



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin, Baile Phámar,
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Deputy Cathal Crowe,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin

27th August 2024

PQ Number: 29610/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the progress made in improving access to mental health services since 27 June 2020; the additional funding provided in successive budgets; his plans for 2024; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Cathal Crowe

Dear Deputy Crowe,

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 continued development of Mental Health Services in Ireland has been aimed at:

- Modernising Mental Health Services that historically were centred on institutional care by building our workforce and investing in fit for purpose infrastructure
- Promoting positive mental health at all levels of society, intervening early when problems develop, and providing accessible, comprehensive and community-based Mental Health Services for those who need them
- Taking a person-centred approach with a focus on enabling and supporting the recovery journey of each individual, based on clinical advice and best practice, as well as lived experience

The main initiatives undertaken to develop and expand mental health services since June 2020 have been guided by *Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone - StV (2020)*. It is important to note that service developments and improvements have been undertaken across a number of healthcare areas and indeed across the public sector more broadly to support the improvement of mental health at a population level.

Since 2020, the Department of Health and the HSE have established the required *StV* implementation structures, developed the first three-year implementation plan and put in place a monitoring and reporting framework through which quarterly policy implementation status reports are published online. In addition to progress on specific policy recommendations, these achievements provide a strong foundation for the effective implementation of the policy up until 2030.

Specifically, there have been key developments and important service improvements across all four domains in the policy as set out briefly below:



Domain 1: Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention

- Publication of [‘Embedding Women’s Mental Health in Sharing the Vision’](#) and the development of a position paper for how the Women’s Mental Health Charter will be embedded in StV implementation.
- Development of new public mental health content on [yourmentalhealth.ie](#) and the launch of the ‘Making the Connections’ public information campaign, which focuses on mental health literacy and signposts people to new content on anxiety, low mood, stress and sleep issues.
- Development and publication of [‘Stronger Together – HSEs mental health promotion plan 2022 – 2027’](#) supported by the establishment of a national network for health promotion and improvement officers working in mental health.
- [Directories of Wellbeing Continuing Professional Development \(CPD\) and the Catalogues of Resources](#) for wellbeing promotion, for schools and centres of education, have been updated and published online.

Domain 2: Service Access, Coordination and Continuity of Care

- Further roll-out of [social prescribing](#) nationally as an effective means of linking those with mental health difficulties to community-based supports and interventions. This has been supported by training and learning platforms for social prescribing link workers and HSE staff involved in supporting the delivery of social prescribing.
- Enhanced access to talk therapies within community and primary care settings, including by targeted initiatives to address capacity challenges in [Counselling in Primary Care](#) and Primary Care Psychology Services.
- Continued investment in the provision of digital mental health services including guided online cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) programmes in collaboration with Silver Cloud.
- Launch of the [Model of Care for Crisis Resolution Services](#) and development of Standard Operating Procedures to support CHO implementation teams, Crisis Resolution Teams and Crisis Café (Solace Café) staff. Four Crisis Resolution Teams sites are now operational (CHO 1, CHO 4, CHO 5 and CHO 6) with a fourth site due to operationalise Quarter 4, 2024. Solace Café is now operational in CHO 4 and CHO 6, with the remaining cafes in CHO 1, CHO 3 and CHO 5 at advanced stages of development; anticipated to be operational between Q.4 2024 and Q.1 2025.
- In September 2023, the [Model of Care for CAMHS Hubs](#) was launched. These hubs will provide enhanced intensive brief mental health interventions to support CAMHS teams in delivering enhanced responses to children, young people and their families and carers, in times of acute mental health crisis. Two CAMHS Hubs are operational in CHO 2 and CHO 6. Further CAMHS Hubs in CHO 3, CHO 4 and CHO 8 are at advanced phase of development; and currently impacted due to the current recruitment embargo.
- In collaboration with the HSEs Internal National Audit, an audit of compliance with the Mental Health Commission Code of Practice Relating to Admission of Children under the Mental Health Act 2001 was completed and the assessment of compliance was ‘satisfactory’.
- Enhancement of Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) across all age groups
- A demonstration of the [Model of Care for adults accessing talk therapies while attending specialist mental health services](#) is underway across five demonstration sites.



The National Clinical Programmes in Mental Health have expanded since 202. Please see progress made below for each Clinical Programme:

Adult ADHD

The National Clinical Programme for Adults with ADHD was launched in January 2021. Prior to the inception of the Programme, there were no specific ADHD public services available for Adults in Ireland. The NCP for ADHD is delivered as part of the HSE's mental health service provision to ensure an integrated, person-centred response to adults with ADHD. The Programme includes both assessment and treatment of the disorder and works collaboratively with voluntary agencies.

The table below provides detail on the location of each of the specialist Adult ADHD teams.

