



Press Release – Friday 04 February 2022

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) welcomes Mental Health Commission announcement regarding independent review of CAMHS by the Inspector of Mental Health Services

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI), the learned and professional body for psychology in the Republic of Ireland, welcomes the recent announcement by the Mental Health Commission confirming that the Inspector of Mental Health Services will conduct an independent review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in the State.

In particular, the PSI welcomes the wide-ranging scope of the review to include an assessment of whether there had been improvements in CAMHS provision, the number and resourcing of teams, training and expertise, facilities, governance structures and processes, good practice initiatives, and young people and their families' involvement.

The PSI is supportive of any process which brings about much needed reforms in the provision of mental health services for children and adolescents in order to effectively meet the needs of those vulnerable children and families who need support in a timely fashion.

It is of significant concern to the PSI that the most recent Health Service Executive (HSE) figures have indicated that only 38% of recommended psychologists are in post in CAMHS. Children and young people who are in need of CAMHS should have access to the full range of multi-disciplinary supports available. Increasing access to psychological therapy should be a priority.

The PSI has previously [advocated for](#) a shared governance and distributed responsibility model of mental health service, which would lead to a more effective and accessible service for families that are more consistent with client centred, recovery-oriented models of practice with service users.

PSI President Vincent McDarby states: "The scope of the Mental Health Commission review of CAMHS is to be welcomed. If we are to have a CAMHS provision that is fit for purpose, then it needs to be resourced to the levels required. We need minimum safe staffing levels for CAMHS teams to operate under.

“What we have now is a service that’s firefighting with limited staffing, non-existent CPD, no integrated IT system or database, KPIs based on bums on seats that don’t ask about people’s outcomes or experiences, and dilapidated buildings. If you bring traumatised children into a traumatised system, then how could you expect to achieve meaningful change? If, as a society, we can’t value and support children’s mental health when they are most vulnerable then what have we become?”

ENDS.

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To note:

- The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) advocated for shared governance and a distributed responsibility model of mental health service in the Society’s March 2021 submission to the public consultation on the review of the Mental Health Act 2001. The PSI submission can be [viewed here](#);
- The PSI, with circa 4,000 members, is the professional body for psychology and psychologists in the Republic of Ireland;
- The PSI is committed to maintaining high standards of practice in psychology and also to exploring new and innovative ways of furthering psychology as an applied science.