St Patrick's Mental Health Services
Attitudes to Mental Health
Annual Survey: 2020 Findings
Fieldwork conducted 16 – 22 June 2020

#### **SECTION 1:**

Awareness of mental health difficulties and self-care

## Over one-third of Irish adults have been treated for a mental health difficulty, a significant increase compared with 2018 and 2019



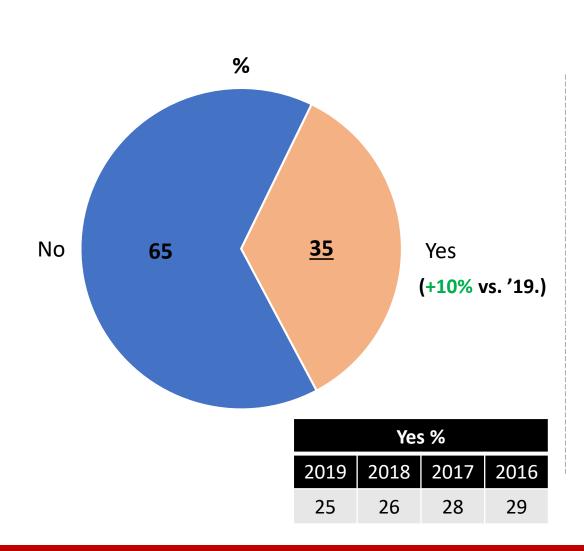
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38

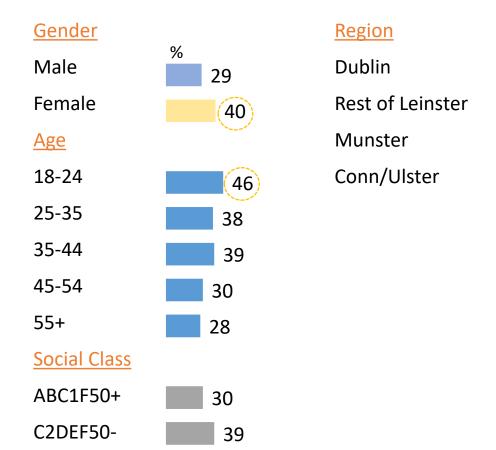
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36

(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



#### **Demographics for Yes**



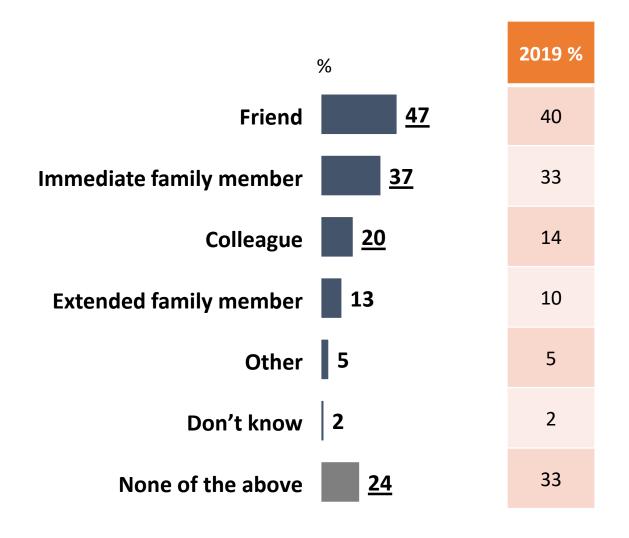
Profile breakdown of those who said Yes are available in the appendix



## Nearly 3 in 4 have had someone disclose to them that they have/had a mental health difficulty, most likely a friend or family member



(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



74% of people have had someone disclose to them that they have or had a mental health difficulty (+9% vs. 2019 at 65%)

