



Bainisteoir Gnó
An Roinn Cumarsáide

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Deputy Michael Collins

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PQ 12583/23

Dear Deputy Collins

To ask the Minister for Health when the bid management strategy to automatically outbid websites other than MyOptions in search engine results was set up; if he will provide a breakdown of the amount that has been spent annually on this function since its establishment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE My Options is a Freephone helpline and web chat service that provides information and support to anyone experiencing an unplanned or crisis pregnancy. The My Options service provides the contact details of general practitioners who provide termination of pregnancy services; as well as providing listening support. The service also signposts to state funded crisis pregnancy counselling for those who wish to access this service. Professional, experienced counsellors are available to talk about options including continuing pregnancy supports and termination of pregnancy.

Information about My Options is available at www.myoptions.ie. The My Options information campaign aims to ensure that the service is widely promoted using a number of channels. Our research shows that people would go to online/internet/Google search for information if experiencing unplanned pregnancy.

The MyOptions campaign is promoted on digital (Google Search) and social media channels throughout the year. The My Options search ad campaign performs well, both in organic and paid search results. On search result pages where paid ads appear first, My Options appears as the top ad for searches related to this campaign.



To help combat the promotion of disingenuous* messaging, the HSE monitors competitors and a bid management strategy is in place to automatically increase bids if a competing website appears ahead of us. The HSE monitors the search ad performance and that of disingenuous agencies on an on-going basis and shares feedback with Google about service advertising that appears to be disingenuous. In 2022 the HSE spent €38,405 on Google paid ads for My Options. The amounts spent in previous years were as follows:

2021: €51,555

2020: €52,613

2019: (launch of the service in Q1 €35,657 plus rest of the year €51,442)

As well as Search advertising and social media advertising which is promoted year round, the HSE promotes awareness of My Options through radio, digital audio and Out-of-Home targeting a female audience promoting information about the My Options service to women aged 18-45 in Ireland. An awareness campaign burst which started in January 2023, is currently running until the end of this month.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

* A disingenuous organisation may not be upfront about their intentions and may try to influence a person's decision with regard to their pregnancy. Signs of a disingenuous service include a delay in giving pregnancy test results, advice and supports that do not include information on abortion services, and the use of negative or frightening language. The HSE has taken a number of measures to address the issue of disingenuous agencies targeting people experiencing unplanned pregnancy.

About My Options:

The HSE My Options service is free of charge to everyone. Professional, experienced counsellors are available to talk to you about all your options including continuing pregnancy supports and information about abortion services. My Options can also give information on free face to face counselling.



The My Options counselling and information service is available at Freephone 1800 828 010 from 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday and Saturday 10am to 2pm. If you are calling from outside the Republic of Ireland the number is +353 59 913 8175.

Medical advice is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service can provide information and support in over 240 languages. The phone line counselling service can also refer people to face-to-face counselling.

Visit myoptions.ie for more information.

I trust this addresses your question. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mary Brodie

General Manager – Communications Division