

Mental Health Services 2010
Inspection of Mental Health Services
in Day Hospitals

DAY HOSPITAL INSPECTED	Day Hospital, Cavan General Hospital
EXECUTIVE CATCHMENT AREA	Cavan/Monaghan, Louth and Meath
HSE AREA	Dublin North East
CATCHMENT AREA	West Cavan
CATCHMENT POPULATION	Not Provided by Service
LOCATION	Cavan General Hospital
TOTAL NUMBER OF PLACES	31
DATE OF INSPECTION	5 May 2010

Details

Service description

The day hospital had no formal name and was located on the lower ground floor of Cavan General Hospital, adjacent to the Department of Psychiatry. It was first opened off campus in October 1977 and moved to its present location in November 1989. Opening hours were from 0830h to 1700h Monday to Thursday and 0830h to 1600h on Fridays. It was located on the edge of Cavan town and the bus station was approximately 1.6 kilometres away. The service also catered for residents from a largely rural area.

Premises

CHECKPOINT	RESPONSE
Was the premises part of a psychiatric hospital?	No
Were the premises an independent building?	No
Were the premises purpose built?	No
Were the premises accessible by public transport?	Yes
Were the premises the sector Headquarters located in district hospital?	No
How many activity rooms are there for service users?	3
How many service users are attending?	31
Is there a facility for providing hot meals?	Yes

Referral procedure

There were 31 service users on the record books, 11 of whom were reported to be acute patients who had been using the service for the past few weeks to the past 11 months. It was reported that the remaining 20 service users were long-term. The facility therefore functioned as both a day hospital and a day centre. Referrals were made from the West Cavan sector team, the adjacent acute mental health unit, out-patients, the Assertive Outreach Team and Psychiatry of Old Age. There were no standardised referral forms.

Staffing levels

POST	NUMBER WTE	SESSIONS PER WEEK
Consultant psychiatrist	1	As required
Nursing staff	2	Full time
NCHD	2	As required
Occupational therapist	-	As required
Psychologist	-	As required
Social worker	-	As required
Activities therapist	0	0
Other – Cognitive Behavioural Therapist	1	As required

Range of services provided

It was reported that the multidisciplinary team met each Monday morning when home-based service users were reviewed. The 11 acute service users were discussed on Tuesday mornings. It was reported that there was no regular multidisciplinary team review of the remaining 20 long-term service users. All residents had multidisciplinary care and treatment plans which incorporated a brief risk assessment. The community mental health nurses carried out domiciliary visits when required. A Clozapine clinic was held on Tuesdays and Fridays each week. Medications for the long term attendees of the day centre were prescribed by respective general practitioners.

The surface area of the day hospital was particularly small and cramped. One room had a triple purpose: a cloak room, a beauty treatment room and a storage area for stationary and general purpose items. It was reported that where there had been four registered psychiatric nurses attached to the facility; there were now two. Two nurses recently retired and had not been replaced. It was reported that this was due to the HSE's embargo on staff recruitment. It was declared by nursing staff that more therapeutic services and programmes could be provided with more staff. The newly introduced gym and swimming programme had been recently curtailed as one staff nurse was receiving training in Wellness, Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) and the other nurse, for safety reasons, was unable to accompany service users to the swimming pool alone. It was reported that office administration also impeded one of the two nurses in direct service user care for long periods on a regular basis. It was reported that two attendees to the day hospital required assistance with showering and laundering of their clothes. All these factors impeded on the function of the facility as a day hospital. In this regard, it was unclear to the Inspectorate as to the exact function of the facility in that it appeared to co-function as a generic drop-in centre for long-term service users, as well as a combined day hospital and day centre. There was no operational framework that set out the purpose and function of the facility.

Service user input

A number of service users were met by the Inspectorate. All expressed satisfaction with their care and treatment. All found the nursing staff approachable. All said that they had seen their doctor recently.

Quality initiatives in 2010

- A new television and exercise bikes had been purchased.
- Gym and swimming for service users had commenced each Thursday.
- The Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) programme was being developed by the service.
- A compact disc player and a punch bag had been acquired for the service by the Cavan Women’s Group.
- Cross border links with the Beacon Centre in County Fermanagh had been established.

Diagnoses (all attendees in past month)

DIAGNOSIS	NUMBER
Affective disorders	8
Psychotic illness	17
Anxiety disorders	3
Addiction disorders	0
Personality disorders	3
Other	0
Average length of stay (number of days)	1-5

Operational policies

The service did not have admission and discharge policies. There was no risk management policy. Incidents were recorded into the acute unit's incident reporting book. The training register was examined. A staff nurse had completed training in the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) programme. There was evidence of training in fire, manual handling, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation. Fire drills were carried out by Cavan General Hospital as a whole.

Planning

A copy of the services five year plan was given to the Inspectorate. In this plan, the ever increasing work load with reduced levels of staff had been referred to.

Conclusions

The day hospital in Cavan General Hospital was adjacent to the Department of Psychiatry. It was located in the lower ground floor. It was cramped and devoid of natural light in some areas. There was not a suitable number of staff to carry out any meaningful therapeutic engagement with service users. Long term patients did not have regular formal multidisciplinary team reviews. The service had no admission, discharge and risk management policies. It was apparent to the Inspectorate on the day of inspection that nursing staff were stretched to provide a basic service. It was not apparent what type of service was being provided. Generally, because of these factors, it was unsuitable for the purpose in which it was being used.

Recommendations and areas for development

1. All service users attending the day hospital should have a regular multidisciplinary team review.
2. The day hospital should have written operational policies on admissions and discharges.
3. The day hospital was in need of more staff if it was to carry out any meaningful therapeutic interventions.
4. The day hospital was quite cramped and was in need of more space.
5. The service should have a risk management policy.
6. The day hospital should have a formal name in order to have its own identity.
7. The mental health service should review the purpose and function of the day hospital.
8. The day hospital should have an operational framework in order to set out its purpose and function.