



**Health  
Information  
and Quality  
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis  
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

# **Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit in the Health Service Executive South**

*Follow-up inspection report ID number: 593*

**Fieldwork date: 11 March 2011**

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**SSI Inspection Period: 13**

**Unit ID number: 99**

## About the Health Information and Quality Authority

The Health Information and Quality Authority is the independent Authority which has been established to drive continuous improvement in Ireland's health and social care services. The Authority was established as part of the Government's overall Health Service Reform Programme.

The Authority's mandate extends across the quality and safety of the public, private (within its social care function) and voluntary sectors. Reporting directly to the Minister for Health and Children, the Health Information and Quality Authority has statutory responsibility for:

**Setting Standards for Health and Social Services** — Developing person centred standards, based on evidence and best international practice, for health and social care services in Ireland (except mental health services)

**Social Services Inspectorate** — Registration and inspection of residential homes for children, older people and people with disabilities. Inspecting children detention schools and foster care services. Monitoring day and pre-school facilities<sup>1</sup>

**Monitoring Healthcare Quality** — Monitoring standards of quality and safety in our health services and investigating as necessary serious concerns about the health and welfare of service users

**Health Technology Assessment** — Ensuring the best outcome for the service user by evaluating the clinical and economic effectiveness of drugs, equipment, diagnostic techniques and health promotion activities

**Health Information** — Advising on the collection and sharing of information across the services, evaluating information and publishing information about the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services

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<sup>1</sup> Not all parts of the relevant legislation, the Health Act 2007, have yet been commenced.

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## 1. Introduction

The Health Information and Quality Authority's (the Authority) Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) carried out an announced follow-up inspection of Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit (SCU1) in the Health Service Executive (HSE), South (HSE South), under Section 69(2) of the Child Care Act, 1991.

This follow-up inspection was carried out by Sharron Austin, Lead Inspector on the 11 March 2011. The purpose of this inspection (Inspection report ID No. 593) was to assess compliance of the HSE action plan response to the recommendations made at the last full inspection by the Authority in October 2010 (Inspection report ID No. 589), available from [www.hiqa.ie](http://www.hiqa.ie).

## 2. Findings

At the time of this inspection, there were six girls resident in the unit aged between 15 and 16 years. Since the previous inspection in October 2010, five children had been admitted to the unit and five children discharged.

Twenty recommendations had been made following the inspection fieldwork on 5, 6 and 7 October 2010 (published in Inspection report ID 589, available from [www.hiqa.ie](http://www.hiqa.ie)). The inspectors found that eight of the 20 recommendations had been met and 12 were met in part. There were no recommendations that were not met.

The inspector interviewed the HSE interim National Manager with line-management responsibility for special care and high support, the Acting Unit Manager and two acting Deputy Managers during the follow-up inspection. The inspector also met briefly with the young people and examined relevant records and documentation.

The purpose of special care is to provide a place of containment for a child to restrict their ability to engage in unsafe and oftentimes dangerous behaviour and address these behaviours through targeted interventions. In response to Recommendation 8 the HSE had outlined a detailed action to address the need for adequate emotional and specialist support to address the young people's unsafe behaviours which necessitated their placement in special care:

Action 12 of the Ryan Implementation Plan 2009 states that the HSE will develop a national specialist multidisciplinary team for children in detention and special care in consultation with the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS).

Action 15 states that the HSE will review need and establish resourced multidisciplinary assessment teams for children and young people at risk.

A proposal arising out of the Ryan Implementation Plan 2009 for a National Assessment Consultation Therapeutic Service (ACTS) had been developed and agreed which addressed Actions 12 and 15 of the plan, by developing services for children in the care of the state under the Child Care Act 1991 and the Children Act 2001 and children at risk. The proposal recommends developing a four-pronged model comprising:

1. A national assessment and intervention service for children at risk.
2. On-site therapeutic services for high support and special care units.
3. On-site therapeutic services for the children detention schools.

4. A parallel development of a forensic child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) for children and young people with significant mental health needs requiring more specialist input.

