



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

24th July 2025

PQ Number: 42390/25

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if frontline social workers in the public system have access to ongoing mental health supports; her plans to strengthen psychological support for staff experiencing vicarious trauma or burnout; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Sorca Clarke

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 provides and funds a wide range of counselling and mental health services to support staff experiencing trauma or burnout. The services available include:

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

- Fully confidential and free service for all HSE staff.
- Provides up to **six short-term counselling sessions**, addressing personal or work-related issues.
- Also includes **Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)** support and wellbeing workshops.
- You can start by calling **0818 327 327** or be referred via your manager (with your agreement)

Inspire Support Hub

- Digital resource hub accessible to all HSE employees.
- Offers self-help materials and exercises while waiting for counselling or as standalone support.

Minding Your Wellbeing Programme

A free **one-day training workshop** delivered by Health Promotion Officers.

- Focuses on stress management, emotional awareness, self-care strategies and resilience building.

Balancing Stress (Online Programme)

- Open to all people in Ireland, including HSE staff.
- Consists of **six self-directed 35-minute video modules** covering stress, worry, relationship pressure and low mood.
- Accessible 24/7 on any device. **Organisational Health Service**
- A **manager-led referral service** for teams needing structured interventions in areas like psychosocial risk, conflict, or workplace stress.



- The HSE also runs facilitated group support, team resilience training, and guided action planning. Email hr.wellbeing@hse.ie for referrals.
- **Dignity at Work & Other Supports**
- The HSE offers confidential **coaching services**, bereavement support helplines, and resources under the “Dignity at Work” policy for workplace wellbeing.

Support via Your Professional Association

Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH) – IASW

- A **Special Interest Group** within the Irish Association of Social Workers focused on mental health social work.
- Provides **professional development**, peer networking, webinars and input to national policy.

HSE National Counselling Service

The HSE National Counselling Service (NCS) provides a free, professional, confidential, counselling and psychotherapy service to adults and is available in all HSE Health Regions.

The NCS provides the Counselling in Primary Care (CiPC) service. CiPC is a time limited counselling service providing up to 8 counselling sessions to adult General Medical Services (GMS) cardholders with mild to moderate psychological difficulties. Eligibility criteria for the service currently limit referrals to CiPC to patients holding valid GMS cards referred to by their GP or Primary Care Practitioners. If the nature of the difficulties being experienced by an individual are mild to moderate in nature, the CiPC service may be appropriate.

More information about the NCS can be found here: <https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health/services-support/ncs/>

HSE Community Mental Health Services

Adult mental health services in the community can offer access to talking therapies and may be an appropriate service for individuals who have experienced trauma. Referral to community adult mental health services is through a patient’s GP.

Recovery Training for HSE Mental Health staff

The Mental Health Engagement and Recovery function provides Recovery Practice and Principles training for all Mental Health Staff which is co-produced and co-facilitated by people with lived experience. Trauma awareness for staff is a key part of this training. Additionally, through some of our Recovery Education/Recovery College services provide modules for service users in understanding and managing trauma.

HSE Funded Services

The HSE funds a number of talking therapy services and other relevant supports which may be appropriate depending on a person’s presenting issues. These include:

- **MyMind** <https://mymind.org/individual> provides access to counselling and psychotherapy, face to face and online.
- **TURN2ME** Offers self-help, peer support and professional support through an online platform for those who are experiencing poor mental health <https://turn2me.ie/>
- **Shine** Shine is a national mental health organisation which provides a range of services to support individuals with lived experience of mental health challenges and their families and



supporters including Information and brief support, Peer support and advocacy. Further information is available at: <https://shine.ie/shine-supports-page/>

Helplines

A number of helplines are available to provide confidential non-judgemental support including:

- **Samaritans**

Samaritans provide a listening ear 24 hours a day every day of the year. This is confidential, nonjudgmental, emotional support by phone, email, letter and online. Samaritans also provide face-to face support at their local branches.

Website: www.samaritans.org

Free Phone: 24 hours: 116 123

- **Aware**

Irish Advocacy Network, Peer advocacy, support and information to people with mental health difficulties.

Website: www.irishadvocacynetwork.com

Tel: 01 872 8684

- **Grow**

GROW is a mental health support and Recovery Organisation. They have a number of regional offices and a Lo-call helpline. Details of all services is available on their website.

Website: www.grow.ie

Tel: 0818 474474

Email: info@grow.ie

- **Pieta**

Provides free therapeutic support to people who are in suicidal distress and those who engage in self-harm.

Website: www.pieta.ie

Tel: 1800 247 247

- **Text 50808**

A free, 24/7 text service, providing everything from a calming chat to immediate support for your mental health and emotional wellbeing. Service users can free-text HELLO to 50808 for an anonymous chat with a trained volunteer, any time.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

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