



**Health
Information
and Quality
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

National Overview Follow-Up Inspection Report of Special Care Services Provided by the Health Service Executive

Follow Up Inspection report ID number: 595

**March 2011
SSI Inspection period: 13**

About the Health Information and Quality Authority

The Health Information and Quality Authority is the independent Authority which has been established to drive continuous improvement in Ireland's health and social care services. The Authority was established as part of the Government's overall Health Service Reform Programme.

The Authority's mandate extends across the quality and safety of the public, private (within its social care function) and voluntary sectors. Reporting directly to the Minister for Health and Children, the Health Information and Quality Authority has statutory responsibility for:

Setting Standards for Health and Social Services — Developing person centred standards, based on evidence and best international practice, for health and social care services in Ireland (except mental health services)

Social Services Inspectorate — Registration and inspection of residential homes for children, older people and people with disabilities. Inspecting children detention schools and foster care services. Monitoring day and pre-school facilities¹

Monitoring Healthcare Quality — Monitoring standards of quality and safety in our health services and investigating as necessary serious concerns about the health and welfare of service users

Health Technology Assessment — Ensuring the best outcome for the service user by evaluating the clinical and economic effectiveness of drugs, equipment, diagnostic techniques and health promotion activities

Health Information — Advising on the collection and sharing of information across the services, evaluating information and publishing information about the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services

¹ Not all parts of the relevant legislation, the Health Act 2007, have yet been commenced.

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1. Introduction

The Health Information and Quality Authority's (the Authority) Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) is responsible for the inspections of special care units (SCUs) under Section 69(2) of the Child Care Act, 1991. SCUs are inspected annually by the Authority against the *National Standards for Special Care 2001* (see Appendix 1) and the Child Care (Special Care) Regulations 2004. The provision of special care units has been provided for under the Children Act 2001.

There are three such units in Ireland, where children can be placed by a National Special Care Admission and Discharge Committee which considers referrals from all 32 local health areas in the Health Service Executive (HSE).

At the time of the inspections special care was being provided in three units nationally in the following regions: HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster, HSE West and HSE South.

The special care units are:

- **Ballydowd Special Care Unit** – a mixed gender unit in HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster
- **Coovagh House Special Care Unit** – a mixed gender unit in the HSE West
- **Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit** – a female only unit in the HSE South.

The Authority undertook inspections (both announced and unannounced) of the special care units between March 2010 and October 2010. Individual inspection reports on each of the units were published following each inspection. A national overview report of special care services provided by the HSE in Ireland was also published.

The Authority had identified common themes and overarching issues from the individual inspections and made national recommendations to the HSE about the provision of this service.

The Authority carried out announced follow-up inspections of Gleann Alainn SCU and Coovagh House SCU in March 2011 under Section 69(2) of the Child Care Act 1991 to assess compliance of the local and national HSE action plan response to the recommendations made at the last full inspection.

The follow-up inspections were carried out by Sharron Austin, Lead Inspector and the reports, listed below, can be found on the Authority's website, www.hiqa.ie:

- *National Overview of Special Care Services* (Report ID No.595), inspection carried out on 23 March 2011
- *Gleann Alainn SCU* (Report ID No. 593), inspection carried out on 18 March 2011
- *Coovagh House SCU* (Report ID No. 594), inspection carried out on 25 March 2011

Ballydowd Special Care Unit follow-up inspection report (Report ID No. 591) had previously been published on 15 December 2010.

At the time of the follow up inspection of Ballydowd SCU (SCU1) in October 2010 the service also included Solas Unit (SCU2), located in a high support campus in the Dublin North East region (DNE) which was designated as a special care facility in agreement with the High Court for three children following a fire incident in the SCU1 campus on 25 October 2009.

Solas Unit (SCU2) was closed on 17 December 2010. The HSE had made a decision to refurbish Unit 3 in Ballydowd SCU1 to a standard that made it fit for purpose. This was carried out and Unit 3 became operational on 7 March 2011.

2. Key findings for each unit

The inspector carried out a site visit of the **Ballydowd SCU campus** on 28 March 2011 and met with the Acting Director, Deputy Director, an acting deputy unit manager and five of the six young people currently residing in the SCU.

