Over 90% compliance ratings received by two approved centres

Mental Health Commission finds moderate risk ratings of non-compliance in two inpatient units.

Tuesday 6 December 2022: The Mental Health Commission has this morning published inspection reports for inpatient centres in Kilkenny and Louth, which identified four moderate risk ratings for non-compliances with regulations.

Dr Susan Finnerty, Inspector of Mental Health Services, commented: "It is positive to see centres retaining levels of compliance above 90% year on year. It demonstrates a dedication of centres to maintaining a consistent quality patient care. However, I would like to see issues around staffing addressed. Staff play a key role in maintaining consistency of these standards, to achieve this it is vital staff are trained and confident in their skills."

"These centres highlight how correct protocols and procedures once implement effectively lead to year-on-year high compliance ratings. The Commission has noted a trend of compliance ratings falling due to premises and has repeatedly called for capital investment for mental health centres premises across Ireland to address this", said John Farrelly, Chief Executive of the Mental Health Commission.

St Gabriel's Ward is an approved centre located in a single storey building on the grounds of St. Canice's Hospital in Kilkenny. The centre is registered to accommodate residents for Continuing Mental Health Care/Long Stay and Psychiatry of Later Life.There are 20 registered beds in the centre, and 15 beds were occupied on the day of inspection.

At the time of inspection, there are no conditions attached to the centre.

Overall, compliance fell from 97% in 2021 to 94% in 2022. The centre received two moderate non-compliance with regulations relating to premises and risk management procedures.

In relation to its non-compliance with risk managements, hazards were not adequately minimised in the approved centre. The approved centre had a written operational policy and procedures in relation to risk management, which was last reviewed in April 2022. However, during the inspection, radiators and associated pipework were not covered and represented a burn hazard they were extremely hot to touch. This represented a health and safety risk to the centre's resident cohort. This risk had not been identified by staff prior to the inspection, and hence was not documented in the risk register.

In terms of corrective and preventative action, funding has been secured to cover radiators and associated pipework in all resident access areas in order to prevent a burn risk to residents.
Also, a risk assessment form has been completed highlighting the risk of burns to residents from hot radiators and the associated pipework and is now on the unit's risk register.

The Ita's Ward is single storey building within the campus of St Brigid's Hospital, in Louth. The approved centre is registered with the Mental Health Commission for 20 beds. There were give rooms occupied during the inspection. All residents were now accommodated in single bedrooms.

There is one condition attached to the centre at the time of inspection which relates to staffing. The centre was not in breach of this condition at the time of inspection.
Compliance fell from 97% in 2021 to 93% in 2022. The centre received two moderate risk ratings for non-compliances with regulations relating to staffing and general health.

The centre did receive a moderate risk rating for non-compliance with a different aspect of the staffing regulations. The numbers and skill mix of staffing were sufficient to meet resident needs and an appropriately qualified staff member was on duty and in charge at all times, however, not all staff were trained in the areas of fire safety, basic life support or the professional management of aggression and violence.
In relation to the non-compliance on general health, the inspection found the clinical files of five residents who had been in the approved centre over six months were reviewed. The six-monthly health assessments documented a physical examination, blood pressure, smoking status, dental health, nutritional status, a medication review, body mass-index and weight. Not all six- monthly assessments included documented family history; this was missing in three of the files examined. Similarly, the waist circumference measurement of one resident had not been recorded in one case. Resident waist circumference measurements were contained in each the other four files inspected.

St Gabriel's Inspection Report

St Ita's Inspection Report

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 this inspection:

These inspections were carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 centre. 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.

St Gabriel's Ward

- **Overview of centre:**
  - Location: St Canice's Hospital, Dublin Road, Co Kilkenny
  - Beds: 20
  - Care: continuing mental health care/long stay psychiatric care for later life
- **Finding:**
  - The approved centre was non-compliant with Regulation 22: Premises and Regulation 32: Risk Management Procedures at the time of inspection.
- **Compliance:**
  - 94% (3% decrease since 2021)
  - 31 compliant; 2 non-compliance, 8 non-applicable
    - 2022 risk ratings: (relating to the two non-compliances)
    - 2 Moderate
    - 2022 areas rated as excellent: N/A

St Ita's Ward, St Brigid's Hospital

- **Overview of centre:**

- Location: St Brigid's' Hospital, Ardee, Co Louth
- Beds: 20
- Care: continuing mental health care/long stay psychiatric care for later life

- **Conditions**: there was one condition attached to the registration of this approved centre at the time of inspection.
  - Condition 1**:** 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.
  - The approved centre was in breach of Condition 1 and the approved centre was non-compliant with Regulation 19: General Health and Regulation 26: Staffing.
- **Compliance:**
  - 79% (down from 94% in 2021)
  - 27 compliant; 2 non-compliance, 10 non-applicable
    - 2022 risk ratings: (relating to the two non-compliances)
    - 2 Moderate
    - 2022 areas rated as excellent: N/A