



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
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**24th November 2020,
Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.**

PQ 35364/20

To ask the Minister for Health if cognitive behavioural therapy groups are provided by the HSE to assist persons with mental health challenges.

Dear Deputy Ward,

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 specialist mental health services provide a wide range of talking therapies in both CAMHS and adult mental health services including cognitive behavioural therapy, family therapy etc. Additionally the HSE provides talk therapies at primary care level through directly employed staff e.g. psychologists in primary care and counsellor therapists in CIPC (Counselling in Primary Care) and the NCS (National Counselling Service). These services have been enhanced recently through the recruitment of assistant psychologists in primary care. The HSE also employs counsellors/ therapists/ psychologists in primary care addiction services. In addition to directly employed staff the HSE funds partner organisations to provide talk therapies eg Jigsaw services.

Jigsaw provide face-to-face, online and phone based services to young people aged between 12 to 25 years old while working with communities to resource and support parents and other adults who work with young people. Face-to-face services are delivered from 12 nationwide locations in the form of brief intervention sessions with healthcare professionals, usually taking place across 6 to 8 appointments. Other services include live 1 to 1 online chat, phone based support provided by a counsellor and text support. All Jigsaw services are highlighted on www.jigsaw.ie

In order to ensure greater consistency and equity of access to talk therapies, HSE MH commenced a service improvement project in January 2018 with a view to developing a Model of Care for adults who attend specialist mental health services accessing talking therapies. While the project focuses specifically on adults attending specialist mental health services, it will also describe other services where talk therapies are currently provided from HSE funding.

Building on a stepped care approach, the Model of Care is expected to involve an assessment of the need for talking therapies taking into account stakeholder perspectives and the prevalence of mental health disorders within the adult population. It will consider evidence-based talking therapies best-suited to meet the identified



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needs, and outline a recommended operational model for talking therapies provided by General Adult Community Mental Health Teams.

With reference to CBT groups it is usual practice for clinicians/ therapists in their clinical practice to assess the needs of individuals on their caseloads with a view to making decisions about whether group or individual therapy will be most effective. Clearly the Covid 19 pandemic has consequences for the delivery of face to face group sessions.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sinead Reynolds'.

Dr Sinead Reynolds
General Manager Mental Health Services