



Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

26th April 2024

PQ Number: 16708/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health for an update on the number of public inpatient beds for adults with eating disorders; the cost of operating one bed per year; if there will be an increase in beds in 2024; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

Inpatient referrals for eating disorders

The most effective treatment setting is usually in the community, although a small number of people benefit from more intensive treatment through day programmes or inpatient care. Children and adolescents with an eating disorder diagnosis who require inpatient treatment can be referred to one of the CAMHS in-patient approved centres by their treating CAMHS consultant. Referrals are reviewed individually to determine the likely clinical benefits of admission as well as possible other treatment alternatives.

There are four CAMHS in-patient acute units across the HSE; Linn Dara Approved Centre in Dublin, St Joseph's Approved Centre in Dublin, Eist Linn Approved Centre in Cork and Merlin Park Approved Centre in Galway. Specialist eating disorder beds are available in Merlin Park Galway and Linn Dara.

There are currently 20 dedicated eating disorder beds across the four 4 CAMHS units. Of the 20 ED beds nationally, Linn Dara and Merlin Park have 14 Specialist ED beds (SEDBs). A SEDB differs somewhat from a 'standard' ED bed in that a Specialist ED bed is one whereby the unit has specially trained staff who can manage NG feeding programmes within the unit.

The division of the beds is as follows:

- Linn Dara: 8 SEDBs
- Merlin Park: 6 SEDBs
- Eist Linn: 3 ED beds
- St Vincent's Fairview: 3 ED beds

As part of the new CHI hospital development, there will be an additional 8 Specialist Eating Disorder beds as part of a new 20 bedded CAMHS inpatient approved centre which will be collocated within the new children's hospital.

Adults who have an eating disorder diagnosis and require inpatient care can be referred to any of the HSE's acute in-patient mental health approved centres around the country. Referrals are reviewed individually to determine the likely clinical benefits of admission as well as possible other treatment alternatives. If in-patient treatment is recommended by a clinician, every effort is made to prioritise urgent cases. CHO6 St. Vincent's University Hospital has 3 specialist inpatient beds. Additional need for inpatient beds for eating disorders has been reported in A Vision for Change and endorsed by NCP Model of Care. This need was also reported in the recent HSE Mental Health Bed Capacity Report. Adults presenting with an eating disorder can also be treated in an acute hospital if their physical health needs require this.

At this time, HSE National Mental Health are not in a position to report on expenditure or budget by service category. The current financial reporting system is aligned to Annual Financial Statement type (i.e. nursing pay, Drugs & Medicines etc.) and does not align to the services and sub-services in operation. Therefore we would not be in a position to give costings on the cost of operating one bed.

The Future Health Report identified the financial and service information systems of the Health Service as not fit for purpose. In order to address this, over 200 legacy financial systems will be moved to a Single Integrated Financial and Procurement Management System (IFMS). This process is now underway and the IFMS project is currently in the detailed design phase. When the IFMS system is fully implemented, National Mental Health will be in a position to report on expenditure by service category.

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
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Clinical Design and Innovation
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