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Ireland 3rd worst in Europe for Mental Health Problems – IACP calls for Action

According to a new report from the OECD, Ireland currently ranks as amongst the worst countries in Europe in terms of Mental Health problems, finishing joint 3rd out of 36 other European countries.

The annual report, entitled Health at a Glance, ranked issues like Depression, Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder and Anxiety as being issues causing problems for 18.5% of the population.

Reacting to these figures, the IACP (Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) say that mental health issues cost the Irish economy over €8.2 billion annually and suggest that the Government could focus on Early Intervention to mitigate the problem.

The IACP have called upon the Government to introduce the National School Based Counselling Programme as soon as possible, as early intervention is key. Unaddressed mental health means less opportunities down the line for our children - this is crucial to support IACP's call to move towards a National School Based Counselling Programme, with equality of access for all. We are told in so many areas of health that early intervention is key to successful treatment – this applies also in terms of Mental Health.

The IACP also calls for increased funding, and the introduction of new initiatives, such as Resilience Building Primary School Programmes, and a Person-Centred Counselling Programme for adults, which advocates a 'stepped model' of community-based mental health care.

One such programme, called a Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression Programme (PCE- CfD) – using tried and trusted methods, has been proven to work and to be cost-effective in Britain.

The IACP strongly believes there is a need for greater availability of evidence-based talking therapies, for people with common mental health conditions. These therapies are accessible via primary care services, and general practice. A lack of adequate services is often linked not only to over-prescription in mental health, but also to high suicide rates across Europe.

ENDS

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