



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

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

Office of the
Assistant National Director
Mental Health Operations

St Lomans Hospital, Palmerstown,
Dublin 20, D20 HK69

www.hse.ie
[@hselive](https://twitter.com/hselive)

e:PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie

Deputy Roisín Shorthall,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

July 11th, 2024

PQ 30798/24

'To ask the Minister for Health to provide an update on implementation of recommendation 46 from Sharing the Vision, in respect of bed capacity in approved centres; and if he will make a statement on the matter'.

Dear Deputy Shorthall,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply to you directly with regard to the parliamentary question detailed below.

I have collated the relevant information in response to your question and can advise as follows: As part of the implementation of Sharing the Vision (StV), our national mental health policy, the policy's National Implementation and Monitoring Committee (NIMC) requested the establishment of a Specialist Group on Acute Bed Capacity. The work of the Specialist Group was to support delivery of StV recommendation 46, which states:

'An expert group should be set up to examine Acute Inpatient (Approved Centre) bed provision (including Psychiatric Intensive Care Units) and to make recommendations on capacity, reflective of emerging models of care, existing bed resources and future demographic changes, with such recommendations being aligned with Sláintecare.'

The Specialist Group examined provision of mental health beds from a range of sources, including Mental Health Commission reports and a bed census undertaken on 23rd November 2021. This census gathered occupancy data on Acute Adult and Continuing Care beds in HSE-approved centres nationally and included data on Forensic, CAMHS and high support beds (non-approved centres). The report took account of overall capacity nationally and examined regional differences in bed usage, along with associated and aligned mental health resources.

The Joint Committee on the Future of Mental Health Care recommended an increase in the number of available beds to 50 per 100,000 population. Taking into account both public and private bed resources, the Specialist Group found a national shortfall of 832 beds at the time of the census. In its report, the Specialist Group recommends a phased approach to address this shortfall, taking into consideration regional variances, ensuring a high-quality continuum of care for mental health service users in line with StV recommendations and the wider Sláintecare reform programme.



To address issues related to capacity and suitability of premises in the wider context of the overall Mental Health estate, the HSE's Chief Operations Officer has established a Capital Planning Group for Mental Health Services, which has been tasked with:

- Identifying and prioritising mental health capital requirements over the next five to ten years based on existing and future service need, and on regulatory requirements.
- Providing advice on the development of the future financial architecture of HSE Mental Health Services in terms of capital expenditure, including design of capital programmes and changes to the approach to pricing.
- Creating an initial 3-year plan outlining infrastructural works required to achieve infrastructural regulatory compliance in all registered mental health facilities.
- Completing a medium and long-term strategic mental health capital estates plan aligned to the new Health Regions, which supports the implementation of StV.

The Capital Planning Group has formally agreed to take into account the report of the Acute Bed Capacity Specialist Group and its recommendations and include as appropriate in ongoing capital planning.

In parallel with these initiatives to build our overall acute bed capacity in mental health services, work will continue to ensure people who are experiencing difficulties have access to comprehensive and community-based mental health services when they need them. This will involve continued investment in multi-disciplinary Community Mental Health Teams across the life span, building specialist services in the community as part of the ongoing roll-out of national clinical programmes, and enhancement of out of hours crisis resolution services. By building access to specialist care closer to home, these critical service improvements will help reduce avoidable admissions and support individuals in their recovery journey following discharge from an in-patient unit.

I hope that this clarifies the position and I would be happy to provide any additional information requested.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Derek Chambers'.

Derek Chambers
General Manager (Policy Implementation)
HSE National Mental Health