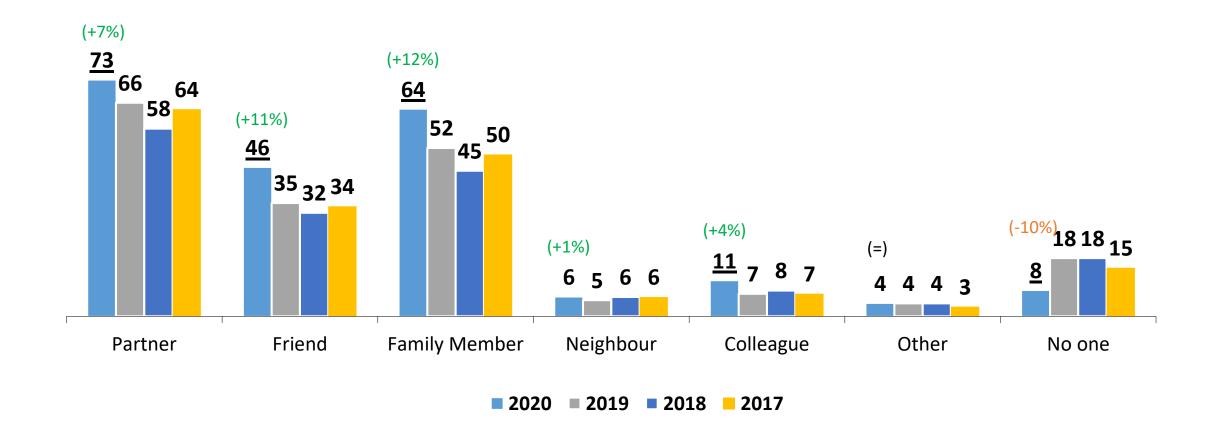


## SECTION 2:

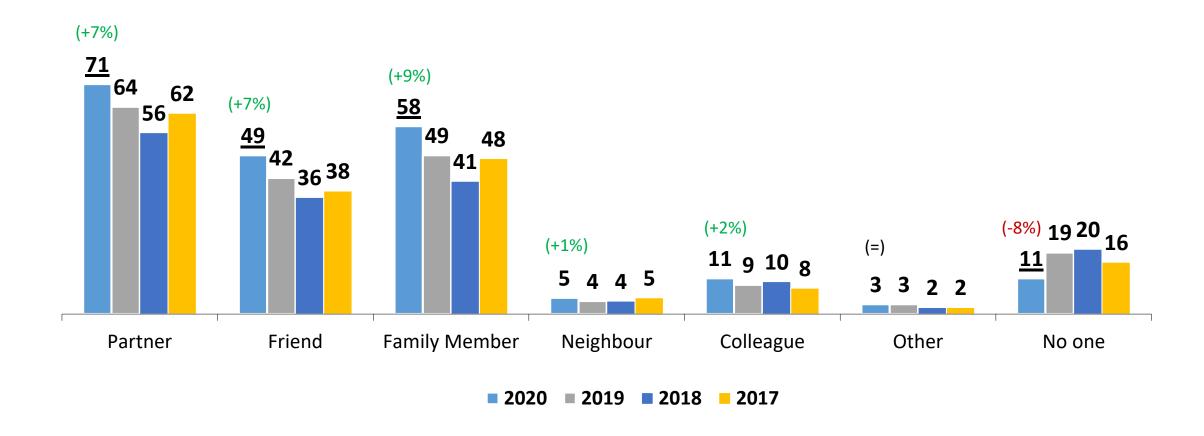
Mental health problems and stigma

<sup>6</sup>People are most likely to tell their partner if their child was being treated for depression followed by family members

(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)

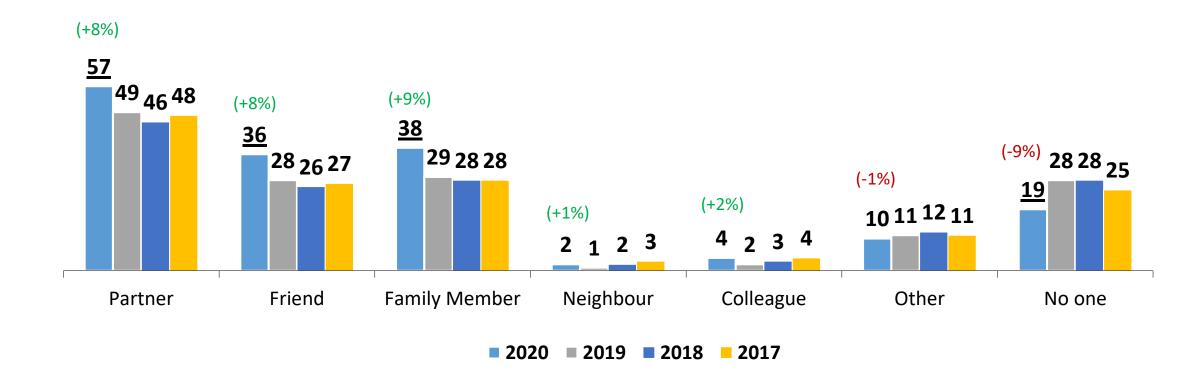


There is an increase of people who would tell their partner, friend or family member if they were on antidepressants (Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



