 Matters Arising:**

Cllr Tony Ward thanked Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, Estates for the update on the Sacred Heart Home in Roscommon.

**759/92/21 Chairman's Business:**

## **760/92/21 Update on COVID-19**

Tony Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group gave an update to the members on COVID 19 and the vaccination roll-out.

## **761/92/21 Questions:**

### **W92Q2867: Phased works at St Joseph's Community Hospital**

**Action:** J Hayes to revert to Cllr Gerry Crawford with an update on the ambulance base at St Joseph's Community Hospital and any re-location of staff.

### **W92Q2871: Criteria used for the allocation of Home Help Hours**

**Action:** B. Crehan-Roche to revert to Cllr M Kilcoyne with a report on the Standard Assessment Tool "interRAI" which outlines the different bands and the criteria used to determine the hours allocated to the client.

### **W92Q2872: No of people that are refused Medical Cards in Co Mayo**

B. Crehan-Roche to provide Cllr Kilcoyne with the number of Medical cards refused in Co Mayo in the last 2 years.

**Action:** National Medical Card Unit to respond to this.

### **W92Q2876: Spiddal Primary Care Centre**

**Action:** Breda Crehan-Roche to revert to Cllr D Ó Cualáin with the possible location for the Spiddal Primary Care Centre

### **W92Q2885: Vaccination in Disability Residential Care Facilities**

**Action:** J. Hayes to advise Cllr D Gilroy on the plan for front of house staff vaccination roll-out in Disability Residential Care Facilities

### **W92Q2888: Adequate Emergency Medical Cover:**

**Action:** Bill Forbes to revert to Cllr Cillian Murphy with the following breakdowns:  
Cat 1 calls for 2020, 875 in total (2.39 per day).

- the breakdown of all other category call outs?
- the breakdown of the number of all Category calls by month for 2020?
- the breakdown of the monthly average response times .

### **W92Q2890: Community Cardiac First Responder Group:**

**Action:** Bill Forbes to confirm if the Community First Responders response times to an incident is included in the data used to compile the average response times?

### **W92Q2892: Libre Device for the treatment and monitoring of Diabetes**

**Action:** Ann Cosgrove to check with the National Acute's Office regarding the cutoff point of 22 years of age for free supply of the Libre Device and revert to Cllr Gerry McMonagle.

### **W92Q2893: Beds and Theatre Space from Private Hospitals**

**Action:** A Cosgrove to revert to Cllr Gerry McMonagle with the number of people waiting for diagnostics in LUH?

**W92Q2908: Occupancy Levels of the Acute Mental Health Unit:**

**Action:** B Crehan-Roche to revert to Cllr J Connolly with confirmation on whether the capacity of the Acute Mental Health Unit has reduced due to COVID 19.

**W92Q2918: The National Programme Board for Psychosocial Response**

**Action:** B Crehan-Roche to revert to Cllr Evelyn Francis Parsons with confirmation when the Board of The National Programme Board for Psychosocial Response will be established?

**W92Q2919: New Primary Care Centre in Newtowncunningham:**

**Action:** J. Hayes to outline the enhanced services that will be available in Newtowncunningham Primary Care Centre when it is completed and revert to Cllr C Brogan.

**762/92/21 AOB:**

**763/92/21 Date & Time of Next Meeting:**

The next **Regional Health Forum** meeting will take place on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2021 at 2pm, virtually.

The next **Regional Health Forum Committee** Meeting will take place on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm, the format of which will be advised to the members at the next meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

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Cathaoirleach/Chairman

*Adopted at the Regional Health Forum West meeting*

## QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

### REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM WEST – 23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2021

Number:	QUESTION	RAISED BY	PAGE No.
W93Q2926	What plan is in place for patients that should have got the vaccine, but could not go due to their mobility.	Cllr P Farrell	4 - 5
W93Q2927	Update on the proposed Carrick- on-Shannon hospital.	Cllr P Farrell	5
W93Q2928	New eating disorder Hubs for Children -Adolescents and adults; in place or planned for CHO1	Cllr G Crawford	5
W93Q2929	How many home support hours were provided to clients in Donegal in year 2020. Is this likely to change in 2021	Cllr G Crawford	5
W93Q2930	During year 2020 to date changes to Ambulance Management HSE West.	Cllr G Crawford	6
W93Q2931	Will Bunrana Ambulance base effect on any other Ambulance Base staffing or Crewing in Donegal.	Cllr G Crawford	6
W93Q2932	Since 1 <sup>st</sup> lockdown how many staff in SUH and UL Hospital Group were facilitated to work	Cllr D Bree	6
W93Q2933	Paediatric Speech and Language Assessment (initial appointment) wait list in Sligo and Leitrim.	Cllr D Bree	7
W93Q2934	Number of Consultant posts which are vacant at SUH; the speciality; the length of time of each vacancy.	Cllr D Bree	7
W93Q2935	Home Support – staff cover by families/assessment before this decision, panel for Home Support workers?	Cllr M Kilcoyne	7
W93Q2936	Covid 19 Mortality numbers Mayo.	Cllr M Kilcoyne	7 – 8
W93Q2937	Vaccination pathway and choices. Vaccination Centre Breaffy? Daily targets there.	Cllr M Kilcoyne	8 – 9
W93Q2938	School Dental Scheme wait list; appointments and procedures. Orthodontic treatment and criteria.	Cllr M Kilcoyne	9 – 10
W93Q2939	Number of Speech and Language Therapists in Donegal and wait list numbers.	Cllr G McMonagle	10
W93Q2940	Number of in-patient detox beds for Drug/Alcohol addicts in Donegal.	Cllr G McMonagle	10 – 11
W93Q2941	Update on the CAMHS provision in Donegal.	Cllr G McMonagle	11
W93Q2942	Current Bed capacity at the Psychiatric Unit at LUH.	Cllr G McMonagle	11 – 12
W93Q2943	Fatigue & Myalgia Encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS) Clinic/Helpline and treatment.	Cllr A Doherty	12 – 13
W93Q2944	Update on an adequate additional workforce required to deliver Covid-19 programme at the location of a vaccination centre in the INISHOWEN peninsula?	Cllr A Doherty	13 – 14
W93Q2945	Riverwalk Respite House – beds available currently?	Cllr A Doherty	14
W93Q2946	How many staff recruited with clearances now granted are now in situ to enable the four residential service users move to Dunshenny House?	Cllr A Doherty	14 – 15
W93Q2947	Numbers vaccinated/weekly targets in each CHO in RHF West area.	Cllr J Connolly	15 – 16
W93Q2948	CHO2 Community adult psychological services wait list for initial appointment/awaiting therapeutic intervention?	Cllr J Connolly	16

<b>W93Q2949</b>	When will the planning application be lodged for the New A&E unit at GUH?	<b>Cllr J Connolly</b>	<b>16 - 17</b>
<b>W93Q2950</b>	How many key workers are employed with CAMHS Community Mental Health Team in Galway, number of children are currently assigned to each one.	<b>Cllr J Connolly</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>W93Q2951</b>	Update on the operation of CT Scanner at PUHB; breakdowns in service and impacts. Update on Second scanner	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>	<b>17 – 18</b>
<b>W93Q2952</b>	Address need to increase public awareness of Mental Health Supports to second level students, targeting Irish language Connemara youth communities re message and services.	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>	<b>18 – 21</b>
<b>W93Q2953</b>	Eating disorder admissions rise during pandemic	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>W93Q2954</b>	Update on the new eating disorder treatment hub for children and adolescents which is to be set up in CHO2.	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>W93Q2955</b>	Update on referral of Children to CAMHS assessment for Autism Spectrum/ADHD	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>	<b>21-22</b>
<b>W93Q2956</b>	Mental Health Services in the two new Primary Care Centres North Sligo, any plans for Mental Health Hub in North Sligo, staffing levels mental health services in Sligo.	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>	<b>22 – 23</b>
<b>W93Q2957</b>	Consultant Geriatrician Services for Sligo Leitrim West Cavan re Dementia/Alzheimer services.	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>	<b>23-24</b>
<b>W93Q2958</b>	Update on what Paediatric /Child Psychology services are available in the Northwest for Children with acquired brain injuries/Mental Health Issues.	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>W93Q2959</b>	Why the HSE allows private health insurance companies to delay payment of fees?	<b>Cllr D Bree</b>	<b>24-25</b>
<b>W93Q2960</b>	Can you provide a time frame for the return of Adult Disability Day and Respite Services in Co. Clare please.	<b>Cllr S Crawford</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>W93Q2961</b>	Can you advise re the return of both speech and language therapy and occupational therapy for both children and adults in Co. Clare.	<b>Cllr S Crawford</b>	<b>25-26</b>
<b>W93Q2962</b>	Can you clarify exactly what Community psychiatric services are available as per the response of Maria Bridgeman to the last forum in Feb.	<b>Cllr S Crawford</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>W93Q2963</b>	Clarification on the availability of ECT in UHL	<b>Cllr S Crawford</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>W93Q2964</b>	Cataract Surgery in Galway; numbers awaiting assessment by consultant, current waiting time for assessment and cataract surgery in G.U.H?	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>W93Q2965</b>	Any expansion plans by NAS to the current Emergency Ambulance Service in South or North Connemara?	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>W93Q2966</b>	Number of interviews undertaken in Irish 2018-2020.	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>W93Q2967</b>	Number of Haemochromatosis clinic's in Galway.	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>	<b>27-28</b>
<b>W93Q2968</b>	What daily / weekly community based supports are available for North Tipperary Mental Health Service users, the over 25s.	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>W93Q2969</b>	How many people from the Mid West region suffering mental health issues?	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>W93Q2970</b>	What is the protocol for discharge of patients from the Mental	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>	<b>28</b>

	Health Psychiatric units serving North Tipperary?		
<b>W93Q2971</b>	What is the in bed capacity of Mental health facilities in the Mid West?	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>W93Q2972</b>	Process to ensure all elderly patients, being dealt with by a succession of locums on an ongoing basis, are not slipping through the cracks for Covid vaccination.	<b>Cllr C Murphy</b>	<b>28 – 29</b>
<b>W93Q2973</b>	Possibility of upgrade to the public lighting on the grounds of Ballina District Hospital.	<b>Cllr J O’Hara</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>W93Q2974</b>	Counselling service for frontline staff who have worked in our hospitals and nursing home since the start of Covid-19.	<b>Cllr J O’Hara</b>	<b>30 – 33</b>
<b>W93Q2975</b>	Update on the plan for vaccine rollout to new community members who have not registered with local GP.	<b>Cllr F Armstrong McGuire</b>	<b>33 - 34</b>
<b>W93Q2976</b>	Have all the displaced services at LUH resumed again if not, can we have a timeframe for when this will happen?	<b>Cllr C Brogan</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>W93Q2977</b>	Updated on the commissioning of the radiology intervention suite and the second CT scanner?	<b>Cllr C Brogan</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>W93Q2978</b>	Update report on the roll out of the vacation programme in Donegal through the GPs and the roll of the pharmacy’s being part of the plan.	<b>Cllr C Brogan</b>	<b>34 – 35</b>
<b>W93Q2979</b>	Update on the services at CAMHS based in Letterkenny, for Inishowen, north central Donegal, north west, Donegal.	<b>Cllr C Brogan</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>W93Q2980</b>	Dental Services in the Tuam area; what are the current waiting times.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>W93Q2981</b>	Update on the X Ray facilities for Tuam area.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>W93Q2982</b>	What are the current staffing requirements for the Tuam area primary care centre and community services.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>W93Q2983</b>	Update on plans to increase the number of spaces available for people with special needs that want to live in the community in the Tuam area.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>	<b>37</b>

Number:	QUESTION	RAISED BY
<b>W93Q2926</b>	What plan is in place for patients that should have got the vaccine, but could not go due to their mobility.	<b>Cllr P Farrell</b>
<p>Ireland's strategy is to distribute all COVID-19 vaccines that we receive, subject to ensuring availability of the second dose. At the beginning of last week, Ireland had received approximately 520,000 vaccine doses and by the end of the week approximately 500,000 doses were administered, a measure of the programme's efficiency. Vaccines continue to be administered very quickly after their arrival into the country. At the moment, vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on manufacturers meeting their supply commitments.</p> <p>In relation to General Practitioners, the position is that at the conclusion of the first phase rollout of the programme last weekend, the HSE has confirmed that the majority of patients aged 85 years and over have received their first dose of the vaccine as scheduled. GPs have also begun administration of vaccine to people aged 80-84. In total over 1,300 GP practices, representing in excess of 3000 GPs and their Practice Teams have delivered over 90,000 vaccines by last weekend and a further 37,000 vaccines being distributed this week (w/c 8 March). The programme has also involved a number of large scale GP clinics, which have taken place in the Helix DCU, MTU in Cork and Merlin Park Galway with over 1,500 over 85's receiving the vaccine at these locations.</p> <p>There are a very small number of practices, less than 30, who are due to receive first delivery this week for their over 85s and it is also intended to commence the vaccination of those who are homebound as arrangements have been put in place in conjunction with GP's, local community teams and the National Ambulance Service and will commence this week and also patients in our acute hospitals. The HSE has acknowledge that there were problems with communication with GPs generally and that some issues have arisen with the distribution of vaccines to some GP Practices over the last week and we wish to apologise to GP practices, their teams and the patients who may have been impacted by these.</p> <p>The vaccination programme is limited internationally by the supply of vaccine and our programme to date has ensured that all available vaccine is distributed and administered as quickly as possible. The supply required for the completion of the programme by mid-May remains on target. However, due to a re-profiling of the Moderna vaccine delivery schedule, the total vaccine doses available for distribution in the coming weeks is now slightly less. The available vaccine supply is approximately 15% less than the required amount to meet the total over-80 cohort. This means GPs may not receive the total order for these coming weeks but, in all instances, GPs will be advised on the amounts they will receive and any shortfall in vaccine for the over-80 age group will be allocated in the next order and so on through March with a significant ramp-up in vaccine delivery in April as increased supplies arrive in Ireland. Unfortunately, these supply issues are outside of our control. However, if any additional supply becomes available, this will be provided to General Practitioners at the earliest opportunity. Importantly, we expect that the totality of the over-70s programme will be completed within the original timeframe of mid-May.</p> <p>With regard to the Vaccinator Role, the Statutory Instrument (SI 698 of 2020) is the relevant SI which includes pharmacists as one of those disciplines which can vaccinate for the purpose of rolling out the Covid Vaccination Programme subject to their being registered with their regulatory body (PSI) and subject to agreement by the regulatory body on required training. (The DoH introduced a new SI (81 of 2021) which added dentists and optometrists to the list of disciplines approved as vaccinators subject to registration etc.)</p> <p>The COVID-19 Vaccinator Recruitment Initiative for the HSE is being supported by CPL Healthcare. Registered optometrists and registered dentists can apply to become COVID-19 Vaccinators from 2pm, Tuesday 2nd, March 2021.</p> <p>If you do not have a GP the <a href="#">COVID-19 helpline</a> Lo-call: <a href="#">1850 24 1850</a> for advice or contact any GP in your area. The</p>		

COVID vaccine is free and you do not need a PPS number.  
 COVID Implementation plan attached.

