



Health Information and Quality Authority

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

Social Services Inspectorate

Gleann Alainn

Special Care Unit

HSE South

FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION REPORT ID NUMBER: 303

Follow-up Inspection Date: 27th March 2009

Publication Date: 1st April 2009

SSI Inspection Period: 11

Centre ID Number: 99

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Introduction

On 27th March 2009 the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) carried out an announced follow-up inspection of Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit in the Health Services Executive (HSE), Southern Area under Section 69 (2) of the Child Care Act 1991. The inspection was carried out by Michael McNamara. Special care units are inspected annually, and this was a routine follow-up inspection to assess compliance of the HSE action plan provided in response to the recommendations of the last inspection (*see inspection no. 247*). At the time of this inspection there were two young people resident in the unit, one aged 15 and the other 16 years.

Inspector's judgements are based on evidence verified from several sources: direct observation, an inspection of accommodation, and interviews with the unit manager, the deputy unit manager, the child care manager (by telephone), two members of staff, and one of the young people, and inspectors examined relevant records and documentation including the following:

- The unit's register,
- A draft statement about the model of therapeutic care in the unit,
- An independent review of the practice and structure of staff supervision, dated December 2008,
- A health and safety statement revised in February 2009,
- A health and safety assessment carried out on 15th February 2009,
- A plan showing the structural changes made to the unit,
- Service agreements between the HSE and a fire safety company,
- The unit's revised safeguarding policy,
- Monitoring officer's reports for January and February 2009,
- Policy statements on the management structure, staff supervision and maintenance, dated February 2009,
- A report co-ordinating the actions needed to meet all the recommendations outstanding from the various reports on the unit in 2008.

On 9th March 2009, an inspector made a visit to the unit as a consequence of receiving information about a High Court order for a report prepared by HIQA on the 'necessary fencing and facilities in place at Gleann Alainn for the care and protection of young people', before a hearing of a case on 12th March 2009. He was told by the unit manager that progress was made in upgrading the security of the unit, and made a physical check of the premises. He found that structural alterations had been made to the interior of the building, and while planning permission had been granted for a perimeter fence, the contract for erecting it was still out to tender.

This report and action plan will be published and put on the HIQA website in accordance with the inspectorate's procedures. It will also be presented to the

High Court in response to a direction made by the judge on 12th March 2009 in a case concerning a young person.

Findings

In this inspection the inspector found that the HSE had made significant progress in meeting the majority of recommendations of the last report, but there were some recommendations that had yet to be implemented. Managers and staff interviewed by the inspector were positive about the changes, and there was evidence of a will to 'get it right'.

Several recommendations were partly or mostly met, and this reflects the scale of the work being undertaken to bring the physical and operational structures of the unit up to standard; and external managers have provided clear leadership and support to ensure that all those involved in the delivery of the service in the unit engage in the necessary changes.

The key recommendation of the last report, that the HSE should give the sourcing of suitable premises for the unit urgent priority (14), had not been met. Instead, the HSE has decided to make a substantial investment in order to bring the current premises up to standard. At the time of the follow-up inspection most of the refurbishment of the unit had been completed, but there was still work to complete in the interior of the unit, and the erection of a secure perimeter fence had not commenced.

The inspector found that outstanding recommendations included those that concerned: the qualifications of unit managers (5), deficits in vetting (6), on-site leisure facilities (13), the assessment of fire safety by the fire authority (19), and continuity of education for young people in special care (20). Since there is so much work being done to meet the recommendations, and in some cases this involves far-reaching changes, compliance with those recommendations that still require action will be fully assessed at the next inspection in Autumn 2009.

Detailed comments on the actions undertaken to meet each recommendation are in the action plan below.