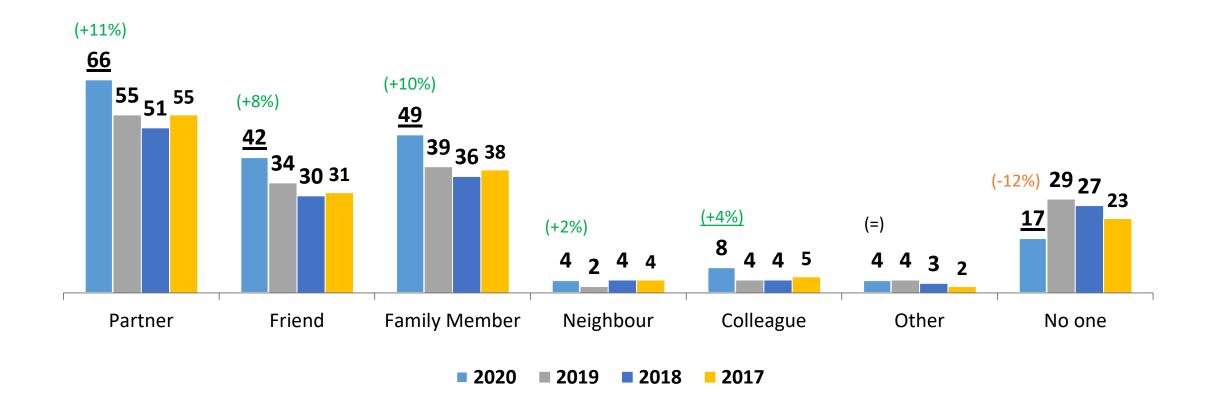
Positively, there is a decline of people who would *not tell anyone* if they were experiencing suicidal thoughts...

(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



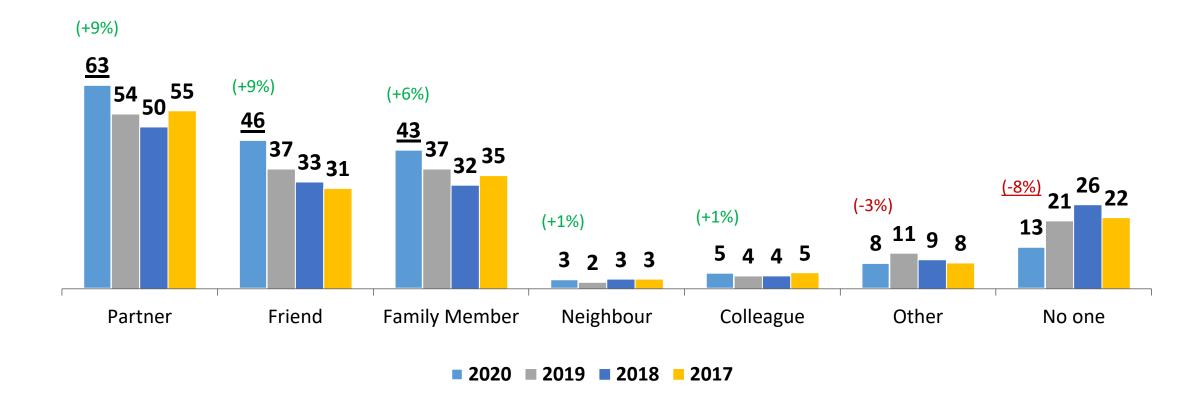
...we also see more people who would be open to talk about previously being an inpatient for a mental health difficulty

(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)

