



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

An Oifig Náisiúnta don Chuimsiú
Sóisialta
Rannóg Cúram Príomhúil
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse
Sláinte
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National Social Inclusion Office
Primary Care Division
Health Service Executive
Mill Lane
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27th April 2016

Deputy Thomas P. Broughan
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 5732/16

* To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the list of services available to families in hotel room emergency homeless accommodation for mental health supports; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Broughan,

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:

Rather than outlining the list of services in tabular format, my response is provided by way of outlining the various services available to families in hotel room emergency accommodation.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in conjunction with Local Authorities, has responsibility for assessment for placement in accommodation including emergency homeless accommodation for homeless persons whilst the provision of health services and in-house care is primarily a matter for the HSE.

The HSE, Tusla and Local Authorities work with relevant services in order to maximise the supports available to children and families and to ensure that all professionals are aware of their obligation to be vigilant in relation to child welfare issues. As parents remain their child's primary carer, Tusla's role is to support homeless families in the same way that it supports any family where child welfare issues are identified by providing family support and assessing any child protection concerns that arise.

Mental Health Services are based on assessed levels of clinical needs. In the first instance this is provided by the individual's GP. The GP may treat the problem or, following assessment, refer the individual on to locally based Consultant led Mental Health Teams.

Dublin Region

For the Deputy's information, there are two specialist Consultant led Mental Health Services in the Dublin region for those who have severe and enduring mental illness and have difficulty engaging with traditional services.. Referrals to these services are accepted from Hospitals, Community Mental Health clinics, Primary Care teams/GP, Project Managers/Team Leaders/Nursing Staff in hostels and Outreach teams, Multidisciplinary health link team etc..

In 2014, an additional 7.5 posts were allocated from Mental Health Development Funding to specialist Mental Health Services to enhance services provided for people experiencing homelessness.

It is worth noting that many Community Mental Health teams work with Homeless people and engage on a regular basis with voluntary providers. Not all Homeless people are referred to the specialist teams. On occasion, when people are admitted to acute services, once their acute need has been met, they can be discharged back to these providers and may be accommodated in hostels or other short term accommodation.

Cork - Adult Homeless Multidisciplinary Team

The Adult Homeless Multi Disciplinary Team provides assessment and treatment for adults over 18 years, including older people who are residents in emergency accommodation in St Vincent de Paul and Cork Simon Community. The Team will also see individuals in homeless residential and supported accommodation. They attempt outreach to those "no fixed abode/rough sleepers" who have severe mental disorders,; they also work to support Focus Ireland and Threshold in their efforts with both homeless people and – indirectly - with others for whom these agencies provide accommodation.

The Team is involved in the Homeless Action Teams with voluntary agencies and collaborate with their tenancy support work. Members liaise with local Mental Health Services and Cork Prison Services and provide outreach to homeless adults as they move out of homeless services and reintegrate into mainstream services.

Clinics are held by the GP and Public Health Nurse at the Day Centre in Cork Simon Emergency Shelter and at St. Vincent's Hostel. The clinics are open to all people who are homeless in the City via self-referral or referral by hostel staff. This service is funded through Social Inclusion services in Cork. The Mental Health Division approved 2 additional posts to focus on the homeless population (1 Consultant Psychiatrist and 1 Senior Social Worker) in 2015. The intention is to enhance the existing service and focus on vulnerable cohorts during transition from prison, recovery programmes, etc.

Further details of Mental Health Services available in each area can be accessed at: www.hse.ie.

Details of the type of Mental Health Services to be provided in 2016 are included in the Mental Health Division Operational Plan 2016 which includes specific detail by CHO of the mental health services available; this is available at :-

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/serviceplans/serviceplan2016/OpPIs16/MtIHtOpPIs16.pdf>

A Homelessness Liaison Officer has recently been appointed to lead Tusla's engagement with homeless services, particularly in relation to child protection issues. Tusla and Dublin Regional Homeless Executive have established a working group and are developing a protocol to assist both services in ensuring appropriate responses to any child protection and welfare issues which may arise within the homeless population. A draft protocol has been drawn up and is at consultation stage.

Tusla has established links with Dublin Region Homeless Executive around access for children and families to Family Resource Centres and to other Tusla funded local area partnership prevention and family support services.

I trust this further 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