



Mental Health Among Probation Service Clients in Ireland

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Mental Health and Probation Supervision

- International research has shown higher prevalence of mental health difficulties among persons subject to probation supervision compared to the general population.
- Mental health difficulties can impact compliance and re-offending.
- Second Report of Interdepartmental Working Group, 2018 recommended research to ascertain prevalence of mental illness in probation population.
- New Probation Service research provides insight into the mental health needs of people who come into contact with the service.

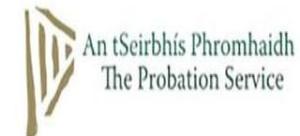
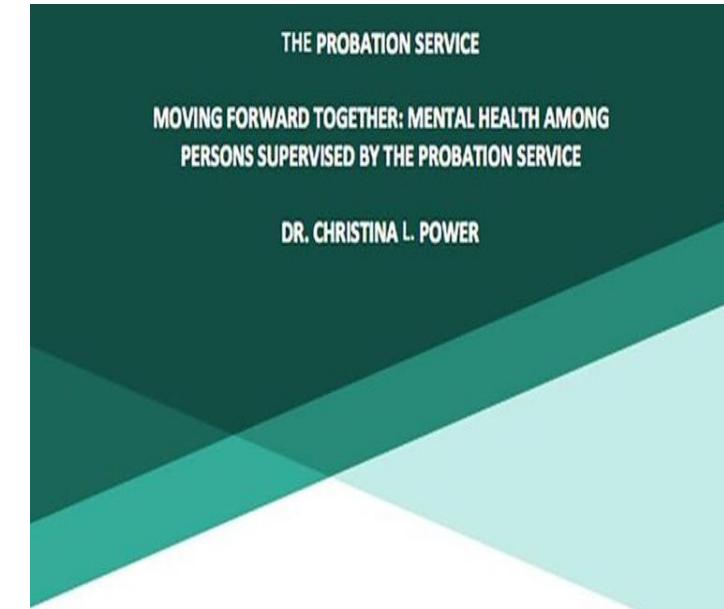
The Probation Service and Mental Health

- Responsivity – RNR Model
- Mental Health Working Group established in 2019
- Probation Service Mental Health Practice Guide developed in 2019
- Mental Health Training since 2018 has included:
 - STORM - Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention Skills Training
 - ASIST - Applied Suicide Intervention Training
 - Working with Personality Disordered Offenders
 - An Introduction to Trauma
 - A – Z of Adolescent Mental Health

