

Mental Health Services 2012

Inspection of Mental Health Services in Day Hospitals

EXECUTIVE CATCHMENT AREA/INTEGRATED SERVICE AREA	Dublin North East
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE	St. Vincent's Hospital, Fairview
HSE AREA	Dublin North East
DAY HOSPITAL	Psychiatry of Old Age
CATCHMENT POPULATION	14,000
LOCATION	31 Eccles Street, Dublin 2
TOTAL NUMBER OF PLACES	8
AVERAGE NO OF WEEKLY ATTENDEES	28
TYPE OF INSPECTION	Unannounced
DATE OF INSPECTION	5 September 2012

Summary

- The day hospital provided designated facilities for elderly patients.
- All attendees had an initial domiciliary assessment by the consultant psychiatrist.
- The building in which the day hospital was situated did not provide for easy access for infirm or wheelchair users.
- The psychiatry of old age team was poorly resourced in terms of social work and occupational therapy.
- The average length of attendance at the day hospital was approximately six weeks.

Details

Service

This day hospital was part of the services for Psychiatry of Old Age (POA) service users and was open from 1100h until 1500h, Monday to Friday. People attending the day hospital were collected by hospital transport if they were unable to attend independently. It was located on a busy street opposite the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Dublin city centre and was managed by the psychiatry of old age team.

Premises

The day hospital occupied the ground level floor and basement of a tall Georgian building in Eccles Street. Although the meeting rooms were situated on the ground floor, there were a number of steps leading to the front door which could be difficult to negotiate for elderly attendees with limited mobility and the building was therefore not wheelchair accessible. Public transport was easily accessible. The building housed the POA headquarters and provided two activity rooms for the use of day hospital attendees.

The service provided a hot meal for people attending, which was sourced from a private company, paid for by St. Vincent's Hospital.

Care Pathway

All people referred had an initial domiciliary assessment by the consultant psychiatrist who then made the referral to the day hospital by completing the referral form. Transport was arranged for people if required and the waiting time from referral to attendance was two weeks at most. At the initial attendance, a further assessment including a nursing admission was conducted.

Most people attended once weekly, but some may attend twice each week. Staff took care to have patients with similar needs and difficulties attend together. When the person's condition had stabilised, attendance was phased out, and following discharge, a domiciliary follow-up review was carried out by the community mental health nurse.

The average length of attendance in the day hospital was six weeks, but two people had been attending once each month for two years.

Staffing levels

POST	NUMBER	SESSIONS PER WEEK
Consultant psychiatrist	4	1 monthly
Nursing staff	2	Full-time
NCHD	1	Shared with the Approved Centre
Occupational therapist	0.5	None
Psychologist	0	None
Social worker	0	None
Activities therapist	0	None
Other – Arts/Crafts therapist	1	2

Range of services provided

The two nurses in the day hospital were agency nurses, funded by St. Vincent's Hospital, Fairview.

A full multidisciplinary (MDT) meeting was held each month at which all attendees at the day hospital were reviewed. In addition, a fortnightly meeting was held with the consultant psychiatrist. A range of activities was provided in the day hospital including relaxation, Reminiscence groups, newspaper reading, art, crafts and cooking. Walks and outings were also held. Depot medication was administered but no oral medication was provided in the day hospital. All activities were run by the nursing staff.

The occupational therapist undertook domiciliary assessments in the person's own home.

A psychology post had been vacant for the previous five years. There was no provision for a social worker on the team and one 0.5 whole time equivalent (WTE) occupational therapist post on the team was also vacant.

Service user input

There were no service users in the day hospital at the time of the inspection.

Quality initiatives in 2012

There had been no new quality initiatives in the past year.

Operational policies

There were admission and discharge policies for the day hospital and a discharge checklist was completed when a person was being discharged. A record of incidents was maintained but it was reported there were very few incidents in the day hospital. The service made provision for staff training and some staff had undertaken courses in Dublin City University and with the Alzheimer's Society.

Planning

There was a proposal to merge the day hospital with a POA day hospital situated in Connolly Hospital and to locate this new day hospital in Eccles Street.

Conclusions

The POA day hospital at Eccles Street provided a setting for interventions for elderly people in the catchment area. Once a person had been assessed at a domiciliary visit, access to the day hospital was rapid and individual assessments were also carried out on admission. There were regular reviews by the MDT team and service users were discharged from the day hospital once the initial condition stabilised. While the day hospital was well located in terms of access, the building itself was unsuitable for an elderly population.

Recommendations and areas for development

- 1. The building should be made wheelchair accessible.*
- 2. Provision should be made to adequately resource the team in terms of personnel.*