

MAP OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND SUPPORTS AROUND IRELAND

Explainer Document

December 2024

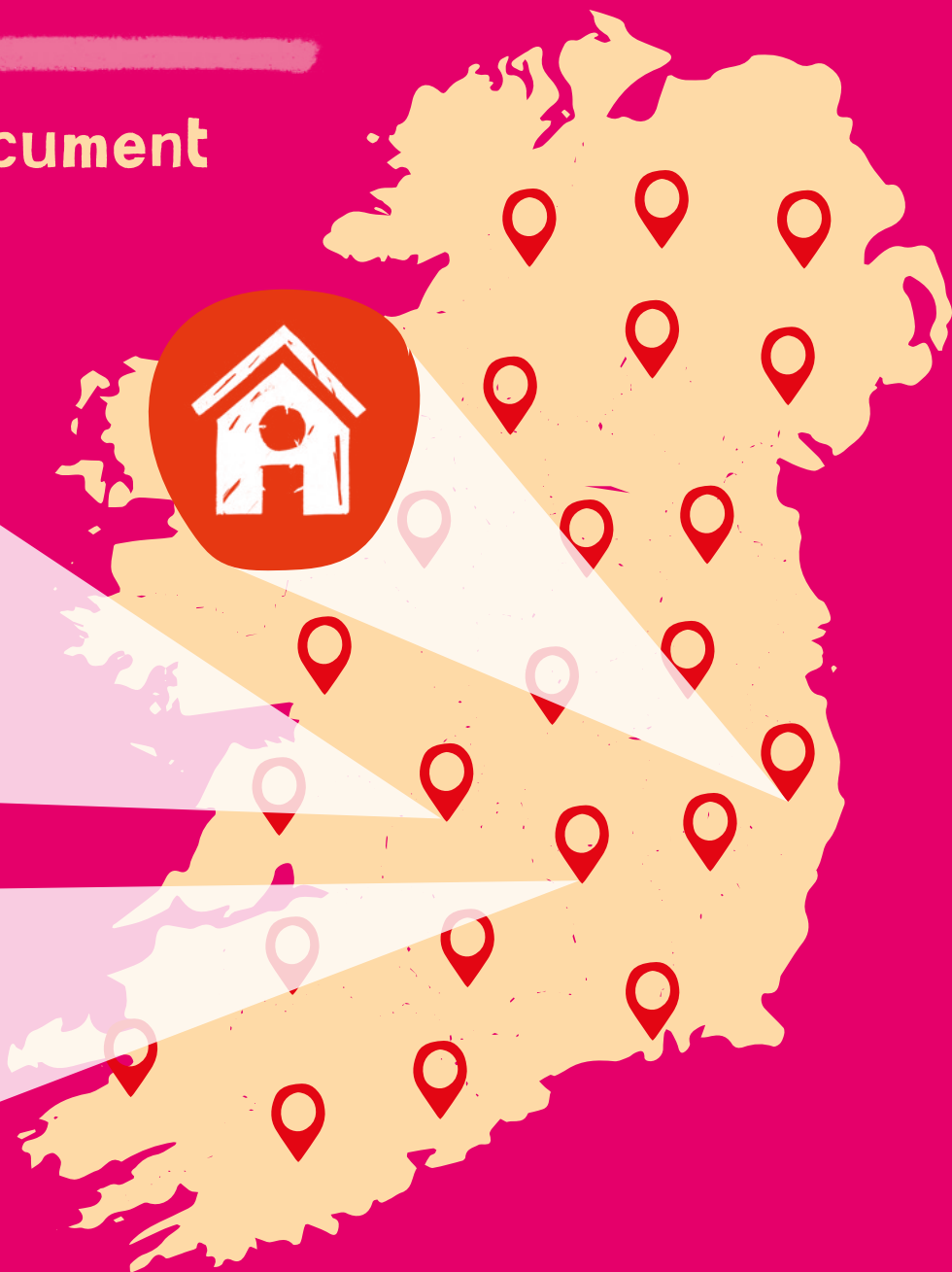


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations/Acronyms	1
Who We Are	1
1. Introduction	1
2. Mapping Mental Health & MHR	1
2.1 MHR Governing Members	2
2.2 Recovery Education	4
2.3 Community / Crisis Café	5
3. Limitations of the Map	7

1. WHAT IS THE AIM OF THIS DOCUMENT?

The aim of this document is to accompany an interactive map of Ireland showing where you can access different types of mental health services and supports.

