



**College of Psychiatrists Welcomes and Reacts to
Prescribing in CAMHS, Results from National Audit (July to December 2021)**

(As published on HSE website 28/07/2021)

31st July 2023

The College welcomes the publication of the findings of this report which will provide reassurance to children and their parents/guardians attending CAMHS around the country that levels of prescribing in CAMHS are safe and appropriate.

As the report highlights, and is well documented previously, a fit for purpose, national standardised IT system in CAMHS (and the Mental Health Services overall), is severely lacking or non-existent. Without essential basic systems that incorporate data gathering and management, electronic patient records and management of the varying, and often complex, information pertaining to patients (their diagnoses, medicines prescribed and follow up), clinical time and administrator support time are compromised and often wasted. Service development and risk minimisation also prove onerous without timely and easy access to data. Ultimately this affects the ability of a service to provide the best, safe, modern, fit for purpose service to patients.

The recommended National Drugs and Therapeutics Committee to develop protocols, procedures and guidelines on prescribing and consent is a welcome development. Of particular note is the recommendation that psychiatry, nursing, pharmacy work together, under the leadership of the National Clinical Lead for Child and Youth Mental Health, to develop guidelines and protocols for clinicians and information for parents/guardians.

Simple, modern data management systems in tandem with a general ICT system, need to be funded and put in place urgently, in services nationwide, to enable medical, health and administrative staff to deliver and support patient care safely, efficiently, and effectively and, most importantly, to ensure patient outcomes are the best they can be.

Plans and adequate funding to address deficits in resources for CAMHS are also needed urgently, particularly consultants and staffing of multi-disciplinary teams, fit for purpose, modern premises, and improved, robust governance structures. IT systems in isolation will not provide patients with moderate to severe mental illness with the services they need and deserve.

ENDS.

Contact:

Andrea Ryder

Manager, Communications and Policy

0872697656

andrea@irishpsychiatry.ie