



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](http://www.hse.ie)  
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e: [PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie](mailto:PQReps.NatMHOPS@hse.ie)

Deputy Sorca Clarke  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025

**PQ Number: 35447/25**

**PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health the current number of HSE-funded counselling hours delivered annually in primary care; and the average cost per session. -Sorca Clarke**

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Dear Deputy Clarke,

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 provides Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) to adults experiencing mild to moderate psychological difficulties who present in the primary care setting. Currently all adults in receipt of a medical card are eligible for the service. CIPC is available in each HSE regional health area and provides up to eight counselling sessions with a professionally qualified counsellor/therapist. CIPC counsellors utilise a range of counselling interventions depending on presenting issues and assessed needs.

Depression and anxiety constitute the main reasons for referral to CIPC. It is generally accepted that 90% of mental health needs can successfully be addressed in primary care settings, and for many, CIPC provides a person-centred, high-quality service 'in the right place, at the right time', in line with the Sláintecare reform programme. For GPs, CIPC offers an alternative to medication for people presenting with mild to moderate mental health difficulties.

Currently CIPC service is available to the adult GMS population only. It receives on average 17,660 referrals per year.

Based on available data the HSE CIPC service offered **75,894 counselling sessions in 2024**.

Latest data available indicates that up to the **end of May 2025**, CIPC offered **33,304** counselling sessions.

Based on the monthly average of sessions offered this indicates that to date in 2025 CIPC has been offering on average 5% more counselling sessions per month than in 2024.

**The average cost per individual counselling session** is calculated as €119.00.



I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

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**Tony Mc Cusker**  
**General Manager**  
**National Mental Health Services**