



Press Release – 11 May 2026

For Immediate Release

## **The Psychological Society of Ireland Welcomes the Enactment of the Mental Health Act 2026**

As the learned and professional body for the psychology profession in the Republic of Ireland, the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) warmly welcomes the passage of the Mental Health Bill 2024 through its final stage in Dáil Éireann and the signing of the Mental Health Act 2026 into law by President Catherine Connolly.

This milestone marks a significant step forward in the modernisation of Ireland's mental health legislative framework, replacing the Mental Health Act 2001 with a more comprehensive, rights-based, and person-centred approach to care and treatment.

The PSI acknowledges the substantial body of work undertaken over the past number of years to bring the Bill to this stage. This includes sustained engagement, consultation, and collaboration between the Department of Health, service providers, regulatory bodies, professional organisations, and individuals with lived experience. The Society particularly recognises the openness of the legislative process and the opportunity afforded to stakeholders, including the PSI, to contribute meaningfully to the development of the Bill.

Over many years, the PSI has engaged extensively with Government, opposition parties, Oireachtas members, and Department of Health officials on the reform of Ireland's mental health legislation and wider mental health policy. The Society has made a range of submissions, participated in consultations and stakeholder meetings, and consistently advocated for a human rights-based, recovery-oriented, and evidence-informed approach to mental health care. The PSI particularly acknowledges the constructive engagement of Minister of Mental Health Mary Butler and her office throughout this process, and thanks the Minister for her sustained commitment to progress this Bill into law through every stage.

The Mental Health Act 2026 introduces a range of important reforms, including strengthened safeguards around involuntary admission and treatment, a greater emphasis on consent and autonomy, enhanced regulatory oversight of community mental health services, and specific provisions relating to the care and treatment of children and young people. The alignment with

the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 represents a critical advancement in supporting individuals' rights to make decisions about their own care.

Commenting on the Bill's progression, PSI President Dr Sarah Cassidy stated: "The enactment of the Mental Health Act 2026 represents a pivotal moment for mental health services in Ireland. It reflects a clear commitment to embedding human rights, dignity, and person-centred care at the heart of our mental health system. The PSI commends the extensive work that has gone into shaping this legislation and the collaborative approach taken throughout its development."

While the passage of the Bill represents a significant legislative milestone, its ultimate impact will depend on effective implementation. This will require sustained investment in resources, strategic workforce planning, and the continued development of services to ensure that the intentions of the legislation are fully realised and lead to tangible improvements in the lives of those accessing mental health supports.

The PSI remains committed to supporting the implementation of the new legislative framework and to continuing engagement with Government and stakeholders to ensure that mental health services in Ireland are accessible, evidence-informed, and responsive to the needs of all.

## **ENDS.**

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

**Lucy Brennan**

**PSI Media and Content Coordinator**

[communications@psychologicalsociety.ie](mailto:communications@psychologicalsociety.ie)

**+353 87 755 2409**

### **Notes to the editor:**

- The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI), with over 5,400 members, is the learned and professional body for the profession in the Republic of Ireland, with the primary object of advancing psychology as an applied science in Ireland and elsewhere.
- The Mental Health Bill 2024 (Bill 66 of 2024) has completed all stages in Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann and will, upon enactment, replace the Mental Health Act 2001.
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- See more information on PSI press releases [here](#) and advocacy items [here](#).