Health Information & Quality Authority Social Services Inspectorate

Action Plan for Inspection 247

Name of Centre: Gleann Alainn SCU

Date Action Plan Dispatched: 13th November 2008

HSE Area: South

Date of Follow-up Inspection: 27th March 2009

<i>No.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Action to be taken</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Implementation Date</i>	<i>SSI Response</i>
1	The HSE should review the purpose and function of the unit, with particular focus on its role as a place of detention, the length of placements, and the scope and aim of its programme of mobilities.	Look at purpose and function will be amended to reflect current reality.	Unit Manager, Childcare Manager.	Jan 2009	27 th March 2009 This recommendation has been met.
2	The HSE should prepare an action plan which addresses all the outstanding recommendations made by the monitoring officer since March 2008, the inspectorate in April 2008, and the investigating officer in May 2008, and include those made in this report.	Regarding the structural integrity and repair of the building this has been done.	General Manager, Childcare Manager, Co-ordinator Residential Services, Unit Manager, Technical Services.	Jan 2009	27 th March 2009 This recommendation has been met. The plan addressing all the recommendations made in 2008 was prepared on 19th February 2009.
3	The HSE should satisfy itself that the model of management and supervision used in the SCU is suitable for the purpose and function of the unit.	Has been reviewed, will coincide with a reconfiguration of the staff structure in-house.	Governance Group. Line Management. Staff Relations. Impact.	Jan 2009	27 th March 2009 This recommendation has been mostly met. An independent expert has carried out a review of policy and practice, and her recommendations are being implemented. Practice to be assessed at the next inspection in Autumn 2009.

4	The HSE should ensure that the unit's register is maintained in accordance with the regulations.	This has been done.	Unit Manager.	Nov 2008	27 th March 2009 This recommendation has been met.
5	The HSE should determine whether the qualifications of the unit managers are suitable for its purpose and function.	The current unit management do not have the specific social care professional qualifications stipulated by the DoHC. Efforts to identify and source ways of remedying the situation are under active consideration.	Unit Manager and Deputy Unit Manager, Co-ordinator Residential Services, Childcare Manager.	Jan 2009	27 th March 2009 This recommendation has not been met.
6	The HSE should ensure that the deficits in vetting in the unit are remedied, and should ensure that future vetting of staff in the unit complies with the requirements of the Department of Health and Children's guidelines on vetting issued in 1994 and 1995.	This is in train.	Unit Manager.	Jan 2009	27 th March 2009 The deficits in vetting have yet to be remedied. The recruitment and vetting of staff has been handed over to the Human Resources Department of the HSE, and a system to ensure compliance with the guidelines on vetting is in place. Compliance with this recommendation will be assessed by inspectors at the next inspection in Autumn 2009.
7	The HSE should ensure and all statutorily required documentation is provided to the SCU and that care plans address onward placements.	New eligibility criteria have been issued nationally (15/10/08), and will inform all future applications.	National Special Care & High Support Service.	Sept 2008	27 th March 2009 The required documentation was in place for the two young people in the unit at the time of this inspection. To be fully assessed at the next inspection in Autumn 2009.

8	The HSE should review the unit's system of recording in its administrative and care files in order to streamline them, avoid duplication and improve their overall quality.	Review has been instigated in relation to records.	Childcare Manager, Unit Manager.	Nov 2008	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been met.
9	The HSE should ensure that managers and staff are familiar with all its policies on safeguarding.	The issue of safeguarding is under consideration via a committee looking at this and other issues arising from the report.	Committee.	Jan 2009	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been met.
10	The HSE should ensure that privacy and dignity of children is fully respected and reflected in the routines and practices of the unit.	This has been reviewed. Policy in relation to privacy and the state of facilities is being addressed currently. New office layout will reflect this. The Model of Therapeutic Care document, put forward by the unit psychologist, addresses the structural requirements necessary to promote stability and consistency of care.	Unit Manager, Co-ordinator of Residential Services.	Jan 2009	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been partly met. Several features necessary to afford privacy in the bedrooms have been put in place: blinds, frosted windows, and the locking of bedroom doors when the young people are in school. The toilet/shower rooms do not have locks, and in the configuration of rooms the managers' offices are still adjacent to bedrooms. A review of practice was carried out in September 2008. Inspectors require this recommendation to be fully implemented.

