

Consent - What the people think?

In November 2019 the Office commissioned Red C to conduct a nationally representative survey of 1016 adults over 18 years who had used the health service for themselves, or for their child, in the preceding 3 months.

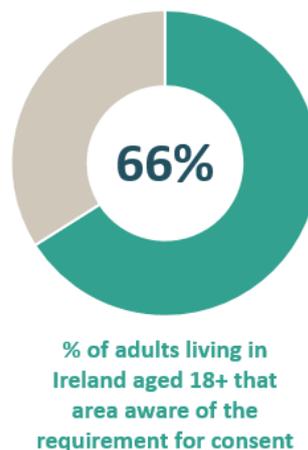
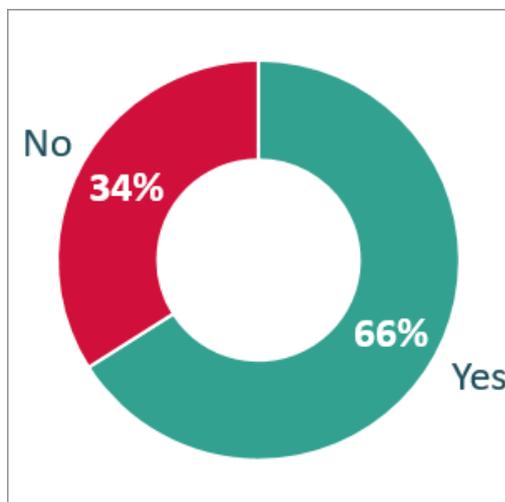
- This survey showed that while 66% of adults were aware that their consent should be sought for any health or social care intervention, only half reported that this consent was always or frequently sought.
- For consent to be valid the person must be given sufficient information, in a format they can understand. Most people felt they were given enough information (68%), in a way they could understand (75%) and that they could ask a professional questions about their treatment (80%). However, 1 in 5 respondents reported that it can be difficult to understand the information they are given because of medical terminology and jargon.
- The survey identified some areas for improvement. Remarkably, only 6 in 10 respondents reported they were told what the purpose of the treatment was and what it would involve. Only 3 in 10 said they were told about side effects, benefits, risks and the likelihood of success. A significant percentage of respondents felt they did not receive sufficient information about the cost of their treatment and how this should be paid (30%), alternative treatment options (25%), or that they had been given enough time to make a decision (18%).

Awareness of requirement for Consent

66% of adults were aware of the requirement for consent for a health or social care intervention.

Q1a. If a health or social care professional recommends any treatment or care for you or your child, such as a blood test, operation or providing you with home supports, they must first seek your consent. Seeking consent means asking for your permission or agreement. Health care professionals are doctors, nurses, physiotherapists or anyone else who treats you. Social care professionals include social workers, key workers, residential home staff or any other professionals who provide care for you.

Before today, were you aware of this requirement for consent?



Frequency Consent is sought:

Q. Based on your own experience of the Irish healthcare system, how often would you say that your consent is sought by a health or social care professional when they recommend a treatment, either for you or your child?