An implementation group was being established for this service under the lead of a national specialist and a nominated director of one of the special care units representing the national high support and special care services.

During this follow-up inspection, concerns had been expressed by an external professional in relation to the delay in receiving notifications and records concerning the behaviour of a child. The concern expressed also highlighted the professional's dissatisfaction with the communications system within the unit and the management of two specific significant events. The unit had implemented the national policy for the notification of significant events however it was evident that this policy had not been strictly adhered to. This had been highlighted in the full inspection report in October 2010 when it was found that the standard regarding the notification of significant events was met in part.

Senior managers should ensure that national and unit policies are consistently adhered to by staff in the special care unit.

The findings of this follow-up inspection are presented in a table which addresses each recommendation, the action to be taken and the person responsible for its implementation. The table also outlines the original timeline that the HSE proposed in order to implement each of the recommendations.

Table 1 contains the action plan and findings of the follow-up inspection relevant to each recommendation from the full inspection. It also contains the HSE actions to be taken where a recommendation was found by inspectors to have been met in part.

Table 1: HIQA Action Plan for Inspection No.589 Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit in the Health Service Executive South

<b>Centre ID:</b>	99	<b>Date Action Plan Dispatched:</b>	17 December 2010
<b>HSE Area:</b>	HSE South	<b>Date Action Plan Updated:</b>	11 March 2011

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
1	Immediately stabilise the management of the Unit to ensure it is sustainable and the Acting Manager adequately supported.	Operational responsibility for the management of Gleann Alainn (GASCU) transferred to HSE Dublin North East with effect from 07 January 2011. An interim National Manager has been appointed who line manages the manager of GASCU and reporting to the LHM Dublin NE. The LHM reports to RDO DNE. Arrangements for formalisation of the Manager posts will be progressed.	National Manager RDO DNE	07.01.11.	<b>Recommendation met.</b> An interim arrangement was put in place through the transfer of a deputy manager from another unit to support the Acting Unit Manager prior to the appointment of a second Acting Deputy Manager. As of 29.11.10 the centre management structure consisted of one Acting Unit Manager and two Acting Deputy Managers.  A HR manager DNE was currently working on regularising all acting positions within special care.
2	Resolve the current management issue and put in place a long-term management solution	In addition to the above, A national steering group for special care and an operational group are being established. The steering group will develop a national strategy for special care and the operational group will address operational issues.	National Director	Q1 2011	<b>Recommendation met in part.</b> The management function for Gleann Alainn transferred to the National Special Care and High Support Management on the 7 January 2011. See Appendix 1 for current management structure. A national steering group had been established, to be chaired by the National Director Children and Family Services. The first meeting of this group was scheduled for the 04.04.11

