



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte

Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin, Baile Phámar,
Baile Átha Cliath 20, D20 HK69

Office of the
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Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

27th February 2024

PQ Number: 1405/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health for an update on Traveller counselling services; if they operate on a national basis; the funding that is allocated to the service on a yearly basis; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mark Ward.

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.

The HSE fund a number of counselling schemes and initiatives that offer supports to the Travelling Community. The HSE National Counselling Service (NCS) is a professional, confidential, counselling and psychotherapy service available free of charge in all regions of the country.

HSE mental health also fund the Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) service, which is available to adults who hold a GMS card. CIPC is for adults who may be experiencing mild to moderate psychological difficulties. Clients are offered up to eight counselling sessions.

The HSE National Office of Suicide Prevention (NOSP) provides funding to Exchange House National Travellers Service. With the support of the HSE NOSP, Exchange House provides a range of Traveller-specific mental health and suicide prevention services to the community. Their aim is to improve the overall wellbeing of Travellers and reduce the likelihood of suicide or self-harm within the community. They do this by working with Traveller groups (such as community and resident groups) and Traveller organisations and services (including Primary Healthcare Projects and Traveller Action Groups). They also provide direct mental health support to Travellers experiencing mental health issues including psychotherapy and CBT.

For more information on the HSE NOSP, NOSP Annual Reports, and details of funded agencies (in Annual Reports), visit

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-healthservices/nosp/about/annualreports>.

In line with the National Traveller Health Action Plan, the HSE funds the Traveller Counselling Service (TCS) which provides a service that takes into account the disadvantage and exclusion that Travellers experience in Irish society, and acknowledges the values, norms and traditions of the community.



The Traveller Counselling Service is Traveller-led, but supported by and working in collaboration with members of the wider community.

The service is available in-person in seven different locations in Dublin and Wicklow, as well as offering nationwide phone and online counselling. The TCS service is free at the point of contact for clients.

In 2024 HSE Mental Health Service will fund an additional €200,000 to allow the development of the Traveller Counselling Service to provide service on a national basis. The Traveller Counselling Service is available by calling 01 868 5761 or emailing info@travellercounselling.ie.

24 hour support is always available to members of the Travelling Community through the following organisations:

Samaritans - Samaritans services are available 24 hours a day, for confidential, non-judgmental support.

Freephone 116 123 anytime day or night · Email jo@samaritans.ie · Visit www.samaritans.ie

Pieta - Pieta provide a range of suicide and self-harm prevention services.

Freephone 1800 247 247 anytime day or night

Text HELP to 51444 (standard message rates apply) · Visit www.pieta.ie

Text About It - Text About It is a free, anonymous, 24/7 messaging service providing everything from a calming chat to immediate support for our mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Text HELLO to 50808 anytime day or night · Visit www.textaboutit.ie

Childline - A free 24/7 support service for children and young people up to and including those age 18 years of age.

Freephone 1800 66 66 66

Text 50101 · Live chat at www.childline.ie

Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Mental Health Service is available for support.

Call 01 8721094, Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm.

Pavee Point, Traveller and Roma Centre provide a list of National Traveller Organisations and Local Traveller Organisations.

Pavee Point also encourage young Irish Travellers to 'Mind Their Nuck' and text PAVEE to 50808 for 24 hour support, or email mentalhealth@pavee.ie.

Visit www.yourmentalhealth.ie for information on how to mind your mental health, support others, or to find a support service in your area. Or, call the HSE Your Mental Health Information Line on Freephone 1800 111 888, anytime day or night, for information.

Information on bereavement, supports and services

Visit www.hse.ie/grief for information on bereavement, loss and suicide bereavement supports and services.



The Irish Hospice Foundation Bereavement Support Line A confidential space for people to speak about their experience or to ask questions relating to the death of someone.

Freephone 1800 807 077 — Monday to Friday, 10am to 1pm

HUGG – Healing Untold Grief Groups provide information and support groups for anyone over 18 years who has lost a loved one to suicide. Services are provided by people who have been bereaved by suicide.

The Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service – a free, confidential service that provides assistance and support after the loss of a loved one.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Mc Cusker'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Tony Mc Cusker
General Manager
National Mental Health Services