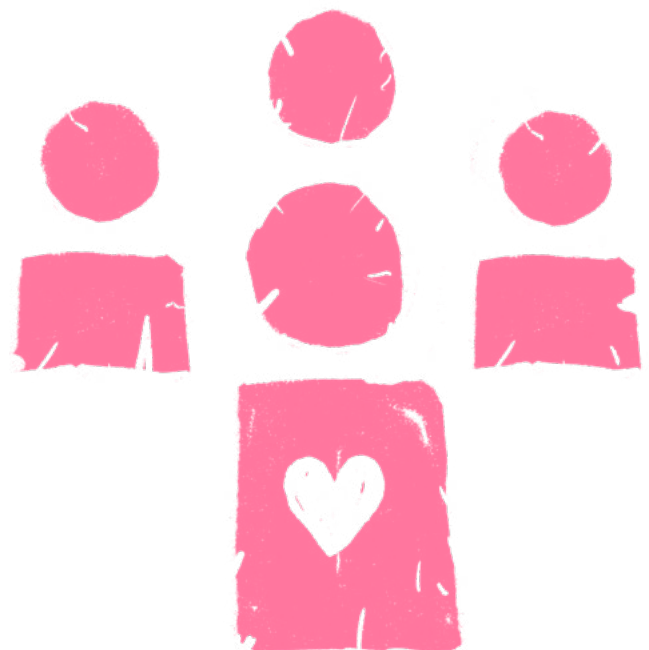
This project presents a geographical list of some of the mental health services and supports in Ireland in each county. The **interactive map of Ireland** shows in each county where Mental Health Reform's (MHR) governing members are present, where there are recovery colleges and where there are crisis cafés (now known as 'Solace Cafés').

This project is intended to complement the work already being undertaken by the Health Service Executive's (HSE) digital team on updating www.yourmentalhealth.ie; the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)'s directory for GPs on service providers and work done on Social Prescribing across Ireland.

Please note the limitations of the project in Section 3.

2. MAPPING MENTAL HEALTH & MHR

This section provides an overview of the community and voluntary mental health sector services provided by the **60+ governing members of MHR.** Included in this overview is information on recovery education, which is managed by MHR member organisation Mental Health Ireland on behalf of the HSE's Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Office (MHER). Finally, this section touches on the available information on Solace Cafés in operation around the country and some of the plans to expand those cafés under the Model of Care for Crisis Intervention.



2.1 WHAT IS A GOVERNING MEMBER?

MHR currently represents over 60 governing members across the voluntary and community mental health sector. As Ireland's leading national coalition on mental health, MHR promotes awareness of its members and advocates on behalf of the sector at Government level, HSE level and in other important stakeholder areas. The coalition includes a number of national and regional organisations including **Barnardos**, **Bodywhys**, **GROW**, **Jigsaw**, **Pieta**, **Samaritans**, **Doras**, and **Helplink Mental Health**.

Governing members provide services that are diverse, wide in range and of vital importance to the whole mental health ecosystem. The type and focus of work areas undertaken include:

- Information and Sign-Posting
- Psycho-education, self-help and positive mental health
- Peer Support
- Helpline/Crisis
- Therapy/Counselling
- Treatment for more severe mental health difficulties
- Recovery/Social Inclusion
- Societal Capacity Building
- Advocacy Specialism
- Children & Young People
- Housing & Homelessness
- Disability
- Gender, equality and human rights advocacy
- Ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma
- Addiction and Dual Recovery
- Suicide Prevention
- Older People
- Neurodiversity
- Creative Arts
- Mental Health Promotion & Recovery
- Support Services
- Criminal Justice System Involvement



The voluntary and community mental health sector plays a significant role in supporting the State in the provision of services for people with mental health difficulties. For example, some of MHR's member organisations are named by the HSE as organisations that assist with the waiting list issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) through their provision of early intervention and prevention.¹ There are also over 20 NGO partners who have a role in the implementation of *Connecting for Life*, Ireland's suicide prevention strategy.²

Making better use of the mental health services offered by the voluntary and community sector is also a central aim of *Sharing the Vision*, our national mental health policy.³



Although many of the mapped governing members have national reach, this phase of the mapping project solely provides information on the head offices of each organisation. However, many of the members provide online and telephone services that are nationally available to people across Ireland. Work is ongoing in MHR to provide further detail on our governing members' areas of interest and expertise.



1 [PQ 17711/23](#)

2 [National Office for Suicide Prevention Annual Report 2022](#)

3 Department of Health (2020) *Sharing the Vision; A Mental Health Policy for Everyone*.

2.2 WHAT IS RECOVERY EDUCATION?

Recovery education is for adults who use mental health services; for their families, friends, carers and supporters (FFCS); for people who work in the mental health services; and for the wider communities who want to learn more about mental health, recovery and wellness.

Recovery education can be provided in a number of ways:

- in the community or in HSE facilities.
- in a Recovery College or a Recovery Education Service.⁴

This map focuses on the numerous Recovery Colleges that are available to people around the country.

The idea of co-production is central to recovery education. Module and course content are produced and facilitated by people with lived experience of mental health difficulties, family members, friends, carers, and supporters. Providers of services and community and voluntary partners might also be involved in module and content development.

4 <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/mental-health-engagement-and-recovery/recovery-education/>



"Recovery is individual and means different things to different people. What matters most is what recovery means to you. There is no defined time period for recovery and everyone's recovery journey is unique to them. The recovery approach is a way to provide mental health services which respects all approaches to recovery. It does not view one approach as better or less than another. It is about valuing expertise by experience and the importance of personal meaning."⁵

Source: *Mental Health Reform – Let's Talk About Recovery*

5 https://www.mentalhealthreform.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/mhr_a4_aw.pdf

2.3 WHAT IS A COMMUNITY/ CRISIS CAFÉ?

Peer educators, peer facilitators and peer supporters are key to delivering recovery education. The **Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Office (MHER)** is the main provider of Recovery Education. This is usually done through the Recovery Colleges listed on the map. Most of these **Recovery Colleges** are managed by Mental Health Ireland, a member organisation of MHR.