Further details on the roll out of the vaccine are available at <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/rollout-covid-19-vaccines-ireland.html>

Operational guidance on the vaccine for GPs is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/gmscontracts/2019agreement/operational-guidance-for-vaccination-in-general-practice-%E2%80%93-people-aged-70-and-older.pdf>

A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

**National Community Strategy and Planning**

<b>W93Q2927</b>	What stage are we at with the proposed Carrick- on-Shannon hospital.	<b>Cllr P Farrell</b>
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The new Community Nursing Unit, in Carrick-on-Shannon is a planned ninety bed unit. The development received planning permission in 2020 and a detailed design is, currently, being completed.

It is intended to proceed to tender and award of contract in 2021. The current forecasted completion date of Q4 2023 is subject to funding. The total capital budget allocated for the project is €27.53m

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2928</b>	Information suggests that new eating disorder Hubs for Children - Adolescents and adults will be set up in areas CHO2-CHO4-CHO8-CHO9. This is subject to funding and recruitment Of the Specialist Staff required. What level of Service for such is in place or planned for CHO1	<b>Cllr G Crawford</b>
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There is a National Clinical Programme in Eating Disorders which is aimed at providing services nationally to children, adolescents and adults with eating disorders and a Model of Care has been developed as part of this programme. Sligo has been designated as a mini-hub for adults on this model of care and no specific funding from the National Programme in 2021 has been identified.

Through the 2021 HSE service plan, CHO1 Mental Health Service has received approval to recruit an additional three Senior Dieticians to support children and adults with Eating Disorders. Each CHO1 MHS catchment area - Cavan Monaghan, Donegal and Sligo Leitrim – will be allocated one post. This will broaden the range of expertise available to treat the specific needs of this population.

Cavan Monaghan and Sligo Leitrim Mental Health Service, each have one Eating Disorder Therapist, providing specialist therapeutic intervention to people with eating disorders.

The Eating Disorder Team in SLMHS, the CAMHS team and the Mental Health Liaison Team in Sligo Leitrim work closely with the medical and paediatric teams in Sligo University Hospital (SUH) to provide multidisciplinary care and best practice for those - adults and children - admitted to SUH with severe Anorexia Nervosa using the MARSIPAN guidelines. In addition children requiring community care receive physical monitoring, mental state review, weight restoration and therapeutic intervention; nursing staff in CAMHS have trained in CBTE in recent years, and aim to provide a clear evidence based care pathway of care to young people under 18 with a primary eating disorder.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2929</b>	How many home support hours were provided to clients in Donegal in year 2020. Is this likely to change in 2021	<b>Cllr G Crawford</b>
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In 2020, a total of 784,040 home care hours were provided to clients in Co Donegal.

Additional funding has been allocated in 2021, which will allow for an increase in home care provision.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**



<b>W93Q2930</b>	During year 2020 to date. What personnel changes have taken place in Ambulance management posts in The Ambulance Service HSE West, who are the People in place and where are they Based.	<b>Cllr G Crawford</b>
<b>Post</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Based</b>
NAS West Area Operations Manager/CAO	Bill Forbes (T.H.A.)	HSE West
NAS Estates	Paudie O’Riordan	HSE West
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer Operations N.West	John J McGowan (T.H.A.)	HSE North West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Sally McDaid	HSE North West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Brian Ferry	HSE North West
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer Operations M. West	Ian Brennan (T.H.A.)	HSE Mid West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Tom Searson	HSE Mid West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Keith Mullane	HSE Mid West
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer Operations West	Rónán White	HSE West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Bridget Meehan	HSE West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Tomas Searson	HSE West
Ambulance Officer Operations	Michael O’Donoghue	HSE West
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer Area West	Gabriel Glynn	HSE West
Fleet Manager Area West	Bridin McGowan	HSE West
Quality Safety and Risk Manager	Kevin Flannery	HSE West
Community Engagement Officer	Mark Callanan	HSE West
Business Manager Area West	Mary McTigue	HSE West
Section Officer Business Support Mid West	Ingrid Browne	HSE Mid West
Section Officer Business Support West	Keith Treacy	HSE West
<b>Bill Forbes, Chief Ambulance Officer, National Ambulance Services West</b>		
<b>W93Q2931</b>	Will the recent very welcome announcement that a Ambulance will be Buncrana based have any knock on effect on any other Ambulance Base staffing or Crewing In Donegal.	<b>Cllr G Crawford</b>
<p>Currently an ambulance crew who commence duty in Carndonagh are moved to Buncrana for standby purposes. The proposed Buncrana Ambulance service will be a stand-alone resource with six new development posts. This will be an addition to resources in Donegal with no planned knock on effect on any other ambulance base staffing and or crewing.</p>		
<b>B. Forbes, Chief Ambulance Officer, NAS West</b>		
<b>W93Q2932</b>	In the period since the first lockdown to date how many staff in (A) Sligo University Hospital; (B) University Hospital Limerick (who did not have underlying health issues) were facilitated to work at home. What was the grading of each staff member. In which Department/office did they work	<b>Cllr D Bree</b>
<p>Working from home arrangements are assessed on a case-by-case basis by line managers. They are primarily administrative in nature as most staff are required on site to support clinical, patient facing or management roles. Line managers in the first instance ensure that service needs will not be impacted by having staff work from home. In addition, the situation is fluid as short term arrangements can be made to enable people to work from home for child-care purposes or if they are designated as close contacts of a Covid-19 positive case.</p> <p>A number of factors are considered by line managers before assessing if an employee has the necessary supports in place to work from home such as equipment and technological infrastructure.</p> <p>All staff attendances are recorded on SAP, however there is no facility to record if a member of staff is working from home, and therefore it’s not possible to provide a definitive number as arrangements are managed at a local/team level.</p>		
<b>C. Cowan, CEO, UL Hospitals Group/ T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group</b>		

<b>W93Q2933</b>	How many children, 12 years and under, who have been referred for Speech and Language Assessment are awaiting an initial appointment in (a) Sligo and (b) Leitrim	<b>Cllr D Bree</b>
<p>As of 11/3/21 there are a total of 372 children 0-12 years waiting for an initial assessment. There are 268 children on the Sligo waitlist and 117 children on the Leitrim list. Please note children from North Leitrim are included in the Sligo figures.</p> <p><b>John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1</b></p>		
<b>W93Q2934</b>	That the Forum be advised as to the number of Consultant posts which are vacant at Sligo University Hospital; the specialty of each vacant post; the length of time of each vacancy (in tabular format)	<b>Cllr D Bree</b>
<p>There is one vacant permanent consultant post in Sligo University Hospital in Dermatology, vacant since April 2020.</p> <p>All other permanent posts are filled on a temporary basis pending permanent filling of posts.</p> <p><b>A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group</b></p>		
<b>W93Q2935</b>	Why has the Home Support Department decided that they expect families who are in receipt of Home Support to cover absent periods for staff on annual/sick leave. What assessment was carried out before this decision was taken? Is there a panel in place of persons who can be employed for home support?	<b>Cllr M Kilcoyne</b>
<p>Every effort is made to cover staff who are on Annual Leave / Sick Leave. Home Support prioritise clients with the greatest care needs for care which includes annual leave cover in the first instance. However, in exceptional circumstances when cover is not available, and there are no carers to provide this cover, we communicate with the client and family members with regards to same.</p> <p>Clients and their families are informed on service commencement that leave cover may not be possible.</p> <p>With additional Home Support hours has increased significantly over the last few years. This challenges both HSE staff and direct providers of Home Support to deliver the hours approved and also to cover when carers are on annual leave and/or sick leave.</p> <p>There is currently no panel in place for Health Care Support Assistants in Mayo.</p> <p><b>Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</b></p>		
<b>W93Q2936</b>	According to available figures 155 Covid 19 deaths have taken place in Mayo. How many of those people died in Mayo University Hospital and how many of those people tested negative when admitted to the hospital and subsequently contracted the virus in the hospital? Is there any known reason why the rate of deaths per 100,000 people in Mayo is 118.8 and is the second highest in the country after Cavan? If there were better facilities available at Mayo University Hospital e.g. additional accommodation and additional staff could the death rate have been lower?	<b>Cllr M Kilcoyne</b>
<p>The determination of the cause of death of any individual person is complex. While COVID-19 is clearly the principal cause of death for some people, in other people who were already very seriously ill the contribution of the COVID-19 infection to their death can be difficult to determine.</p> <p>It is known that certain factors increase peoples risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19, including age over 65 and comorbidities. In the Census of 2016 the population of Mayo was noted to have the highest average age in the country. Having a larger proportion of older age groups, as well as a high overall cumulate rate per 100,000 populations could explain why Mayo's death rate per 100,000 population is one of the highest in the country</p> <p>The CSO publishes data on people who have died due to COVID-19 or have been diagnosed with the virus. The most</p>		

recent published report (up to and including Friday 05 March) is available here:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/br/b-cdc/covid-19deathsandcasesseries26//>

In addition, the HPSC publishes daily 14-day epidemiology reports which include the most recent information on cases and the number of deaths at a national level:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/surveillance/covid-1914-dayepidemiologyreports/>

The National HSE Capital Plan has highlighted the requirement for investment in service continuity and additional capacity projects including additional acute hospital beds, additional critical care capacity and intermediate care or step down capacity. It has been the experience in Mayo University hospital as with the other hospitals in the Saolta Group that multi bed inpatient accommodation has created and continues to create significant challenges in managing the delivery of patient care in the current Covid environment.

**T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2937</b>	Please set out in detail the sequence to be followed by Person A in order to obtain the Covid 19 vaccine. Does the GP contact him, or does he contact the GP? What is the process if a person does not have a GP? Who decides if person A will receive his vaccine from the GP surgery, the pharmacy or the vaccination centre? Has he a choice on which vaccine he will receive? Who will keep a record of the people who receive the vaccine and the type of vaccine they receive? When will the Vaccination Centre in Breaffy open and what will be the daily target for the number of vaccines to be administered?	<b>Cllr M Kilcoyne</b>
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The groups currently being vaccinated against COVID-19 are: [those aged 65 years and older who live in long-term care facilities \(group 1\)](#); [frontline healthcare workers \(group 2\)](#); [people aged 70 and older living in the community - at different stages \(group 3\)](#); and [people aged 16 to 69 who are at very high risk \(group 4\)](#)

**Group 3 - People aged 70 and older**

GPs will contact their patients when the vaccine is available. Patients do not need to register for the vaccine. Most people in this group will be vaccinated at their own GP surgery; some GPs who work in smaller practices will join together; some people will be invited to attend a vaccination centre.

The Covid Vaccination Centre at Breaffy Resort opened on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> March and when fully operational can administer up to 2,000 vaccines per day, depending on supply.

Ireland's strategy is to distribute all COVID-19 vaccines that we receive, subject to ensuring availability of the second dose. At the beginning of last week, Ireland had received approximately 520,000 vaccine doses and by the end of the week approximately 500,000 doses were administered, a measure of the programme's efficiency. Vaccines continue to be administered very quickly after their arrival into the country. At the moment, vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on manufacturers meeting their supply commitments.

In relation to General Practitioners, the position is that at the conclusion of the first phase rollout of the programme last weekend, the HSE has confirmed that the majority of patients aged 85 years and over have received their first dose of the vaccine as scheduled. GPs have also begun administration of vaccine to people aged 80-84. In total over 1,300 GP practices, representing in excess of 3000 GPs and their Practice Teams have delivered over 90,000 vaccines by last weekend and a further 37,000 vaccines being distributed this week (w/c 8 March). The programme has also involved a number of large scale GP clinics, which have taken place in the Helix DCU, MTU in Cork and Merlin Park Galway with over 1,500 over 85's receiving the vaccine at these locations.

