

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

Subgroup 3: Community issues including through Care from Detention

Friday, 28th January 2022 10am- 11am via video conference

Attendees:

- Chair; Mark Wilson; Director, Probation Service
- Judge Brendan Toale
- Chief Superintendent Gerry Roche; An Garda Síochána
- Jim Ryan; Head of Operations for Mental Health Services, HSE
- Mary O'Regan; Principal Officer, Dept. of Justice, Penal and Policing Policy
- Dr Conor O'Neill; National Forensic Mental Health Service, HSE
- Tom O'Brien; Head of Service Primary Care, Community Healthcare Organisation, HSE
- Ruairi Ferrie; Assistant Principal Officer, Dept. of Housing, Homelessness Policy, Funding and Delivery Section
- Kim McDonnell; Probation Officer, Probation Service
- Dr Damien Smith; Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, In-reach team, Mountjoy, CMH
- Deirdre O'Flaherty; Administrative Officer, Mental Health Unit, Dept. of Health
- Joseph Doyle; Social Inclusion, HSE
- Seamus Hempenstall; Principal Officer, Mental Health Unit, Dept. of Health
- Enda Kelly; National Nurse Manager, Irish Prison Service
- Brendan O'Connell; Senior Psychologist, Psychology Service, Irish Prison Service
- **Secretariat** –Oonagh Ffrench and Kerrie Keegan, Dept. of Justice, Penal and Policing Policy

Apologies:

- Tony O'Donovan; Principal Officer, DCEDIY, Child Welfare Advisor, Child Detention Unit
- John Dunphy; Dept. of Justice, Penal and Policing Policy
- Michael Murchan; Assistant Principal Officer, Mental Health Unit, Dept. of Health

Agenda:

1. Minutes of last meeting
2. Document on Courts
3. AOB

1. Minutes of the last meeting

- 1.1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Brendan O'Connell, IPS Psychology Service as a new member of the Subgroup
- 1.2. Group agreed that the SG3 Final report is made up of three main documents on Community, Throughcare and Primary Care/Social Inclusion and the focus for the Subgroup is to now pull together the different strands of each and build the recommendations for Final report

2. Document on Courts

- 2.1. It was raised that there are a large number of people with mental health challenges before the Courts and this cohort of people need to be diverted away from the CJ system
- 2.2. There is a need for new legislation in order to successfully divert people away from Courts system
- 2.3. Measures could include assisting Judges with more information, ensuring adequate staffing and funding for the in-reach prison service
- 2.4. There is a need for a more integrated team approach from the Probation Service and the Courts as people have challenges access different types of services
- 2.5. It is important to have an adequate referral pathway and to ensure any barriers to access to housing are removed
- 2.6. Important to address the area of dual diagnosis of both substance abuse and mental health issues throughout the report
- 2.7. The Group acknowledged that due to the end of institutional mental healthcare there is a now a pattern of people with mental health issues gravitating towards the Criminal Justice System
- 2.8. The Group agreed that those in need should be assessed correctly and the whole area should not be viewed as criminalising mental health
- 2.9. There are already some diversion services available in Cloverhill but there are number of other Courts already diverting people away from the Criminal Justice system where possible
- 2.10. The Group agreed that resourcing as regards the availability of delivering service was of utmost importance
- 2.11. It was also suggested that there needs to be a mental health diagnosis before a Court appearance
- 2.12. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the area of drug possession and how the mental health diversion model could be applied to drug possession
- 2.13. It is hoped the Primary care networks will be developed in the coming months
- 2.14. The Group discussed the importance of Housing relating to the model of care for homelessness within the HSE and the homelessness outreach programme run by D/Housing
- 2.15. The Group acknowledged the challenges faced within homeless services outside Dublin – a Housing First discussion paper is being developed and it is hoped a new model will roll out from the Dublin to the wider regions. There will be a new Housing First National Director starting soon
- 2.16. It was raised that there are barriers in place to accessing treatment facilities for substance misuse at the end of prisoners' sentences. There was a consensus there will need to be a recommendation for better access to beds relating to same
- 2.17. The Group agreed that there will be a number of critical recommendations to be included in the conclusion of the report

AOB

- Secretariat to send an updated copy of the document to the Group
- Workshop scheduled from 10-1pm on 18th February 2022 –location to be confirmed