ADHD NCP	
CHO1	Sligo / Leitrim / Donegal
CHO3	Limerick / Clare /North Tipperary
CHO4 Cork	Cork
CHO4 Kerry/West Cork	Kerry / West Cork
CHO6	South Dublin / Wicklow
CHO7	CHO7 partly opened in November 2023

In addition, as part of the National Clinical Programme, funding was provided to facilitate a collaboration with ADHD Ireland and the UCD School of Psychology to develop an Adult ADHD App and the UMAAP Programme (Understanding and Managing Adult ADHD Programme).

UMAAP is a 6-week online intervention that combines psychoeducation, with acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) to provide a self-help intervention for adults who have ADHD. Both of the above are available to everybody in Ireland. The former can be downloaded from the App Store and the latter via ADHD Ireland. These should ensure those with milder ADHD can have access to appropriate information including self-care information. This is an alternative to referral to the specific Adult ADHD Services the focus of which is on those with moderate to severe ADHD and should reduce demand on these Services. UMAAP is delivered through ADHD Ireland.

Both the ADHD App and the UMAAP Programme have proven to be very positive resources for Adults with ADHD.

Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)

- Building on the [Model of Care for Early Intervention in Psychosis](#), there are five adult EIP services in place across the HSE and one youth at risk service is due to commence in CHO6.
- An EIP key worker grade has been established and approval granted by the DoH. The EIP key worker will enhance the multidisciplinary teams delivering EIP services.

Dual Diagnosis

The Dual Diagnosis Model of Care was launched in May 2023. Currently, there are two adult specialist Dual Diagnosis teams located in the Midwest and Cork. In addition, resources have been allocated to enhance the SASSY team in CHO9 and YoDa team in CHO7 to Adolescent Dual Diagnosis Hub teams.

Further information is available here: [Model of Care for Dual Diagnosis](#)



Eating Disorders

In January 2018, the HSE published a National Model of Care (MOC) for Eating Disorders (ED) in partnership with College of Psychiatrists' of Ireland and Bodywhys. In the absence of a preexisting dedicated eating disorder infrastructure or strategy, this MOC document has been developed in order to guide the provision of high quality, accessible and value for money eating disorder services in Ireland. Currently, there are five specialist CAMHS eating disorders teams and six adult eating disorders teams at various stages of development across the HSE. These consultant-led teams provide specialist eating disorder assessment and treatment in the community and are the foundations of quality eating disorder care.

Further information is available here: [Model of Care for Eating Disorders](#)

Management of Self Harm and Suicide Related Ideation

An updated Model of Care National Clinical Programme for Self Harm and Suicide related Ideation provides a framework to improve services for all who self-harm or present with suicide-related ideation, regardless of where they present. Launched in February 2022, the MOC outlines in detail the response for people who present to the emergency department including services for children and adolescents with Self-harm and Suicide Related Ideation. Since March 2023 the programme has been provided in all 26 Emergency Departments (EDs) with 24-hour service.

As at July 2024, there are 23 funded CNS (Clinical Nurse Specialist) posts providing a Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurse (SCAN) service across HSE:

- 4 in Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo (CHO1)
- 2 in Community Healthcare West (CHO2)
- 4 in Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CHO4)
- 5 in South East Community Healthcare (CHO5)
- 4 in Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare (CHO8)
- 4 (3 of which are based in CAMHS) in Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHO9)

Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services

- Building on the [Model of Care for Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services](#), six multidisciplinary teams are now in place across hub hospital sites and there are perinatal mental health midwife posts funded in all 13 spoke sites.
- Consultations are continuing in order to advance the establishment of a Mother and Baby Unit within Elm Mount Unit and funding has been approved for the appraisal of suitability.

Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People

In line with the [Model of Care for Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People](#) work has progressed on the establishment of comprehensive specialist mental health services for older persons

Mental Health of Intellectual Disability (MHID)

- Following the [National Model of Service](#), there are now 19 adult teams and 4 CAMHS-ID teams in place
- Launch of the [Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026](#) and continued development of peer support working, recovery education and individual placement and support services



Domain 3: Social Inclusion

- Publication of the new [National Housing Strategy for Disabled People \(NHSDP\) 2022-2027](#) and of the associated [implementation plan](#).
- A Standard Operating Procedure for the Individual Personalised Support model of supported employment is at an advanced draft stage.

Domain 4: Accountability and Continuous Improvement

- Publication of the [National Population Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research and Evaluation Strategy](#), supported by the Health Research Board (HRB), and with allocation of €1.8m for research and evaluation under StV over 2022 and 2023.
- Establishment of the HSE Assisted Decision Making (ADM) mentorship programme

In 2024, work will continue to progress the short-term recommendations in *Sharing the Vision* and regular progress reports will be published online. During 2024, the second policy implementation plan will be developed, coming into effect from the start of 2025.

Connecting for Life, Ireland’s National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2024

The HSE works to lead on the implementation of [Connecting for Life](#), since 2015. The strategy outlines 69 key actions, across seven strategic goals and related work across these actions, is described in phased [implementation plans](#). The [HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention \(NOSP\)](#) has responsibility for developing these plans and for describing the strategic and operational agenda needed to drive the implementation of the strategy.