There are a very small number of practices, less than 30, who are due to receive first delivery this week for their over 85s and it is also intended to commence the vaccination of those who are homebound as arrangements have

been put in place in conjunction with GP's, local community teams and the National Ambulance Service and will commence this week and also patients in our acute hospitals. The HSE has acknowledge that there were problems with communication with GPs generally and that some issues have arisen with the distribution of vaccines to some GP Practices over the last week and we wish to apologise to GP practices, their teams and the patients who may have been impacted by these.

The vaccination programme is limited internationally by the supply of vaccine and our programme to date has ensured that all available vaccine is distributed and administered as quickly as possible. The supply required for the completion of the programme by mid-May remains on target. However, due to a re-profiling of the Moderna vaccine delivery schedule, the total vaccine doses available for distribution in the coming weeks is now slightly less. The available vaccine supply is approximately 15% less than the required amount to meet the total over-80 cohort. This means GPs may not receive the total order for these coming weeks but, in all instances, GPs will be advised on the amounts they will receive and any shortfall in vaccine for the over-80 age group will be allocated in the next order and so on through March with a significant ramp-up in vaccine delivery in April as increased supplies arrive in Ireland. Unfortunately, these supply issues are outside of our control. However, if any additional supply becomes available, this will be provided to General Practitioners at the earliest opportunity. Importantly, we expect that the totality of the over-70s programme will be completed within the original timeframe of mid-May.

With regard to the Vaccinator Role, the Statutory Instrument (SI 698 of 2020) is the relevant SI which includes pharmacists as one of those disciplines which can vaccinate for the purpose of rolling out the Covid Vaccination Programme subject to their being registered with their regulatory body (PSI) and subject to agreement by the regulatory body on required training. (The DoH introduced a new SI (81 of 2021) which added dentists and optometrists to the list of disciplines approved as vaccinators subject to registration etc.)

The COVID-19 Vaccinator Recruitment Initiative for the HSE is being supported by CPL Healthcare. Registered optometrists and registered dentists can apply to become COVID-19 Vaccinators from 2pm, Tuesday 2nd, March 2021.

**If you do not have a GP the [COVID-19 helpline](#) Lo-call: **1850 24 1850** for advice or contact any GP in your area. The COVID vaccine is free and you do not need a PPS number.**

COVID Implementation plan attached.

Further details on the roll out of the vaccine are available at <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/rollout-covid-19-vaccines-ireland.html>

Operational guidance on the vaccine for GPs is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/gmscontracts/2019agreement/operational-guidance-for-vaccination-in-general-practice-%E2%80%93-people-aged-70-and-older.pdf>

A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

***National Community Strategy and Planning***

<b>W93Q2938</b>	How many children are on the waiting list for an appointment under the HSE School Dental Scheme. How many are awaiting procedures. Of the children who did receive appointments how many received orthodontic treatment in 2019? What are the criteria to receive treatment from the HSE orthodontist?	<b>Clr M Kilcoyne</b>
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Children on the waiting list for an appointment under the HSE School Dental Scheme:

**Mayo** 8500

**Roscommon** 4500

**Galway**

13,000 circa.

The above figures are indicative, as all assessments will need to be completed in order to determine how many procedures are required.

1680 children were assessed for eligibility for orthodontic treatment.

989 children started orthodontic treatment in 2019.

Galway 536

Mayo 311

Roscommon 142

Criteria to establish those who are most in need of treatment is based on the Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need (IOTN).

This is an internationally recognised index to establish those who are most in need of orthodontic treatment and who will benefit the most.

The details of this index are explained on the Saolta webpage:

<https://saolta.ie/wards/orthodontic-service>

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West**

<b>W93Q2939</b>	How many Speech and Language Therapist work in Donegal and where, and how many people are currently awaiting this service and the length of time they have been waiting?	<b>Cllr G McMonagle</b>
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The breakdown of the current Speech & Language Therapists (SLTs) in Co Donegal as at 09/03/2021:

	<b>WTE's</b>
Letterkenny University Hospital:	4.0
CAMHS Service:	2.0
Children's Disability Service:	11.5
Primary Care Services:	<u>9.0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.5</b>

In addition to the above, 2 agency SLTs will be commencing in post in April and they will be assigned to reducing the waiting list. Recruitment is also underway to backfill vacant posts and an SLT is due to return from leave in the coming months. We are therefore hopeful that the waiting list numbers will reduce significantly by year end. The current waiting list for SLT assessment:

0-4 months	290
4-8 months	204
8-12 months	129
12-18 months	188

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2940</b>	Can I have an update on how many in-patient detox beds are available for Drug/Alcohol addicts in Donegal, including those addicts presenting with mental health issues including suicidal ideation?	<b>Cllr G McMonagle</b>
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The majority of detoxifications from alcohol/drugs are completed in the community with the support of General Practitioners and HSE Mental Health Addiction Counsellors. For service users with mental health issues including suicidal, where in-patient admission to the Mental Health Admissions Unit is indicated access to the Department of

Psychiatry, Letterkenny University Hospital is provided.

The attached table (Appendix 1) lists the number of beds available as at end of November 2020 in residential, rehabilitation and step down services provided directly by the HSE or Agencies that are in receipt of funding from the HSE, by Community Health Organisation (CHO) Area. The table highlights bed capacity has reduced to operate within public health guidelines.

It is important to note that access to all beds is based on need rather than geographical location and therefore people living in Donegal have access to these beds if required

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2941</b>	Can I have an update on the CAMHS provision in Donegal and the figures on how many young people are currently awaiting appointments and what resources are available ie Staff, Residential units, etc to help support Children and adolescents with their mental health in Donegal?	<b>Cllr G McMonagle</b>
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Donegal CAMHS Service have until now operated a two team model covering North Donegal and South Donegal. North Donegal also includes the Inishowen area.

Both teams are made up of Clinical Staff including a Child and Adolescent Consultant Psychiatrist, Non Consultant Hospital Doctor (NCHD), Senior Psychologist, Senior Social Workers, Nursing Staff, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Social Care Workers. Teams are also supported by Administration Staff.

Unfortunately the COVID pandemic has negatively affected the numbers of people waiting to be seen by CAMHS Donegal. During the restriction levels, waiting lists have increased as professionals were unable to complete full assessments and observe the service user in their usual environment which is a key component of many mental health assessments. It has also been difficult to link with other key personnel such as teachers and other professional supports who may be working with the young person.

Whilst Donegal CAMHS acknowledge that the waiting list for children and adolescents waiting to be seen is above the acceptable levels (there are currently 144 young people waiting on their first appointment as of 31st January 2021) the service is currently developing performance improvement measures to address the waiting list.

Whilst Donegal CAMHS have had two Consultant Psychiatrist posts which have not been filled with locum consultants for some time, the service has recently been successful in attracting two permanent candidates to these posts which will see the development of a three team service the third team covering the geographical area of Inishowen. This coupled with a performance improvement plan will assist in ensuring that the young people in Donegal receive the mental health supports they require.

Donegal CAMHS operate on an outpatient basis but have access to the in-patient treatment beds at Merlin Park CAMHS In-patient unit, University College Hospital, Galway.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2942</b>	What is the current Bed capacity at the Psychiatric Unit at LUH, can I also have a breakdown of the number of staff and their responsibilities and roles that work in the Unit?	<b>Cllr G McMonagle</b>
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The Department of Psychiatry at Letterkenny University Hospital is a 34 bedded unit including a seclusion bed.

The breakdown of approved staff posts are as follows:

Discipline	Grade	WTE	Discipline	Grade	WTE
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Nursing	Assistant Director of Nursing	1	Health & Social Care Professional	Social Worker	1
Nursing	Clinical Nurse Manager III	1	Health & Social Care Professional	Senior Psychologist	1
Nursing	Clinical Nurse Manager II	1	Health & Social Care Professional	Senior Occupational Therapist	1
Nursing	Clinical Nurse Manager I	1	Health & Social Care Professional	Staff Occupational Therapist	1
Nursing	Registered Psychiatric Nurse	10	Health & Social Care Professional	Pharmacist	1
Medical	Consultant Psychiatrist	9	General Support	Domestic	6
Medical	Non Consultant Hospital Doctor	12	Other Patient & Client Care	Health Care Assistant	0.5
Clerical and Administration	Mental Health Act Administrator	1			
Clerical and Administration	Medical Secretary	1			
Clerical and Administration	Ward Clerk	1			

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2943</b>	Fatigue & Myalgia Encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS) Clinic/Helpline. How presently does the HSE respond, offer support, advise and treat ME clients and their families? How soon is O T services available to a client presenting with ME? Will the HSE link with interested voluntary groups and establish in Donegal a helpline/support clinic to assist ME clients and Families?	<b>Cllr A Doherty</b>
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Primary Care Occupational Therapists occasionally receive referrals for people with fatigue, including ME. These referrals are managed as part of the Occupational Therapist's workload according to the prioritisation system.

Equipment provision at later stages of the condition is the most common reason for referral. The role of Occupational Therapy with the fatigue management/energy conservation, for these and other clients, is one that needs to be further developed within our Primary Care services in order to be able to address people's needs at earlier stages in their conditions.

Whilst there are no specific psychological supports for people with ME, a person with ME, and who has co-morbid psychological difficulties or mental health difficulties, can be referred to the appropriate service in accordance with their needs.

The Living Well Programme is also a valuable resource to support people living with long term health condition to self-manage their condition and the skills taught are very relevant for living with any long-term condition. People may self-refer to the Living Well Programme, which is a free online group programme delivered over six workshops (2.5 hrs x 6). It is delivered by trained leaders, most of whom are also living with a long-term health condition. The

trainers will help participants develop self-management skills and confidence to live well with their health conditions.

Upcoming Living Well Programmes are as follows:

22/04/2021 – 03/06/2021 – 10.30am – 1pm

28/04/2021 – 09/06/2021 – 10.30am – 1pm

To book a place applicants can contact Helen on 087 3964307 or Martina on 087 3314159; [www.hse.ie/Livingwell](http://www.hse.ie/Livingwell)

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2944</b>	Will the HSE confirm progress with the engagement of an adequate additional workforce required to deliver Covid-19 programme in the times scheduled and establish in collaboration with local GPs, Pharmacists, Dentists etc. at the location of a vaccination centre in the INISHOWEN peninsula?	<b>Cllr A Doherty</b>
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Ireland's strategy is to distribute all COVID-19 vaccines that we receive, subject to ensuring availability of the second dose. At the beginning of last week, Ireland had received approximately 520,000 vaccine doses and by the end of the week approximately 500,000 doses were administered, a measure of the programme's efficiency. Vaccines continue to be administered very quickly after their arrival into the country. At the moment, vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on manufacturers meeting their supply commitments.

In relation to General Practitioners, the position is that at the conclusion of the first phase rollout of the programme last weekend, the HSE has confirmed that the majority of patients aged 85 years and over have received their first dose of the vaccine as scheduled. GPs have also begun administration of vaccine to people aged 80-84. In total over 1,300 GP practices, representing in excess of 3000 GPs and their Practice Teams have delivered over 90,000 vaccines by last weekend and a further 37,000 vaccines being distributed this week (w/c 8 March). The programme has also involved a number of large scale GP clinics, which have taken place in the Helix DCU, MTU in Cork and Merlin Park Galway with over 1,500 over 85's receiving the vaccine at these locations.

There are a very small number of practices, less than 30, who are due to receive first delivery this week for their over 85s and it is also intended to commence the vaccination of those who are homebound as arrangements have been put in place in conjunction with GP's, local community teams and the National Ambulance Service and will commence this week and also patients in our acute hospitals. The HSE has acknowledge that there were problems with communication with GPs generally and that some issues have arisen with the distribution of vaccines to some GP Practices over the last week and we wish to apologise to GP practices, their teams and the patients who may have been impacted by these.

The vaccination programme is limited internationally by the supply of vaccine and our programme to date has ensured that all available vaccine is distributed and administered as quickly as possible. The supply required for the completion of the programme by mid-May remains on target. However, due to a re-profiling of the Moderna vaccine delivery schedule, the total vaccine doses available for distribution in the coming weeks is now slightly less. The available vaccine supply is approximately 15% less than the required amount to meet the total over-80 cohort. This means GPs may not receive the total order for these coming weeks but, in all instances, GPs will be advised on the amounts they will receive and any shortfall in vaccine for the over-80 age group will be allocated in the next order and so on through March with a significant ramp-up in vaccine delivery in April as increased supplies arrive in Ireland. Unfortunately, these supply issues are outside of our control. However, if any additional supply becomes available, this will be provided to General Practitioners at the earliest opportunity. Importantly, we expect that the totality of the over-70s programme will be completed within the original timeframe of mid-May.

With regard to the Vaccinator Role, the Statutory Instrument (SI 698 of 2020) is the relevant SI which includes pharmacists as one of those disciplines which can vaccinate for the purpose of rolling out the Covid Vaccination



Programme subject to their being registered with their regulatory body (PSI) and subject to agreement by the regulatory body on required training. (The DoH introduced a new SI (81 of 2021) which added dentists and optometrists to the list of disciplines approved as vaccinators subject to registration etc.)

The COVID-19 Vaccinator Recruitment Initiative for the HSE is being supported by CPL Healthcare. Registered optometrists and registered dentists can apply to become COVID-19 Vaccinators from 2pm, Tuesday 2nd, March 2021.

If you do not have a GP the [COVID-19 helpline](#) Lo-call: [1850 24 1850](#) for advice or contact any GP in your area. The COVID vaccine is free and you do not need a PPS number.

COVID Implementation plan attached.