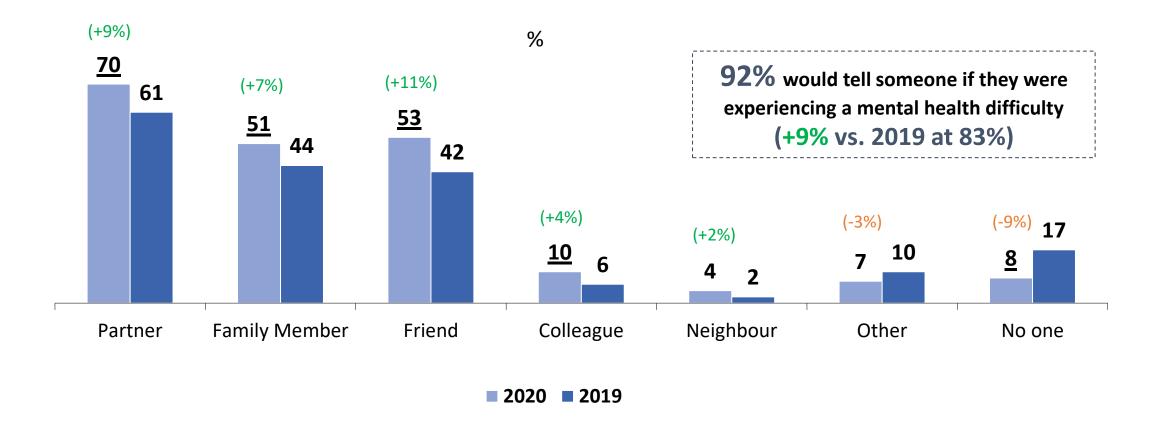


Overall, people are more likely to open up about substance abuse compared to last year

(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



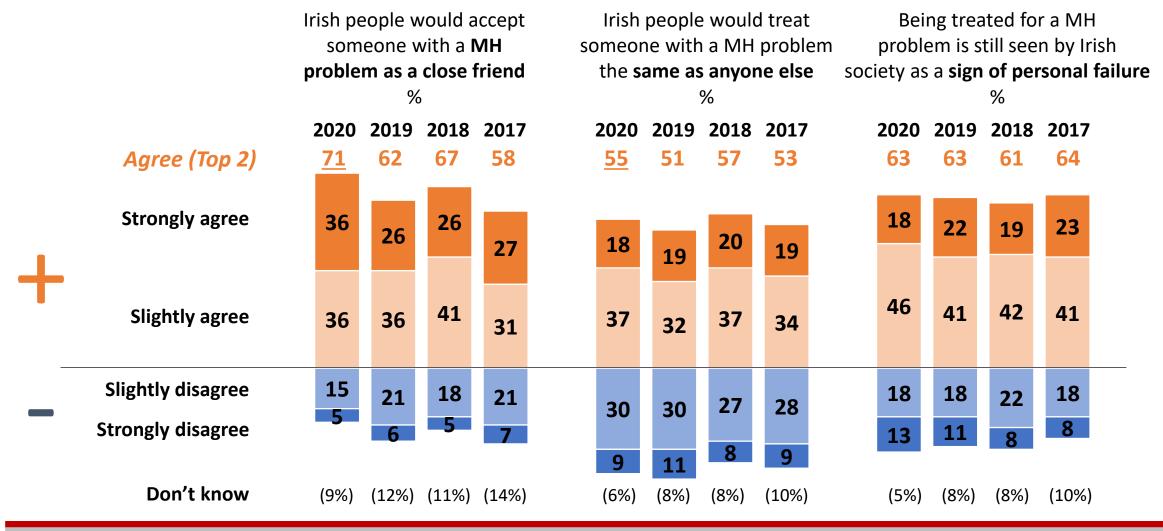
Majority of people feel they would tell someone if they were experiencing mental health difficulties — an increase from last year (Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



## People who think Irish society would accept someone with a MH difficulty as st Patrick's a close friend has increased by 9% and would treat them the same as

