

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – CHO 4

2017 Inspection Report

Community Healthcare Organisation:
CHO 4

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Contents

Introduction	3
Description	3
Staffing	3
Waiting times	4
Access to care and treatment	5
Young people and family involvement	5
Quality initiatives	5
Challenges	5
Conclusion.....	6

Introduction

In 2017, the Inspector of Mental Health Services sought information from each Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) about Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in their area. Information was collected by questionnaire on 15 September 2017 and a meeting held with the Executive Clinical Directors and Head of Mental Health for the CHO.

Description

CHO 4 was a large geographical area and included counties Cork and Kerry. There were ten poorly resourced community teams, eight in Cork and two in Kerry, and one 20-bed in-patient CAMHS unit, Eist Linn, which admitted 12 to 17 year olds. As well as CHO 4, Eist Linn also served CHO 5 (Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary). Consequently, the demand on beds was high, with complaints about the difficulty in obtaining a bed across both CHOs.

CHO 4 Profile

Total population	689,750
Population under 18	168,542
CAMHS funding	€13,120,000
Per capita funding for under 18's	€77.84
Number of CAMHS community teams recommended in <i>A Vision for Change</i>	14
Actual number of CAMHS community teams in 2017	10

Staffing

CHO 4 CAMHS Staffing Profile	Number (WTE)*	<i>A Vision for Change</i> recommendations	% <i>A Vision for Change</i> recommendations in place
Consultant Psychiatrist	9.6	14	69%
Doctor in training	10.8	14	77%
Psychologist	14.2	28	51%
Occupational Therapist	11.44	14	82%
Social worker	15	28	54%
Social care staff	6	14	43%
Nursing staff	11	28	39%
Speech and language	6.2	14	44%
Total	84.24	154	55%

*WTE: Whole Time Equivalent

CHO 4 CAMHS Vacancies (post approved but not filled)	Number (WTE)
Consultant Psychiatrist	2.2
Doctor in training	1.4
Psychologist	0.33
Occupational Therapist	0
Social worker	1
Social care leader	0
Nursing staff	0
Speech and language	1

Waiting times

CHO 4 CAMHS Waiting times – From time of referral to first assessment	
Emergency	CAMHS unable to give information
Urgent	CAMHS unable to give information
Non-urgent	CAMHS unable to give information

CHO 4 CAMHS Waiting times – From first assessment to follow-up appointment	
Emergency	CAMHS unable to give information
Urgent	CAMHS unable to give information
Non-urgent	CAMHS unable to give information

The CHO were unable to give waiting times, as above. However, they stated that there were 768 young people on the waiting list for a first appointment:

1 – 3 months	3 – 6 months	6 – 9 months	9 – 12 months	12 months or above	Total
154	171	164	98	181	768

Waiting list initiatives

A clinician-led waiting list validation exercise was developed and piloted with one team, resulting in nine patient discharges from the waiting list of that team. This was to be extended to all teams in 2018.

Access to care and treatment

CHO 4 Access to in-patient CAMHS facilities

CAMHS Eist Linn in-patient unit	20 beds
Children admitted to adult mental health units in 2017	10
Children treated abroad for mental illness in 2017	2

CHO 4 CAMHS Access

Donegal

CAMHS out of hours cover provided to emergency departments	Yes
CAMHS team input if child admitted to adult unit	Yes
Provision of CAMHS to 17 year olds	Yes

Young people and family involvement

A listening exercise in conjunction with the ISPCC was completed in 2017.

Quality initiatives

- A liaison service was planned for Cork and Kerry in 2018. There was a working group formed to work with the Adult Liaison Service. This group was to establish assessment by Self-Harm Nurses of 16 and 17 year olds who present to the Emergency Departments.
- A CAMHS Enhancement Project had been initiated and a lead appointed in September 2017.
- Approval had been obtained for a CAMHS Eating Disorder Team.
- Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy for Suicide 2015-2020, was developing positive mental health initiatives within the school system and plans for Cork and Kerry were launched in 2017.
- A JIGSAW service had been established in Cork.
- Alignment of CAMHS services with Primary Care Networks was ongoing.

Challenges

- There was under-resourcing of CAMHS teams. This was especially so where teams had transferred from the Brothers of Charity Services to the HSE.

- Although management in the CHO stated that they provided a service to 16-18 year olds, this was still considered a challenge.
- There were two consultant psychiatrist vacancies. In North Lee, this had been covered by a 0.6 WTE locum psychiatrist. In South Kerry, there was a consultant psychiatrist vacancy since August 2016. This post had not been advertised and it has been impossible to recruit a locum.

Conclusion

CHO 4 provided CAMHS services across a wide geographical area with varying levels of resources. The South Lee/West Cork CAMHS team, with a population of 19,000 had a particularly poorly resourced team of 6.8 WTEs, and covered a difficult geographical area. With overall staffing at 55% of the recommendations of *A Vision for Change*, there were long waiting times and poor response to young people's needs for CAMHS services. Initiatives to address the waiting times had commenced, but more needed to be done, specifically by putting more resources in place. Eist Linn, the in-patient CAMHS unit, was a modern unit with 20 beds. However, it was difficult to source a bed and there was no emergency bed provision in Eist Linn, and its catchment area also included all of CHO 5.