Further details on the roll out of the vaccine are available at <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/rollout-covid-19-vaccines-ireland.html>

Operational guidance on the vaccine for GPs is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/gmscontracts/2019agreement/operational-guidance-for-vaccination-in-general-practice-%E2%80%93-people-aged-70-and-older.pdf>

A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

**National Community Strategy and Planning**

<b>W93Q2945</b>	Riverwalk Respite House Are all Respite Beds (3) presently available for service users in Riverwalk Respite House? Will the HSE and the service disability deliver proper Respite facilities and increased bed capacity numbers for the registered users within Inishowen who seek residential respite?	<b>Cllr A Doherty</b>
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Riverwalk Respite House is currently occupied by two persons since July 2020 as a result of emergency respite admission further to the impacts of the pandemic. There are currently no other service users availing of respite within this service. Since the two emergency admissions in July 2020 only one other individual on the respite caseload is assessed as compatible and this person received respite care for a duration of five weeks due to family circumstances. Neither the person nor the family have wished to avail of any additional respite since then.

There is currently a plan in place to provide alternative accommodation for the two persons who currently avail of emergency respite in Riverwalk. One person is due to move to another HSE community home and the second person will be moving to a property that has been identified as suitable to the person's needs. The funding has been approved and the process of preparing the property and sourcing staff is under way. When the plan is concluded, Riverwalk will revert to providing respite to people living in the community.

Alternative overnight respite is being offered in other areas of Donegal and home support respite is being offered.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2946</b>	How many staff recruited with clearances now granted are now in situ to enable the four residential service users move to Dunshenny House? Has agreement on use of Milltown House including use of Hydrotherapy Services and leasing arrangements progressed and concluded with Friends of JCM committee?	<b>Cllr A Doherty</b>
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The current position regarding staff for the Dunsheany House is:

- 1 x Staff Nurse appointed

- 5 x Care Assistants appointed
- 3 x Care Assistants awaiting Garda Vetting clearance

Milltown House:

Further agreement on the use of Milltown House to include lease arrangements and the use of the hydrotherapy facility has not concluded. CHO1 Disability Services will be engaging further with the Friends of JCM committee to reach agreement.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2947</b>	How many people in each of the 15 Provisional Vaccine Allocation groups have received the vaccine in each CHO within the Forum area? Are there targets for the number of people who should receive the vaccine on a weekly basis within each CHO?	<b>Cllr J Connolly</b>
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As the vaccination programme has just commenced in the wider community, the priority is to ensure the safe and effective running of the programme. It is not possible to provide the breakdown of data requested at this time. Validated data will be available upon completion of the vaccination rollout.

Daily vaccination data is published on the HSE's Vaccination programme dashboard at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/integrated-information-service-vaccination-programme-dashboard.html>, and the Government of Ireland's COVID-19 Data Hub <https://covid19ireland-geohive.hub.arcgis.com/>. Please note it is 2 days in arrears.

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A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

**T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2948</b>	How many people are on a waiting list to avail of community adult psychological services in the area of CHO 2? Can the list be categorised into those who have received a referral and are waiting for an initial appointment and those who have had an initial assessment and are awaiting therapeutic intervention?	<b>Cllr J Connolly</b>
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Service	No of Service Users referred to Psychology & Waiting	No of Service users seen for Initial Assessment and Waiting for therapeutic Intervention	Total
Adult Mental Health Galway Roscommon	222	75	297
Primary Care Adult Galway Roscommon	40	5	45
Adult Mental Health Mayo	22	0	22
Primary Care Adult Mayo	7 –have declined remote apps and await face to face	0	7

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West**

<b>W93Q2949</b>	When will the planning application be lodged for the New Accident and Emergency unit at Galway University Hospital?	<b>Cllr J Connolly</b>
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The project design team for the ED project at UHG were requested to assess the feasibility of including the development of the Women and Children's element of the new block, at the same time as the development of the lower ED floors. This feasibility report has been completed and has been considered by the HSE nationally. The intention is to now update the business case and progress the overall full project scope. The project timeline including the timeline for obtaining planning permission for the new block will also be updated .

In parallel, the design of enabling works for the site which impacts the critical path is being progressed. We have also proceeded with both Winter ED works to create a green stream ED and also the commencement of construction works in relation to the Interim ED building at UHG as part of overall response to COVID-19 and overall site needs.

**J. Hoare, Asst National Director Estates (West)**

<b>W93Q2950</b>	How many key workers are employed with CAMHS Community Mental Health Team in Galway? How many children are currently assigned to each key worker?	<b>Cllr J Connolly</b>
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All clinical members of CAMHS Community Mental Health Teams provide a keyworker for CAMHS service users. There are currently 95.96 clinicians on the Community Mental Health Team and the Acute Inpatient Unit.

The total number of active cases is recorded annually in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter statistics. Quarter 3 2020 statistics are as follows:

- South Galway 710
- North Galway 588
- West Galway 356
- Roscommon/East Galway 514

These are due to be reported again in the March statistics i.e. Q1 2021.

Each service user is assigned a key worker and in some cases depending on presentation they may have more than one key worker. As previously indicated we do not have the electronic systems in place to allow use to identify how many service users are assigned to each key worker. Currently, however we envisage that a National I.T. system should have this facility in the future.

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West**

<b>W93Q2951</b>	Please provide an update on the operation of CT Scanner at PUHB since last report in Nov 2020 to date. Have any more breakdowns in service occurred? If so please provide a report in terms of operational hours, patient examinations impacted and waiting list impacts. Has a capital submission been lodged at this stage for a second scanner at PUHB and has a suitable site location been identified to accommodate it within PUHB	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>
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Since November 2020 – the CT Scanner has been out of operation on one occasion from the 26<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 11:30am to Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 16:30 hrs. Galway University Hospital facilitated diagnostics during this period.

As this occurred over the Christmas period – no Outpatient lists were affected and 3 patients were transferred to GUH for a CT Scan.

The identified priority for Portiuncula Hospital is the replacement of the Fluro X Ray machine (Siemens Iconos R200 installed 2001). The replacement of the Siemens Somatom 64 slice CT (install date 2007) is the next equipment

priority thereafter. The replacement of this CT machine in its existing location is not considered ideal due to space constraints and downtime implications. Therefore the proposed approach is to locate the replacement machine in a more suitable location. This will require infrastructural works to be carried out in the first instance. Capital funding will be sought for this approach with a view to initiating the project later this year and progressing the works and equipment replacement in 2022.

**A Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2952</b>	County Galway Comhairle na nÓg have undertaken a survey on the mental wellbeing of 280 young people in second level schools in Galway-ages 12-19, identifying that 53% of respondents in their survey were not aware of any mental health supports in their area. 19% reported their mental wellbeing was poor. 59% believed there is a stigma around mental health <a href="#">issues</a> . <a href="#">How</a> will the HSE address the need to increase public awareness of the mental health supports available among second level school going young people, and how will they deliver mental health messages and supports to students during restricted conditions? What efforts are being made to target awareness and services in Irish language to youth communities in Connemara?	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>
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The *Connecting for Life, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2018-2020* was launched in 2017 [ConnectingforLifeGMR](#). It is one of 17 local, multi-agency suicide action plans, developed throughout Ireland, which align with the goals and objectives in *Connecting for Life: Ireland’s National Strategy to Reduce Suicide*, so as to ensure their local implementation, while also responding to particular local needs, strengths and challenges ([ConnectingforLife](#)). *Connecting for Life* nationally is being extended to 2024. A complete set of revised local action plans are also in the process of being developed to reflect activities until 2024.

In Galway, Mayo and Roscommon a Connecting for Life Implementation Steering Committee has been established, with wide representation from all key stakeholders. It is chaired by the Head of Mental Health Services, HSE.

The following are examples of some of the actions being undertaken in the *Connecting for Life Galway, Mayo and Roscommon Suicide Prevention Action Plan* to address the need to increase public awareness of the mental health supports available among second level school going young people and to target awareness and services in ‘as gaeilge’ to youth communities in Connemara:

- A ‘Westbewell’ Working Group was established in September 2020. Its membership includes those supporting young people. This working group aims are to: develop a coordinated Mental Health Communications Strategy for Community Healthcare West, including the promotion of timely, safe, evidence-based mental health messages and mental health supports; develop and build awareness of the Westbewell brand in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon; and support/reinforce national mental health campaigns at a local level. 'Numbers if you need them' materials (flyer, poster and wallet cards) are being widely distributed, including through traditional and social media in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon and online via [www.westbewell.ie](http://www.westbewell.ie) (see [www.westbewell.ie/flyer](http://www.westbewell.ie/flyer), [www.westbewell.ie/poster](http://www.westbewell.ie/poster) and [www.westbewell.ie/walletcard](http://www.westbewell.ie/walletcard)).

The home page of [www.westbewell.ie](http://www.westbewell.ie) will be translated into Irish.

The next phase of this work currently underway is planning and delivering a communications action with young people, which optimises social media opportunities. To date, we have received feedback from young people linked through mental health services and an adolescent project in the region in relation to: where they currently receive their messages on mental health; and what they identify are the best ways of promoting these messages among their peers [Goal 1.3.1(a)].

- A project is currently underway in the development to strategically place Community Health and Well Being Boards in local sports clubs throughout Galway City and County, as part of a Sports Partnership, Mental Health Ireland and HSE initiative, funded by Galway City Council and Health Ireland, Galway County. This will

help to promote supports for young people, for example, Childline, Text 50808 and Spunout.ie [Goal 2.2.1(a)].

- The START online, interactive suicide prevention programme, which is free to complete, has been made available by the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention throughout Ireland, including the West. This programme is for those aged 18 years and older who would like to learn the skills and knowledge to keep others safe from suicide, including the adult school community who are engaging with second level students on an ongoing basis (to book a place see [START](#)) [Goal 3.3.2].
- Youth Work Ireland Galway continues to provide a free counselling service to young people (aged 12-21 years) in Galway City and County in 4 locations (Galway City, Loughrea, Tuam and Ballinasloe) over 16 hours weekly. This service is part funded by the HSE. An online service is being provided during the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, Youth Work Ireland received funding from the Children and Young People's Services Committees through the Community Resilience Fund to provide counselling in new areas of Galway County, i.e. Gort, Athenry, Oughterard and An Ceathrú Rua. The funding is short term, offering 64 sessions across these four additional areas.

The aim is to provide this service through Irish in Connemara [Goal 3.3.6(b)].

- Training on evidence-based wellbeing programmes, for example, MindOut, is usually delivered to teachers as part of the SPHE programme by HSE Health Promotion and Improvement through the Education Centre. However, with Covid restrictions, all training is currently on hold [Goal 3.1.6(c)].
- The Planet Youth project is an international evidence-based primary prevention model, developed in Iceland, which is being led out by the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon for a number of years. Part of this work involves administering a comprehensive lifestyle questionnaire to the 15-16 year olds in schools and Youthreach settings. This survey includes questions on young people's mental health. The data returned from the survey is used to inform the development of suitable interventions in the community that will help address the known risk and protective for young people and thus improve outcomes. A report is currently being compiled for data gathered in 2020 [Goal 3.2.1(b)].
- A National Mental Health and Wellbeing Promotion Plan is currently in development which aims to respond to the mental health and wellbeing needs of young people, based on findings from national surveys and studies carried out with this cohort [Goal 1.1.2(a)].

### **Jigsaw**

Jigsaw is an early intervention, primary care service for youth with mental health issues. Jigsaw Galway offers free brief therapeutic support to young people aged 12-25 to help them to cope with the mental health challenges they may face. These challenges can include low mood, anxiety, sleep issues and stress. While supports were traditionally in the form of in person sessions, the restrictions of Covid 19 have seen Jigsaw successfully adapt to providing therapeutic interventions through video and phone sessions in addition to in person face to face appointments.

### **Schools**

Jigsaw Galway has always worked closely with schools and communities across the county in providing resources and workshops. In 2019, we further developed our engagement with schools by piloting the One Good School programme which was rolled out to 5 schools in the county. The One Good School initiative supports the mental health and well-being of young people by developing a shared responsibility across the whole school community – including school leadership teams, teachers, parents and students and was delivered through interactive workshops, online tools and resources, and peer education programmes. While this pilot is currently being completed, Phase 2 is about to be rolled out and Jigsaw Galway will be working with schools interested in being involved in the next phase of this programme.

In response to the the challenging times that schools have experienced over the last 12 months following consultation with our school partners including our One Good Schools, we have developed The Jigsaw Schools Hub – our new mental health and well-being resource for schools. This Jigsaw Schools Hub provides supportive tools and resources which may indeed make the transition back to the classroom a little easier for staff, students and parents – we are currently communicating with schools in the county in relation to the new Jigsaw Schools Hub. [www.jigsaw.ie/schools](http://www.jigsaw.ie/schools) provides a growing range of resources for school staff, created in collaboration with young people, school staff, and parents. The resources contribute to delivering a mental health and well-being programme as part of the school curriculum and have been tailored to support school staff and students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This includes:

- An Introduction to youth mental health toolkit to help school staff to explore mental health and well-being with young people in the classroom.
- Ways for school staff to support and look after their own mental health.
- What school leaders can do to create a whole-school approach that supports staff and students with their mental health and well-being.

### **Community**

Jigsaw continues to work closely with the communities across the city and county to build confidence in supporting and promoting young people’s mental health. We offer 14 workshops to parents, guardians and adults who work with young people. Many of our workshops have been converted for online delivery, which enables the Jigsaw Galway team to continue to support communities even in times of Covid 19 restrictions. Our current online workshops include One Good Adult, Self-Care for One Good Adult, One Good Coach, 5 A Day for Mental Health, My Mental Health, What Helps? and It’s Time to Start Talking.