Progress in implementing Connecting for Life is tracked and reported quarterly, to the National Cross Sectoral Steering and Implementation Group associated with the strategy. Its role is to review and drive implementation, applying a cross-sectoral approach and supporting the wide range of statutory and non-statutory agencies that have commitments to particular actions or initiatives in the strategy.

More details can be found by consulting with the [Quarterly Connecting for Life implementation progress reports](#)

Funding

In terms of additional funding provided in successive budgets, table 1 below outlines net mental health funding from the period 2020 to 2024.

Table 1

Net Mental Health Funding 2020 to 2024						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total increase
	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m
Budget per NSP	1,031	1,099	1,159	1,227	1,308	277
PFG development funding	13	23	24	14	13	87
Budget increase 2020 - 2024:						
Public sector pay agreements						119
Existing level of service funding						66
Development funding						87
Other adjustments						5
Total budget increase						277



Table 2 below provides detail on the allocation of Programme for Government funding from 2012 to 2024.

Table 2

Allocation of Programme for Government Funding 2012 to 2024														
Funding Use	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m
Service Staff for Community Teams, Specialist services and supports	24.5	31.1	20.0	15.8	3.8	7.9	8.1	3.9						115.0
Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC)	5.0	2.5	-	-	-	-	-	0.5						8.0
National Office for Suicide Prevention & CFL	3.0	1.0	-	2.8	-	-	1.0	0.3		0.1				8.2
In Patient Capacity/Placements	-	-	-	6.3	9.0	4.2	4.6	8.7		7.7	5.0	3.0		48.4
Jigsaw & Limerick Youth Service & SHIP Counselling	-	-	-	3.2	5.3	-	-	0.6						9.1
Genio & Misc	2.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		0.3	0.2			2.6
Community Nurse Allowances	-	-	-	-	-	1.8	-	-						1.8
Advancing Recovery & Service User Engagement	-	-	-	1.0	-	1.0	0.5	0.1		0.9	2.3		0.2	6.0
Peer support workers & CHO service user engagement leads	-	-	-	-	2.0	-	-	0.7		0.3	0.4			3.4
Information Systems/ Digital Projects	-	0.4	-	1.0	2.5	-	-	3.0						6.9
Clinical Programs - Self Harm	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	0.6			0.3		0.2	2.0
Clinical Programs - Eating Disorders	-	-	-	-	1.5	1.0	1.5	1.6			1.2		1.0	7.7
Clinical Programs - Early Intervention in Psychosis	-	-	-	1.4	-	0.5	-	0.4		0.5	0.5		0.7	4.0
Clinical Programs - ADHD	-	-	-	-	0.3	1.0	-	0.3			1.1		1.3	4.0
Clinical Programs - Dual Diagnosis										1.0	0.8		0.9	2.6
MoC Specialist MH Services for Older People											0.6		0.8	1.4
CAMHS hubs										5.0	0.6		0.4	6.0
Crisis resolution services										2.6	1.4		0.4	4.4
Clonmel Crisis house										0.4	0.4			0.7
Sharing the Vision implementation										0.5	0.3			0.8
Expanding community services										3.5	4.0			7.5
Expansion CAMHS services											2.0		5.8	7.8
Perinatal	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	2.0	0.6						3.6
MHID	-	-	-	3.2	-	0.5	2.0	1.7		0.3			0.2	7.8
Specialist Rehabilitation Services	-	-	-	-	3.0	-	2.9	-						5.9
Homeless funding	-	-	-	-	2.0	1.0	0.5	-						3.5
7 Day services	-	-	-	-	-	4.5	1.0	-						5.5
Service improvement & Quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	-						1.0
Minor Works fund to meet compliance and safety requirements	-	-	-	-	-	3.0	3.0	-						6.0
Clinical Psychology Training & Post/Under Graduate Nursing	-	-	-	-	0.7	2.5	2.4	1.5						7.1
Primary Care based Mental Health supports - Psychologists	-	-	-	-	5.0	-	-	-						5.0
Forensic Service	-	-	-	-	-	1.2	1.0	4.7	13.0		1.0			20.9
Drugs & Medicines increased costs for Improved Regimes	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	-						1.0
Youth Mental Health	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	1.0	-						2.0
Advanced Nurse practitioners	-	-	-	-	-	2.0	-	1.0						3.0
Physical Health	-	-	-	0.4	-	0.5	-	-						0.9
Talk therapies	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	1.0	1.0						2.5
Rental/Upgrade costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5			2.0	2.0		5.5
S39 developments												9.0		9.0
Online safety													1.0	1.0
SCAN for CAMHS/Youth													0.2	0.2
Traveller Youth Mental Health													0.2	0.2
Social Inclusion based Mental Health supports	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.4						2.4
Total	35.0	35.0	20.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	13.0	23.0	24.0	14.0	13.2	352.2

This detailed response provides an overview of mental health initiatives and progress made in relation to mental health National Clinical Programmes since June 2020.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Mc Cusker'.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
Access and Integration – HSE Mental Health Services