Mental Health Commission finds six high-risk non compliances across four centres

Tuesday, February 15th, 2022: The Mental Health Commission (MHC) has this morning published inspection reports on four of the country's inpatient mental health centres and found six high-risk non-compliances and eight moderate-risk non-compliances across all four units.

The Inspector of Mental Health Services, Dr Susan Finnerty, said that therapeutic services and programmes are an essential part of the road to recovery. "It is concerning to find two centres receive high-risk non-compliances on the regulation with regard to therapeutic services," she said. "Residents need access to social work and occupational therapy as part of their treatment, and approved centres need to ensure multi-disciplinary teams are available to patients."

The Chief Executive of the Mental Health Commission, John Farrelly, said many centres across the country have had to reduce resident numbers to facilitate COVID-19 social distancing and isolation measures and to facilitate one resident per room. However, as we start to move back to normality, it is now time, he believes, to address the urgent need for suitable premises.

"The pandemic has highlighted a number of inadequacies in our mental health services, and we have learned that shared accommodation is not suitable for keeping people safe. It is critical that premises for mental health residents are of an appropriate standard. Shared accommodation, dormitory-style bedrooms, old unsuitable premises, and shared bathrooms are not suitable to meet the requirements for a modern, inpatient mental health service."

The **Admission Unit and St Edna's Unit** are located on the grounds of St. Loman's Hospital in Mullingar and provide a total accommodation for 44 residents. St Enda's Unit provides continuing care for male residents, most of whom have been in the centre for several years. At the time of the inspection, there was an occupancy of 15 residents. The Admission Unit had reduced bed capacity to 21 beds to facilitate COVID-19 social distancing and isolation measures and is an acute facility providing treatment for male and female residents. At the time of the inspection, there was an occupancy of 13 residents.

The centre received an overall compliance rate of 86% which was up 3% from the compliance rating in 2020. There were three conditions attached to the centre at the time of inspection. The approved centre was not in breach of its conditions but was non-compliant with two regulations related to premises.

The centre received five non-compliances on inspection, comprising four moderate and one low-risk rating. The centre received a moderate-risk non-compliance for the regulations on privacy, premises, risk management, and the use of seclusion. The inspectors found that fire evacuation drills had not taken place since 2019, and ligature points, identified as a medium risk, were not minimised to the lowest practicable level based on risk assessment. Additionally, the windows of the visiting room, dining room and assessment rooms which were overlooked by public areas did not have privacy blinds.

The **Cluain Lir Centre** opened in 2012 and is located on the grounds of St. Mary's Care Centre in Westmeath. While the approved centre was registered for 42 residents, the capacity has been temporarily reduced to 36 because of COVID-19 restrictions so that all residents could be accommodated in single, en suite rooms.

The building is shared with old age care facilities which included sharing the central reception, a church, and catering facilities. However, residents from Cluain Lir had limited access to therapy facilities because of a lack of clarity as to their entitlement to use these rooms. Access to a large therapy room was only permitted two days per week. The centre did not have a dedicated tribunal room and residents could not access the external garden space at the back of the large therapy room.

The centre received an overall compliance rate of 91%; a decrease on its 100% compliance rating it received in 2020. There were no conditions attached to the centre at the time of inspection.

However, the centre was non-compliant with the regulations on premises, and therapeutic services, for which it received two high-risk ratings. Reasons for the high-risk rating for therapeutic services included that the programme of activities was predominantly recreational and there were insufficient recovery-oriented therapeutic programmes provided by appropriately qualified professionals. This programme was led by the nursing staff and was not multi-disciplinary in its delivery.

The centre received a high-risk rating for premises as hazards were not consistently minimised. The risk associated with slates falling from an adjacent HSE building into the Cluain Lir garden meant that residents of the centre did not have full or free access to the garden.

The report noted that the centre did not provide an acceptable corrective and preventative action plan within the required timeframe to address the high-risk rating for premises. The MHC will follow up in relation to same and will escalate accordingly.

Ginesa Suite is located on the St. John of God Hospital campus in Stillorgan, Co. Dublin. The centre is situated on the first floor of the main building. It is registered for 12 beds and there were six residents present at the time of the inspection. It provides treatment to young people aged from thirteen to seventeen years of age from all over Ireland.

The centre received an overall compliance rating of 88%, which was the same compliance rating it received in 2020. There were no conditions attached to the centre at the time of inspection.

The centre received four non-compliances on inspection, two moderate-risk and two high-risk. The moderate-risk non compliances related to regulations on premises and medications. The high-risk non compliances related to the regulations on therapeutic services and staffing as residents did not have any access to social work and occupational therapy services since late 2020. The therapeutic services provided were not directed towards restoring and maintaining optimal levels of physical and psychosocial functioning of residents. At the time of the inspection there was an occupational therapy manager, but this individual did not provide occupational therapy services to Ginesa Suite.

The report noted that the social work post was filled on the Monday after the inspection and the occupational therapist post has since been recruited and is due to commence duty in 2022.

The **Adult Mental Health Unit at Sligo University Hospital** is a purpose-built facility which opened in October 2020. Accommodation comprises of 25 single en suite bedrooms and there were 23 residents present at the time of the inspection.

The centre received an overall compliance rating of 88%, the same rating it received in 2020. There were no conditions attached to the centre at the time of inspection.

The centre received two moderate and two high-risk non-compliances. The centre received high-risk non compliances for the regulation on individual care planning and Part 4 of the Mental Health Act 2001, which relates to consent to treatment. In relation to the high-risk rating for care planning, residents' individual care plans inspected were found to be inadequate. The centre was high-risk non-compliant with consent to treatment as one involuntary patient's records did not document that the responsible consultant psychiatrist had assessed the patient's capacity to consent to receive treatment.