We are a member of the Galway Child & Young People’s Services Committee and also attend the Child and Family Support Network for Gort, Connemara, West Side and Athenry

Jigsaw Galway is a member of the Steering Committee of Planet Youth and the Jigsaw Galway Youth Advisory Panel has recently been involved in consulting on the new West Be Well Platform, [www.westbewell.ie](http://www.westbewell.ie). Our Youth Advisory Panel members actively promote the Jigsaw service among their peers and are about to commence a new project promoting the service through a poster and information campaign. They actively promote the service and positive mental health messages on Instagram.

To date in 2021, 41 % of young people who attended Jigsaw Galway for brief intervention support self-referred to the service, 35% were referred by a parent /guardian and 17% were referred by their GP. We continue to work with communities and schools to raise awareness of the services we provide to young people in Galway but we also work with other referral agents for example GPs and other services. We held an open morning in 2020 to provide general information on our supports and referral pathways and plan to engage again with these stakeholders later in 2021. We are also currently finalising an information pack for the Galway service which will be a valuable resource for stakeholders and referrers.

### **Online Supports**

Jigsaw Galway is part of the wider Jigsaw network and as a national organisation, we have a number of online and phone offerings available to young people, their parents/guardians, concerned others and those who work with young people. These include:

- Jigsaw Online <https://jigsawonline.ie/> which contains lots of information/reading on mental health and supporting young people with their mental health.
- web chats for young people with a trained member of staff to speak about any issue of concern they may wish to discuss.
- Group chats for young people aged 12-25 with a trained member of staff. Themes of such groups chats



include 'Coping with Lockdown' and 'Managing Anxiety'.

- An 'Ask a Jigsaw Clinician' feature where a young person can ask a mental health question or query and it will be answered by a Jigsaw Clinician
- Our Freephone Service 1800Jigsaw (544729) was set up in response to Covid 19 and provides mental health support and advice to young people, and parents or concerned adults. A Jigsaw Clinician can also be contacted for support and guidance by emailing [help@jigsaw.ie](mailto:help@jigsaw.ie). Jigsaw Clinicians are available to speak to young people/parents/concerned other Monday to Friday 1.00pm – 5.00pm.

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West**

<b>W93Q2953</b>	There has been a 66% rise in eating disorder admissions since beginning of the pandemic throughout Ireland. What level does this represent in CHO2? Is there a demographic analysis/ breakdown available for CHO2?	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>
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There were 2 Community Healthcare West Inpatient ED admissions up to February 2020 and which increased to 9 admissions in the 12 months to February 2021.

This is fully attributable to the Galway area, with Mayo/ Roscommon remaining relatively stable, year on year. All admissions were of female patients. Further demographic analysis would be difficult to anonymise and as such is not considered appropriate for publication due to its sensitivity.

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West**

<b>W93Q2954</b>	Please provide information on the new eating disorder treatment hub for children and adolescents which is to be set up in CHO2. How will this service operate? Details on the location, staffing and recruitment. When will this service be operational in CHO2 and what is the capacity?	<b>Cllr E Francis Parsons</b>
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In March, we received approval to proceed with recruitment of this team. Recruitment will begin immediately and the team when fully operational will consist of:

Location	Grade/Grade Code	WTE
<b>CHO2</b>	Consultant, General Adult	1
	Registrar	1
	Psychologist, Senior Clinical	1
	Social Worker, Senior Medical	1
	Clinical Nurse Manager Specialist 1 (Mental Health)	1
	Clinical Nurse Specialist (Mental Health)	1
	Occupational Therapist, Senior	0.5
	Dietician, Senior	1
	Consultant, General Adult	0.2
	Social Worker, Senior Medical	0.5
	Grade IV	1
<b>Total WTE</b>		<b>9.2</b>

The team will initially be based in Merlin Park in the CAMHS Connect site but once the team becomes fully operational a permanent base will be sought to facilitate the team in Galway City which will cover the 3 counties, Galway, Roscommon and Mayo.

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West**

<b>W93Q2955</b>	Can the Regional Health Forum West update on what process is in place for the Referral of Children to CAMHS assessment for Autism Spectrum/ADHD and why children of a certain age are referred from School to GP to CAHMS to early intervention team to Psychology service via NEPS to Assessment of Need team. Does the service in any way help parents who are unfamiliar	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>
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	with the criteria for each service and what services are in place to guide parents in need of such services?	
<p>Whilst CAMHS do not complete ASD assessments and the diagnostic service for ASD lies within Disability Services, it is common for young people who are referred to CAMHS with other difficulties to require an ASD assessment. Staff in CAMHS make this referral for parents, and support them through that process, providing information on the referral pathway. CAMHS will also make community referrals for supportive services as required for young people and families following assessment. On occasion when it is clear that there are complex mental health needs interacting with potential ASD, Mental Health Services have provided funding for an urgent ASD assessment, as this was considered to be in the best interests of the young person.</p> <p>CAMHS also provide a range of therapeutic modalities, including, - Play therapy, Systemic Family Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Eating Disorder (CBTE), Eye movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR), Psychodynamic Psychotherapy.</p> <p>CAMHS works collaboratively with our colleagues in the Autism Support Service, and provide outreach clinics for the ASD service and regularly contribute to joint MDT meetings to care plan for young people with dual diagnoses of ASD and a moderate to severe mental illness.</p> <p>In relation to ADHD, CAMHS offers a multidisciplinary assessment, which may include meeting with the young person and their family to gather a detailed psychosocial history, and complete a mental state examination, liaison with education professionals and other involved healthcare professionals and as well as use of internationally recognised standardised assessment tools. With consent, a diagnosis can be shared with the young person's school, and educational supports can be arranged. CAMHS staff also contribute to the roll out of community parenting interventions to the parents of all young people with ADHD.</p> <p>CAMHS are committed to providing the appropriate interventions to young people with ADHD.</p> <p><b>John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1</b></p>		
W93Q2956	<p>Can the Regional Health Forum West Advise?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What mental health services if any will be provided at the two new primary care centres in North Sligo</li> <li>• Will there be any accommodation for Mental Health staff at these centres if required?</li> <li>• Are there any plans to build a purpose-built hub for Mental health in North Sligo?</li> <li>• Are there imminent plans to increase frontline staff in the community mental health services in Sligo?</li> <li>• Are there plans to fill current vacant roles such as Mental Health Co-Ordinator role?</li> <li>• What plans are in place to bring staffing levels of Dialectical behaviour therapy and Cognitive behavioural Therapy to a level that will reduce waiting times.</li> </ul>	Cllr D Gilroy
<p><b><i>What mental health services if any will be provided at the two new primary care centres in North Sligo?</i></b>  <b><i>Will there be any accommodation for Mental Health staff at these centres if required?</i></b>  The new primary care centres have bookable rooms to facilitate outreach mental health services as requires</p> <p><b><i>Are there any plans to build a purpose-built hub for Mental Health in North Sligo?</i></b>  There are no plans to build a built in purpose HUB in North Sligo, however services will be provided on an outreach basis as required</p> <p><b><i>Are there imminent plans to increase frontline staff in the Community Mental Health Services in Sligo?</i></b></p>		

SLMHS have increased frontline staff in the community Mental Health Services in Sligo over the last 6 months. In addition to these the Early Intervention Programme (EIP) and the Adults with ADHD programme have been launched within SLMHS and additional dedicated staff have been appointed to each of these programmes.

**Are there plans to fill current vacant roles such as Mental Health Co-Ordinator role?**

At present SLMHS have two Adult Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTS), one of which has a team coordinator. In addition SLMHS have a Psychiatry of Old Age (POA) Team and a Community Rehabilitation and Recovery (CRRS) Team both of which has a team coordinator and a CAMHS team which does not have a team coordinator. SLMHS therefore have two teams without a team coordinator at present. The vacant co-ordinator post will be filled immediately following national agreement between the HSE and relevant unions. It is intended that team co-ordinators reflect the multi-disciplinary membership of the teams.

**What plans are in place to bring staffing levels of Dialectical behaviour therapy and Cognitive behavioural Therapy to a level that will reduce waiting times.**

Adult Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)

The Sligo/Leitrim Adult Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Service was established in 2013. It has consistently provided an evidenced based intervention to service users, and engaged in ongoing evaluation of its clinical outcomes.

A number of proposals are currently being considered by the Area Mental Health Management Team to increase staffing levels within the Sligo/Leitrim Adult Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Service. These include:

- i. Releasing SLMHS staff members who have previously trained in DBT and are interested in returning to the DBT Service, from other duties for 1.5 days per week to re-join the DBT Service.
- ii. Facilitating some existing DBT Team members to increase their commitment (in terms of hours per week) to the DBT Service (this requires reducing their time commitment to their substantive role). Therefore this will need to be evaluated against demands in the core services.
- iii. Identifying suitable SLMHS staff to train in DBT.

We hope that these considerations will be progressed, and waiting times will consequently be reduced for this highly valued, evidence based intervention.

Adult Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

As regards CBT, Sligo Leitrim Mental Health Service have a long tradition of delivering a high quality CBT service. In addition to the CBT service in each of our Adult Community Mental Health Teams, SLMHS have in the past 12 months begun the roll out of a CBT service to the Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) programme. This will provide psychotherapy to service users who present with a new onset of a severe mental illness or psychosis.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2957</b>	Can the Regional Health Forum West provide an update on any provision to provide additional Consultant Geriatrician services for Sligo Leitrim West Cavan area to care for and achieve early diagnosis of Dementia/Alzheimer's and to develop 7 Day care plans for those suffering with this condition who wish to continue to live in the community? Are there any plans to carry out genetic testing for Alzheimer's? Does the Regional Health Forum West have any plans to introduce a Fair Deal type plan for home care that would allow families to care for relatives who suffer from Alzheimer's in their own homes?	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>
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I am pleased to confirm that the recruitment campaign for the post of Geriatrician (integrated care) in Sligo was launched on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 with the closing date in mid-April.

At present there is a Clinical Nurse specialist in Dementia care and an Older Person's Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner (R ANP) with a special interest in cognitive issues. Both these staff members provide domiciliary care to clients and families living with Dementia/ Alzheimer's. They work under the clinical governance of a consultant

geriatrician who provides outreach services to the community from Sligo University Hospital.

Post Covid, CHO 1 in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Society is offering a variety of services for respite care including respite in the client's own home. This is offered for a number of block hours per week based on needs and risk assessment. The plan of care is tailored to individual needs and offers the carer some much need time out.

The government has indicated its intention to introduce a new home support scheme on a statutory basis similar to the Fair Deal Scheme in Nursing homes.

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2958</b>	Can the Regional Health Forum West Provide an update on what Paediatric /Child Psychology services are available in the Northwest for Children with acquired brain injuries and other Mental Health Issues as Children in the region have been referred to Adult Services and to services in outside the region.	<b>Cllr D Gilroy</b>
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All Children with complex needs including children with Acquired Brain Injury are referred to the Children's Disability Network Team which provides services to all children and young people in the 0-18 age group. The Children's Disability Network Teams operate an interdisciplinary model of care which comprises of Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech & Language Therapy, Psychology, Social Work and assigned Key Workers.

Children with Acquired Brain Injury and mental health difficulties are also referred to CAMHS and a joint care plan to address the child's needs would be developed.

In some cases where the child or the young person's needs are assessed as non-complex, their supports are provided through the appropriate disciplines in Primary Care Services.

In respect of the Mental Health Services specific query there are four [4] CAMHS teams in the Northwest regional encompassing 3 county areas, namely: two [2] for the catchment area of counties Sligo, Leitrim /West Cavan and two [2] for Donegal.

The HSE has been investing on the enhancement of the supports provided by these teams in recent years and this has been impacted by attracting and retaining the specialisms that CAMHS Teams require.

- In Donegal Mental Health Service a plan was set in place to develop a third CAMHS team and in that regard we have now secured 3 full time HSE Consultants for the whole county, as up to October 2020 there was only one [1] HSE Consultant in place. The established Heads of Discipline Team for Donegal are currently developing a waiting list reduction initiative and we hope this will be approved and progressed by Q3 2021.
- In Sligo Leitrim Mental Health Services, I can confirm that through an extensive recruitment campaign two [2] full time Psychologist are now at the final stages of the recruitment process and will be taking up their posts in Q2 of 2021. Other gaps such as Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy due to maternity leaves are also being replaced and awaiting recruitment clearance. These measures will give support to many situations in the communities served by these teams

**John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1**

<b>W93Q2959</b>	Noting that private health insurance companies owe Sligo University Hospital in excess of €2.4million in fees and further noting that €1.3million in fees has been outstanding for in excess of one year; the Forum be provided with an explanation as to why the HSE allows private health insurance companies to delay payment of fees for such a significant length of time.	<b>Cllr D Bree</b>
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The HSE follows the appropriate procedures in terms of follow up debt, including debt outstanding from insurance

companies. There can be multiple factors why debt is left unpaid by the insurance companies, including, queries in relation to length of stay, insurance cover of individual patients or queries on patients clinically discharged but still in hospital. Debt outstanding from insurance companies is followed up continuously and rigorously by the HSE.

**A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2960</b>	Can you provide a time frame for the return of Adult Disability Day and Respite Services in Co. Clare please.	<b>Clr S Crawford</b>
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In line with Public Health guidance and the "Framework for Resumption of Adult Disability Services" which set out clear guidelines around the reopening of day services in a safe way, the HSE both nationally and locally worked very closely with all Service Providers over the summer months in 2020 to ensure the earliest possible resumption of services in August /September 2020.

