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Deputy Mattie McGrath
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
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26th March 2021

PQ ref: 14163/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons employed on the MyOptions helpline; the process by which persons were recruited; the qualifications needed to work on the helpline; and the body and or group which provides the training.

Deputy McGrath

Thank you for your question to the Minister for Health, which was forwarded to my office to respond to you directly.

The number of counsellors employed by the MyOptions helpline is seven.

All staff working on the My Options phone-line are professional and accredited counsellors with 3+years post qualification experience. All have a relevant counselling or psychotherapy qualification and they are accredited with a professional body.

Recruitment is in line with the organisation's recruitment policy, via a job advertisement and application process. Shortlisted applicants are invited for first round interview, followed by a second round interview for those successful at first round.

In-house training on unplanned pregnancy counselling and post abortion counselling is provided by an experienced unplanned pregnancy counsellor and supervisor. Continuous professional development has been provided by external professionals in the areas of foetal anomaly, domestic violence and telephone counselling.

Yours Sincerely

Maeve O'Brien

Interim Programme Lead
Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme