

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Our Ref: Democratic Services

Date: 19 January 2022

Email: democratic.services@fermanaghomagh.com

Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office, Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

Dear Chief Executive,

Re: Public Inquiry into Northern Ireland's handling of care home residents

At the Council meeting held on 11 January 2022, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council adopted the following Motion:

This Council fully supports the call by the Commissioner for Older People Eddie Lynch for a public inquiry into Northern Ireland's handling of care home residents throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, being the first and to date only local authority to call for such an inquiry.

This council restates our established position and calls on those who previously voted against such an inquiry to reconsider their stance in light of the Commissioner for Older People's remarks and the body of evidence on which this is based.

Furthermore this council calls for scrutiny of procedures under Human Rights legislation, particularly Articles 2 and 3 and demands an inquiry applies these as grounding rules within any Terms of Reference.

This council will write to all Stormont Executive Ministers and the other local authorities to seek their support for a public inquiry into this matter.

As you will note, the motion requests that all Councils support our Council's call for a public inquiry into this matter.

The Council trusts you will give this issue due consideration and looks forward to receiving your response.

The Council asked me to write to all Stormont Executive Ministers and the other local authorities to seek their support for a public inquiry into this matter.

The Council trusts that you will give due consideration to this request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alison McCullagh". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive

MH, LD & CW DIRECTORATE

01 February 2022

Mid Ulster Council Meeting – Response to Councillor Questions raised during the meeting on Thursday 16th December 2021

Mental Health Services thank Councillor Kerr for his question in relation to services delivered in the Mid Ulster area and the opportunity to respond.

Mental health services operate across a continuum from community based services which often provide local access to counselling and early intervention; to primary care services which provide low intensity interventions through practice based councillors; to Trust based mental health services which provide medium to high intensity services to those people who experience significant mental health needs.

Mental Health Care within Community and Primary Care Services

As such, counselling services are typically provided across the Northern Trust area within GP practices and by the Northern Well-being Service. The service provider is known as LINKS. The service provides talking therapy and mental health support within the community. The team of counsellors will collaborate with service users to ensure they get the most appropriate form of treatment, helping them to build resilience and learn new mechanisms for coping with difficult emotions and situations. Following receipt of a referral (which can be a self-referral or via the GP), a Counsellor from LINKS, will contact the service user and undertake a triage phone call. Following a discussion, the Counsellor can identify what might be the best course of action and develop a tailored plan. Options might include a group programme, 1-to-1 Talking Therapy, counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Community Programmes.



"To deliver excellent integrated services in partnership with our community"

Community Mental Health Teams

There are nine Adult Community Mental Health Teams in the Northern Trust locality and each provide a service to a population of approximately 50,000 and are aligned to GP practices within each locality. Two are based within the Mid Ulster Locality, namely Magherafelt Community Mental Health Team based in Loughview Resource Centre, and Cookstown Community Mental Health Team based in Cookstown Health & Care Centre. The teams offer assessment, diagnosis and treatment to individuals aged over 18 years old, who are referred to the service with significant mental health needs. The teams deliver services to those with severe and enduring mental health needs, those with moderate to severe levels of health problems such as anxiety, depression, and post traumatic disorders. Mental Health Services in the Northern Trust are committed to a stepped model of care; an approach used to match service users' need to the appropriate level of support and only 'stepping up' to more intensive/specialist services as the people's needs require.

Mental Health Services for Older People

Located on Hospital Road, Magherafelt is the Magherafelt & Cookstown Community Mental Health Team for Older People. This team which is also aligned to GP practices, provides secondary mental health services to people aged 65 years and older, providing services for those with significant mental health needs or a dementia.

Psychological Therapy Services

As noted above, NHSCT Mental Health Services do not typically offer counselling as in intervention as this is largely provided within Primary Care and the Community and Voluntary Services such as LINKS. Rather, within our Trust mental health services, we offer psychological therapy in line with the Stepped Care Model and Regional Psychological Therapies Strategy (DHSSPS, 2010). Psychological therapy within NHSCT is offered across different settings (e.g. community and in-patient) and service areas. In addition, specialist services for those with addictions, an eating disorder or personality disorder also provide psychological therapy. Within the Mid-Ulster locality, these services are provided through services based at the Psychological Therapy Service on the Mid Ulster Hospital site and through a



range of outreach clinics across the locality.

Supported Living Services

Located in the centre of Magherafelt town is Church Lane Mews. This is a Northern Trust Mental Health Supported Living Scheme provided in 14 bungalows. The service provides support to people with a severe and enduring mental illness, to maximise their potential towards more independent living, using the principles of normalisation, rehabilitation and recovery. Tenancies are not time limited, however it is envisaged that when a service user becomes more independent, they will progress to less supported accommodation in their local community. The service is registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, which inspects and monitors the scheme to ensure it complies with the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards.

NHSCT Mental Health Services would extend an invite to Councillor Kerr to visit the facilities mentioned above.

Dr Petra Corr
Director Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Community Wellbeing

Bretten Hall, Antrim Area Hospital Site, Bush Road, ANTRIM, BT41 2RL
Tel: 028 94424321 Email: petra.corr@northerntrust.hscni.net



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Southern Health
and Social Care Trust

Quality Care - for you, with you

Chair
Eileen Mullan

**Temporary
Accounting Officer**
Dr Maria O'Kane

Our ref: CX/ew

16 February 2022

BY EMAIL: Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Councillor Paul McLean
Chair
Mid Ulster Council

Dear Cllr McLean

I refer to your letter dated 7 February 2022 following up on the Trust response to issues raised at the Council Meeting on 16 December 2021. My apologies for the delay in responding.