The inspector found that significant work had been carried out to bring the entire campus to an acceptable standard and the specific refurbishment of Unit 3 was of a high quality. The inspector was informed that the HSE plan to upgrade Unit 2 to the same standard as soon as possible. Those interviewed confirmed that significant progress had been made to ensure that the service provided to the young people in Ballydowd SCU was in compliance with the national standards and regulations for special care and outcomes for the young people had improved.

In respect of the inspection of **Coovagh House SCU**, the inspector found that of the 29 recommendations made following the inspection fieldwork on 5, 6 and 7 October 2010, 16 recommendations had been met and 11 were met in part. There were two recommendations that were not met. The inspector also found evidence that children were well cared for.

The findings of the follow up inspection of **Gleann Alainn SCU** determined that of the 20 recommendations made following the inspection fieldwork on 5, 6 and 7 October 2010, eight recommendations had been met and 12 were met in part. There were no recommendations that were not met. The inspector also found evidence of a child-centred culture and practice.

3. National Findings

Seven recommendations had been made at a national level following the inspections carried out between March 2010 and October 2010. The inspector found that five recommendations had been met and two were met in part and the Authority recommends that the HSE provide the Authority with the requested information as soon as possible. There were no recommendations that were not met.

The inspector interviewed the HSE's interim National Manager with line management responsibility for special care and high support units and examined relevant records and documentation.

The findings of this follow-up inspection of the implementation of the national recommendations are presented in a table format which addresses each recommendation, the action to be taken and the person responsible for its implementation. The table also outlines the original timeline that the HSE proposed in order to implement each of the recommendations.

Table 1 contains the action plan and findings of the follow-up inspection relevant to each recommendation from the full inspection. It also contains the HSE actions to be taken where a recommendation was found by inspectors to have been met in part.

National Overview of Special Care Services Provided by the Health Service Executive

Social Services inspectorate Action Plan for Inspection No.592

Date Action Plan Dispatched: 17 December 2010

Date Action Plan Updated: 23 March 2011

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 595)
1	<p>The HSE should appoint a nominated National Director with delegated specific accountability for children's services.</p> <p>An experienced and suitable manager should be appointed to report to the National Director with specific responsibility and authority for special care as a matter of urgency.</p>	<p>The appointment process for a National Director for Children's Services was completed prior to the HIQA recommendation. The appointee is due to take up office on 10 January 2011.</p> <p>An Interim national manager for special care and National High Support Services is in place. A permanent National Manager for Special care and National High Support Services will be appointed following a competition. This appointee will report to the designated Local Health Office Manager in Dublin North East (DNE).</p>	<p>HSE Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Regional Director of Operations Dublin North East</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completion by Q2 2011</p>	<p>Recommendation met.</p> <p>The National Director of Children and Family Social Services (CFSS) took up office on 10 January 2011.</p> <p>Interim National Manager took up office on 3 December 2010. He reported to the Integrated Services Manager, HSE DNE. Approval was received on the 22.3.11 to fill this post on a permanent basis.</p>

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Date Action Plan Dispatched: 17 December 2010

Date Action Plan Updated: 23 March 2011

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 595)
2	The HSE should develop, approve and publish a national strategy for the provision of children's special care services considering short-, medium- and long term needs. This should be accompanied by a published strategy-implementation plan, with accompanying timelines. Progress against this plan should be reported to the Board of the HSE, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and the Authority, and published.	<p>The HSE, through a small internal working group developed a draft contingency plan for Special Care in July 2010.</p> <p>The policy and interim plan for the provision of special care for children was approved by the HSE on 10 October 2010. this interim plan will be reviewed by the end of January 2011.</p>	<p>Assistant National Director Children and Family Services</p> <p>National Director, Children and Family Services and Integrated Services Manager</p> <p>National Director, Children and Family Services</p>	<p>Q3 – 2010</p> <p>Capacity Review – Q1 2011</p>	<p>Recommendation met in part.</p> <p>The HSE, led by the office of the National Director of CFSS had engaged external support to assist it in establishing the projected need for care placements in the HSE for the period 2011-end 2013 in regard to special care, high support, foster care, residential care, emergency care, out of hours, aftercare and separated children seeking asylum at a national level and at a local health office/integrated services area level and auditing the current capacity of the service in regard to those listed above. The HSE had prioritised Special Care within this process. The capacity review would inform the work of the National Steering Group for Special care and High support in devising the National Strategy.</p> <p>Following a tendering process a Consultancy had been appointed to carry out the research. This process commenced on 24</p>

