



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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26th May, 2020

**Deputy Jennifer Whitmore,
Dail Eireann
Dublin 2.**

PQ Number: 6960/20

To ask the Minister for Health if the guidelines provided to mental health practitioners will be clarified; the guidelines available advising mental health practitioners of face-to-face counselling particularly in relation to children; if his attention has been drawn to the need for the provision of mental health supports for at risk individuals particularly for children during Covid-19; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Whitmore,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

HSE Mental Health has maintained essential services during this public health emergency. Currently the HSE is utilising a number of methods to provide services including face to face services and also telehealth technologies. HSE Community Operations are currently working with clinicians and managers across the CHOs to consider how best we maximise efficiencies and deliver safe services going forward.

The HSE continue to update and circulate guidance and advice to its staff including Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC), the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the use of facemasks. In addition, as clinical guidance and advice may change quite quickly due to the changing nature of the pandemic, all staff have been advised to keep updated with information on www.hpsc.ie and www.hse.ie.

HSE mental health services follow all HPCS guidance in addition to the governments guidance on the Return to Work Protocol.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sinead Reynolds
General Manager Mental Health Services