

INSPECTORATE OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

WHOLE SERVICE EVALUATION DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 2012

Introduction

As part of the inspections of 2012 the Inspectorate undertook a Whole Service Evaluation (WSE) of Dublin North Central which included an inspection of the following:

- St. Vincent's Hospital Fairview
- St. Aloysius Ward, Mater Hospital
- St. Joseph's Child and Adolescent In-patient Unit
- St. Joseph's Child and Adolescent Day Hospital
- Iona Day Hospital
- Crannog Day Hospital
- Psychiatry of Old Age Team
- Marino-Tolka Community Mental Health Team
- Marino-Clontarf Community Mental Health Team,
- Day Centre, 87 St. Lawrence's Road
- Community Residences St. Lawrence's Rd

The inspection took place over three days in September 2012. All the above inspections are published as separate reports on the Mental Health Commission website.

Description of service

Dublin North Central was a busy inner city catchment area with large areas of social deprivation and a population of approximately 156,000. Its in-patient service was provided by St. Vincent's Hospital Fairview with 59 beds and an acute admission ward with 15 beds, St. Aloysius Ward, Mater Hospital. St. Vincent's Hospital had an acute admission unit, psychiatry of old age unit, a rehabilitation unit and a general adult psychiatry unit. There was also a 12-bedded child and adolescent in-patient unit currently with six operational beds.

There were six community mental health teams who had access to two day hospitals, four day centres, a substance misuse centre and a psychotherapy centre. There was a 24 hour supervised residence and three medium/low support residences.

There was an old age psychiatry service that had a day hospital in Eccles Street. The child and adolescent service had a day hospital in the grounds of St. Vincent's Hospital. There was also an active rehabilitation team, and a liaison team in the Mater Hospital.

Discussion

One of the most striking aspects of the service was the lack of multidisciplinary team (MDT) staffing and this had been a historical difficulty. At the time of inspection in 2012 there were 2.8 whole time equivalent (WTE) social workers, 1 WTE psychologists and 1 WTE occupational therapists to serve six community mental health teams (CMHTs). There had been a decrease in MDT staffing since 2008 when there were 2.8 WTE social workers, 4.5 WTE clinical psychologists and 4 WTE occupational therapists. (*Annual Report of the Inspector of Mental Health Services 2008*)

Despite this extreme lack of MDT staffing the service had made every effort to provide a quality service. Each service user in the community and in-patient units had a multidisciplinary individual care plan as far as was practically possible with only minimal MDT staffing. There was an emphasis on psychotherapy with many nurses training in psychotherapeutic techniques and a department of psychotherapy. All referrals to the day hospitals were offered psychotherapy. There was a home-based treatment team that operated from the day hospitals and a seven day twelve hour service from the day hospitals.

Despite the restrictions imposed by lack of staffing and the condition of some of the buildings the service offered a comprehensive in-patient and community service.