



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.
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May 6th 2021,
Deputy John McGuinness,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ
Number: 20550/21

To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide funding to support one to one counselling and psychotherapy services to assist those delivering the services in the private sector to expand their operations to include referrals from the public health sector given the significant demand arising from Covid-19 being experienced by those professionals involved; if he will encourage the HSE to assist in ensuring that any person presenting with a mental health issue is seen immediately by the appropriate professional in either a public or private setting; the number of out-patients on the waiting list presenting with mental health issues that have yet to have their first appointment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -John McGuinness

Dear Deputy McGuinness,

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.

The HSE has developed a comprehensive National Psychosocial Framework for responding to the psychological and mental health impact of COVID-19. This framework provides for a layered care approach to addressing the psychosocial consequences of Covid-19, from a societal level and then through the levels of need of the population across the life span. The framework's structure enables the health service to effectively integrate the wide range of wellbeing and mental health supports available so as to ensure supports are in place to meet the needs of the whole population, while also responding to the needs of those who have been impacted the most.

The HSE and many of its funded NGO partners have successfully fast-tracked new telehealth options. These include innovative online, text and phone therapeutic supports. All available supports and services can be found on yourMentalHealth.ie.

In addition to national initiatives, each local CHO area offers a number of key supports including a Psychological First Aid Call Back Service - for health care workers and targeted groups of the public, who may be feeling stressed or anxious about the impact of COVID-19. Details for how to access this support is available at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/psychosocial-response-group/>

In addition the HSE's National Counselling Service provides access to counselling in primary care through its CIPC service. This is a Mental Health service that provides time limited counselling of up to 8 sessions to adult



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GMS cardholders with mild to moderate psychological difficulties. CIPC operates from over 240 locations situated throughout Ireland.

CIPC contributes to the HSE's psychosocial response to the COVID-19 pandemic through its provision of psychological first aid, counselling for the psychological impact of COVID-19 and bereavement counselling.

Information about the HSE's National Counselling Services are available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/national-counselling-service/>

CIPC counselling is delivered by employed staff as well as counsellors who are contracted on an agency basis. Many private sector counsellors and psychotherapists are contracted to provide counselling as part of CIPC service provision across the country.

In addition, the latest data for Mental Health Service from March 2021 is as follows:

Community Adult Services

- 90.4% of referred patients were offered an appointment within 12 weeks in general adult mental health YTD March 2020 against a target of 90%
- 98.5% of referred patients in Psychiatry of Old Age services were offered an appointment within 12 weeks YTD March 2021 against a target of 98%

In Adult services, those who weren't offered an appointment within the 12 weeks timeframe are offered one subsequently.

Community CAMHS

- As of the end of March, 77.9% of referrals accepted by child and adolescent community teams nationally were offered an appointment within 12 weeks against a target of 78%
- Nationally, 96.4% of urgent referrals to CAMHS were responded to within three working days, above the 90% target.
- At the end March 2,625 are waiting to be seen, which is 7% (191) below the same period last year 2,816.
- Of those waiting 49.3% (1,294) are waiting less than 12 weeks
- Of those waiting 10.7% (282) are waiting more than 52 weeks

** all data subject to change due to validation issues*

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

Yours sincerely,



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Linda Moore

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