



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

An Oifig Náisiúnta don Chuimsiú
Sóisialta
Rannóg Cúram Príomhúil
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse
Sláinte
Lána an Mhuilinn
Baile Phámar
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National Social Inclusion Office
Primary Care Division
Health Service Executive
Mill Lane
Palmerstown
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25th October, 2016

Deputy Niamh Smyth
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 31357/16

* To ask the Minister for Health the measures that are being introduced to address the issue of substance abuse following an incident (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Smyth,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

The majority of under 18 year olds are supported through community based drugs initiatives. These services provide evidence based approaches such as Motivational Interviewing, Brief Interventions, Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) and Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA). Residential detoxification treatment for 15 to 21 year olds is provided nationally in the Aislínn Centre, Ballyraggett, Co. Kilkenny. Both Cuan Dara and St Michaels Ward in Beaumont will take referrals for detox of individuals aged 18-21 yrs. There is also facility for individuals aged 17 yrs and under to be admitted to one of these units under the care of one of the Child and Adolescent Substance Misuse Psychiatrists working in the HSE for particularly complex cases. This has not been necessary over the last number of years.

For further information on under 18 treatment currently available countrywide see PQ no **13553/16**.

The best way to deliver effective services to young people presenting with problem substance use is to ensure that services are provided as part of a four tier model that are based on the specific needs and rights of the child and his or her family; include a range of drug-related education, prevention and treatment interventions; and are competent to deal with the complex ethical and legal issues surrounding such interventions.

Tier 1 Generic services provided by teachers, social services, gardaí, general practitioners, community and family groups for those at risk of drug use. Generic services would include advice

and referral and would be suitable for those considering or commencing experimentation with drugs or alcohol.

Tier 2 Services with specialist expertise in either adolescent mental health or addiction, such as juvenile liaison officers, local drugs task forces, home-school liaison, Youthreach, general practitioners specialising in addiction and drug treatment centres. The types of service delivered at this level would include drug-related prevention, brief intervention, counselling and harm reduction, and would be suitable for those encountering problems as a result of drug or alcohol use.

Tier 3 Services with specialist expertise in both adolescent mental health and addiction. These services would have the capacity to deliver child-centred comprehensive treatments through a multi-disciplinary team. This team would provide medical treatment for addiction, psychiatric treatment, child protection, outreach, psychological assessment and interventions, and family therapy. These types of service would be suitable for those encountering substantial problems as a result of drug or alcohol use.

Tier 4 Services with specialist expertise in both adolescent mental health or addiction and the capacity to deliver a brief, but very intensive intervention through an inpatient or day hospital. These types of service would be suitable for those encountering severe problems as a result of drugs or alcohol dependence.

Services need to be adolescent-specific, local and accessible, and include a combination of disciplines. The services would offer assessment, treatment and aftercare.

For the Deputy's information, the Department of Health is developing a new National Drugs Strategy, which will take effect in 2017, when the current policy expires. A Steering Committee has been established to oversee the process and to advise on how the new Strategy should address alcohol and substance use moving forward.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph Doyle', written in a cursive style.

Joseph Doyle
National Planning Specialist