		<p>The development of a National strategy for the provision for children’s special care services is underway. The strategy will be informed by a capacity review of the full range of alternative care services: fostering in all its forms, mainstream residential care, high support residential care, high support as part of the intervention model and special care services.</p> <p>The capacity review will include an analysis of services provided by the statutory, voluntary and private sectors; needs versus provision and the optimum continuum of alternative care services.</p> <p>The strategy will determine the overall model and how best to provide the continuum of alternative care.</p> <p>An implementation plan will accompany the strategy with detailed actions, timelines for their implementation, identified persons with responsibility for implementing each action or part of an action, monitoring and reporting frameworks, and overall governance arrangements for implementing the Action Plan.</p> <p>Progress against the Implementation Plan will be reported internally in the</p>	<p>National Director, Children and Family Services</p> <p>National Director, Children and Family Services and Regional Director of Operations DNE</p> <p>Regional Director of Operations DNE</p>	<p>Draft strategy and consultation process – Q2 2011</p> <p>Strategy finalised – Q3 2011</p> <p>Implementation plan completed – Q4 2011</p>	<p>January 2011. An interim report is due by the end of April 2011. A research reference group was being established to assist in the research process. Work had advanced in the development of a draft Integrated Model of Care. The Capital Projects Design Group was in the process of procurement of design team for the provision of purpose built facilities to meet the capacity and infrastructural requirements.</p> <p>The inspector was given a copy of a briefing report for the national high support and special care services which supports this recommendation and outlines the progress taken to date.</p> <p>The HSE should provide the Authority with a copy of the capacity Review Interim report when published.</p>
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		HSE through the current arrangements vis-à-vis the Performance Contract, and reports to the Board and/or its committees; progress reports at the monthly meetings between the Minister, the OMCYA and the HSE; and reports to the HIQA at intervals to be notified by them.		Monthly and ongoing – January 2012	
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No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 595)
3	The HSE should review the national governance of special care services and implement any appropriate actions to improve the governance arrangements arising from the review.	<p>The National Director will review the current proposals for the governance of special care and high support services.</p> <p>A National Steering group for Special care and High Support Services is being established. This group will include representatives at a senior level from relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The remit of the group will include the development of a national strategy and implementation plan. Details of the full membership will issue when all the nominations are finalised.</p>	National Director, Children and Family Services	<p>January 2011</p> <p>Q 1 2011</p>	<p>Recommendation met.</p> <p>See Appendix 1 for current governance structure</p> <p>The national steering group were established and were scheduled to have their first meeting on the 04.04.11</p> <p>The inspector was given a copy of the terms of reference for this group and the names of those who would be part of it.</p>

4	The HSE should appoint one HSE monitoring officer for all special care units.	A Monitoring Officer for the Special Care and high Support units is in the process of being appointed. This officer will be independent of such services and will report to the manager for Quality, Safety and Risk, Alternative care services, DNE.	Regional Director of Operations DNE	Q2 2011	<p>Recommendation met. A monitoring officer had been appointed and assigned to Special Care Units and was due to commence fully from the 14.04.11.</p> <p>Written monitoring reports should be issued to the Authority after each visit to an SCU.</p>
5	The HSE should implement the recommendations of the Children Acts Advisory Board report, Tracing and Tracking of Children Subject to a Special Care Application 2010, within reasonable timeframes.	A group under the auspices of the National Steering group for Special care and High Support Services will be established to review the recommendations in this report and to prepare an implementation plan.	Regional Director of Operations DNE	Q1 2011 Implementation of recommendations to commence Q2 2011	<p>Recommendation met in part. A project scope for this group had been drafted and submitted for approval. A full-time dedicated senior manager in DNE had been assigned to facilitate this.</p> <p>The HSE should provide the Authority with a copy of the implementation plan when it has been approved.</p>

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No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 595)
6	The HSE should ensure that it complies with legislation, regulations and Standards relating to special care services.	The HSE will comply with the legislation, regulations and standards relating to special care services.	National Director, Children and Family Services and Regional Director of Operations DNE	On-going	Recommendation met. The interim national manager confirmed that the HSE will continue to monitor and work towards full compliance with legislation, standards and regulations. The role of the dedicated monitoring officer is deemed central to compliance with the recommendation.
7	The HSE should provide a monthly progress report to the Authority, and the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, on the implementation of the recommendations in the current inspection reports and those of this Overview Report.	Monthly progress reports will be provided to the HIQA and to the minister for Children and Youth Affairs	National Director, Children and Family Services	First progress report by 31.01.2011 and monthly thereafter.	Recommendation met. Progress reports were submitted to the Authority on 28 January 2011 and the 4 March 2011. While this recommendation had been met, the Authority will be requesting further progress reports on specific recommendations that require further action from a national perspective.