Ends

Notes to the Editor:

About the Mental Health Commission:
The Mental Health Commission (MHC) is an independent statutory body. The primary functions of the MHC are to foster and promote high standards of care and good practice in the delivery of mental health services and to ensure that the interests of those involuntarily admitted are protected, pursuant to the Mental Health Act 2001. The MHC also has statutory responsibility for the Decision Support Service (DSS) under the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015.

Note regarding these inspections:
In order for the MHC to safely complete inspections of all approved centres, it continues to be necessary to have announced inspections to ensure inspectors and staff and residents of individual centres are in a position to abide by public health guidelines in the context of COVID-19. Due to public health restrictions, certain activities within approved centres were not able to take place. The inspectors have taken these restrictions into account when assessing compliance with regulations, rules and codes of practice. In line with public health guidance, the inspectors restricted the amount of time spent in resident areas of the approved centres. Because of this, only compliance with regulations, rules and codes of practice was assessed, as required by the Mental Health Act 2001, and quality ratings have not been included.

Admission Unit St Enda's unit, St Loman's:

https://www.mhcirl.ie/sites/default/files/2022-02/St-Lomans-Hospital-IR-2021.pdf

- Overview of centre:
    - Location: Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
    - Beds: 44
    - Care: acute adult mental health care, continuing mental health care/long stay, mental health rehabilitation, forensic mental health care

- **Conditions**: there were three conditions attached to the registration of this approved centre at the time of inspection.

    - **Condition 1:** To ensure adherence to Regulation 22(3): Premises, the approved centre shall develop a costed, funded and time-bound plan to minimise ligatures in the approved centre. This plan shall be developed by a date specified by the Mental Health Commission. The approved centre shall provide an update on the implementation of this plan to the Mental Health Commission in a form and frequency prescribed by the Commission.

Finding on condition: The approved centre was not in breach of Condition 1 and the approved centre was non-compliant with Regulation 22: Premises at the time of inspection.

- **Condition 2:** To ensure adherence to Regulation 22(1)(c): Premises, the approved centre shall implement a programme of maintenance to ensure the premises are safe and meet the needs of the resident group. The approved centre shall provide a progress update to the Mental Health Commission on the programme of maintenance in a form and frequency prescribed by the Commission.

  Finding on condition: The approved centre was not in breach of Condition 2 and the approved centre was non-compliant with Regulation 22: Premises at the time of inspection.

- **Condition 3:** To ensure adherence to Regulation 26(4) and (5): Staffing the approved centre shall develop and implement a plan to ensure all healthcare professionals working in the approved centre are up-to-date in mandatory training areas. The approved centre shall provide a progress update on staff training to the Mental Health Commission in a form and frequency prescribed by the Commission.

  Finding on condition: The approved centre was not in breach of Condition 3 and the approved centre was compliant with Regulation 26: Staffing at the time of inspection.

- Compliance:
  - 86% (up 3% from 83% in 2020)
  - 31 compliant; 5 non-compliant; 3 non-applicable
  - 2021 risk ratings (for the 5 non-compliances)
    - 4 moderate
    - 1 low

- 2021 areas rated as excellent: n/a

St Bridget's Ward & St Marie Goretti's Ward, Cluain Lir Centre:

https://www.mhcirl.ie/sites/default/files/2022-02/Cluain-Lir-Care-Centre-IR-2021.pdf

- Overview of centre:
  - Location: St Mary's Campus, Longford Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
  - Beds: 42
  - Care: Acute adult mental health care, psychiatry of later life, continuing mental health care / long stay mental health rehabilitation, mental health care for people with intellectual disability

- Conditions: There were no conditions attached to the registration of this approved centre at the time of inspection.

- Compliance:
  - 91% (down from 100% in 2020)
  - 32 compliant; 2 non-compliant; 5 non-applicable

- 2021 risk ratings (for the 2 non-compliance)
    - 2 high

- 2021 areas rated as excellent: n/a

Ginesa Suite: https://www.mhcirl.ie/sites/default/files/2022-02/Ginesa-Suite_IR-2021.pdf

- Overview of centre:
    - Location: St John of God Hospital, Stillorgan, Co Dublin
    - Beds: 12
    - Care: Child and adolescent mental health care

- Conditions: there were no conditions attached to the registration of this approved centre at the time of inspection.

- Compliance:
    - 88% (same rating of 88% in 2020)
    - 28 compliant; 4 non-compliant; 7 non-applicable
    - 2021 risk ratings (for the 4 non-compliance)
        - 2 high
        - 2 moderate

- 2021 areas rated as excellent: n/a

Adult Mental Health Unit, Sligo University Hospital:

https://www.mhcirl.ie/sites/default/files/2022-02/AMHU-Sligo-University-Hospital-IR-2021.pdf

- Overview of centre:
    - Location: Sligo
    - Beds: 25
    - Care: acute adult mental health care

- Conditions: there was one condition attached to the registration of this approved centre at the time of inspection.

    - **Condition 1:** To ensure adherence to Regulation 26(4) and 26(5): Staffing the approved centre shall develop and implement a plan to ensure all healthcare professionals working in the approved centre are up-to-date in mandatory training areas. The approved centre shall provide a progress update on staff training to the Mental Health Commission in a form and frequency prescribed by the Commission

      Finding: The approved centre was not in breach of Condition 1 and the approved centre was compliant with Regulation 26: Staffing at the time of inspection.
- Compliance:
    - 88% (same as 2020)
    - 30 compliant; 4 non-compliant; 5 non-applicable
    - 2021 risk ratings (for the 4 non-compliances)
        - 2 high
        - 2 moderate

- 2021 areas rated as excellent: n/a