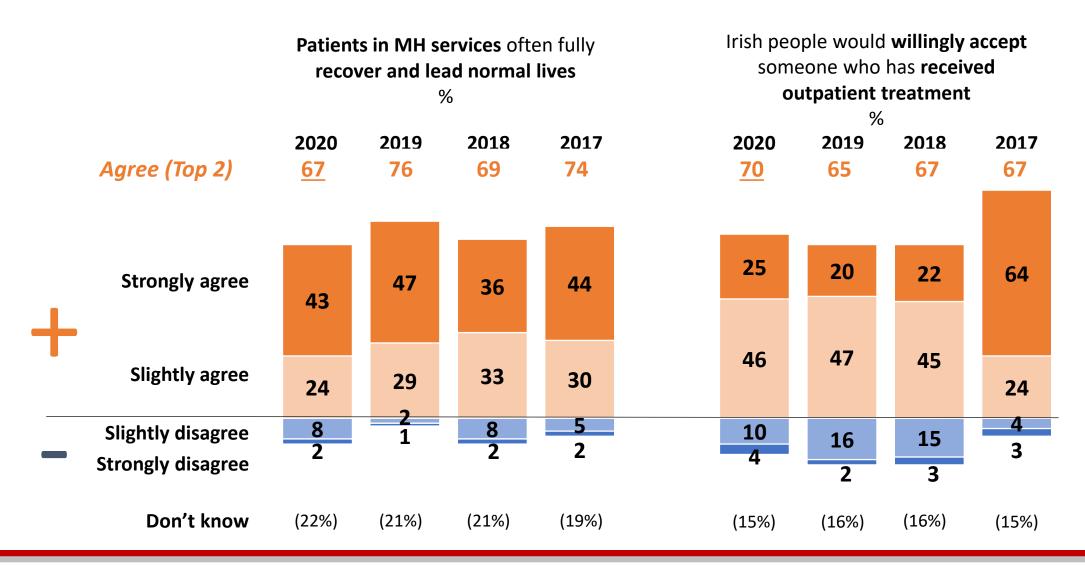


anyone else has increased by 4% (Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)



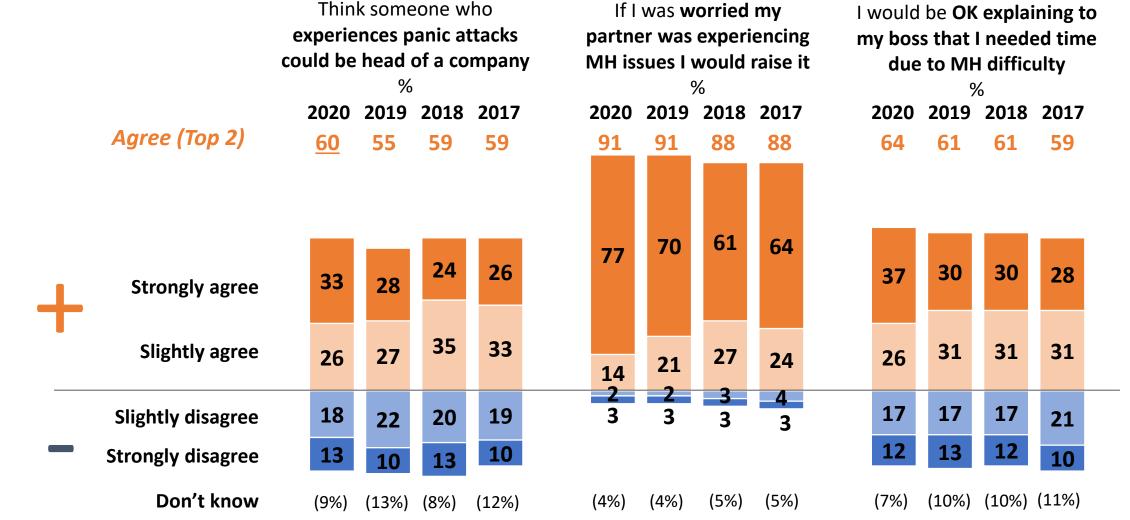
#### However, there is a decline (-9%) of those that believe patients in mental health services can fully recover and lead a normal life





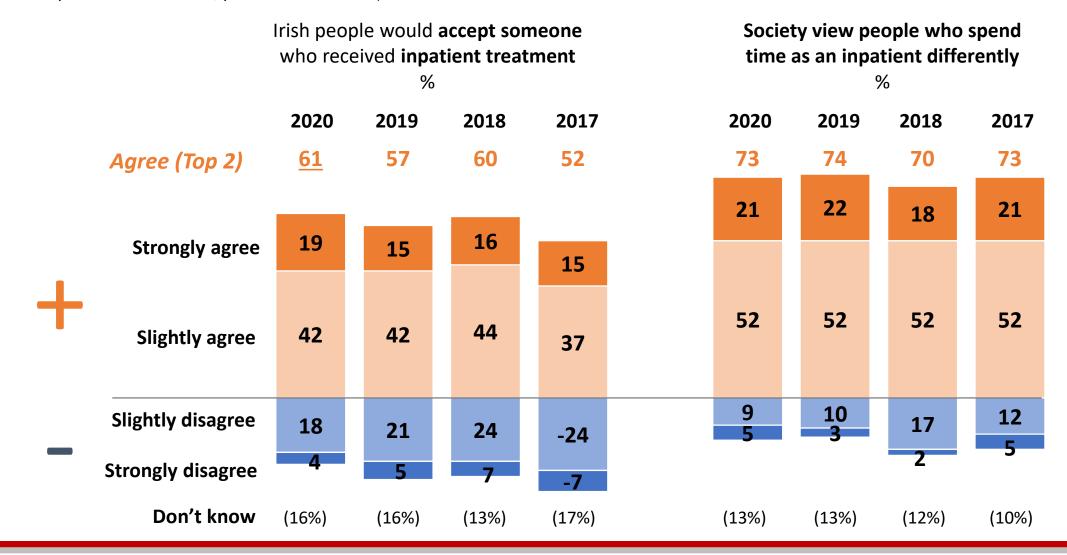
#### 3 in 5 agree that someone who experiences panic attacks could be head of a company, returning to levels seen in 2017 and 2018





