



Office of the Assistant National Director
Access and Integration

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Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúnta
Rochtain agus Comhtháthú: Seirbhísí
Meabhairshláinte FSS
Ospidéal Naomh Loman
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Deputy Mary Lou McDonald
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

13th May 2025

PQ Number: 19474/24

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the breakdown, by year of the total number of people who have accessed the services of the National Counselling Services from 2020 to date, in tabular form. -Mary Lou McDonald

Dear Deputy McDonald,

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 National Counselling Service (NCS) is a professional, confidential, counselling and psychotherapy service available free of charge in all regions of the country. It was established in 2000 following the Taoiseach's apology in 1999 on behalf of the State for abuse of children in residential institutions. In 2013 the NCS expanded to provide the Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) service to adults who hold a GMS card who may be experiencing mild to moderate psychological difficulties.

The CIPC model of service is aimed at providing early access to counselling. Clients are offered up to eight counselling sessions.

The CAPA service [for adults who have experienced childhood abuse] is for moderate to severe psychological difficulties and offers medium to long term counselling contracts.

Counselling to former residents of Mother and Baby Home Institutions, County Homes

In 2021 the National Counselling Service began offering counselling to former residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions as part of the Government agreed package of health and well-being measures. There is no waiting list for this service. The NCS continues to prioritise these clients with immediate allocation to counselling if this is the client's choice.

Stardust Inquest

In April 2024 following the inquest into the Stardust fire disaster the National Counselling Service began providing counselling to family members and those impacted by the Stardust.

There is no waiting list for this service. The NCS prioritises these clients with immediate allocation to counselling if this is the client's choice.



Number of People Accessing the National Counselling Service 2020-2025

The data provided below details the number of people who have accessed the services of the National Counselling Service from 2020 to end of March 2025 [latest data available]. This data is sourced from the number of clients who have been discharged from the NCS between 2020 and March 2025. It is not possible to give a more detailed breakdown of this data set at this time.

Year	Total No. Clients Discharged from NCS
2020	10010
2021	13522
2022	16551
2023	18528
2024	21472
2025*	5379
Total	85,462
* Latest available data - Jan-Mar 2025	

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

Tony McCusker
General Manager
Access and Integration; HSE Mental Health Services