Please find attached the additional information requested. I trust this is helpful but please do not hesitate to make contact should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

pp **DR MARIA O'KANE**
TEMPORARY ACCOUNTING OFFICER/MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Enc

Questions posed to Southern Trust for response:

Question:

Update sought on the future of the Firs Care Home facility in Ballygawley (Cllr S McAleer)

Trust Response:

A Trust media release dated 17 January 2022, included information advising that the Trust continues to progress alternative options for the 6 residents of The Firs in partnership with residents, their families and with input from Independent Advocacy.

Update as of 15 February 2022: The Trust has agreed a new termination date of 24 June 2022, with the owner of The Firs. This situation is being kept under review.

QUESTION:

Mental Health Services Related

Trust Response:

The Trust welcomes the dedication of Council to promoting mental health and well-being for the citizens we both serve.

The Mental Health Strategy 2021 – 2031, is the 10-year strategic direction for mental health services in Northern Ireland, led by the Department of Health (DOH) and co-produced by a variety of stakeholders, including Trusts, Professional Bodies, Service Users and Carers and Community and Voluntary Sector agencies. The Southern HSC Trust contributed both to the development of the Strategy and in response to the consultation document. The Strategy includes 35 Actions (funding dependent) and it is expected that implementation over the next 10-years will be work-stream led and founded on the principles of co-production. The Minister has informed Trusts that for him, Action 31 is a priority for implementation: *Develop a regional mental health service, operating across the five HSC Trusts, with regional professional leadership that is responsible for consistency in service delivery and development.* A draft model for a regional mental health service is currently being developed, led by DOH and the Trust has contributed both at the design and consultation stages. The Trust is committed to the vision and ambition outlined in the Mental Health Strategy and eagerly awaits the opportunity to influence, develop and expand mental health services for our citizens in line with the region.

Current services: The Southern HSC Trust Adult Mental Health Services, in line with other Trusts, provides mental health care at Steps 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Stepped Care Model. These are described as follows:

- Step 1: Step 1 of the model is based on education/information sharing and typically this role is provided on a population health basis by PHA commissioned services/initiatives and in conjunction with Trusts Promoting Well-Being officers.
- Step 2: Primary Care Talking Therapies: GPs will refer to the Trust for the Well-mind Hub. This is a clinical triage, advice and signposting service provided by registered health care professionals and is for individuals with mild mental health conditions. Individuals will be offered advice on the management of their condition and signposting to supports within their local communities. The Southern HSC Trust does not, at this time, commission Step 2 services, such as counselling, from the Community & Voluntary Sector. The model of Step 2 Talking Therapies varies significantly across Northern Ireland and there is significant differences between the models operated in the Southern and Northern HSC Trust. Community and Voluntary sector organisations typically provide Step 1 and Step 2 services based on funding from PHA / Victims and Survivors Service / PEACE/European Funding sources etc.
- Step 3: Specialist Community Mental Health Services: GPs will refer to the Trust for Step 3 services including:
 - Primary Mental Health Team – gateway to mental health services for adults aged 18+. Provides assessment and intervention for common mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression.
 - Support and Recovery Mental Health Team – specialist community mental health service for the assessment and treatment of severe and enduring mental health conditions, such as schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, severe depressive disorder.
 - Community Addictions Team – specialist community addiction service providing assessment and treatment for alcohol and substance misuse, including opiate dependence.

At present, the Trust is undertaking a significant reform of Primary Mental Health Care, in collaboration with East London Foundation Trust (EFLT) and in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including GPs, Community and Voluntary Sector

agencies and individuals with lived experience. In line with the Mental Health Strategy, the Trust is moving to embed psychological therapies into our services and ensure they are available across the Steps of Care. The Steps to Wellness Programme, based on the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) model successfully implemented across England, will provide evidence based, recovery focused psychological interventions to individuals referred to the Primary Mental Health Team. In time, this Programme will also be available to individuals referred to the Step 2 Well-mind Hub.

- Step 4: Highly Specialist Condition Specific Mental Health Teams: Specialist recovery focused teams to include: Adult Eating Disorder Team, Personality Disorder Service, Mental Health Forensic Services, Rehabilitation Team.
- Step 5: High Intensity Mental Health Services: Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit at Bluestone, Craigavon Hospital and Home Treatment Crisis Response Services.

In respect to a specific question raised in relation to where the Trust would welcome Council **influence regarding the Mental Health Strategy**, as strong promoters of Personal and Public Involvement, the Trust would encourage all citizens to make themselves aware of the strategy and then to contribute to related discussions, wherever the opportunity presents. It is important that individuals realise that the promotion of good mental health is everyone's business.

In respect to a specific question raised in relation to **Investment in MH Services**, the Trust would reflect that expenditure figures in 2018/19 evidenced that in N Ireland we spend £160 per person, whilst the spend in England is £220. The level of need is estimated to be 25% greater in NI.

QUESTION:

What percentage of GPs offering Counselling Services and the waiting time for same? (Cllr Ashton)

Trust Response:

GPs working in General Practice are not employed by the Trust. Therefore, the Trust is not responsible for General Practice and the services they offer. The Trust forwarded this question in respect of GPs offering Counselling Services, to Louise McMahon,

Director of Integrated Care, Health and Social Care Board within the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). Louise has responded that:

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“18 out of the 26 GP practices in the Mid Ulster Council area provide counselling services. This represents 69% of the Practices in the area. The HSCB does not hold data on the waiting times, however if there are particular issues in this regard of which Councillors are aware, HSCB colleagues will be happy to follow these up”.