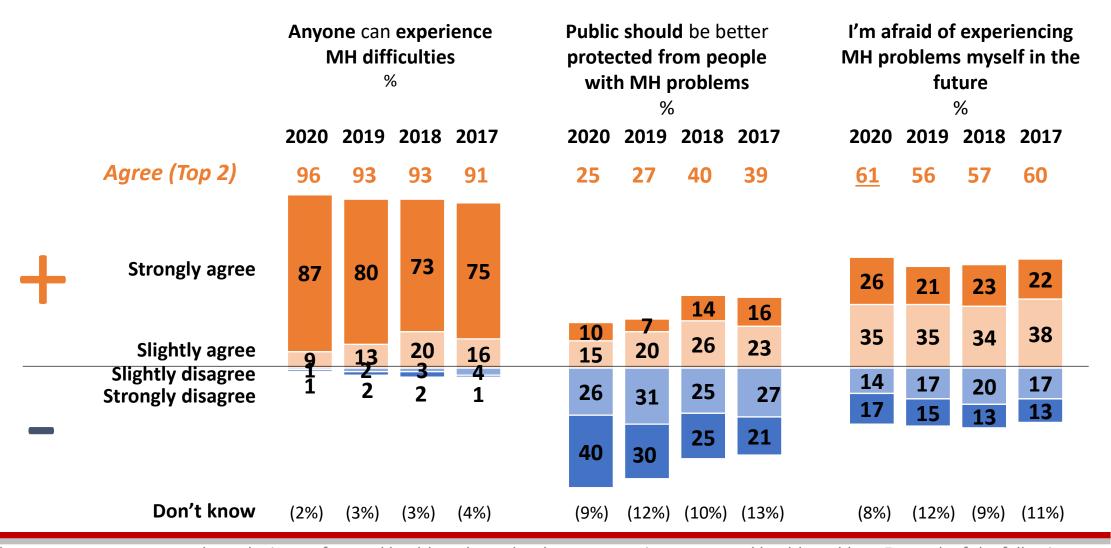
#### 3 in 5 feel Irish society would accept someone who has received inpatient treatment. However, there is little change with people agreeing that society would view them differently (Base: All respondents. 2020: 800, previous waves: 500)





## 3 in 5 Irish adults are afraid of experiencing mental health problems themselves in the future - an increase from last year

