

# **INSPECTORATE OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

## **WHOLE SERVICE EVALUATION OF LIMERICK MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 2012**

### **Introduction**

A Whole Service Evaluation (WSE) of the mental health services in the Limerick city region was carried out by the Inspectorate in April 2012, over a period of three days. The service served an urban population of approximately 91,500.

During the evaluation three approved centres, two 24 hour- staffed community residences, one day centre, one day hospital and four community mental health teams (CMHTs) were inspected. The report for each of these individual units is available on the Mental Health Commission website. Following the inspections of Unit 5B and St. Joseph's Hospital a meeting with the senior management team was held to outline the nature of the subsequent inspections. During the course of the inspections, inspectors had the opportunity to meet with several members of the service who facilitated the inspections and were most helpful. The inspections were unannounced.

The services inspected were:

- Unit 5B, Mid-Western regional Hospital
- St. Joseph's Hospital
- Tearman Ward, St. Camillus Hospital
- St. Anne's Day Hospital
- Inis Cara Day Centre
- New Strand Community Residence
- Inisgile Community Residence
- Limerick Forensic Team
- Child and Adolescent team
- Sector B Community Mental Health team
- Psychiatry of Old Age Team

### **Description**

#### **Approved Centres**

The service had three approved centres with a total of 77 beds. St. Joseph's Hospital, with 16 beds had only one remaining ward open and no longer admitted patients. There was a closure plan in effect for this unit and it was expected that it would soon close. St. Camillus Hospital was a long- term care facility for elderly residents with physical needs and the approved centre, Tearman Ward was one

ward within this campus. It accommodated 16 residents under the care of the Psychiatry of Old Age team. The acute unit, Unit 5B, was located in the Mid Western Regional Hospital in Dooradoyle and had 40 beds. At the time of inspection, refurbishment work was ongoing which would provide a high dependency unit and beds for admission of elderly patients.

## **Community Services**

The day hospital at St. Anne's, Roxboro Road, had recently been refurbished and provided mainly sessional interventions for patients of two sectors (B and B1) referred from General Practitioners (with whom there were good links), the CMHTs or following discharge from the approved centres. A key worker from the multidisciplinary team carried out an initial assessment of each person referred and an appropriate programme of interventions was implemented. A wide range of interventions were provided by the team. Assessment of the B1 Sector Team showed strong multidisciplinary team working, with all members of the team providing initial assessments for people referred. Patients were regularly reviewed by the team thereafter. The team provided two follow-up clinics and four new patient clinics each week, but there was no streamlined method of recording appointments in one single appointment book.

The day centre at Inis Cara was inspected. This provided 26 places each day for those with enduring mental illness and was under the care of the rehabilitation team. There was evidence of multidisciplinary team involvement, with access to the social worker and occupational therapist in the sector team.

In addition to providing sectorised community mental health services, the service in Limerick also provided a service to Limerick Prison. This was a part-time position filled by the consultant psychiatrist from Sector B2 team (0.5 WTE), one NCHD (0.5 WTE) and one nurse (0.2 WTE). This forensic team was extremely stretched as it provided an in-reach service to Limerick prison, forensic reports for court, liaison to the courts and forensic assessments for in-patients in Unit 5B. In 2011, 543 prisoners were seen by this part-time service. The consultant and the NCHD also had a commitment to provide a service to the sector.

The Psychiatry of Old Age team was based in the day hospital on the campus of St. Camillus Hospital and ran a day hospital for the elderly on one day per week in rather cramped facilities which had only one meeting room. The team comprised two consultants, two NCHDs, two community mental health nurses, one psychologist and 0.5 WTE social worker. There was no occupational therapist on the team. The population served was 184,000.

There were two Child and Adolescent Mental Health Teams for Limerick; one of these teams, East Limerick, was inspected. The service operated out of rented premises in the city which was unsuitable in terms of access, layout and location.

Nevertheless, the team provided a service for adolescents up to age 18 years and there was evidence of good team working. A significant challenge highlighted by the team was access to age appropriate beds.

The community residences at New Strand and Inisgile were large houses with 17 and 27 residents in each, respectively. Many of the residents in both residences had been transferred from long-stay wards in St. Josephs' Hospital and whilst it was good to see people living in the community, both these community residences were significantly larger than recommended in A Vision for Change.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, there was a sense of good team working in the community service, despite the fact that teams were not fully resourced in terms of multidisciplinary team members. CMHTs showed an innovative approach to assessments with initial assessments being carried out by members of the multidisciplinary team in addition to medical members. Some premises had been refurbished to a high standard whilst others were not well maintained or suitable; the refurbishment of the acute unit in 5B will be a welcome improvement of the layout of this unit.

It was disappointing to see that individual care plans as described in the Regulations were not used in either Unit 5B or in St. Joseph's Hospital.