



Cúram Sláinte  
Phobail, Iarthar  
ag freastal ar Ghailimh,  
Maigheo agus Ros Comáin

Community  
Healthcare West  
serving Galway, Mayo  
and Roscommon

Ceannasaí na Seirbhísí Meabhairshláinte  
Cúram Sláinte Phobail, Iarthar, Ceanncheathrú N. Muire,  
Caisleán an Bharraigh, Co. Mhaigh Eo, F23 HP58.  
T: 094 9049242 R: [Mentalhealth.cho2@hse.ie](mailto:Mentalhealth.cho2@hse.ie)

Head of Mental Health Services  
Community Healthcare West, St. Mary's Headquarters,  
Castlebar, Co. Mayo, F23 HP58.  
Tel: 094 9049242 Email: [Mentalhealth.cho2@hse.ie](mailto:Mentalhealth.cho2@hse.ie)

[katrina.cusack@hse.ie](mailto:katrina.cusack@hse.ie) 094 9049242  
[aidan.sweeney@hse.ie](mailto:aidan.sweeney@hse.ie) 094 9049241  
[laura.costello@hse.ie](mailto:laura.costello@hse.ie) 090 6637543

17<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Ms. Roisin Shortall TD  
5 Main Street  
Finglas  
Dublin 11

**PQ Ref: 33405/20**

*\*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons seeking mental health supports in Galway city to date in 2020; the way in which this compares to the previous five years; if there were notable increases during the initial Covid-19 emergency period lockdown from 13 March 2020 to 18 May 2020 in those seeking mental health services in Galway city; if there was a change over the summer months with more relaxed restrictions; if his Department and the HSE are planning for increased resources for mental health services in Galway city through the current stage of restrictions; and if he will make a statement on the matter.\**

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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;

As of September 2020, the numbers of new referrals to the Adult Community Mental Health Team GR2, covering Galway City, stands at 582. This figure is slightly down in comparison to the trend over the last five years, however the inpatient numbers in our acute inpatient unit in Galway University Hospital covering Galway City has on occasion during the pandemic been approaching capacity reflecting the number of service users who experienced a significant deterioration in their mental health warranting an acute admission.

It should be noted however that the Community Healthcare West Counselling service who provide bespoke Covid 19 counselling for the Counties of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon have received a high volume of referrals in relation to members of the public experiencing anxiety in relation to the pandemic. The service offers appropriate therapeutic intervention services based on assessing the individual needs of the clients. The purpose of this specialized service is to mitigate the psychosocial and mental health effects on people by responding appropriately, flexibly and in a timely way to the phased needs of who is affected. Members of the public wishing to access this counselling can do so via a referral from their GP, Tusla, Primary Care or Mental Health Services.



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In relation to additional services being available in Galway City, The Community Healthcare West Mental Health Service in conjunction with a local project committee and the Galway Forum are delighted to announce that a Community Café will soon be established adjacent to Galway University Hospital. The café will be an out of hours space that member of the public experiencing some mental health difficulties can attend for support as an alternative to attending A&E. The service will offer some low level support and sign posting to appropriate services.

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

Yours sincerely,

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**Charlie Meehan**  
**Head of Mental Health Services**  
**Community Healthcare West**



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