

The Psychological Society of Ireland responds to the Children’s Rights Alliance Report Card 2018

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) welcomes the publication of the Children’s Rights Alliance Report Card for 2018, and the focus that the Alliance has brought to the mental health needs of children and young people in Ireland.

PSI shares the concerns expressed by the Children’s Rights Alliance in relation to the unacceptable numbers of young people experiencing psychological distress waiting for an appointment with a Psychologist in Primary Care.

PSI welcomes the recruitment by the Health Service Executive (HSE) of 22 psychologists and the establishment and recruitment of 114 Assistant Psychologist positions. However, PSI believes that these additional numbers will not be sufficient to meet the demand for primary level psychological, behavioural and emotional services for young people.

The role of Assistant Psychologists in supporting the work of Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychologists in delivering primary interventions is welcomed. It is important to highlight, however, that an Assistant Psychologist is a pre-trained Psychologist and should be viewed as a support to, rather than a replacement of, qualified practitioners.

If there is to be a reduction in numbers requiring the support of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and inpatient beds then the funding for provision of Psychology resources in Primary Care needs to substantially increase.

PSI would also welcome the opportunity to contribute to the review of *A Vision for Change* currently underway. It is of concern to PSI that, given the levels of psychological distress which young people are experiencing in Ireland, there are no Psychologists or other Health and Social Care Professionals represented on the oversight committee.

PSI will also seek to meet with the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Future of Mental Health Care.

ENDS.

Note to Editor:

1. Terri Morrissey, PSI CEO, is available for in studio/telephone interviews on this item;
2. The PSI, with over circa 3,000 members, is the learned and professional body for Psychology in the Republic of Ireland.

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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