



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

National Social Inclusion Office
Primary Care Division
Health Service Executive
Mill Lane
Palmerstown
Dublin 20
01 620 1747

5th May 2016

Deputy Gerry Adams, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 6842/16

* To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients who have accessed Tier 4 Residential Addiction Treatment Centres in each of the past five years.

PQ 6844/16

* To ask the Minister for Health the average duration of treatment for a patient within a Tier 4 Residential Addiction Treatment Centre.

PQ 6845/16

* To ask the Minister for Health the number of Health Service Executive referrals to private or voluntary Tier 4 Addiction Treatment Centres, in each of the past five years.

Dear Deputy Adams,

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

Data for 2015 is not yet available but analysis based on returns from residential services only (including inpatient detoxification) who have participated in the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) over the five year reporting period 2010 to 2014 are presented in the below table. The NDTRS includes data from voluntary and HSE residential services plus one private residential clinic that have reported during the periods. Note that data from psychiatric hospitals is not included in the NDTRS. The data includes those who were treated for problem alcohol or drug use and excludes those treated for functional addictions e.g. gambling as that data is not complete. It is not possible to solely identify HSE referrals as the NDTRS does not report on HSE referrals only. The below table identifies all sources of referrals (many of which are HSE).

For the Deputy's information, the below table shows that between 2010 and 2014 there were 25,554 cases referred to those residential services who participated in the NDTRS. Of those who were referred, 81% went on to commence treatment. Of those who had a valid exit date, the average (mean) duration of treatment was 45 days.

Number of cases referred and treated for problem alcohol or drug use, residential services, 2010 to 2014, NDTRS

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of cases referred | 5451 | 5303 | 5239 | 4642 | 4919 |
| Number treated | 4292 | 4315 | 4236 | 3875 | 3999 |
| Average duration of treatment (days) | 42.9 | 44.5 | 44.5 | 48.5 | 45.9 |

It is important to note (see attached Appendix) that the NDTRS only report on cases who enter treatment in a particular calendar year, not on those who continue in treatment from one year to the next without a break.

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". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a distinct "D".

Joseph Doyle
National Planning Specialist

Appendix

Background to the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS)

Treatment for problem alcohol and drug use in Ireland is provided by statutory and non-statutory services, including residential centres, community-based addiction services, general practices and prison services.

For the purpose of the NDTRS, treatment is broadly defined as 'any activity which aims to ameliorate the psychological, medical or social state of individuals who seek help for their substance misuse problems'. Clients who attend needle-exchange services are not included in this reporting system. From 2004 onwards, clients who report alcohol as their main problem drug have been recorded by the system. These data have been presented in an earlier paper in the HRB Trends Series (Fanagan *et al.* 2008). Drug treatment options include one or more of the following: medication (detoxification, methadone reduction, substitution programmes and psychiatric treatment), brief intervention, counselling, group therapy, family therapy, psychotherapy, complementary therapy, and/or life-skills training.

Compliance with the NDTRS requires that one form be completed for each new client coming for first treatment and for each previously treated client returning to treatment for problem drug use. Service providers at treatment centres throughout Ireland collect data on each individual who attends for first treatment or returns to treatment in a calendar year.

Staff at the NHIS unit in the HRB compile anonymous, aggregated data, which are analysed and reported at national and EU levels.

The main elements of the reporting system are defined as follows:

All cases treated – describes cases who receive treatment for problem drug and/or alcohol use at each treatment centre in a calendar year, and includes:

Cases assessed only - describes cases who were assessed but who did not progress to treatment

Previously treated cases – describes cases who were treated previously for problem drug/alcohol use at any treatment centre and have returned to treatment in the reporting year;

New cases treated – describes cases who have never been treated for problem drug/alcohol use; and

Status unknown – describes cases whose status with respect to previous treatment for problem drug/alcohol use is not known.

* It is very important to note that **each case refers to an episode of treatment**, not an individual. Therefore 'previously treated cases' could appear more than once in the database, in a calendar year, if for example they receive treatment at more than one centre or at the same centre more than once per year. The NDTRS also does not include those cases in continuous care i.e. cases who remained in treatment without a break from one year to the next. It also does not include those treated in psychiatric hospitals.