5. Conclusions

The completed reports on all inspections by the Authority of the three Units and the Overview Report were issued to the then Minister for Health and Children and to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. The Authority requested an action plan on all of the recommendations contained within these reports from the HSE within 10 days of their publication. The Authority also requested a monthly progress report on the implementation of these HSE actions. These requests were fully complied with by the HSE and were risk assessed on receipt by the Authority.

The follow-up inspections concentrated on the progress made by the HSE to address the national recommendations which arose out of the coordinated inspections of the three special care units in 2010. The inspection found that five recommendations were met. Two recommendations were met in part and a further two new recommendations were made subsequent to the follow-up inspection. These new recommendations relate to progress reports and monitoring reports which are to be issued to the Authority by the HSE as soon as they are completed.

The recent appointment of a HSE National Director, Children and Family Services had established a clearer governance structure for special care and high support service provision. A national steering group had been established, to be chaired by the National Director Children & Family Services. The first meeting of this group was scheduled for 04 April 2011. The operation management group had yet to be established as nominations sought had yet to be returned. A proposed date for this group to meet was 21 April 2011. There were clear terms of reference drawn up for each of these groups. The appointment of dedicated National Special Care and High Support Monitoring Officer is welcomed.

The Authority requests written monitoring reports to be issued after each visit to a special care unit. Overall, the Authority was satisfied that significant progress had been made to ensure compliance with national standards and regulations for special care and most importantly outcomes for young people in special care were increasingly positive.

6. Next steps

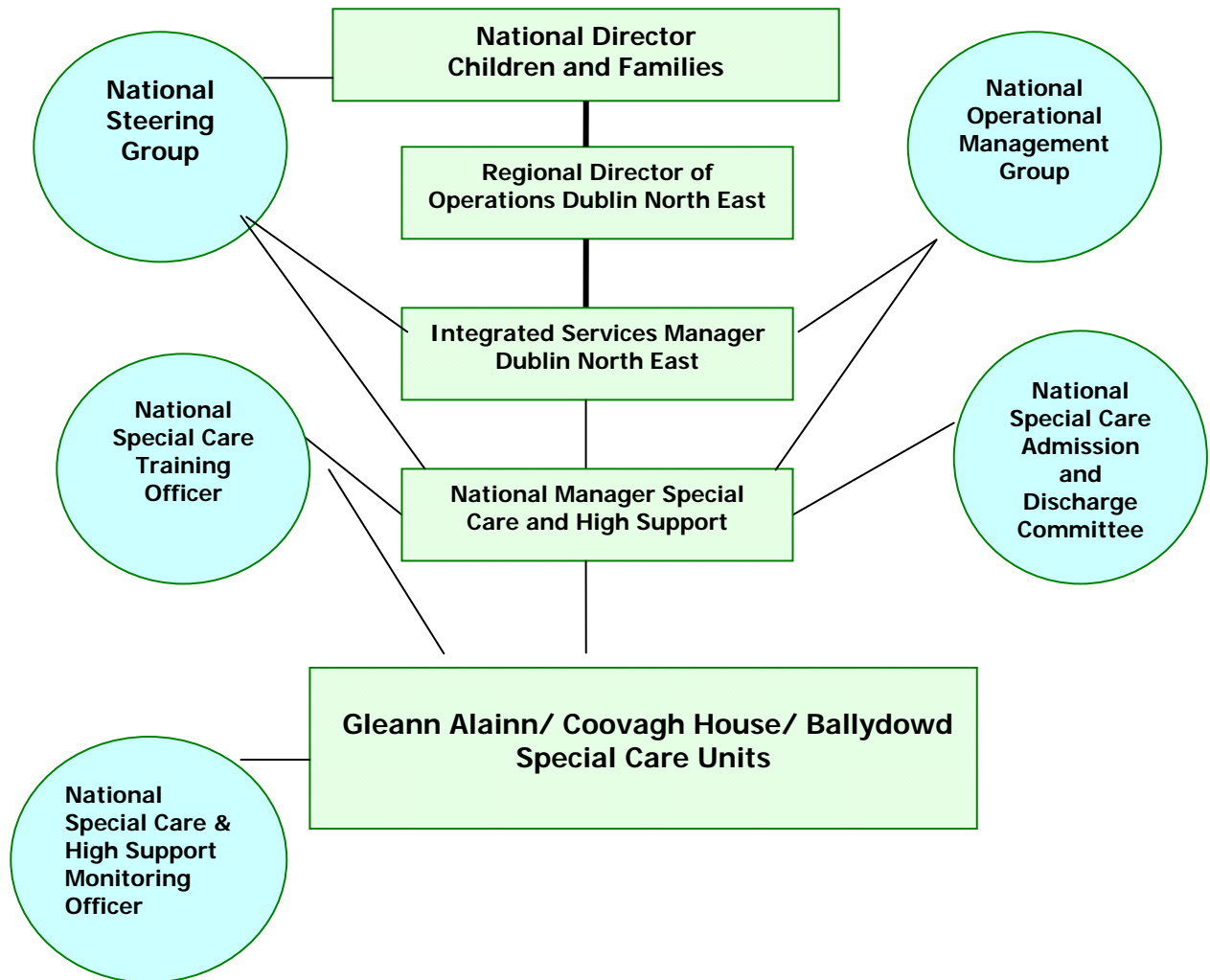
On going monitoring of each Special Care Unit will be undertaken by the Authority and further inspections will continue as part of the inspection schedule. The Authority requires monthly progress reports on national recommendations until further notice.

