

HEA-MoSB-00446-2024

29 May 2024

Your Ref: M5/0124

Dear Ms Reilly,

The Minister for Mental Health and Older People Mary Butler T.D., wants to thank you for taking the time to contact her Office regarding your interest in the ADHD UMAAP Programme and specialist ADHD services in Ireland.

As you are aware, ADHD has long been recognised as one of the most common psychiatric disorders in children and it is now known to persist into adulthood. Core symptoms include inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. It can cause many issues in areas such as personal and social relations, education and occupation, managing money and organising life in general, there is also an increased risk of having other mental health difficulties with it such as anxiety and depression.

Children can access ADHD assessments through the National Educational Psychological Service. In addition to this, as per the CAMHS Operational Guidelines, CAMHS take referrals for children and adolescents up to age 18 with moderate to severe ADHD.

The Minister is aware that prior to the inception of the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Adults with ADHD which she launched in 2021, there were no specific ADHD public services available for Adults in Ireland. The Minister has been advised by the HSE the following is the position regarding ADHD services in Ireland.

The NCP for ADHD is delivered as part of the HSE's mental health service provision to ensure an integrated, person-centered response to adults with ADHD. The programme includes both assessment and treatment of the disorder and works collaboratively with voluntary agencies. It envisages a national service of ADHD teams, with each Team comprised of Consultant Psychiatrist, Senior Psychologist, Senior Occupational Therapist, Clinical Nurse Specialist Mental Health, and an administrator.

Enhancement of specialist mental health services such as ADHD is a key priority for the Minister, the Government as a whole and the HSE. The National Clinical Programme for ADHD is being implemented across the country by multidisciplinary teams on a phased basis. Since 2021, over 3 million has been made available for funding ADHD posts from Programme for Government funding. This has enabled the set-up of 5 fully operational ADHD Teams with recruitment of over 25 posts, and two more teams are currently in development with posts funded for them. The Minister is aware it is important to have a geographical focus on the rollout of this Programme, and it is planned to announce the roll out of further Teams in due course. With this objective in mind, it is the Minister's stated intention to continue to deliver expanded services for people with ADHD, through reaching the planned 12 specialist teams as soon as possible.

In addition, as part of the National Clinical Programme funding was allocated to facilitate a collaboration with ADHD Ireland and the UCD School of Psychology to develop an ADHD app and the UMAAP Programme (Understanding and Managing Adult ADHD Programme). Both the ADHD App and the UMAAP Programme are two very positive resources for people with ADHD. The UMAAP Programme is delivered as a 6-week workshop, and its aim is to provide education and tools for adults on how to manage ADHD. This Programme can be completed online, while the ADHD App is a useful source of information on ADHD.

The Minister is pleased to confirm that further to recent discussions between the Department of Health and the HSE to finalise 2024 mental health funding, ADHD Ireland will be provided with funding for provision of the UMAAP Programme in 2024 and beyond. The Minister recently had the pleasure of launching the UMAAP Programme in April with ADHD Ireland.

It should also be noted as part of the additional 10 million funding secured by the Minister for mental health services in 2024, a number of new posts will be available to support the clinical programmes. This includes posts to support ADHD, and details are currently being finalised.

Finally, the Minister wants to reassure you that she remains firmly committed to enhancing specialist services for ADHD, including improved access and shorter waiting lists.

Again, thank you for taking the time to contact the Minister's Office to raise your concerns on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

Amy Brennan

Private Secretary to Minister Butler