



Mental Health Reform
Promoting Improved Mental Health Services

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FOR CHANGE!**
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CAMPAIGN AGENDA

2020



WE NEED SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENT IN IRELAND'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



GOAL: Ireland's mental health budget should move towards 10% of the overall health budget

Thousands of people in Ireland who might need mental health support, such as a talking therapy, are not getting it. Mental health services are far behind other areas of the health service and the system cannot cope with the amount of people coming forward to access supports. The mental health budget represents just 6% of the overall health budget, when Government policy recommends it should be at 10% of the overall health budget.

Mental Health v Overall Health Budget 2020

€1.031B (6%)

€17.056B

Mental Health Budget v Sláintecare Recommendation

Mental Health Budget 6%

Sláintecare Recommendation 10%

The number of people with mental health difficulties in Ireland is significant.

- ★ Almost 10% of the Irish population over age 15 has a 'probable mental health problem' at any one time.
- ★ Almost 20% of young people aged 19-24 and 15% of children aged 11-13 years have had a mental health disorder.
- ★ Young Irish women are experiencing the highest levels of moderate to severe symptoms of depression compared to their EU counterparts.

Growing demand for mental health services, at all levels of the system, has not been met with proportional increases in staff and resources for mental health services. There are fewer staff in our mental health services today than there were before the recession in 2008.

Mental Health Staff (WTE) 2008 v 2020

Mental Health Staff 2008

10,476

MH Staff 2020

9,823

The implications of not adequately investing are seen every day in mental health services:

- ★ Referrals to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) increased by over 40% from around 12,800 in 2011 to 18,100 in 2019.
- ★ The waiting list for a first appointment with CAMHS has remained in or around 2,000 children since at least 2016.
- ★ At the end of 2019, more than 8,000 people were waiting for a Primary Care Psychology appointment, many of whom were children.
- ★ Research shows that 78% of older people with depression and 85% of older people with anxiety did not report a doctor's diagnosis, indicating large unmet mental health need among the older population in Ireland.

There is a lack of transparency around how funding allocated to mental health is being spent.

We need transparency, accountability and leadership in order to drive implementation and track expenditure against policy commitments.

CRISIS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES NEED TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO EVERY COMMUNITY IN IRELAND



GOAL: Services for people of all ages experiencing a mental health crisis are available at any time, day or night, in their local community.

Everybody knows that a mental health crisis can happen at any time, day or night, weekday or weekend. Community mental health services need to be available for people when a crisis occurs. This means being able to respond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Yet, many mental health services across Ireland are only open Monday-Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Successive Governments have committed to the roll out of 7-day-per-week mental health services for adults, and while some progress has been made, many areas still do not have these in place for adults.

Many children and young people still have no crisis supports out of hours.



Most counties in Ireland do not have 7-day-a-week crisis mental health services for children and adolescents. Most Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services only open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.



This means that if a child or a young person encounters a mental health crisis in the evening or the weekend, often the only option they or their parent has, is to go to an Emergency Department (A&E) and wait, sometimes for 8-10 hours or more for help. Everybody knows that an Emergency Department is an inappropriate environment for a child in acute distress.

This needs to change. We need crisis mental health services for children and young people outside of office hours, accessible to every community in Ireland.

"You're not meant to be a kid in A&E waiting hours for someone to call your name"

- Joseph, young person with experience of a mental health crisis

UPDATE IRELAND'S MENTAL HEALTH **LAW** TO PROTECT PEOPLE'S RIGHTS IN HOSPITAL



GOAL: The Government must publish in 2020 legislation to reform the Mental Health Act in full.

Ireland's Mental Health Act, 2001 must be updated in 2020 so that people in hospital for mental healthcare have their rights adequately protected and they can feel safe accessing the mental health services they need. People cannot wait any longer to have their rights protected.

It has been almost 5 years since the Government committed to publishing the draft legislation to reform the Mental Health Act, and today, we are still waiting.



While we wait

- ✦ HSE community residences for people with mental health difficulties remain unregulated.
- ✦ Voluntary patients do not have basic rights to information.
- ✦ Voluntary and involuntary patients do have a right to advocacy.
- ✦ Involuntary patients do not have the right to have their advance wishes about treatment respected.
- ✦ 16 and 17 year olds have no legal right to consent or refuse admission or mental health treatment.
- ✦ There is no independent review of people in hospital who lack capacity to consent to their admission or mental health treatment.
- ✦ The Mental Health Commission have found that some service users feel coerced, disempowered and unsupported when being admitted to a psychiatric inpatient unit and that this had a long-term negative impact on their recovery.

The Mental Health Act, 2001 does not comply with international human rights standards set out in the UNCRPD, UNCRC and the ECHR.

The law must be updated to protect people using mental health services from the risk of abuse.

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