The **Mental Health Ireland** website provides a lot of information on the Recovery Colleges around Ireland. There is also a calendar of events and services indicating the modules and topics covered by various Recovery Colleges on different days.

An updated National Recovery Framework is due to be published in 2025. It is hoped that recovery education and recovery colleges will continue to expand across communities throughout Ireland.

"Crisis Cafés form part of the Crisis Resolution Services. Crisis Cafés, now called 'Solace Cafés' will provide an out-of-hours friendly and supportive crisis prevention and response service. They will run in partnership with different community agencies across the country. The Cafés will often be open in the evenings and at weekends. They will provide a welcoming, non-clinical, safe environment in the style of a café. People who come to Solace Cafés will be able to learn about coping strategies and access a range of supports - including one-to-one, peer, psychosocial and recovery supports. When appropriate, Café staff will assist people by signposting them to other relevant mental health and well-being services locally.⁶"

Source: **HSE**



⁶ <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/crisis%20resolution%20services/#:~:text=Crisis%20Caf%C3%A9s%20%E2%80%93%20called%20'Solace%20Caf%C3%A9s,the%20evenings%20and%20at%20weekends.>

The **Galway Community Café** was the first crisis café of its kind in Ireland, with Mr Waffle providing their café free of charge for a pilot site. In 2021, *The Irish Times* wrote about the unique service offering in Ireland.

"On arrival I'm greeted and brought to a table in the spacious cafe. Customers get a menu, with free tea/coffee and a choice of options to tick: "I would like to... Sit quietly/Talk to someone/Ask a question."⁷

Source: *The Irish Times*

In May 2023, the new **Model of Care for Crisis Resolution Services** was launched. Community Cafés such as Galway Community Café are expected to play a vital role in providing crisis resolution services. The Model of Care aims to provide more accessible and personalised support to individuals with mental health difficulties, empowering them on their recovery journey and offering an alternative to hospital admission when appropriate. Crisis Cafés are part of this model of care but have been rebranded as 'Solace Cafés'.

The new **Model of Care for Crisis Resolution Services** will be piloted across five pilot learning sites in the next two years in;

- Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo
- Midwest Community Healthcare
- Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
- South East Community Healthcare
- Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow.⁸

As this is a newly launched Model of Care, there is limited information available to inform MHR's map at this point.

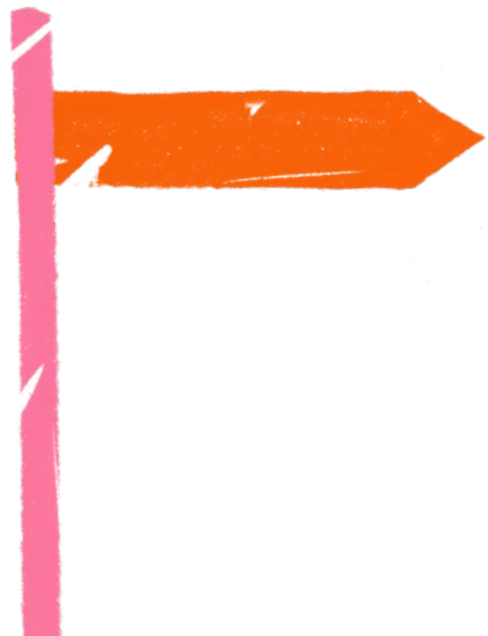
Solace CAFÉ
Hope • Comfort • Support

⁷ <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/care-in-the-community-galway-cafe-offers-out-of-hours-mental-health-support-1.4607720>

⁸ <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/crs-moc.pdf>

3. WHAT ARE THE LIMITATIONS OF THE MAP?

- The interactive map and this accompanying explainer document contains available data up to the end of November 2024. It is important to note that all information and data was correct at the time of data collection but that this data may change regularly. For the most accurate information, you should contact the relevant organisation, recovery college or Solace Café directly.
- MHR strives to avoid duplicating work or data, so where information already exists, signposting links will be included on future iterations of this map. For example, please see the [All Ireland Social Prescribing Network](#) for information on locations of where social prescribing is available.
- The information provided on MHR Governing Members include publicly available information and where contact details exist. Many organisations providing online or telephone services have a national reach and scope but this will only be indicated in the county of the Head Office.
- MHR accepts no responsibility for the services listed in this document and map. This map and explainer document are for signposting purposes only.



ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Mental Health Reform (MHR) is Ireland's leading national coalition on mental health. Our vision is of an Ireland with accessible, effective and inclusive mental health services and supports. We drive the progressive reform of mental health services and supports, through coordination and policy development, research and innovation, accountability and collective advocacy. Together with our 80 member organisations and thousands of individual supporters, MHR provides a unified voice to the Government, its agencies, the Oireachtas and the general public on mental health issues.



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