



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin, Baile Phámar,
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Deputy Bernard J. Durkan.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

23rd February 2024

PQ Number: 2330/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health to indicate the extent to which adequate mental health provision is being provided to ensure the availability of an adequate number of residential places to meet the current and ongoing requirements; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Bernard J. Durkan

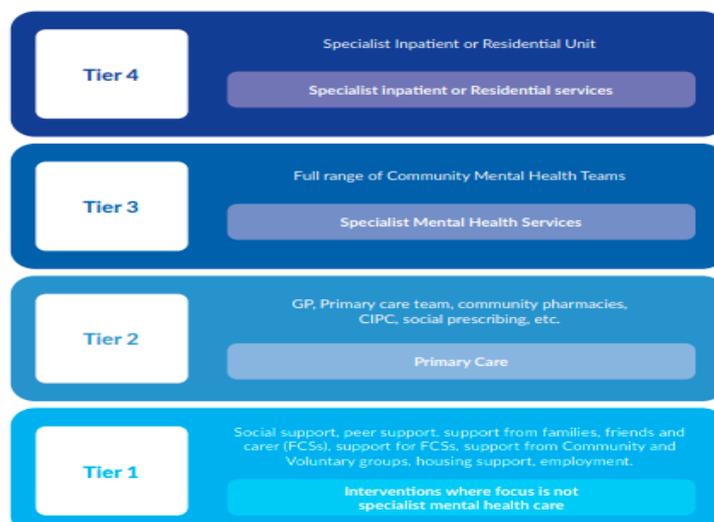
Dear Deputy Durkan,

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.

Policy Context

Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone (2020) (StV) provides a policy framework for the continued development and enhancement of mental health services in Ireland. The policy adopts a lifecycle approach to address the needs of the population by placing the individual at the centre of service delivery at different stages throughout the lifecycle. It aims to enhance the provision of mental health services and supports across a continuum of care using a stepped model of care approach in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for each service user.

The table below provides an overview of the stepped care approach as outlined in the policy





Some intended outcomes of StV include:

- the creation of a mental health system that focuses on the requirements of the individual
- the development and delivery of a range of integrated activities to promote positive mental health in the community
- increased participation of service users, families, carers and supporters in the design of mental health services
- the enhanced provision of accessible, comprehensive and community-based mental health services
- enhanced capacity of primary care services to respond to mental health needs, thereby reducing the requirement for specialist mental health services

It is envisaged that by strengthening services and supports at Tier's 1 and 2 will reduce the requirement for specialist, secondary mental health services over time.

Community Rehabilitation Residences (CRR)

Historically, many mental health community residences were organised around a 'High Support Hostel' model of care. With recent changes in mental health policy, it is now recognised that there is a danger that these residences could potentially become mini-institutions. In 2019 the HSE launched a [Model of Care for People with Severe and Enduring Mental Illness and Complex Needs](#) in the recognition that those with the most severe and enduring mental illness require specialist rehabilitation services to assist their recovery.

The MOC recommended that services should develop alternative Community Rehabilitation Residences which, although continuing to provide intensive MDT support, are primarily geared towards active rehabilitation and recovery. Provision of this type of care is made available to individuals who require continued input around their mental health needs with a focus on moving towards independent community living. Crucially, the MOC recommended that each CHO provide a number of Community Rehabilitation Residences (CRR) with a focus on rehabilitation and recovery programmes to enable service users progress towards independent living.

The MOC recognizes that a small cohort of service users may need the on-going support and structure of a community residence geared towards continuing care. Therefore, to provide for the varying care needs of this distinct service user group, it is recommended that local mental health services in each CHO reconfigure their existing community residences.

The MOC of Care outlines a number of principles underlying the operation of CRR's

1. To support people with complex mental health needs who, due to their ongoing mental health needs, cannot be directly discharged from an acute inpatient unit and/or an SRU to an independent or supported community placement
2. Service users will have access to the community rehabilitation team and an allocated key worker
3. Service users will be provided with an individual care and treatment plan that describes the levels of support and treatment required in line with their needs. This will be co-ordinated by a designated member of the MDT, i.e. a key worker



4. CRR's focus on assisting service users further their recovery, optimising medication regimes, engaging in psychosocial interventions and attaining increased independent living skills
5. CRR's will be part of the service user's accommodation pathway with an active focus on assisting individuals transition to independent community living
6. CRR's will be defined by the nature of the rehabilitation and recovery programme on offer rather than by staffing levels
7. Local, community-based units will provide a domestic environment that facilitates service users to achieve optimum autonomy and independence
8. All CRR's will prioritise the promotion of a recovery-oriented service built on a culture of hope and expectation so that the person can recover and build a fulfilling life of their own choosing.

Thankfully, only a minority of service users with severe mental illness and complex needs require CRR facilities. Provided they have access to good quality, secure accommodation with appropriate mental health support, most service users can live independently within their own communities. This is achieved through supports that enable recovery, improve service user ability to manage independent community accommodation and through the promotion of social and community networks.

Further information can be found at the following links:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2e46f-sharing-the-vision-a-mental-health-policy-for-everyone/>

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/rehabilitation-recovery-mental-health-services/model-of-care-for-people-with-severe-and-enduring-mental-illness-and-complex-needs.pdf>

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Mc Cusker', written over a horizontal line.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services