

Appendix 3

Key informants' schedule

1- Could you speak about your experience in working with care leavers, particularly with those suffering from depression?

Prompts

- To explore the main characteristics of care leavers: difficulties experienced, aspirations, expectations vs. reality, engagement with support provided, background, outcomes, relationships, what makes a successful transition, what feelings do they express at this time of their lives, etc.
- To explore the experience of the worker/key informant: e.g. does the worker feel that he/she makes a difference in the life of the young person?, difficulties expressed in working in the field, knowledge possessed about the field and about mental health, training in mental health, etc.
- To what extent do mental health problems exist among care leavers”?
- What kind of mental health issues and symptoms of depression do you come across?
- Explore what kind of support exists for care leavers suffering from depression e.g. is the support provided appropriate for their mental health needs?
- To what extent do these young people engage with this support.
- Main difficulties in supporting these young people in terms of health, housing, employment, etc.
- What are the causes of depression and other mental health problems?
- How do they react to depression?
- Are they more exposed to risk than other care leavers?
- Are they more associated with high-risk behaviour and anti-social behaviour?
- Do they refuse the support offered to them more than care leavers who do not suffer from depression?

2 - *What do you think about the support provided to these young people to help them move on to independence?*

Prompts:

- Feelings in relation to the support offered.
- Explore the experience of specific concepts such as pathways plan, corporate parenting, eligibility criteria¹, the current policy and legislation, etc.
- What would you suggest in order to improve the throughcare and aftercare system?
- What are the successful strategies for working with care leavers?
- Could you provide examples of good practice?
- Is the leaving care field a priority or not for the government?
- To what extent do you think the needs of care leavers are met?

3 – *Could you speak about these young people’s experiences in terms of housing/accommodation?*

Prompts:

- Who is the responsible service for providing accommodation to care leavers? Who takes the lead on aspects concerning the housing process?
- How are the housing and accommodation processes treated in practice? (Kind of accommodation chosen vs. accommodation provided.)
- Is the accommodation provided suitable for young people’s needs and wishes?
- Difficulties in sustaining a tenancy and how are these difficulties experienced and addressed?
- What kind of support is offered (e.g. budgeting, life skills)?
- What could improve in terms of housing and accommodation support?
- What does the worker/key informant think about the support provided to these young people?
- Are these young people’s accommodation needs understood by departments and agencies involved at this level?
- To what extent are B&B used as accommodation for these young people?
- What are the difficulties associated with these young people who are placed in B&B and hostels?
- Are their mental health needs taken into account when a place to live is chosen?
- Are those who are mentally ill more associated with less effective housing pathways and transitions or not?
- What are the causes of homelessness among care leavers? What kind of support is provided in terms of homelessness?
- Main difficulties in supporting these young people in terms of housing.

¹ An eligible criterion means the criteria established by law for a young person to be considered a care leaver and be eligible to receive support from throughcare and after services.

4 - *What do they experience in terms of employment or unemployment?*

Prompts:

- Difficulties in finding and maintaining a job.
- Types of employment.
- Expectations vs. reality.
- According to your experience, why are the rates of unemployment so high among care leavers? Is it a problem of the system or is it related to particular characteristics of this population?
- Is there any special provision for care leavers with mental health problems?
- What kind of support do mentally ill care leavers need in terms of employment?
- What do you think can be there to improve the support related to employment and unemployment and in holding down a job?
- Main difficulties in supporting these young people in terms of employment/unemployment.
- There is any kind of accommodation related to a more successful employment pathway?

5 – *What are the main characteristics of those care leavers suffering from mental health problems, particularly with regards depression?*

Prompts:

- Their outcomes compared to those not suffering from mental health problems.
- Their performance (school, care, engagement, employment, etc.).
- Treatments: treatments are available, resources and their engagement.
- Substance misuse.
- Lifestyle.
- Impact of mental health on their transition.
- Difficulties experienced.
- Self-harm, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts.
- Housing/employment.