

High Level Taskforce on Mental Health and Addiction Challenges of persons interacting with the Criminal Justice System

Plenary Group Meeting

Thursday 16th December 2021 11am-1pm via videoconference

Attendees:

- Minister Helen McEntee, Minister for Justice
- Kathleen Lynch; Chair - former Minister of State for Primary Care, Mental Health and Disability
- Ben Ryan; Assistant Secretary, Dept. of Justice, Head of Criminal Justice Policy
- Mary O'Regan; Principal Officer, Dept. of Justice, Penal and Policing Policy
- Michael Murchan; Assistant Principal Officer, Dept. of Health, Mental Health Unit
- Jim Ryan; Head of Operations for Mental Health Services, HSE
- Pat Bergin; Head of Service, Forensic Mental Health Service, HSE
- Mark Wilson; Director, Probation Service
- John Devlin; Clinical Director, Irish Prison Service
- Enda Kelly; Chief Nursing Officer, Irish Prison Service
- Inspector Andrew Lacey; An Garda Síochána
- Deirdre O'Flaherty; Administrative Officer, Dept. of Health, Mental Health Division
- Dr Narayanan Subramanian; Consultant General Adult Psychiatrist & HSE National Clinical Lead in Dual Diagnosis, HSE
- Graham Hopkins; Dept. of Housing, Homelessness Policy, Funding and Delivery Section
- Ruairi Ferrie; Dept. of Housing, Homelessness Policy, Funding and Delivery Section
- Tony O'Donovan; Principal Officer, Child Welfare Advisor, Children Detention Unit, DCEDIY
- Dr Eamon Keenan; National Clinical Lead-Addiction Services, HSE
- Prof. Harry Kennedy; Executive Clinical Director, Central Mental Hospital
- Secretariat – John Dunphy, Oonagh Ffrench and Kerrie Keegan, Dept. of Justice, Penal and Policing Policy

Apologies:

- Paula Hilman; Assistant Commissioner, An Garda Síochána
- Seamus Hemenstall; Principal Officer, Dept. of Health, Mental Health Division
- Chief Superintendent Gerard Roche; An Garda Síochána
- Eamon Waters, Dept. of Housing, Homelessness Policy, Funding and Delivery Section

Guest speakers:

- Pat Kirwan, Head of Business Development, State Claims Agency
- Elaine Byrne, Senior Enterprise Risk Manager, State Claims Agency
- Theresa Doyle, Enterprise Risk Manager, State Claims Agency

Agenda:

1. Welcome from Chair
2. Helen McEntee, Minister for Justice
3. Minutes – 22nd November, 2021
4. Presentation by State Claims Agency + Q&A
5. AOB

1. Welcome from the Chair

- 1.1. The Chair opened the meeting welcoming everyone and thanking all for their continued commitment to the project and the substantive work that has been completed to date

2. Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee

- 2.1. The Chair welcomed Minister McEntee to the meeting. Minister McEntee asked questions of the members and agreed with their comments. She advised that any requests regarding resources, funding and legislative changes emanating from the work of the Taskforce need to be raised very early on in 2022
- 2.2. The three Subgroup Chairs each gave an overview on their responsibilities and remit
- 2.3. Subgroup 1 advised that they are focusing on the Adult Caution Scheme and diverting people away from the criminal justice system
- 2.4. The Group are currently assessing the existing scheme and are working on expanding the Scheme
- 2.5. There is an agreement with the DPP that the Prosecutor Guidelines will change as well as the Schedule of Minor Offences
- 2.6. Subgroup 2 advised that their responsibility is to look at the NFMHS and the capacity level at the CMH. The modelling data of CMH admissions is now complete
- 2.7. The IPS are currently working on a space within the prison system that is violence and drug free in order to facilitate a safe return of service users to the prisons service
- 2.8. The Minister was advised that one of the key aspects is to reduce the waiting lists and to create a suitable safe exit care pathway through the CMH and into approved community setting
- 2.9. There will be an ICRU opening in Portrane which highlights the importance of securing additional resourcing, staff and funding for this service
- 2.10. Subgroup 3 advised that their remit is Courts, Community and Throughcare
- 2.11. There are a lot of linkages between Subgroup 1 and Subgroup 3 with regards to how best to support the judiciary in diverting people away from the criminal justice system
- 2.12. The importance of Housing First was discussed and the importance of recognising the links between homelessness and homeless people entering the criminal justice sector
- 2.13. The Plenary agreed the work of the taskforce is a complex piece of work and has a tight deadline for the work to be completed by end January. It was also agreed how complex the needs of the service user are and how best to align services for them
- 2.14. The Plenary discussed the implementation phase of the recommendations and how this could be built into the recommendations
- 2.15. The Minister advised that it might be beneficial for the Chairs of the Subgroups to meet with Minister of Health and Minister of Housing to discuss the final report when finished

3. Minutes

- 3.1. Minutes of 22nd November 2021 will be circulated before next meeting

4. Presentation by State Claims Agency + Q&A

- 4.1. The State Claims Agency presented their research on the area of litigation and the care of service users in mental health facilities

5. AOB

- 5.1 The taskforce agreed to meet early in the New Year and the Final report will be ready in Q1 2022

APPROVED