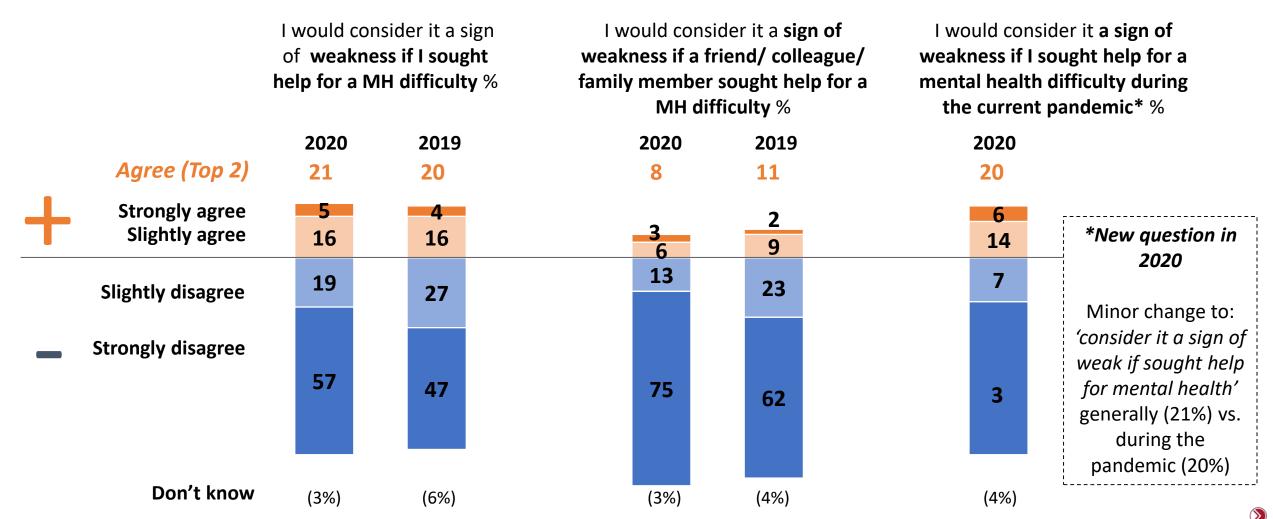






# Similar to 2019, there is an indication of a self-stigmatising attitude, with 2 in 10 considering it a weakness if they sought help for mental health themselves but only 1 in 10 if a friend sought help

