



Health Information and Quality Authority

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

A FOLLOW UP INSPECTION OF A CHILDREN'S HIGH SUPPORT UNIT IN THE HSE WEST AREA

Inspection Report ID Number: 524

Follow-up Inspection Date: 11th January 2012

Publication Date: 15th February 2012

SSI Inspection Period: 14

Unit ID Number: 186

Introduction

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) carried out an announced follow-up inspection of a children's high support unit in the Health Services Executive (HSE), West Area (WA) under Section 69 (2) of the Child Care Act 1991. This inspection was carried out by Orla Murphy, Inspector on the 11th January 2012. The purpose of the inspection was to assess the level of compliance of the HSE action plan provided in response to the recommendations of the last inspection (*see inspection ID 471*). The inspector found that all of recommendations from the previous inspection report were met or in progress.

The unit was located in a rural setting, near a large urban area. It was a large detached house, set in its own grounds. The urban area was only accessible by car but had a wide range of facilities such as shops, public transport, leisure units and places of worship.

The purpose and function of the unit is to provide medium term high support care for young people aged 12 – 17 years of age. The unit provided this high support care within a therapeutic framework.

Medium term placements were determined by the admissions panel for residential care. The service is based near a village and the unit provided a regional service to the HSE areas in counties Limerick, Clare and Tipperary North.

At the time of inspection there were four young people resident in the unit but one young adult was moving on to semi independent accommodation as part of their aftercare plan, on the day of the inspection. As part of the follow-up inspection the inspector met with the Unit Manager. Two of the young people were at school at the time of the inspection and one young person stated they did not wish to meet with the inspector. The young person most recently admitted to the unit spent time chatting informally with the inspector but did not wish to meet privately. The inspector examined a range of relevant records and documentation as part of the inspection.

Two of the young people living in the unit were aged 18; one was aged 16 and the remaining young person was aged 14 years. One young adult had been resident in the unit for two years, and another had been resident for over one year. Another young person had been resident for seven months and the young person admitted most recently had been in the unit for three months. In the case of the young adult who was moving to another aftercare placement, a transition had taken place and unit staff had agreed a formal plan of support to engage with the young adult in their new placement for six months. Another young person who had turned 18 years was remaining in the unit to continue with therapeutic and educative work and to prepare to leave care later in the year. Onward placements had been identified for the remaining young people as their long term plan, following a period of time in the unit to allow therapeutic work to be carried out with them.

At the time of the last inspection, the inspector found that young people's pocket money was limited and the young people felt they needed more independence financially and with independence skills. Since then, the staff team had worked extensively to review and address the pocket money and self care opportunities for young people. As a result, young people had a much greater independence financially and in independent living skills such as budgeting and cooking.

All of the young people had very complex needs and the unit had worked very responsively with these young people. The inspector had met one young person in another residential unit previously and their progress in wellbeing and behaviour was evident during this visit. The Unit Manager was fully aware of each young person's needs and history, and she and her team presented as being committed to ensuring that the young people had a positive experience in the placement and in their future lives.

All young people were engaged with intensive, structured therapeutic work with unit staff and professionals associated with the unit.

The inspector examined a range of records and found that the unit continued to maintain a high standard of care and administrative records as was seen at the last inspection.

Two young adults did not have an aftercare plan at the time of the last inspection. This has since been addressed and both now have aftercare plans in place which were seen by the inspector.

Findings

Seven recommendations had been made in the previous inspection report (ID No. 471). The inspector found that six recommendations had been met and one was met in part. Further comments on these recommendations are noted in the action plan.

Please see attached action plan in response to the inspection recommendation.

Action Plan for Inspection No. 471/524

Unit ID: 186
HSE Area: HSE West

Date Action Plan Dispatched: 3rd October 2011.
Date Action Plan Updated: 11th January 2012.

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Person Responsible	Implementation Date	SSI Response
1	The HSE WA should ensure that all social workers read the care files from time to time in accordance with standards.	Unit Manager to write to each Social Worker concerned and raise it at the Placement Management Meetings and Regional Manager will address directly with the Principal Social Workers.	Unit Manager Regional Manager	7.10.11	Recommendation met in part The inspector found that social workers had read the young people's files once since the last inspection which is not frequent enough. Social workers must read files to satisfy themselves of the progress and care of young people.
2	The HSE WA should ensure that all care plans are up to date and signed by all relevant parties.	The Regional Manager will make contact with the Principal Social Workers in relation to the two young people this concerns and request same.	Regional Manager	7.10.11	Recommendation met The inspector examined all care & aftercare plans and found this had been rectified.
3	The HSE WA should develop ways to provide young people preparing to leave care with opportunities to manage a budget.	A review to be conducted with respect to proving opportunities for the young people to manage monies in keeping with their leaving care plans.	Unit Manager	31.10.11	Recommendation met Young people now have a greater range of pocket money and opportunities to manage their budgets.

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4	The HSE WA should ensure that, with immediate effect, the two young people currently preparing to leave care are provided with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An aftercare worker allocated to each young person • An aftercare plan 	Each young person now has a dedicated aftercare worker and initial assessments have taken place to draw up the aftercare plans.	Regional Manager Aftercare and Foster Care Clare Care	31.10.11	Recommendation met Both young people have been allocated an aftercare worker and both have an aftercare plan.
5	The HSE WA should ensure that the local procedure regarding access to aftercare is reviewed in conjunction with the HSE National Office for Children and Families to ensure it is consistent with HSE National policy and related guidance.	The local HSE Aftercare service will consult with the national HSE Child and Family Office to ensure consistency with the new national aftercare Policy that is being launched.	Regional Manager Foster Care	30.11.11	Recommendation met The current aftercare procedure within the unit concurs with the HSE National Policy on Aftercare.
6	The HSE WA should ensure the unit reviews the provision of pocket money in consultation with young people.	A service review of pocket money is underway. The young people are being consulted with.	Regional Manager Unit Manager	31.10.11	Recommendation met Pocket monies have been reviewed with young people, and a range has been introduced based on the ages of the young people.

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7	The HSE WA should ensure that the maintenance record and its structure are reviewed to make it clearer where requests have not been responded to, and have necessitated a repeated request.	A data base has is being established in the unit.	Unit Manager	31.10.11	<p>Recommendation met</p> <p>The unit has developed a database for maintenance requests which tracks requests and outcomes.</p>