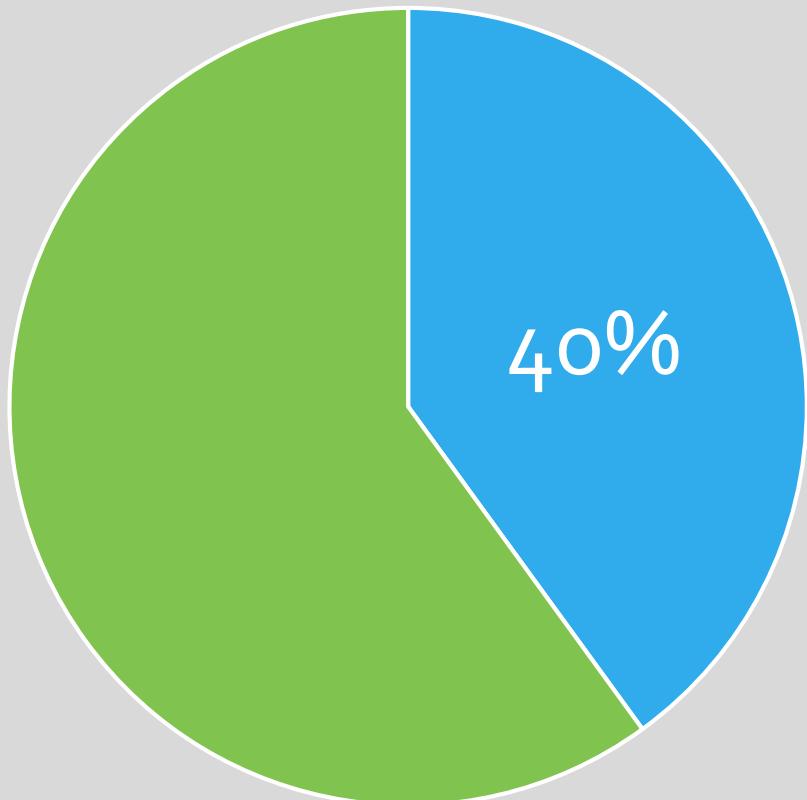
Moving Forward Together

The Mental Health Evaluation Studies, 2019

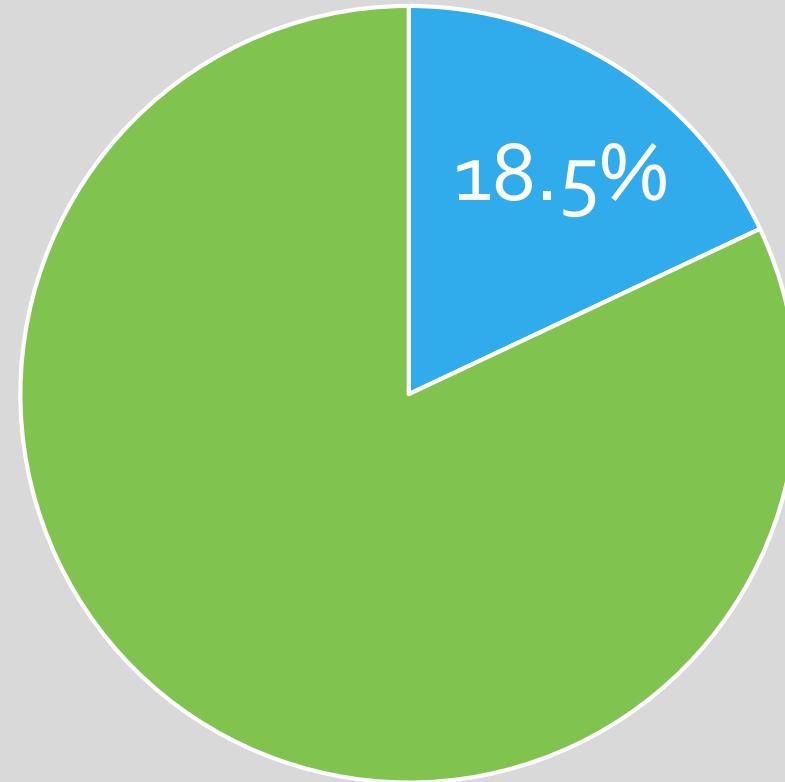
- 3 internal and incremental studies
- 1st exploratory study - analysis of the Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R) data collected between 2017 and 2018.
- 2nd pilot study - self-report survey with Probation Officers from one Probation Service team and the Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF).
- 3rd larger scale study - replicated the second study using the previous learning and findings across a representative sample of five Probation teams.



Symptoms indicating presence of at least one mental illness



Adults supervised by Probation Service



General Population

Approx.

50%

Present with one or more of the following
issues also - alcohol and drug misuse, difficult
family relationships, and accommodation
instability.

Key findings identified from the third and largest study in the Report indicate that:

- 43% experience Active Symptoms of Mental Health Problems (57% women, 40% men)
- 30% are engaged with a service for Mental Health Assessment and/or Intervention currently (49% women, 28% men)
- 56% have had some form of Mental Health Assessment and/or Intervention in the Past (70% women, 52% men)
- 41% are identified as having a known Mental Health Diagnosis provided by a qualified clinician (52% women, 38% men)

Active suicide ideation / plans



8%



16%

1 in 10

One specialist team reported:

- 43% with active symptoms indicative of mental health problems
- 14% with a formal diagnosis of Schizophrenia or other primary psychotic disorder
- 9.5% past contact with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- 9.5% identified as engaging in deliberate self-harm
- 36% identified as having experienced childhood trauma
- 19% engaged with some form of service for mental health problems

One general team reported:

- 1 in 5 men (19%) have had In-Patient Psychiatric Care in the Past
- 14% expressed active Suicide ideation/plans
- 83% of women had Mental Health Assessment and/or Intervention in the past

Key issues for the Probation Service in the findings include:

- Significant unmet psychological and psychiatric needs among persons subject to Probation Supervision.
- Need to further strengthen and build upon knowledge and develop skills-based training in mental health for Probation Service staff to aid recognition of mental health problems and where identified, ensuring that the appropriate services are involved at assessment and/or intervention.
- Need to enhance Probation Service engagement with mainstream primary care and forensic and community mental health service providers and the development of joined-up strategies and interventions.

Responding to Mental Health Needs

- Draft Probation Service Action Plan, currently being finalised – respond to recommendations in research
- Recognition of need for greater collaborative working – Probation and Mental Health Services – Referral Pathways
- Enhance knowledge and skill base of staff through training
- Establishment of a cross-Departmental High Level Taskforce on Mental Health in April 2021 - Justice Plan 2021



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service

Thank you!



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