11	The HSE should arrange for the unit managers and staff to review their practice regarding the provision of meals and food hygiene.	This has been reviewed. More structured approach to meal times has been initiated. Food store conditions have been addressed.	Unit Manager.	Sep 2008	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been mostly met. Storage has been reorganized, meals structured, and staff awareness addressed. However, more work is needed to bring food hygiene up to standard. To be implemented in full before the next inspection in Autumn 2009.
12	The HSE should ensure that children are fully aware of how to make a complaint and that complaints are properly recorded.	This has been rectified.	Unit Manager.	Dec 2008	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been partly met. A leaflet explaining the complaints procedures and the independent/appeal element to young people has yet to be prepared. To be implemented in full before the next inspection in Autumn 2009.
13	The HSE should provide adequate on-site leisure facilities for the children in the SCU.	New fencing has been planned for. Planning permission awaited. This will result in larger leisure area outdoors.	HSE South Technical Services	Jan 2009	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has not been met. It is dependent on the installation of a secure external fence. The unit manager should write to the inspectorate when the fence is in place.
14	The managers of the HSE should give the sourcing of suitable premises for the unit urgent priority.	Considerable resources are being put into Gleann Alainn (almost €500,000) to bring it up to standard.	HSE South Technical Services.	Jan 2009	<i>27th March 2009</i> As it has been written, this recommendation has not been met. However, the HSE made a decision to make a considerable investment to make the current premises fit for purpose. This will be further assessed at the next inspection in Autumn 2009.

15	The HSE should review the administration of medication and all other practices, including risk assessments, designed to ensure the safety of the children.	Has been reviewed. New medical cabinet has been purchased. Full admissions process also under review.	Unit Manager, Childcare Manager, Reviewer.	Jan 2009	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been met.
16	The HSE should ensure that SCU managers regularly monitor systems and practice designed to provide security to the unit in accordance with standard criteria 6.31 – 6.40	A committee has been established looking at all the recommendations, so work relating to physical building and staff practices is underway.	Committee.	Jan 2009	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been partly met. Most of the systems in place to meet the standard have been reviewed by the committee. The inspector noted gaps in practice during the inspection. Practice will be assessed in the next inspection in Autumn 2009.
17	The HSE should review the unit's policy and practice on personal searches, and ensure that each search is notified as a significant event to the child's social worker and the monitoring officer.	Has been reviewed. New forms and recording are in place.	Unit Manager.	Dec 2008	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been met. The review has taken place, and searches are notified as significant events, with a clear record of notification on young people's care files.
18	The HSE should ensure that the unit's system of reporting maintenance requests is revised.	Protocol has been drawn up and circulated to all relevant staff.	Unit Manager, Co-ordinator Maintenance Services.	Dec 2008	<i>27th March 2009</i> This recommendation has been met. A total revision took place, and managers and staff told the inspector that the new system is working well.

19	The HSE should arrange for the fire authority to assess fire safety, and should ensure that fire drills are carried out frequently and that checks on fire safety systems are monitored by the SCU managers.	Has been addressed. Structural reconfiguration to facilitate exit from building. Fire drills schedule has been drawn up.	Unit Manager.	Dec 2008	<p><i>27th March 2009</i></p> <p>This recommendation has been met only partly.</p> <p>An equipment check by a fire safety company has taken place. Written confirmation of fire safety compliance will be sought by the inspectorate on completion of the refurbishment of the unit. The schedule of fire drills will be fully assessed in the next inspection in Autumn 2009.</p>
20	The HSE nationally should ensure that the continuity of education for children admitted and discharged from the SCU is sustained.	Gleann Alainn will liaise with National Special Care and High Support Services re ensuring continuity of education.	Unit Manager, Childcare Manager.	Dec 2008	<p><i>27th March 2009</i></p> <p>This recommendation has yet to be met.</p> <p>It requires a response from the HSE at national level as young people are placed in special care from all parts of the state.</p>
21	The education co-ordinator should refer any difficulties in sharing information about the education of children placed in the unit with the National Education Welfare Board.	This has been brought to attention of Education Co-ordinator.	Co-ordinator of Residential Services.	Nov 2008	<p><i>27th March 2009</i></p> <p>Since the last inspection a new education co-ordinator has taken up the post, and there have been few admissions. The implementation of this recommendation will be assessed at the next inspection in Autumn 2009.</p>