

Financial Savings Review of the Focus Ireland 'My Home, My Choice' Project

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



BACKGROUND

- Funded by Genio, Focus Ireland's 'My Home, My Choice' project was established in Kildare in 2012. It supports individuals with a mental health diagnosis and who are recognised as having a housing need by their local authority. Focus Ireland procures accommodation and provides a holistic and tailored support service both before and after transitioning to independent living.
- As the name of the service suggests, 'My Home, My Choice' project prioritises the perspective of the customers themselves. The service aligns with the Government's mental health strategy, 'Vision for Change', in providing accessible, community-based and specialist services for people with mental health diagnoses in a way which promotes integration and community participation.
- Focus Ireland commissioned independent research consultants Quality Matters to conduct a financial savings review of 'My Home, My Choice' project

METHODOLOGY

- The study seeks to outline and cost accommodation and the supports/services used by customers of 'My Home, My Choice' both before and subsequent to their initial engagement with Focus Ireland.
- Data was collected through 10 semi-structured interviews which yielded detailed information on the type, number and duration of interventions and service use during two periods of time: 1) the 12 months *prior* to their engagement with Focus Ireland; and 2) the 12 months *after* their first engagement with Focus Ireland.
- While this financial savings reviews has limitations in terms of its scope and scale, it nonetheless provides a broad overview of the patterns and costs of service use contact both before and after engaging with 'My Home, My Choice'.

Full Report Available
from Focus Ireland

Study Undertaken By:



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Since transitioning to 'My Home, My Choice' housing, there was a substantial decrease in the reported number of psychiatric / locum visits, representing estimated savings of **€18,654**.
- Substantial increase of engagement in community day centres resulting in a **€11,232** cost increase.
- Small increase in engagement with primary health centre resulting in a **€891** increase in spending.
- Moderate decrease in the number of public health and community psychiatric nurse visits resulting in **€4,784** and **€798** savings respectively.
- Moderate increase in engagement with a community men's group resulting in **€1,040** increase in costs.

CONCLUSION

- There was a total savings of **€6,896** across the sample of ten participants.
- The most significant savings captured in the study related to the reduction in use of psychiatric services and the move away from congregate living situations.
- Areas of increased spending were in the areas of housing provision and increased use of community services.
- The findings highlight the potential cost-effectiveness of interventions such as 'My Home, My Choice', whilst also signalling that the project increases housing stability for customers and enhanced engagement with community-based services.

Costs and Savings Identified: Before/After

GP SERVICES

Small reduction in the number of visits to GPs representing **€624** in savings.

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

There was a marginal increase in the number of A&E visits representing a **€268** increase in spending.

INPATIENT HOSPITALISATION

There was an increase in the number of inpatient admittance resulting in a **€4,580** more spending.

HOUSING SERVICES

- Substantial savings among those who transitioned from congregate settings into independent accommodation resulting in **€16,475** savings.
- Substantial cost increases of **€15,588** were recorded among participants who transitioned from their family home into independent accommodation.
- For those residing in the private rented sector (PRS), they recorded improvements in terms of security of tenure and quality of accommodation. Savings among those who remained in PRS were **€650**.