



The Role of the Housing Coordinator in Mental Health Services

**Michael Hennessy, Housing Coordinator, Mental Health
Services, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CHO4)**



Introduction

- Policy Background
- Role development and initial brief
- Current role of Housing Coordinators across CHOs
- Challenges and opportunities
- Questions and Answers



Housing and Mental Health- History





Housing and Mental Health - 2022

- Many people require little or no housing support.
- Community based services.
- Focus on mainstream housing.
- However.....poor mental health and housing exclusion are intrinsically linked.



Housing and Mental Health - 2022





Background to Role Development

- Genio and the Service Reform Fund
- The National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities 2011-2016
- 2018/2019-- 9 Housing Coordinators in 9 CHOs
- Initial focus on mapping existing resources and structures
- Focus on tenancy sustainment supports



Housing Coordinators 2022

Area	Status
CHO 1- Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan	None
CHO 2- Galway, Roscommon, Mayo	Lorraine Kelly
CHO 3- Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary	None
CHO 4- Cork and Kerry	Michael Hennessy
CHO 5- South Tipperary, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford	Anne Barrett
CHO 6- Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East	Breffni Coffey
CHO 7- Kildare/ West Wicklow, Dublin West, Dublin South City, Dublin South West	Sinead O' Gorman
CHO 8- Laois/ Offaly, Longford/ West Meath, Louth/ Meath	John Cowman
CHO 9- Dublin North, Dublin North Central, Dublin North West	None



Role and Function

- To establish the role of mental health services in the implementation of National Housing Strategy for Disabled People (NHSPD), as it applies to people living with mental health issues.
- To develop effective partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders and seek to embed evidenced based models of practice which create sustainable pathways to housing for people living with mental health issues.
- Coordinate and facilitate associated activities bespoke to the identified housing needs in each CHO region.



Work to Date

Examples

Projects that support Community Integrated Living & housing pathways

- **START** (Support for Tenancy and Recovery Targets) -CHO 5
- **North Tipperary Intensive Tenancy Support project** (HSE service Excellence awards, Innovation winner 2020)
- **Creating Foundations- CHO 7**
- **My Home Project Galway Roscommon** in partnership with LA/HSE/Galway Simon, CHO2
- **Transfer of Ownership project:** HSE properties transferring to the ownership of Approved Housing bodies (AHB), service users become tenants, focus on supporting community integration and independence – CHO 2,3, 5, 7, 8,

Capacity Building & Service improvement

- **HSE Land learning module**
- Briefing Paper on **Mental Health Tenancy Support** submitted to Housing Agency
- Providing advice and guidance mental health staff regarding housing issues
- Development of homeless discharge protocols
- Mental health and housing inter-agency working groups
- Training for local authorities

Identification of housing & support needs in partnership with local authorities

- Local assessments to identify housing needs
- Representing MHS on Housing Disability Steering Group in each Local Authority
- Homeless initiatives



Challenges

- No clear national strategy for addressing the long-term housing and support needs of people with severe and enduring mental illness
- Need for greater emphasis on supporting independent living working in a recovery orientated manner
- Lack of available housing units for service users to move to, particularly single units
- Lack of accurate housing data within MHS



Opportunities

- Clarify what MHS want to achieve
- Enhance existing inter-agency relationships
- Ensure consistent level of support for people moving into tenancies
- Assist local authorities
- Support the work of key internal partners---Social Workers!



Questions?

**Contact Details of National Housing
Coordinators Group:**

John Cowman, Housing Coordinator CHO 7

john.cowman@hse.ie