Northern Ireland Assembly

AQW 3186/16-21

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Tabled Date: 15/09/2016
Answered On Date: 04/11/2016
Priority Written: No

Question:
To ask the Minister of Health for her assessment of the Mental Health Rights Campaign statement on the percentage of the health budget allocated to mental health services.

Answer:
On the basis of the commissioning plan allocation to mental health services, the figure allocated to the mental health programme in 2015/16 was approximately £255m, which represented just over 5.5% of the Departmental Expenditure Limit of £4.7bn. This £255m does not include capital depreciation or interest costs, mental health patients treated on general acute wards, dementia patients (who are treated in the elderly programme of care), spend within primary care such as GPs and Pharmacy and in particular the community drugs budget of which the mental health element forms a substantial part.
I have recently written to the Participation and Practice of Rights (PPR) Mental Health Rights Campaign **to reiterate** that mental health is one of my key priorities as Health Minister, and that I am committed to improving mental health in the North of Ireland.
I am looking forward to tackling issues in relation to funding of mental health, development of new services, improved delivery of those services, and ensuring that there is genuine and meaningful involvement of service users at every stage. Moving towards parity of esteem – making progress to the point where mental health gets its fair share of time, effort, attention and resources – is a concept I am committed to.