However in complying with public health guidance and the need to keep all service users safe, it has been necessary to reduce capacity across services whilst at the same time ensuring that all services users were provided with a level of service. It should be pointed out that the redeployment of day service staff to support those residing in residential services throughout Covid 19 has impacted on the level of day service available. This in effect has meant that some service users are receiving a reduced day service compared to the level of service they received pre Covid 19. It should be pointed out that all individual cases are looked at on a case by case basis in terms of their need for additional supports.

The resumption of Day Services for people with a disability has been a key priority for Government and additional funding both in terms of revenue and capital was provided to the HSE in the final quarter of 2020 to support the resumption of day services. As a result of this additional funding, the HSE engaged with all Day Service Providers to ensure that all affected service users saw an increase in the level of day service being provided to them. Day Service Providers in Clare received their share of funding and have recruited additional staff to support the resumption of Services as well as utilising once off capital funding to complete adaptations/ renovations in their premises in order to increase capacity.

Whilst it is difficult to provide an exact timeframe for the full return to Day and Respite Services due the Covid 19 and the necessity to comply with public health guidelines, Service Providers in Clare have confirmed that some services have fully resumed where other services are operating at 70 % to 85 % capacity which is very positive. It should be noted that a number of individuals have chosen not to return to their Day or Respite Service while Level 5 restrictions are in place. Where this has happened, regular contact is maintained with these individuals and their families to support them.

HSE Disability Services and Service Providers in Clare are fully committed to the full resumption of day and respite services whilst endeavouring to keep everybody safe and well.

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2961</b>	Can you advise re the return of both speech and language therapy and occupational therapy for both children and adults in Co. Clare.	<b>Clr S Crawford</b>
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Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy Services were reduced in line with National guidelines due to the need to respond to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Both HSE Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy Services for adults and children continued to be delivered to priority cases throughout the Covid 19 pandemic.

A number of Speech and Language Therapists for child and adult services who were redeployed to support the HSE Covid 19 response have now been returned to their substantive roles and have resumed services for children and adults in Co Clare.

All services are delivered in line with the National guidelines around Infection Prevention and control measures to

ensure safety of patients and staff. A number of Occupational Therapists in Co. Clare who were also redeployed to support the HSE Covid response services have returned to their posts since March 8<sup>th</sup> 2021.

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2962</b>	Can you clarify exactly what Community psychiatric services are available as per the response of Maria Bridgeman to the last forum in Feb.	<b>Cllr S Crawford</b>
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The Mid West Mental Health Service has remained open with services available for both new and existing service users throughout all phases of the Covid Pandemic. The referral pathway to Mental Health Services remains the same with access through the GP. Emergency appointments are available for existing Service Users through their Community Mental Health Team. Throughout the Mid West mental health services are delivered in the community via our network of community mental health teams. In Clare our Adult Community Mental Health Services are delivered through 4 sector community mental health teams – these are based in Ennis, Shannon, Kilrush and Lisdoonvarna. Each of these services is delivered by a multidisciplinary team including psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, social workers and a team of nurses. These services operate 9-5 Monday to Friday. Access to acute services has remained the same through the Acute Psychiatric Units in Ennis and Limerick. Crisis services also continue to be available at the Emergency Department at University Hospital Limerick for both existing and new service users and can be contacted on 061 301111 (24/7). Additional Crisis Services are available in Clare (087 7999857) and Tipperary (086 830 6663) until 3am.

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2963</b>	Can you clarify the situation re the availability of ECT in UHL and the reason it is not available in Ennis General in the interim following the response of Maria Bridgeman to the last forum in Feb.	<b>Cllr S Crawford</b>
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ECT is available now in UHL for the region. ECT requires very specialist training and facilities as well as anaesthetist oversight. These standards are met in UHL for the region.

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2964</b>	How many people are currently awaiting initial assessment by a consultant for cataract surgery in Galway? How many people are currently awaiting to undergo cataract surgery in Galway. What is the current waiting time for assessment and cataract surgery in G.U.H?	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>
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There is approximately 725 patients awaiting initial assessment for cataract surgery.

The below table outlines the number of patients awaiting to undergo cataract surgery in Galway:

Specialty	Ophthalmology																			
Hospital ICD10 code	(Multiple Items)																			
procname	(All)																			
Count of Hospital Name	Column Labels																			
Row Labels	0-3 Mths	3-6 Mths	6-9 Mths	9-12 Mths	12-15 Mths	15-18 Mths	18-24 Mths	24-36 Mths	36-48 Mths	Grand Total										
ACTIVE	150	140	52	12	18	12	9	1	1	395										
PREADMIT	3	4								7										
SUSPENSION	4	62	57	69	11		2	1		206										
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>608</b>										

Active patients are those on the waiting list without being appointed, Preadmit is the patient has a TCI date and suspended for the most part are patients who have been sent out to the private sector (via the NTPF) for treatment.

Assessment is currently around 18 months to 2 years, prior to COVID it was around 9 months, however with the backlog that has been created over this and the previous lock down has had a significant impact.

The average time waiting to date for patients currently on the waiting list is 27 weeks, the majority of patients will receive their surgery within 12-15 months of being list. Most of the cataracts are being delivered through the NTPF outsourcing process at present.

**A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2965</b>	Does The National Ambulance Service have any plans to increase and expand the current Emergency Ambulance Service in South or North Connemara? Can I also get an update in relation to the proposed base that was to be previously established in Maam Cross. Why has this not been progressed to date?	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>
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Not available at time of printing.

<b>W93Q2966</b>	How many people have applied for various positions within HSE West in the years 2018, 2019, 2020 have undertaken interviews in Irish for these positions. Are all vacancies in Gaeltacht area's of the county filled by people who speak Irish and is it a condition of employment of the HSE that people working in Gaeltacht area's can speak Irish? If not what is the position of HSE West in relation to the use of the Irish Language amongst staff in Gaeltacht area's?	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>
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Since 2017, HSE in conjunction with Údarás na Gaeltachta has awarded scholarships to 20 Gaeltacht students to pursue courses in Medicine, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Pharmacy at third level, in order to cater for the HSE's future requirements for Irish speaking healthcare staff. Five of these students are currently employed as SLTs, Nurses, Doctors by Saolta University Healthcare Group and CHO1 & CHO2.

Candidates applying for posts in Community Healthcare West do not routinely undertake an oral Irish Assessment at the interview stage unless it is for a bespoke campaign where it is essential due the requirements of the post.

Candidates are interviewed in English and placed on the relevant panel in order of merit. When approved posts are submitted to Recruitment with a post specific requirement for the Irish language, the post is expressed to the panel specifying this criteria. The candidate highest in order of merit will then undergo an oral Irish Assessment which they must pass prior to being offered the post.

Year	No. of Posts with specific requirements for Irish	No. of Candidates who undertake an Oral Irish Assessment
2018	0	0
2019	2	2
2020	0	0
2021	1	1 CHO Area 2

There were no interviews conducted through Irish in the Saolta University Healthcare Group.

**Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West/A. Cosgrove, Chief Operating Officer, Saolta University Healthcare Group**

<b>W93Q2967</b>	Can I get an update in relation to the haemochromatosis clinic's being run in Galway. How many people are currently awaiting assessment and venesection at the clinic and do services at the clinic's continue to be curtailed in light of Covid-19? How many haemochromatosis clinic's are in Galway and do G.P's provide venesection procedures to treat haemochromatosis? Are there any risks associated with the curtailment of these clinics for patient's?	<b>Cllr D Ó Cualáin</b>
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There are approximately 340 people awaiting assessment and venesection at the clinic.

Haemochromatosis Venesection Clinics at University Hospital Galway resumed since mid- February - 10 to 15 patients seen daily (exception Tuesday when Hepatology Clinic taking place :3 patients are venesected)  
By Mid-March they should be back to 22 patients per day which is approximately 75% pre- COVID intake in order to

comply with social distancing.

Tuam Primary Care Centre: weekend clinic resumed mid-February with 10 patients each Saturday (Community Intervention Team) – patients receive first 4 venesections at UHG clinic and then if suitable referred to the weekend clinic.

GP practices - Following review at Outpatient clinics some patients can be referred back to their GP for venesection if they meet certain criteria.

**A. Cosgrove COO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2968</b>	What daily / weekly community based supports are available for North Tipperary users for the over 25s who suffer from severe mental health service users?	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>
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HSE Mid West Community Healthcare has two Community Mental Health Teams based in North Tipperary, one in Thurles and one in Nenagh. This service is provided by a multidisciplinary team which consists of Psychiatry, Nursing, Social Work, Clinical Psychology and Occupational Therapy. Our Community Mental Health Teams in North Tipperary also have the additional resource of Tenancy Support Workers who are employed in partnership with Focus Ireland. The Community Mental Health teams operate during business hours 9-5, Monday to Friday. There is an out of hours crisis service available also across all of North Tipperary. These teams offer service to people from 18 years and upwards.

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2969</b>	How many people from the Mid West region suffering mental health issues are languishing in Prison awaiting assessment for the Central mental Hospital and what is the average waiting time ?	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>
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Not available at time of printing.

<b>W93Q2970</b>	What is the protocol for discharge of patients from the Mental Health Psychiatric units serving North Tipperary?	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>
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Patients are treated by their Community Mental Health Team while they are in hospital. When in hospital they have a multidisciplinary care plan and as they move towards discharge all plans for follow up and treatment in the community are included on this care plan. Once discharged the Community Mental Health team will have a follow up plan for the person in the community – each plan is different and based on the specific needs of the individual.

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2971</b>	What is the in bed capacity of Mental health facilities in the Mid West?	<b>Cllr S Morris</b>
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Acute beds Ennis – 39  
 Acute beds Limerick – 42  
 Tearmann -15 Psychiatry of Old Age (approved centre)  
 Cappahard – 32 – using 16 Rehab & Psychiatry of Old Age (approved centre)

**M. Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Mid West Community Healthcare**

<b>W93Q2972</b>	Can I be provided with details of the process that ensures elderly patients of local GPs who are on long term leave, and who are being dealt with by a succession of locums on an ongoing basis, are not slipping through the cracks for Covid vaccination.	<b>Cllr C Murphy</b>
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Ireland's strategy is to distribute all COVID-19 vaccines that we receive, subject to ensuring availability of the second dose. At the beginning of last week, Ireland had received approximately 520,000 vaccine doses and by the end of the week approximately 500,000 doses were administered, a measure of the programme's efficiency. Vaccines continue to be administered very quickly after their arrival into the country. At the moment, vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on manufacturers meeting their supply commitments.

In relation to General Practitioners, the position is that at the conclusion of the first phase rollout of the programme last weekend, the HSE has confirmed that the majority of patients aged 85 years and over have received their first dose of the vaccine as scheduled. GPs have also begun administration of vaccine to people aged 80-84. In total over 1,300 GP practices, representing in excess of 3000 GPs and their Practice Teams have delivered over 90,000 vaccines by last weekend and a further 37,000 vaccines being distributed this week (w/c 8 March). The programme has also involved a number of large scale GP clinics, which have taken place in the Helix DCU, MTU in Cork and Merlin Park Galway with over 1,500 over 85's receiving the vaccine at these locations.

There are a very small number of practices, less than 30, who are due to receive first delivery this week for their over 85s and it is also intended to commence the vaccination of those who are homebound as arrangements have been put in place in conjunction with GP's, local community teams and the National Ambulance Service and will commence this week and also patients in our acute hospitals. The HSE has acknowledge that there were problems with communication with GPs generally and that some issues have arisen with the distribution of vaccines to some GP Practices over the last week and we wish to apologise to GP practices, their teams and the patients who may have been impacted by these.

The vaccination programme is limited internationally by the supply of vaccine and our programme to date has ensured that all available vaccine is distributed and administered as quickly as possible. The supply required for the completion of the programme by mid-May remains on target. However, due to a re-profiling of the Moderna vaccine delivery schedule, the total vaccine doses available for distribution in the coming weeks is now slightly less. The available vaccine supply is approximately 15% less than the required amount to meet the total over-80 cohort. This means GPs may not receive the total order for these coming weeks but, in all instances, GPs will be advised on the amounts they will receive and any shortfall in vaccine for the over-80 age group will be allocated in the next order and so on through March with a significant ramp-up in vaccine delivery in April as increased supplies arrive in Ireland. Unfortunately, these supply issues are outside of our control. However, if any additional supply becomes available, this will be provided to General Practitioners at the earliest opportunity. Importantly, we expect that the totality of the over-70s programme will be completed within the original timeframe of mid-May.

With regard to the Vaccinator Role, the Statutory Instrument (SI 698 of 2020) is the relevant SI which includes pharmacists as one of those disciplines which can vaccinate for the purpose of rolling out the Covid Vaccination Programme subject to their being registered with their regulatory body (PSI) and subject to agreement by the regulatory body on required training. (The DoH introduced a new SI (81 of 2021) which added dentists and optometrists to the list of disciplines approved as vaccinators subject to registration etc.)

The COVID-19 Vaccinator Recruitment Initiative for the HSE is being supported by CPL Healthcare. Registered optometrists and registered dentists can apply to become COVID-19 Vaccinators from 2pm, Tuesday 2nd, March 2021.

**If you do not have a GP the [COVID-19 helpline](#) Lo-call: [1850 24 1850](#) for advice or contact any GP in your area. The COVID vaccine is free and you do not need a PPS number.**

COVID Implementation plan attached.

