



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta  
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

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

Office of the  
Assistant National Director  
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Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne.  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

10<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**PQ Number: 4636/24**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health his views on the fact that 35% of the members of an organisation (details supplied) have said they would not feel comfortable to make a complaint; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Violet-Anne Wynne.**

*Details Supplied: the Families for CAMHS Reform Group members*

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Dear Deputy Wynne,

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.

The HSE remains fully committed to hearing from and responding to concerns raised by service users, their families and the general public in accordance with Section 46, Part 9 of the Health Act 2004. Many options are available for the submission of feedback, comments and complaints. These include the HSE Your Service Your Say Policy, the HSE'S [Confidential Recipient for Vulnerable Persons](#) and through advocacy services. In addition the Mental Health Act 2001 (Approved Centre) Regulations 2006, stipulates that each inpatient mental health facility, must have a robust complaints procedure in place.

The HSE Your Service Your Say Policy sets out the procedures/obligations of the HSE around responding to complaints. In cases where the complainant is unhappy with the response to the complaint, they can request an Internal Review and if still not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant can request an external review from the Office of the Ombudsman/Ombudsman for Children under Stage 4 of the policy. This process is available to anyone accessing public health services.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/yourhealthservice/feedback/complaint/making-a-comment,-compliment-or-complaint.html>

HSE National Mental Health services have advocacy services for young people and their families in place in CAMHS Inpatient services in CHO 2, CHO 7, Cho 9 and CHO 4. The Advocacy service is also available in Community settings in CHO 2 and CHO 4.



### **CAMHS Operational Guideline**

In June 2019, the CAMHS Operational Guideline (COG) was published following an extensive review and consultation process which took into consideration the views of service users, family members, front line staff and management working within HSE mental health services and in other organisations working with children and adolescents. In relation to parental involvement, the CAMHS COG outlines the following -

#### ***“2.3 Involving Parent(s)***

**2.3.1** *CAMHS teams should aim to build and maintain collaborative relationships with parent(s) and seek to involve them fully in their child or adolescent’s care planning and mental health treatments. Parent(s) often have expert knowledge of their child or adolescent which is important in deciding on treatment and care planning.*

**2.3.2** *CAMHS teams may inform and explain to parent(s) about their child or adolescent’s diagnoses, coping strategies and may advise on how to support them at home. They may recommend other community and family support services which can be accessed outside of appointments.*

**2.3.3** *CAMHS teams should encourage parent(s) to recognise their own needs, strengths and resources in supporting their child or adolescent.*

**2.3.4** *CAMHS teams should also be mindful of addressing barriers to engagement, and seek to ensure that services are culturally responsive and designed to fit the family’s needs and preferences.*

**2.3.5** *Parent(s) should be encouraged to take part in Engagement Forum meetings, organised through local mental health services or the office of HSE Mental Health Engagement and Recovery. More details can be found on [www.hse.ie/mentalhealthengagement](http://www.hse.ie/mentalhealthengagement).*

**2.3.6** *In an inpatient setting, parent(s) and families should be encouraged to visit regularly and there should be dedicated visiting space for families.”*

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/camhs/operational-guideline/>

### **The Office of Mental Health Engagement and Recovery**

The office of Mental Health Engagement and Recovery (MHER) established in 2019, has responsibility to carry out that task through their engagement structures. These include the national office of MHER, the local Area lead for engagement and the local and area engagement fora. These structures are open all service users, family members, carer’s and supporters (SUFMC) groups including those from CAMHS. Further information of the work of MHER can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/mental-health-engagement-and-recovery/>

In January 2024 the Office of MHER in partnership with the Child and Youth Mental Health office and CHO 9 is piloting an engagement mechanism for CAMHS services. This mechanism is being developed with our NGO partners, Foroige and is fully co-designed with CAMHS service users and families. This service is being independently designed at the request of young people themselves and is being run in CHO 9 until Q3 2024. At which point it will be evaluated with a view to expanding to other services.



The HSE remains committed to ensuring that the voice of all service user's, family members, carer's and supporters including those from CAMHS inform the design , delivery and evaluation of services as set out in our national policy '*Sharing the Vision – A Mental Health Policy for Everyone*'.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Hennessy".

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**Sarah Hennessy**  
**General Manager**  
**Child and Youth Mental Health Office**