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
					<p>The operation management group had yet to be established as nominations sought had yet to be returned. A proposed date for this group to meet was 21.04.11                      The inspector was given a copy of the terms of reference for these groups.</p>
3	<p>Ensure that the change management process is well managed through good communication and sharing of information with local management and staff members.</p>	<p>A memorandum of Understanding was approved and circulated to all RDO Offices. The change management process is ongoing and is being managed by DNE with support from National Office CFSS. Managers of Units meet with Interim National Manager weekly and take collective and individual responsibility to ensure good communication and change implementation</p>	<p>National Director                      RDO DNE                      National Manager                      Centre Managers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p><b>Recommendation met.</b>                      The inspector was given a copy of the memorandum of understanding dated 03.12.10. in relation to the transfer of responsibility for the management of High Support and Special care services</p> <p>Following the transfer of management function on the 7.1.11 to the National Special Care and High Support Management, the acting unit manager in Gleann Alainn informed the inspector that the interim National Manager for special care and high support was due to hold a briefing session in the coming weeks with the managers and staff in Gleann Alainn so as to ensure good communication and information sharing with staff. Weekly meetings with the managers/directors of the other special care units and the interim National Manager were viewed positively in terms of updating and sharing appropriate information as part of the change management process.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
4	Ensure that specialist human resource support is provided to management.	HR support will be provided to the Centre Manager.	A.N.D. HR RDO DNE	Ongoing	<p><b>Recommendation met.</b></p> <p>As outlined in the memo of understanding a HR manager from the HSE Dublin North East had been nominated as the dedicated resource person to national special care and high support HR related issues. The HSE South continued to provide local HR support to the unit manager of Glenn Alann.</p>
5	Ensure that all staff members receive supervision as a matter of urgency.	<p>The supervision structure for GASCU is as follows:</p> <p>The National Manager supervises the Centre Manager (some professional development will be provided externally), Centre Manager supervises Deputy Managers, Deputy Managers supervise staff and co-ordinators. Co-ordinators supervise night staff and relief staff.</p> <p>Supervision is every six weeks. Monthly supervision returns will be submitted to the Monitoring Officer and DNE.</p>	National Manager  Centre Manager	Ongoing Q1 2011 (supervision returns to Monitoring Officer)	<p><b>Recommendation met.</b></p> <p>The supervision structure as outlined in the action taken by the HSE was in place. The interim National Manager and the unit management team confirmed this. The interim National Manager informed the inspector that supervision of the acting unit manager was carried out by him from an operational perspective and professional development was provided by an external supervisor. Formal links between the internal and external supervisors have been agreed.</p> <p>The inspector reviewed all supervision files and evidenced that formal supervision resumed for all staff in February 2011. The inspector was given copies of the supervision monthly returns and a memo issued on 05.01.11 to the directors and managers of the special care and high support units in relation to the professional supervision partnership model. The acting unit manager had yet to commence external clinical supervision.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
6	Ensure that the statement of purpose and function is reviewed to define its role within the national child care service including the therapeutic model of care.	The Statement of Purpose and Function will be reviewed in context of overall national service pending overall strategic and operation plan being agreed and implemented.	National Manager Centre Manager	Q1 2011	<p><b>Recommendation met in part.</b>                      The statement of purpose and function had been reviewed and was awaiting approval. The inspector was given a copy of the draft document.</p> <p>As this was dependent on the establishment of the national steering group for approval, the inspector recommends that a draft version should be made available to the acting unit manager of Gleann Alainn with the understanding that it had yet to be ratified.</p> <p><b>The steering group should approve and ratify the revised statement of purpose and function at its first meeting in April 2011.</b></p>
7	Ensure that the purpose and function should reflect how the Special Care Unit will work with families.	This will be included with work under No. 6 above.	National Manager Centre Manager	Q1 2011	<p><b>Recommendation met in part.</b>                      As evidenced in Recommendation 6</p>
8	Ensure that children receive adequate emotional and specialist support to address their unsafe behaviour which necessitated their placement in special care.	Approval for a HSE South Psychologist post has been granted. This post provides a service to GASCU. A recruitment process will now take place; in the mean time psychological services are provided by the referring LHO.	RDO / HR South	Q2 2011	<p><b>Recommendation met in part.</b>                      The inspector was informed by the interim National Manager that currently, access to specialist services was sought through the referring local health area.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
					<p>This was proving to be problematic for the management and staff of Gleann Alainn because access was not facilitated or access was not put in place within an appropriate time frame.</p> <p><b>The national admissions and discharge committee for high support and special care services should request in writing from the placing local health manager that access to specialist services will be facilitated locally as a matter of priority and a copy issued to the authority.</b></p> <p>A comprehensive proposal on the development of a National Assessment Consultation and Treatment Service (ACTS) was at an advanced stage which addressed Actions 12 and 15 of the Ryan Implementation Plan 2009, by developing services for children in the care of the state under the Child Care Act 1991 and the Children Act 2001 and children at risk.</p> <p>An Implementation Group was being established for this service under the lead of National Specialist and a nominated director of one of the special care units as the National high support and special care services representative</p>

