



Office of the Assistant National Director  
Access and Integration

HSE Mental Health Services,  
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D20HK69

Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúnta  
Rochtain agus Comhtháthú: Seirbhísí  
Meabhairshláinte FSS  
Ospidéal Naomh Loman  
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20  
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Deputy Cian O'Callaghan.  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

30<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**PQ Number: 20738/25**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if she will examine alternative options for people suffering from a mental health crisis in order that they do not need to go through the standard accident and emergency department; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Cian O'Callaghan**

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Dear Deputy O'Callaghan

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 '*Model of Care for Crisis Resolution Services*' was developed as a direct recommendation of Sharing the Vision, Ireland's national mental health policy. It arose from the recognition that people who are experiencing mental health crisis need specialist services to provide brief intensive supports in a timely way to assist them in their recovery journey. There are two key service components in Crisis Resolution Services:

**Crisis Resolution Teams** play a vital role by providing intensive mental health interventions and support in the patient's home and the community **as an alternative to a hospital admission**. Evidence from practice indicates service users and carers value, and benefit from home and community interventions and supports. The Crisis Resolution Team use the skills of the multidisciplinary team to assess the service user's needs and to develop an individual care plan that supports the individual service user on their recovery journey.

**Solace Café** teams provide an out-of-hours friendly and supportive community crisis prevention and crisis response service in the evenings and at weekends in a café style/non-clinical safe environment. The café service, *Solace Café*, will support individuals and their family members/carers to manage their mental health and well-being by providing clear supports and effective signposting to services provided by the HSE and other third sector and statutory providers.

The Model of Care for Crisis Resolution Service is currently being tested across five pilot sites, and is currently undergoing an independent evaluation. This evaluation will help assess whether the desired outcomes are being met and inform future development of the service.



By continuously learning and adapting based on the evaluation results, the HSE can improve the model and ensure it effectively meets the needs of individuals with mental difficulties. There are also several other alternative options to the standard Emergency Department for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. These aim to provide more appropriate, timely, and therapeutic support in a less chaotic environment. Options vary by location, but commonly include:

**Contact Your GP or Out-of-Hours GP Services** Your General Practitioner (GP) can be a first point of contact during a mental health crisis. If your GP is unavailable, out-of-hours GP services are accessible. They can assess your situation and refer you to appropriate mental health services. If you need to get urgent help for a mental health issue and your GP is not available, you can contact a GP out-of-hours service or access mental health services through your local mental health unit or hospital. You can get help by text message at any time using the 50808 text service..

**Pieta Crisis Helpline** The Pieta Crisis Helpline offers crisis intervention support to anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts or engaging in self-harm and also supports those bereaved through suicide. Our Therapists will also provide support, information, and psychoeducation for those supporting loved ones in crisis

The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is accessible from anywhere in the Republic of Ireland. This ensures anyone in crisis, including those in isolated areas or difficult circumstances, can access free therapeutic support any time of the day or night.

#### **Mental Health Helplines and Text Services**

- **Samaritans:** Available 24/7 at **116 123** for confidential emotional support.
- **Text 50808:** A free, anonymous 24/7 text service providing support for mental health crises.
- **YourMentalHealth Information Line:** Call **1800 111 888** to learn about mental health services and supports in your area.

**Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs)** The Health Service Executive (HSE) provides community-based mental health services through CMHTs. These teams include psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and occupational therapists. They offer assessment, treatment, and support in your local area. **HSE Mental Health Services** The HSE provides both inpatient and community-based mental health services for all ages, including:

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):** Specialist services for individuals under 18 experiencing moderate to severe mental health difficulties.
- **Adult Mental Health Services:** Support for adults dealing with mental health challenges.
- **Psychiatry of Later Life Services:** Tailored services for older adults.

Access to these services typically begins with a visit to your General Practitioner (GP), who can provide direct support or refer you to the appropriate community mental health team.

The HSE is committed to promoting positive mental health and mental wellbeing across the population and throughout the lifespan of need. To ensure integrated care, service continuity and the best possible outcomes for those experiencing mental health difficulties, services are provided within a stepped-care model where each person can access a range of options of varying intensity to match their needs.



In 2025, the focus will be on the following key areas:

**HSE Funded Mental Health Supports:** The HSE will continue to work in partnership with a number of contracted agencies to develop and deliver community based supports:

#### **Non-Emergency Support and Information**

- Your Mental Health Information Line: For information on mental health services and how to access them, call Freephone 1800 111 888

#### **Support for Young People**

- Jigsaw: Offers mental health advice and support, both online and in-person, for young people aged 12 to 25, as well as for parents or concerned adults. You can chat online with a clinician at [jigsaw.ie/livechat](https://jigsaw.ie/livechat).
- Childline: A 24-hour listening service for individuals up to the age of 18. Contact them via Freephone 1800 666 666 or chat online at [childline.ie](https://childline.ie).

#### **Support for Specific Communities**

- BeLoNG To Youth Services: Provides support, information, and groups for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI+) young people in Ireland, as well as their **parents, carers, and professionals. More information is available at [belongto.org](https://belongto.org).**

#### **Voluntary and Community Organizations**

- Mental Health Ireland: Promotes positive mental health and well-being. They offer resources and information on various mental health topics. Visit [mentalhealthireland.ie](https://mentalhealthireland.ie) for more details.
- Aware: Provides support and information for individuals experiencing depression or bipolar disorder. They offer support groups, a support line, and educational programs. Learn more at [aware.ie](https://aware.ie).
- Pieta House: Offers free therapy to those engaging in self-harm, experiencing suicidal ideation, or bereaved by suicide. Contact them at 1800 247 247 or visit [pieta.ie](https://pieta.ie).
- Samaritans Ireland: Provides 24/7 emotional support to anyone in distress. Call 116 123 or visit [samaritans.org/ireland](https://samaritans.org/ireland).

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

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

