



Oak House  
Lime Tree Avenue  
Millennium Park  
Naas  
Co. Kildare

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

19<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

Tel: (045) 880 400 / LoCall 1890 737 343  
Fax: (045) 880 482 / LoCall 1890 200 857

Deputy Tom Kitt,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Kitt,

I refer to your recent correspondence to Professor Drumm in respect of funding of the mental health services. This correspondence was forward to me for reply.

The correspondence refers to the recent publication by Amnesty International of the Indecon Report on Mental Health financing. This Report re-presents the data included in the HSE's Implementation Plan and in the report of the Inspector of Mental Health Services at the Mental Health Commission as a compilation of the different mental health data streams. It makes a number of useful points in relation to the availability of data within the mental health services, including the financial data, reinforcing those issues identified within the Report of the Expert Group – *A Vision for Change* itself and the recommendations of the Mental Health Commission in its Quality Framework. It clearly demonstrates the historical reliance within the mental health services on information systems that a manual and paper based.

In this context, the HSE, in collaboration with the HRB and other stakeholders, has, over the past two years, developed a mental health information system, WISDOM, to expand the data currently collected from inpatient and community settings and to support the delivery of modern mental health services. The Proof of Concept for the WISDOM project went live on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 in the Donegal Local Mental Health Service and will continue until mid-2010, greatly improving the data and reporting capacity in this area. The outcome of this project should support the development of the requirements for a national mental health information system

It is important to acknowledge that a significant amount of work has already been undertaken on the journey towards implementing *A Vision for Change* and while not yet complete, much progress has been made on many of its recommendations. You may wish to view the recent supplement *Your Health, Your Future with the Irish Independent* at <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Publications/services/Mentalhealth/supplement%20on%20mental%20health.html>

which gives a wide range of examples where the recommendations in *A Vision for Change* are being actively implemented.

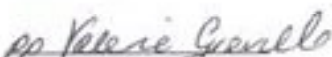
Other important legislative and policy frameworks that promote and contribute to the provision of quality mental health services and protect the human rights of those who use the services include the implementation of the Mental Health Acts 2001 and 2008 and the Statutory Instruments (Rules and Regulations) based thereon, the roll out of the Quality Framework for Mental Health Services in Ireland and the National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention 'Reach Out' are all contributing to achieving the Vision.

The mental health services have a legacy of old psychiatric hospitals, some of which date back to the 1800's. Over the years, a process has been in place to provide more appropriate care settings for the individuals who resided in these buildings. This process has resulted in the reduction of residents from a high of 20,000 in the 1950's to less than 1,500 today. This process is ongoing and the HSE has planned early reinvestment of the proceeds of the sale of lands to provide suitable accommodation for those remaining within the old psychiatric hospitals. These plans are under consideration by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Finance as part of a request to release the €42m deposited in the Exchequer from the sale of St Loman's and the Verville retreat.

While, *A Vision for Change* was written at the peak of the economic cycle and prior to the erosion of national funding, the HSE is committed to its full implementation across the full range of mental health services, revitalising existing resources and applying new resources when allocated. In the immediate and short term, however, the provision of additional resources for mental health services is unlikely.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

  
**Martin Rogan**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**Mental Health Services**  
**Integrated Services Directorate**