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
9	Ensure that the post of shift coordinator is established without further delay.	The post of Shift Coordinator has been established and became operational on 12.01.11	Centre Manager	12.01.11	<b>Recommendation met.</b> Four shift co-ordinator posts were established in January 2011. The inspector evidenced minutes of weekly co-ordinator meetings with unit management.
10	Ensure that the roster and deployment of staff are reviewed so as to facilitate full staff meetings and a training programme.	The roster and deployment of staff are being reviewed.	Centre Manager National Manager	Q1 2011	<b>Recommendation met in part.</b> This was still under review with a view to standardising the roster across the three special care units. In the interim, the management team in Gleann Alainn were reviewing an interim roster to meet the recommendation and proposed an implementation date of June 2011.
11	Address inconsistencies in practices between teams in the Unit through improved communication and increased accountability in care practices.	The role of the coordinator is expected to increase and improve communication and accountability. A weekly management meeting, including coordinators, has been established.	National Manager Centre Manager	Ongoing	<b>Recommendation met in part.</b> The acting unit manager informed the inspector that while the establishment of shift coordinators had improved communication and accountability, there were still some inconsistencies in practices between teams. Staff teams were due to change in April 2011 and this should provide a forum for addressing any inconsistencies in practices.
12	Ensure that adequate information is provided about each child on their admission.	The NSCADC circulate all referral information to each committee member. Full information is provided for each admission.	Chair NSCADC National Manager	Q2 2011	<b>Recommendation met in part.</b> Unit management confirmed that full information was provided for each referral/admission.

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
		A new electronic referral process is being established with a dedicated e-mail address.			The new electronic referral process with a dedicated email address had yet to be established.
13	Ensure that there is a case management review process for children who have two or more placements in special care in a short period of time.	All young people in special care are reviewed at the National Management Team on a weekly basis. The matter of a review mechanism for young people who have had multiple SCU placements will be considered by the National Steering Group and Operational Group.	National Manager Centre Manager	Ongoing Q1 2011	<b>Recommendation met in part.</b> The interim National Manager and acting unit manager confirmed that all young people in special care were reviewed on a weekly basis at the National Management team meeting.  Upon establishment of the National Steering Group and Operational Group, children who have two or more placements in special care in a short period of time will be reviewed.
14	Complete a training audit and implement a programme of training suitable to meet the needs of the staff team working in a special care environment.	A training audit has been completed. A training programme is currently being developed by the National Training Officer.	National Manager Training Officer Centre Manager	Q1 2011	<b>Recommendation met.</b> The inspector was given a copy of the training audit completed and the training programme being rolled out. The acting unit manager confirmed that an audit had taken place and that a training programme had been implemented.
15	Ensure that guidance and training on safeguarding and child protection is provided to staff in the Unit.	All current staff have completed Children First Training. New staff members will be trained on an ongoing basis.	Training Officer Centre Manager	Completed	<b>Recommendation met in part.</b> As evidenced in the training audit 16 staff completed Children First training in November/December 2010. Further training scheduled for 31 March 2011.
16	Ensure that statutory care plan reviews occur on a monthly basis for children in special care.	All young people in Special Care have a statutory review on a monthly basis	Principal Social Worker Centre Manager	Ongoing	<b>Recommendation met.</b> Evidenced on young people's care files.