Further details on the roll out of the vaccine are available at <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/rollout-covid-19-vaccines-ireland.html>

Operational guidance on the vaccine for GPs is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/gmscontracts/2019agreement/operational-guidance-for-vaccination-in-general-practice-%E2%80%93-people-aged-70-and-older.pdf>

A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

***National Community Strategy and Planning***



<b>W93Q2973</b>	Considering poor public lighting on the grounds of Ballina District Hospital would it be possible to have the lighting upgraded.	<b>Cllr J O'Hara</b>
The condition of the lighting on the grounds will be reviewed by Estates with service management in the context of overall priority investment requirements for Ballina District hospital.		
<b>J. Hoare, Asst National Director Estates (West)</b>		
<b>W93Q2974</b>	Considering the stressful conditions that our frontline staff have worked in our hospitals and nursing home since the start of Covid-19 would it be possible to for the Regional Health Board to have a counselling service available for those workers who would like to avail of this service.	<b>Cllr J O'Hara</b>
<p><b>COVID-19 Supports</b>  COVID-19 has created an unprecedented challenge for health care staff, which has led to a need for greater supports. These supports are available to all HSE Staff.</p> <p><b>HSE Supports</b></p> <p><b>1. Coronavirus Staff Support</b>  Including information on policies, procedures, guidelines, testing, training, working from home, safety in the workplace and health and wellbeing.  <a href="https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/coronavirus/">https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/coronavirus/</a></p> <p><b>2. Minding your wellbeing during Coronavirus outbreak</b>  <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/COVID-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html">https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/COVID-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html</a></p> <p><b>3. Mental Health Supports and services during Coronavirus</b>  <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/services/mental-health-supports-and-services-during-coronavirus/">https://www2.hse.ie/services/mental-health-supports-and-services-during-coronavirus/</a></p> <p><b>4. Returning to Work Advice:</b>  Advice on how to protect yourself and others from coronavirus (COVID-19) if returning to work and what to do if you develop symptoms at work  <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/returning-to-work-safely.html">https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/returning-to-work-safely.html</a></p> <p><b>5. Coronavirus Posters and Resources:</b>  <a href="https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/">https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/</a></p> <p><b>6. Silver Cloud Health</b>  Online mental health service SilverCloud Health is giving free access to all HSE staff to four self-directed online programmes. These include dealing with stress, building resilience, improving your sleep and space from COVID-19.  <a href="https://hse.silvercloudhealth.com/onboard/hsestaff/">https://hse.silvercloudhealth.com/onboard/hsestaff/</a></p> <p><b>7. Phone line to help healthcare workers</b>  A dedicated phone line for all healthcare workers is available. It has been set up to give staff and managers information and advice during the coronavirus outbreak.  Callsave 1850 420 420.  Lines are open from Monday to Friday: 9.00am to 5.00pm.</p> <p><b>8. Employee Assistance Programme</b>  The Employee Assistance Programme is a work-based support service for staff. It is a confidential independent service which supports employees with psychosocial issues (psychological and social factors that influence mental health) which may be personal or work-related. The service is free and available to all HSE employees. Further details at: <a href="https://workwell.ie/contact-list/contact-your-local-employee-assistance-programme/">https://workwell.ie/contact-list/contact-your-local-employee-assistance-programme/</a></p>		

### **Psychosocial Supports (Galway, Mayo and Roscommon)**

'Psychosocial' refers to the practical, psychological and social needs that people may experience during a crisis. Each CHO has a psychology manager who leads the psychosocial response for Major Emergencies and co-ordinates the Health Service Psychosocial Management Team (HSPMT). Our HSPMT has a broad representation from CHW community services, Saolta and Tusla. Working together, a number of Psycho-social Responses have been developed for staff and the public during COVID-19.

- 1. Psychological First Aid (PFA) for staff.** The aim of PFA is to support people in a crisis situation. People are generally resilient but when an extreme event occurs anyone can find themselves struggling at times. The PFA service aims to provide support to help staff get back on track. All HSE staff can contact the PFA call-back service by e-mailing [Psychosocial.GMR@hse.ie](mailto:Psychosocial.GMR@hse.ie). Staff will then be called back within 24 hours during office hours by a psychologist who will listen, help them to prioritise their needs, explore ways to cope and guide them to appropriate resources or services if needed. Staff may wish to have a follow-up contact and may also use the PFA service on another occasion as required.
- 2. Psychological First Aid Briefings for Staff.** Our Psychology Team have provided PFA Briefings for staff in a live online format. Each briefing last approximately 1 hour. There is a presentation on PFA followed by Questions and Answers. The briefing is based on international research for supporting people in an emergency such as COVID-19, and outlines best practice for good self-care and peer support.
- 3. Psychological First Aid (PFA) Briefings for Managers.** The PFA briefings for managers follow the same live online format as above: a live presentation by our Psychology Team followed by Q&A. Each briefing lasts one hour and is based on international research for supporting people in an emergency. PFA for Managers focuses on ensuring managers have key information to support their staff with their psycho-social wellbeing during COVID-19. Staff can enrol for the briefings by emailing [martina.hughes@hse.ie](mailto:martina.hughes@hse.ie). The briefing dates are also circulated through E-Services.
- 4. HSELand Modules: Psychological Supports.** For those who cannot make the PFA Briefings above, or who may wish to access similar material in their own time, there are two new HSELand Modules available designed by psychologists from Community Health Care West and Mid-West available on HSELand or through the link: <https://www.hseland.ie/ekp/servlet/ekp?TX=STRUCTUREDATALOG&CAT=EKP000005014>
  - a. Psychological Support: Looking after your Wellbeing during COVID-19 (for Staff)
  - b. Psychological Support: Supporting the Wellbeing of Staff during COVID-19 – A Manager's Guide  
Presenter: Dr Toby Sachsenmaier, Senior Clinical Psychologist, HSE Mid-West
- 5. PFA service for New Mothers.** The CHW Psychosocial response is also providing a targeted PFA response for mothers who have just had a new baby. Our Public Health Nurses refer mothers who are concerned about COVID-19 to [Psychosocial.GMR@hse.ie](mailto:Psychosocial.GMR@hse.ie) and we provide up to 3 PFA sessions for each mother to support them at this challenging time. For those who may require longer-term supports we then can refer them to suitable resources as appropriate. Currently a series of videos for new mothers are being developed to expand the reach of this service.
- 6. Bespoke Services for Staff.** To date we have also provided targeted support services for specific groups of staff e.g., Nursing Homes and Call Centres. If your service would like to discuss your needs for specific psychosocial supports please contact:
  - a. Clare Gormley, Director of Psychology, Galway/Roscommon & Psychosocial Lead for Community Health Care West.
    - i. Email: [clare.gormley@hse.ie](mailto:clare.gormley@hse.ie)
    - ii. Phone: 091 775658/7
  - b. Dr. Meena O' Neil, Principal Psychology Manager, Mayo

- i. Email: [meena.oneil@hse.ie](mailto:meena.oneil@hse.ie)
- ii. Phone: 094 90 49117

**7. COVID-19 Counselling.** Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) have expanded their services during COVID-19 to support all members of the public who may be experiencing difficulties related to COVID-19. [Mary.KilcomminsGreene@hse.ie](mailto:Mary.KilcomminsGreene@hse.ie) Phone: 087-4196436090 66 65058

#### **8. Text 50808**

Text 50808 is a free 24/7 text service, providing everything from a calming chat to immediate support for people going through a mental health or emotional crisis - big or small.

Text **HELLO** to **50808** to start a conversation, any time - day or night.

From breakups or bullying, to anxiety, depression and suicidal feelings, our volunteers are available 24/7 for anonymous text conversations. Our aim is to provide immediate support in the short term and connect people to resources that will help them in the future.

More information about this service is available at: <https://text50808.ie/>.

#### **Government Supports**

##### **1. Symptoms of COVID-19 and how to protect yourself:**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/472f64-COVID-19-coronavirus-guidance-and-advice/>

##### **2. Details on how to download the COVID Tracker App on your mobile phone:**

<https://covidtracker.gov.ie/>

##### **3. Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19:**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/resilience-recovery-2020-2021-plan-for-living-with-COVID-19/>

##### **4. Latest updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus):**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/news/7e0924-latest-updates-on-COVID-19-coronavirus/>

##### **5. Department of Health:**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-health>

##### **6. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Travel Advice:**

<https://www.dfa.ie/>

#### **Other Supports**

##### **1. World Health Organization**

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic information:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

##### **2. European Centre for Disease Control**

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en>

##### **3. Health Protection Surveillance Centre**

For information on cases in Ireland, updated guidance, general public information, guidance for healthcare settings and non-clinical settings and useful posters and webinars:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>

*Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West/ T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group*

<b>W93Q2975</b>	<p>Can I have outline of plan for vaccine rollout to new community members who have not registered with local GP.</p> <p>We have many adults who have come to Ireland, worked here and made it their home but have not presented at GP practises as they have been well throughout their stay.</p>	<b>Cllr F Armstrong McGuire</b>
<p>Ireland's strategy is to distribute all COVID-19 vaccines that we receive, subject to ensuring availability of the second dose. At the beginning of last week, Ireland had received approximately 520,000 vaccine doses and by the end of the week approximately 500,000 doses were administered, a measure of the programme's efficiency. Vaccines continue to be administered very quickly after their arrival into the country. At the moment, vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on manufacturers meeting their supply commitments.</p> <p>In relation to General Practitioners, the position is that at the conclusion of the first phase rollout of the programme last weekend, the HSE has confirmed that the majority of patients aged 85 years and over have received their first dose of the vaccine as scheduled. GPs have also begun administration of vaccine to people aged 80-84. In total over 1,300 GP practices, representing in excess of 3000 GPs and their Practice Teams have delivered over 90,000 vaccines by last weekend and a further 37,000 vaccines being distributed this week (w/c 8 March). The programme has also involved a number of large scale GP clinics, which have taken place in the Helix DCU, MTU in Cork and Merlin Park Galway with over 1,500 over 85's receiving the vaccine at these locations.</p> <p>There are a very small number of practices, less than 30, who are due to receive first delivery this week for their over 85s and it is also intended to commence the vaccination of those who are homebound as arrangements have been put in place in conjunction with GP's, local community teams and the National Ambulance Service and will commence this week and also patients in our acute hospitals. The HSE has acknowledge that there were problems with communication with GPs generally and that some issues have arisen with the distribution of vaccines to some GP Practices over the last week and we wish to apologise to GP practices, their teams and the patients who may have been impacted by these.</p> <p>The vaccination programme is limited internationally by the supply of vaccine and our programme to date has ensured that all available vaccine is distributed and administered as quickly as possible. The supply required for the completion of the programme by mid-May remains on target. However, due to a re-profiling of the Moderna vaccine delivery schedule, the total vaccine doses available for distribution in the coming weeks is now slightly less. The available vaccine supply is approximately 15% less than the required amount to meet the total over-80 cohort. This means GPs may not receive the total order for these coming weeks but, in all instances, GPs will be advised on the amounts they will receive and any shortfall in vaccine for the over-80 age group will be allocated in the next order and so on through March with a significant ramp-up in vaccine delivery in April as increased supplies arrive in Ireland. Unfortunately, these supply issues are outside of our control. However, if any additional supply becomes available, this will be provided to General Practitioners at the earliest opportunity. Importantly, we expect that the totality of the over-70s programme will be completed within the original timeframe of mid-May.</p> <p>With regard to the Vaccinator Role, the Statutory Instrument (SI 698 of 2020) is the relevant SI which includes pharmacists as one of those disciplines which can vaccinate for the purpose of rolling out the Covid Vaccination Programme subject to their being registered with their regulatory body (PSI) and subject to agreement by the regulatory body on required training. (The DoH introduced a new SI (81 of 2021) which added dentists and optometrists to the list of disciplines approved as vaccinators subject to registration etc.)</p> <p>The COVID-19 Vaccinator Recruitment Initiative for the HSE is being supported by CPL Healthcare. Registered optometrists and registered dentists can apply to become COVID-19 Vaccinators from 2pm, Tuesday 2nd, March 2021.</p> <p><b>If you do not have a GP the <a href="#">COVID-19 helpline</a> Lo-call: <a href="#">1850 24 1850</a> for advice or contact any GP in your area. The COVID vaccine is free and you do not need a PPS number.</b></p>		

COVID Implementation plan attached.

Further details on the roll out of the vaccine are available at <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/rollout-covid-19-vaccines-ireland.html>

Operational guidance on the vaccine for GPs is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/gmscontracts/2019agreement/operational-guidance-for-vaccination-in-general-practice-%E2%80%93-people-aged-70-and-older.pdf>

A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

**National Community Strategy and Planning**

<b>W93Q2976</b>	Have all the displaced services at LUH resumed again if not, can we have a timeframe for when this will happen?	<b>Clr C Brogan</b>
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The majority of services at LUH have resumed on a staggered basis over the last three weeks. Inpatient surgery resumed with normal schedule on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March. All Outpatients clinics have resumed but at a reduced level and will return to full capacity over the coming weeks as staff are released from the vaccination clinics. Endoscopy has returned to its full schedule and Day Surgery has resumed 5 days per week at reduced capacity which like Outpatients will increase over the coming weeks.

Oncology, Fracture, Breast and Haematology clinics continued throughout the pandemic with appropriate distancing of patients

Where clinically appropriate virtual (telephone or video conference) clinic consultations will continue in order to reduce number of people attending the Outpatients Services.

**A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2977</b>	Can we get an updated report on the commissioning of the radiology intervention suite and the second CT scanner?	<b>Clr C Brogan</b>
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The Interventional Radiology Suite and the second CT scanner for LUH is awaiting National approval. Saolta Executive are supporting this Business case in respect of these two facilities.

