



Office of the Assistant National Director  
Access and Integration

HSE Mental Health Services,  
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Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúnta  
Rochtain agus Comhtháthú: Seirbhísí  
Meabhairshláinte FSS  
Ospidéal Naomh Loman  
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Deputy Barry Heneghan.  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

4<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**PQ Number: 3582/25**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the actions are that being taken to expand access to mental health services given the high rates of mental illness in Ireland; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Barry Heneghan**

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Dear Deputy Heneghan

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.

Ireland is actively implementing several initiatives to expand access to mental health services in response to high rates of mental illness:

#### Increased Funding and Policy Initiatives

- **Budget 2025 Allocations:** The government has allocated an unprecedented additional €143.5 million for mental health services in Budget 2025. This includes €127.5 million to maintain existing services and €16 million for new developments supporting the national mental health policy, "Sharing the Vision," and the suicide prevention strategy, "Connecting for Life."
- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):** An investment of €2.9 million is directed towards CAMHS initiatives, including additional staffing, expansion of CAMHS Hub Teams, and the development of a CAMHS Emergency Department Liaison Service.

#### 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:

1. **Sharing the Vision:** Publish the second Sharing the Vision implementation plan in collaboration with the Department of Health (DoH) covering the period 2025 to 2027. Key areas of focus in 2025 will include:
  - Expansion of the National Counselling Service including Counselling in Primary Care service through an additional investment of €2m with a particular focus on counselling supports for men
  - Strengthening culturally appropriate services and supports for Travellers, through the further expansion of the National Traveller Counselling Service, and the provision of additional Traveller focused suicide prevention and self-harm supports
  - Further implementation of the Crisis Resolution Services Model of Care for adults through enhancement of the existing teams (additional 16 Whole Time Equivalents), implementation of the national digital mental health strategy in keeping with the organisation's Digital Health Strategic Implementation Roadmap, and ongoing capacity building and service improvement. Information can be found here [https://assets.publications.hse.ie/media/file\\_based\\_publications/Digital\\_Health\\_Strategic\\_Implementation\\_Roadmap.pdf](https://assets.publications.hse.ie/media/file_based_publications/Digital_Health_Strategic_Implementation_Roadmap.pdf)
  - Expansion of existing tenancy support services with five additional housing co-ordinators to assist service users find suitable, longer-term accommodation.
2. **Child and adolescent mental health reform:** Ensure improvements to service delivery for children and adolescents through:
  - Expansion of existing child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) teams and roll-out of waiting list initiative
  - Development of the electronic healthcare record
  - Development of a model for a single point of access referral pathway for children and young people with the expansion of the development sites in 2025
  - Design and development of integrated child and youth crisis response services, which will include CAMHS and emergency department (ED) liaison / out of hours services and one additional CAMHS Hub team
3. **Clinical programmes and service improvement programmes:** Further roll-out of the programmes will enhance productivity and outcomes, and includes:
  - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder for adults
  - Early intervention in psychosis, eating disorders, dual diagnosis, self-harm and suicide-related ideation
  - Mental health of intellectual disability



- Mental health for older persons

4. **Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide:** Support the DoH to develop a successor to the strategy which will be informed by evaluation and the most up-to-date evidence on suicide prevention and data on suicide mortality. Further enhance existing suicide prevention and bereavement support services with a specific focus on supporting health and social care professionals and reaching middle-aged men
5. **Mental health engagement and recovery:** Support the Health Regions to implement the Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Office Strategic Plan 2023-2026: Engaged in Recovery and the National Framework for Recovery in Mental Health 2024-2028.

Additional peer support and recovery co-ordinator positions will ensure that lived experience across all service user populations is central to the design, development and delivery of mental health services Receiving Care at the Right Time National Service Plan 2025

6. **Forensic Mental Health Service:** Expand the bed provision of the Central Mental Hospital by 18 beds to 130. Establish a forensic consultant psychiatrist led multidisciplinary team to provide in-reach and court diversion services to Limerick Prison. Commence a mental health needs analysis of the prison population in conjunction with the Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service.

#### **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://www.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://www.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://www.pieta.ie).
- Samaritans Ireland: Provides 24/7 emotional support to anyone in distress. Call 116 123 or visit [samaritans.org/ireland](https://www.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**