



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 R: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Head of Operations,
Mental Health Service, St Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 Email: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Deputy Ruairí Ó Murchú,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

22nd September 2021

PQ Number: 41439/21

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health his plans in regard to the challenges that face persons suffering from eating disorders particularly in relation to the pressures on acute and day services; his further plans to address these pressures; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Ruairí Ó Murchú

Dear Deputy Ó Murchú,

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

Most people can and do get better from eating disorders. While a small number of people benefit from more intensive treatment through day programmes or inpatient care, the most effective treatment setting is in the community. Dedicated community-based eating disorder services, where multidisciplinary teams have specialist training, can provide evidence-based care and treatment.

In January 2018 the HSE published a National Model of Care for Eating Disorders (MOC) in partnership with College of Psychiatrists' of Ireland and Bodywhys. The MOC is the blueprint for the HSE to roll out specialist eating disorder services in Ireland to address the current unmet need for specialist eating disorder service within HSE. Outpatient specialist care is considered to be the most effective treatment setting for most people with eating disorders. The MOC has a core focus on developing regional community based specialist eating disorder services provided by skilled multidisciplinary teams.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/mental-health/eating-disorders/moc/hse-eating-disorder-services-model-of-care.pdf>

The clinical programme aims to establish an ED network (8 adult teams and 8 CAMHS teams) in accordance with the agreed Model of Care 2018. There are currently 3 teams in operation, 2 CAMHS teams serving Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CHO4) and Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow (CHO7) and an adult team in Community Healthcare East (CHO6). These multidisciplinary teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community.



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 R: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Head of Operations,
Mental Health Service, St Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 Email: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

The Model of Care also integrates these teams with primary care, acute medical services and inpatient mental health units, to improve patient flow and clinical pathways between community and inpatient care as needed. Early intervention is a key principle. In line with Slaintecare, the objective is to provide the right care to the right patient at the right time and for the right cost.

A stark increase in eating disorder presentations in the context of the COVID pandemic continues to be reported both in Ireland and internationally for all ages. The predominant diagnosis is anorexia nervosa, which has the highest mortality rates of all mental health disorders. The 3 HSE specialist eating disorder teams recorded significant increases in referrals in 2020 compared to 2019 and this trend has continued to rise into 2021. The demand for eating disorder services (both outpatient and inpatient) is exceeding predictions. Paediatric and acute hospitals are reporting similar rises in acute presentations of eating disorders.

Funding has been made available in 2021 to progress the recruitment of 3 additional ED teams in CHO4 (adult), CHO9 (adult) and CHO2 (CAMHS). Dedicated posts are funded as part of these teams to provide a clinical pathway for patients who present in acute hospitals. The HSE is committed to the full roll out of the ED network in the coming years.

Eating Disorder Supports

Bodywhys: The HSE provides funding annually to Bodywhys to run the helpline which is delivered by a team of trained volunteers. They also provide a range of services (support groups, online groups, email and family programmes) for adults and young people with eating disorders and their families. The HSE also support Bodywhys to run the **PiLaR (Peer Led Resilience) Programme**, a 4 week online modular based programme for parents, friends, and carers of a person with an eating disorder to build resilience and gain support in their role as a carer.

Helpline contact number: [01 2107906](tel:012107906) (Monday, Wednesday and Sunday 7.30pm-9.30pm and Saturday 10.30am-12.30pm).

Contact: alex@bodywhys.ie for support

Visit: <https://www.bodywhys.ie/>

Eating Disorder Self Care App

In March 2019 the HSE launched the first Self Care App which provides valuable information for those with or people caring for someone with an eating disorder.

The self-care app is for people:

- With an eating disorder
- Caring for someone with an eating disorder
- worried about developing an eating disorder



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte,
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin,
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 R: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

Head of Operations,
Mental Health Service, St Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.
Tel: (01) 6207304 Email: jim.ryan1@hse.ie

- Diagnosed or are recovering from an eating disorder

From the HSE National Clinical Programmes for Eating Disorders and Bodywhys

Read more about the HSE Eating Disorder Self Care app at the following link

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/mental-health/eating-disorders/news/>

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Amir Niazi
National Clinical Advisor & Group Lead for Mental Health
Clinical Design and Innovation
Health Service Executive