**T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group**

<b>W93Q2978</b>	Can we have a updated report on the roll out of the vaccination programme in Donegal through the GPs and the roll of the pharmacy's being part of the plan.	<b>Clr C Brogan</b>
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There are two ways that pharmacists can vaccinate; the first is to apply through the national recruitment campaign to work in the new vaccinator role with the Department approved payscale and grade. These will be employed in that role in the Vaccination Centres along with other professions covered under the Statutory Instruments (SI698 of 2020 and SI81 of 2021) to act in that role. Alternatively, community pharmacists (and GPs and others) will support the wider vaccination programme and arrangements have been entered into with the IPU (and for GPs with the IMO) for payment rates for this work. Details of the agreement with pharmacists are available at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/pcrs/circulars/pharmacy/pharmacy-circular-vaccination-programme-nco-03-2021.pdf>

Ireland's strategy is to distribute all COVID-19 vaccines that we receive, subject to ensuring availability of the second dose. At the beginning of last week, Ireland had received approximately 520,000 vaccine doses and by the end of the week approximately 500,000 doses were administered, a measure of the programme's efficiency. Vaccines continue to be administered very quickly after their arrival into the country. At the moment, vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on manufacturers meeting their supply commitments.

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last weekend, the HSE has confirmed that the majority of patients aged 85 years and over have received their first dose of the vaccine as scheduled. GPs have also begun administration of vaccine to people aged 80-84. In total over 1,300 GP practices, representing in excess of 3000 GPs and their Practice Teams have delivered over 90,000 vaccines by last weekend and a further 37,000 vaccines being distributed this week (w/c 8 March). The programme has also involved a number of large scale GP clinics, which have taken place in the Helix DCU, MTU in Cork and Merlin Park Galway with over 1,500 over 85's receiving the vaccine at these locations.

There are a very small number of practices, less than 30, who are due to receive first delivery this week for their over 85s and it is also intended to commence the vaccination of those who are homebound as arrangements have been put in place in conjunction with GP's, local community teams and the National Ambulance Service and will commence this week and also patients in our acute hospitals. The HSE has acknowledge that there were problems with communication with GPs generally and that some issues have arisen with the distribution of vaccines to some GP Practices over the last week and we wish to apologise to GP practices, their teams and the patients who may have been impacted by these.

As is well known, the vaccination programme is limited internationally by the supply of vaccine and our programme to date has ensured that all available vaccine is distributed and administered as quickly as possible. The supply required for the completion of the programme by mid-May remains on target. However, due to a re-profiling of the Moderna vaccine delivery schedule, the total vaccine doses available for distribution in the coming weeks is now slightly less. The available vaccine supply is approximately 15% less than the required amount to meet the total over-80 cohort. This means GPs may not receive the total order for these coming weeks but, in all instances, GPs will be advised on the amounts they will receive and any shortfall in vaccine for the over-80 age group will be allocated in the next order and so on through March with a significant ramp-up in vaccine delivery in April as increased supplies arrive in Ireland. Unfortunately, these supply issues are outside of our control. However, if any additional supply becomes available, this will be provided to General Practitioners at the earliest opportunity. Importantly, we expect that the totality of the over-70s programme will be completed within the original timeframe of mid-May. With regard to the Vaccinator Role, the Statutory Instrument (SI 698 of 2020) is the relevant SI which includes pharmacists as one of those disciplines which can vaccinate for the purpose of rolling out the Covid Vaccination Programme subject to their being registered with their regulatory body (PSI) and subject to agreement by the regulatory body on required training. (The DoH introduced a new SI (81 of 2021) which added dentists and optometrists to the list of disciplines approved as vaccinators subject to registration etc.)

The COVID-19 Vaccinator Recruitment Initiative for the HSE is being supported by CPL Healthcare. Registered optometrists and registered dentists can apply to become COVID-19 Vaccinators from 2pm, Tuesday 2nd, March 2021.

If you do not have a GP the [COVID-19 helpline](#) Lo-call: [1850 24 1850](tel:1850241850) for advice or contact any GP in your area. The COVID vaccine is free and you do not need a PPS number.

COVID Implementation plan attached.

Further details on the roll out of the vaccine are available at <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/rollout-covid-19-vaccines-ireland.html>

Operational guidance on the vaccine for GPs is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/gmscontracts/2019agreement/operational-guidance-for-vaccination-in-general-practice-%E2%80%93-people-aged-70-and-older.pdf>

A list of vaccine allocation groups is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/39038-provisional-vaccine-allocation-groups/>

**National Community Strategy and Planning**

<b>W93Q2979</b>	Can we have a updated report on the services being at with CAMHS, Child	<b>CIlr C Brogan</b>
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	and Adolescent Mental Health Service based in Letterkenny, for Inishowen, north central Donegal, north west, Donegal have we the resources to meet the huge demands in this area, and what steps are we taking to address the many challenges facing the children that need this service at the moment?	
<p>Donegal CAMHS Service have until now operated a two team model covering North Donegal and South Donegal. North Donegal also includes the Inishowen area.</p> <p>Both teams are made up of Clinical Staff including a Child and Adolescent Consultant Psychiatrist, Non Consultant Hospital Doctor (NCHD), Senior Psychologist, Senior Social Workers, Nursing Staff, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Social Care Workers. Teams are also supported by Administration Staff.</p> <p>Unfortunately the COVID pandemic has negatively affected the numbers of people waiting to be seen by CAMHS Donegal. During the restriction levels, waiting lists have increased as professionals were unable to complete full assessments and observe the service user in their usual environment which is a key component of many mental health assessments. It has also been difficult to link with other key personnel such as teachers and other professional supports who may be working with the young person.</p> <p>Whilst Donegal CAMHS acknowledge that the waiting list for children and adolescents waiting to be seen is above the acceptable levels the service is currently developing performance improvement measures to address the waiting list.</p> <p>Whilst Donegal CAMHS have had two Consultant Psychiatrist posts which have not been filled with locum consultants for some time, the service has recently been successful in attracting two permanent candidates to these posts which will see the development of a three team service the third team covering the geographical area of Inishowen. This coupled with a performance improvement plan will assist in ensuring that the young people in Donegal receive the mental health supports they require.</p> <p><b>John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO1</b></p>		
<b>W93Q2980</b>	Can I ask the HSE in the Tuam area regarding Dental services, what are the current waiting times for children to see a dentist and will school visits commence. How many appointments have been cancelled and what is the plan to catch up. Is staffing an issue?	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>
<p>In the Tuam Network due to the COVID 19 pandemic the Dental service is reduced to Priority 1 service. Routine assessments are not categorised as Priority 1. Further re-opening of the dental service will be advised by local senior management in line with NPHET advice.</p> <p>Emergency dental care is continuing.</p> <p>There are vacancies in the Tuam Dental service which we are in the process of trying to recruit.</p> <p><b>Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</b></p>		
<b>W93Q2981</b>	What is the current update on the X Ray facilities for Tuam area, is progress being made with the PPP in the primary care unit.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>
<p>Tuam Diagnostic Service is being developed in conjunction with Portiuncula University Hospital Ballinasloe, the Saolta Group, Primary Care Services Community Healthcare West and HSE Estates.</p> <p><b>X Ray Service</b></p> <p>HSE Estates had a meeting in Tuam PCC with the Design Team and Aramark on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 in relation to development of the Radiology Diagnostics suite in Tuam PCC. Draft plans/proposals should be available for review in coming weeks.</p> <p><b>Ultrasound Service</b></p> <p>The GP direct access Ultrasound service commenced on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. GP in surrounding PCT areas can refer directly for Ultrasound services.</p> <p><b>Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</b></p>		



<b>W93Q2982</b>	What are the current staffing requirements for the Tuam area primary care centre and community services, what new appoints have there been in the last 6 months.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>
<p><b>Agreed Posts under Enhanced Community Care Programme for Tuam Community Health Network Learning Site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Grade Physiotherapist 1 X WTE</li> <li>• Senior Occupational Therapist 1 X WTE</li> <li>• Senior Dietician 1 X WTE</li> <li>• Staff Grade Occupational Therapist 1 X WTE</li> <li>• Senior SLT 1 X WTE</li> <li>• Senior Social Worker Practitioner 1x WTE</li> <li>• Staff Nurse 1xWTE</li> <li>• Public Health Nurse 1x WTE</li> <li>• Staff officer 1x WTE</li> <li>• Clerical officer 1x WTE</li> <li>• Senior Podiatrist 1 x WTE</li> </ul> <p>It is anticipated that the above staff will commence in the coming 6 months. Community Healthcare West seeks approval for replacement staff where current staff members, resign or are on long term leave</p> <p><b>Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</b></p>		
<b>W93Q2983</b>	Are there any plans to increase the number of spaces available for people with special needs that want to live in the community in the Tuam area.	<b>Cllr D Killilea</b>
<p>Community Healthcare West Disability Services has received funding for 4 additional residential placements for adults with a disability in the National HSE Operational Plan 2021. These placements will be allocated on clinical needs. The allocation of these placements has not concluded and at present the HSE are unable to indicate if any will be within the Tuam area. If a service user is allocated a placement based on clinical need and they want to live in the Tuam area, this will facilitated if possible.</p> <p><b>Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</b></p>		



Table: The number of Residential Beds available as at December '19, June '20 and November '20

CHO	Tier 4	Treatment type	No. of beds DEC 2019	No. of beds JUNE 2020	No. of beds NOV 2020
1	Cuan Mhuire, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan	Step Down	11	11	8 beds
1	White Oaks, Donegal	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	12	8-9 beds	10 beds
2	Cuan Mhuire Coolraine, Co. Galway	Community Based Residential Detoxification	20	22	22
2	Cuan Mhuire Coolraine, Co. Galway	Long Stay Residential Rehabilitation	50	23	23
2	Hope House, Foxford, Co. Mayo	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	14 beds	8-9 beds	7
3	Bushy Park, Ennis, Co. Clare	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	13	6	7
3	Cuan Mhuire, Bruree Limerick	Community Based Residential Detoxification	30	18	17
3	Cuan Mhuire Bruree Co. Limerick	Long Stay Residential Rehabilitation	100	100	57
4	Cuan Mhuire Fernannes Co. Cork	Community Based Residential Detoxification	2	2	8
4	Cuan Mhuire Fernannes Co. Cork	Long Stay Residential Rehabilitation	2	2	22
4	Cuan Mhuire Western Road	Long Stay Residential Rehabilitation	16	16	16
4	Matt Talbot, Cara Lodge, Co. Cork	Adolescent Residential Rehabilitation	5	5	Residential part of the service closed
4	Tabor Lodge Belgooly Co. Cork	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	18	9	14
4	Fellowship House	Step Down	18	9	29
4	Renewal Womens	Step Down	9	5	(transferred to Tabor Fellowship)
4	Talbot Grove Castleisland Co. Kerry	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	12	7	16
5	Aiseiri Wexford	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	12	8	10
5	Aiseiri Cahir Tipperary	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	13	11	13
5	Aiseiri Cahir Tipperary	Community Based Residential Detoxification	4	2	4
5	Aiseirí Group Céim Eile, Waterford	Step Down - Men	10	8	8
		Women	6	6	6
		Sober House - Men	4	4	4
		Sober house - Women	4	4	4
5	Aislinn Ballyragget Co. Kilkenny	Adolescent Residential Detoxification	4	2	4
5	Aislinn Ballyragget Co. Kilkenny	Adolescent Residential Rehabilitation	12	10	11
5	MQI St. Francis Farm, Tullow. Co. Carlow	Community Based Residential Detoxification	10	6	10
5	MQI St. Francis Farm, Tullow. Co. Carlow	Therapeutic Community	13	13	13
7	Cuan Dara	In-Patient Medical Detox	13	7	9

7	Dublin Simon Detox	Detox	10	10	11
7	Dublin Simon Stabilisation	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	10	10	10
7	Cuan Mhuire Athy Alcohol Detoxification	Community Based Residential Detoxification	24	20 beds utilised last two weeks in June across detox Alcohol/drugs and long stay.	16
7	Cuan Mhuire Athy Our Lady's Drug Unit	Community Based Residential Detoxification	24	20 beds utilised last two weeks in June across detox Alcohol/drugs and long stay.	16
7	Cuan Mhuire, Athy	Long Stay Residential Rehabilitation	117	98	81
7	Rutland	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	21	17	16
8	Tabor House	Step down	10	10	11
9	Coolmine Ashleigh House	Therapeutic Community	21	21 & 17 Children	21 & 17 children
9	Coolmine Ashleigh House	Community Based Residential Detoxification	2	2	0
9	Coolmine Ashleigh House	Step down	6	0	6
9	Coolmine Lodge	Community Based Residential Detoxification	2	2	2
9	Coolmine Lodge Blanchardstown Dublin	Therapeutic Community	34	30	30
9	Peter McVerry Detox	Community Based Residential Detoxification	12	0	9
9	Peter McVerry Rehab	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	6	0	3
9	Suamhneas	Step Down	6	6	6
9	Stanhope	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	6	0	0
9	Keltoi	Short Stay Residential Rehabilitation	12	0	0
National	Beaumont	In-Patient Medical Detox	12	5	6
9	Peter McVerry Drug Free Housing	Step Down	22	22	55
9	Daisyhouse	StepDown	18	18	18
9	MQI High Park, Grace Park Rd, D9.	Long Stay Residential Rehabilitation	12	12	12
9	Focus Ireland	Step Down	17	17	17