



Office of the Assistant National Director
Access and Integration

HSE Mental Health Services,
St. Loman's Hospital,
Palmerstown, Dublin 20
D20HK69

Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúnta
Rochtain agus Comhtháthú: Seirbhísí
Meabhairshláinte FSS

Ospidéal Naomh Loman
Baile Phámar, Baile Átha Cliath 20
D20HK69

www.hse.ie
@hselive

e:PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie

Deputy Pádraig Rice.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

17th February 2025

PQ Number: 3325/25

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on a waiting list for counselling services, by CHO, age category and time waiting, in tabular form. -Pádraig Rice

Dear Deputy Rice,

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 established Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) service in July 2013 as a mental health initiative to provide counselling to adults experiencing mild to moderate psychological difficulties who present in the primary care setting. Almost 200,000 people have been referred to CIPC since it was established with an average of 2,230 clients attending at any time.

All adults in receipt of a medical card are currently eligible for the service. Access is by referral from the client's GP or a member of the Primary Care Team. CIPC is available in each HSE Regional Health area and is accessible from over 240 locations, mainly primary care centres, situated throughout Ireland.

The table below indicates the latest available information for the number of people waiting for the HSE NCS Counselling in Primary Care Service (as at 31.12.2024). Figures are provided by CHO and length of time waiting. Age category information is not available.

Of the total number of people waiting at the end of December 2024 (4771), 45% were waiting 3 months or less for counselling.

Waiting times for CIPC vary across the country depending on referral rates, service delivery model, staffing levels and individual geographic factors. CIPC is a demand led service with the counselling contract offered based on the assessed needs of the client. As the number of clients seeking counselling exceeds the number of counselling spaces available at any one time there is a waiting time for counselling.



The number of clients currently waiting is in the context of a year on year increase in referrals to, and demand for, CIPC. There were 20, 619 referrals to CIPC in 2024 a 6% increase on the previous year.

CIPC Waiting times at 31.12.2024

Area	<1 Mth	>1<3 Mths	>3<6 Mths	6 Mths+	Total
CHO 1	32	174	163	93	462
CHO 2	7	50	46	215	318
CHO 3	23	200	201	154	578
CHO 4	60	211	134	19	424
CHO 5	30	200	280	196	706
CHO 6	43	158	205	155	561
CHO 7	82	130	5	0	217
CHO 8	61	402	347	205	1015
CHO 9	50	254	185	1	490
Total	388	1779	1566	1038	4771

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

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