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
17	Ensure that children are consulted about the daily routines of the Unit and that information about the service, their rights, including organisations to promote their rights, is available to the children.	A children's booklet will be developed and issued to all young people on admission. Children will be consulted regarding daily routines.	Centre Manager	Q1 2011	<p><b>Recommendation met in part.</b>                      Information booklets from other special care units were being reviewed to inform the final version for Gleann Alainn by a designated deputy manager.</p> <p>The acting unit manager informed the inspector that she had nominated a staff member to be an in-house children's rights representative who will ensure the unit is in compliance with the recommendation.</p>
18	Review the current GP service to ensure it meets the needs of the service.	The GP service will be reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of the service.	National Manager	Q1 2011	<p><b>Recommendation met in part.</b>                      The GP contract was due for renewal in April 2011. Currently, there was a reliance on an out of hours service from 6pm. each evening and at weekends. The interim National Manager informed the inspector that in reviewing the contract, alternative systems to the current practice will be explored while ensuring it meets the needs of the service.</p>
19	Establish the status of the school with the Department of Education and Skills	The school is funded and managed by County Cork VEC.	National Manager	Completed	<p><b>Recommendation met in part.</b>                      The interim national manager informed the inspector that a process was initiated between the HSE, the Department of Education and Science and the Vocational Education Committee (VEC) to discuss the provision of education within the National high support and special care services.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken (completed by HSE)	Person responsible	Implementation date	Follow-up inspection SSI response (Inspection ID No. 594)
					<p>Three meetings had been held to date. The inspector was given copies of the minutes of these meetings. It was proposed that each school within the NHSandSCS would transfer to the management of the VEC.</p> <p><b>The HSE should inform the Authority when the formal transfer to the VEC is completed.</b></p>
20	Assess the safety of the cars in use in the Unit and take any necessary steps to ensure the transport used by the children and staff team is roadworthy and safe.	Three unit vehicles have been replaced. All vehicles have been examined by a mechanic and all have passed the NCT certification. This will be maintained ongoing as part of the HandS Audits / Safety Statement.	Centre Manager	Completed	<p><b>Recommendation met.</b></p> <p>This was confirmed by the Interim National Manager and the acting Unit Manager. Alternatives to the current transport arrangements were to be examined by the acting unit manager, i.e. leasing arrangements.</p>

### 3. Conclusions

The follow-up inspection concentrated on the progress made by the HSE to address the recommendations of the October 2010 inspection. The inspection found that many of the *National Standards for Special Care (2001)* were met or met in part and found evidence that children were well cared for. There was also evidence of a child-centred culture and practice.

Prior to the transfer of this Unit from local management within the HSE South to National HSE management, under the umbrella of the Regional Director of Operations HSE Dublin North East, the HSE South immediately responded to concerns regarding the sustainability of the management of Gleann Alainn at the time of the inspection in October 2010 and appointed a temporary deputy manager.

The recent appointment of a National Director, Children and Family Services as well as the transfer of the Unit from HSE South management to National HSE management on the 7 January 2011 had established a clearer governance structure for this unit in the context of the national special care services.

However, it must be noted that concerns were notified to the Authority during the inspection process by an external professional regarding the communication systems for and the management of the notification of significant events. These concerns should be reviewed by the management of Gleann Alainn. The National Manager should ensure that a review is carried out of the implementation of the national policy for the notification of significant events since the last inspection in October 2010 by the dedicated HSE monitoring officer for special care and high support, who is due to take up the post in April 2011, and submit the findings to the Authority. A proposed timeframe for completing this should be indicated by the HSE.

### 4. Next steps

The Authority has undertaken coordinated and simultaneous inspections of all three Special Care Units in Ireland which form the national special care service.

The completed reports on all inspections undertaken by the Authority, and an overview report on the national special care service, were issued to the then Minister for Health and Children and to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. These reports are on the Authority's website, [www.hiqa.ie](http://www.hiqa.ie).

The Authority requested an action plan on all of the recommendations contained within the three reports from the HSE within 10 days of their publication. The Authority also requested a monthly progress report on the implementation of these HSE actions. These requests were fully complied with by the HSE and were risk assessed on receipt by the Authority.

This follow-up inspection report also informs the Authority's national overview report on special care services provided by the HSE.

On going monitoring of Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit will be undertaken by the Authority and further inspections will continue as part of the inspection schedule. The Authority will require monthly progress reports on national recommendations.

Recommendation 2 and 8 will be incorporated in to this monthly progress report to be issued by the HSE to the Authority. Progress on the actions under Recommendations 6 and 19 of this follow-up report should be provided to the Authority as completed.

The Authority will again report to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Children on the implementation of the *National Standards for Special Care (2001)*.

## Appendix 1

### Management structure of Glenn Alainn Special Care Unit – March 2011



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