Recommendation 2 and 8 of the Gleann Álainn SCU Follow-up Report (Inspection report ID No.593) and Recommendation 5, 19 and 21 of the Coovagh House SCU Follow-up Report (Inspection report ID No. 594) should be incorporated into the monthly progress report to be issued by the HSE to the Authority. Progress on specific actions as outlined in the above two follow-up inspection reports should be provided to the Authority as completed.

Inspection reports for special care units by the Authority will be issued to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Children.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Current HSE structure for management of Special Care Units



Appendix 2

National Standards for Special Care Units (2001)

Standard 1. Purpose and function

The unit has a written statement of purpose and function that accurately describes what the unit sets out to do for children and the manner in which care is provided. The statement is available, accessible and understood. The unit's role in relation to the wider child care services (including regional and national) is clearly set out by the Health Service Executive.

Standard 2. Management and staffing

There is an adequate number of staff who are sufficiently experienced and qualified to enable the unit to achieve its purpose and function and meet the needs of the children. The unit is effectively managed and staff are organised and deployed so as to operate the unit effectively and efficiently to the required standard.

Standard 3. Monitoring

The Health Service Executive has adequate arrangements in place to enable an authorised person, on behalf of the Health Service Executive to monitor statutory and non-statutory children's residential centres.

Standard 4. Planning for young people

There is a written care plan to promote the welfare of each young person which is subject to regular review. This stresses and practically supports contact with families, preparation for adulthood, promotes education and health needs and addresses the emotional and psychological needs of the children.

Standard 5. Care of young people

Children are cared for by staff who can relate effectively to them. Day-to-day care is of good quality and provided in a way which takes account of their individual needs in relation to age, race, culture, religion, gender and disability. Children are cared for in a manner which safeguards and actively promotes their legal and civil rights. Children whose conduct is unacceptable are dealt with in accordance with positive disciplinary measures approved by the Health Service Executive.

Standard 6. Premises, safety and security

The premises and associated outdoor areas are designed to prevent unauthorised entry or exit. They should facilitate supervision and minimise opportunities for self-harm while providing accommodation which is, in so far as practicable, appropriate to its designation as a children's home. It must also be properly maintained and furnished.

Standard 7. Education

Education should be seen as an integral part of the care of the young person. The education of all children should be actively promoted by all involved. In so far as it is practicable, units should aim to provide for those of school age, a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to their age, ability and level of attainment with a view to continuing in open conditions or a return to mainstream school. Where appropriate, children over the age of 16 should be offered a programme of vocational preparation, training and work experience or transition to further education.

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