



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin, Baile Phámar,
Baile Átha Cliath 20, D20 HK69

Office of the
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Deputy Rose Conway-Walsh
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

14th February 2024

PQ Number: 48486/23

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he is aware of young people with autism being treated as in-patients in adult mental health units; the total number of people with disabilities being treated as in-patients in adult mental health facilities; the steps he is taking to have them moved to more appropriate care facilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Rose Conway-Walsh

Dear Deputy Conway-Walsh,

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.

HSE Mental Health Services are committed to age appropriate inpatient mental health treatment and to the minimization of the number of admissions of children to adult units, while acknowledging that, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary, where there is a clear clinical imperative, to admit a small number of children to adult units, for the shortest time possible.

Children are admitted to adult units only after all efforts to place them in Child and Adolescent in Patient Units are unsuccessful due to capacity or clinical needs. All admissions of young people under the age of 18 years are immediately notified to the Mental Health Commission in accordance with regulations via a CIS202 - Child Admission to Adult Unit Form. The CIS form does not specify a diagnosis but it is highly unlikely that a child or young person with autism only, and in the absence of any mental health problem, would be admitted to an adult approved centre.

Further information on Mental Health Commission's Code of Practice can be found at the following link: <https://www.mhcirl.ie/sites/default/files/2021-06/Addendum-to-admission-children-2011.pdf>

On every occasion that a young person requires to be admitted to an adult unit, there are nursed on a 1:1 basis continuously over the 24 hour period as per the Mental Health Commission's Code of Practice.

The number of children admitted to adult mental health units has continued to reduce over time. As of 01st December 2023, the number of children/adolescents who have been admitted to adult units is 11.



I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Braham', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Paul Braham
Senior Operations Manager (Area DON)
National Mental Health Services