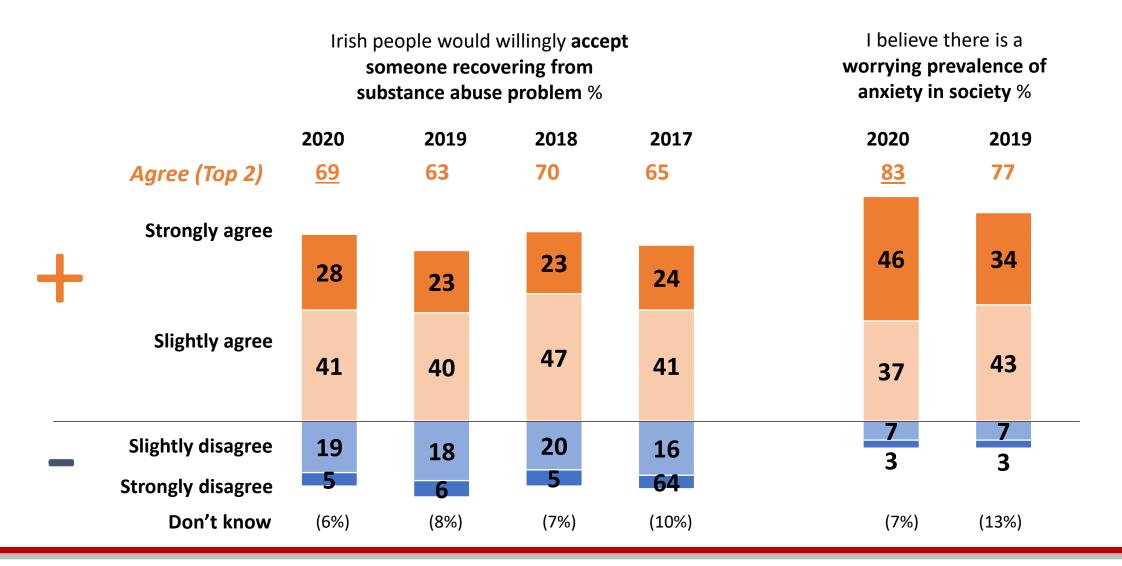






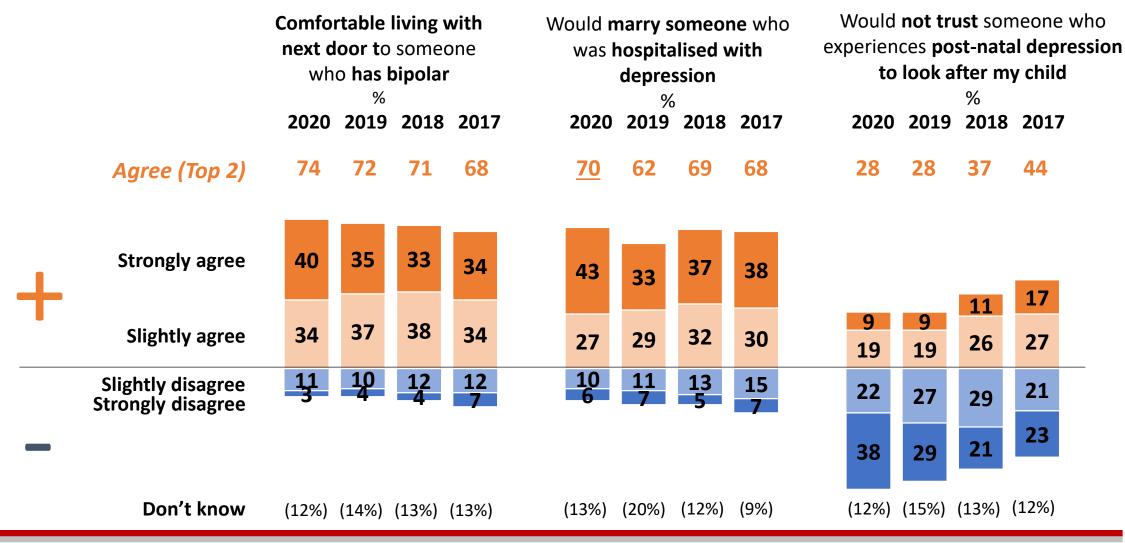
#### More people agree that there is a worrying prevalence of anxiety in society this year compared to 2019





#### Around 7 in 10 would be happy to engage with someone who has mental health difficulties, but fewer would trust them to look after their children







#### Summary: Mental health problems and stigma



- Overall, we see an increase of people who are likely to confide in someone on a range of mental health issues
- There remains a relatively high level of negative attitude towards mental health with nearly two-thirds (63%) agreeing that being treated for a mental health problem is seen by society as a sign of personal failure and 7 in 10 (73%) who agree that society view people who spend time as an inpatient differently.
  - Despite acknowledging that anyone can experience mental health difficulties majority (96%)
- We continue to see a self-stigmatising attitude, with 2 in 10 who would consider it a weakness if they sought help for mental health themself but only 1 in 10 if a friend sought help
- There is a decline of those who believe patients in mental health services can fully recover (67% vs 76% in 2019)
- Positively, there is an increase of people who believe Irish people would accept someone with a mental health problem as a close friend (up 9%) and that they would be treated the same as anyone else (up 4%)
- On a personal level, we see an increase of those who are afraid of experiencing mental health problems themselves in the future (up 5%) and believe this is a worrying prevalence of anxiety in society (up 6%).

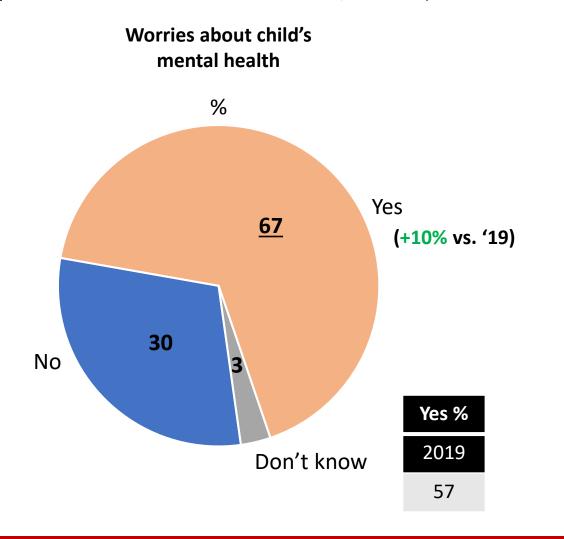


# SECTION 5: Mental health and children

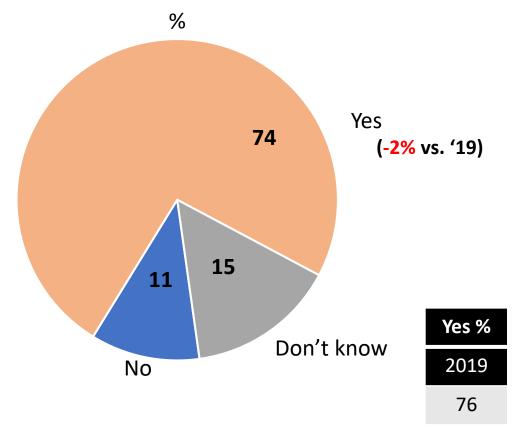
#### There is an increase of parents to U18s worried about their child's mental health, up by 10% from last year



(Base: Respondents with children under 18 – 2020: 270; 2019: 140)



#### Association between social media and anxiety in children

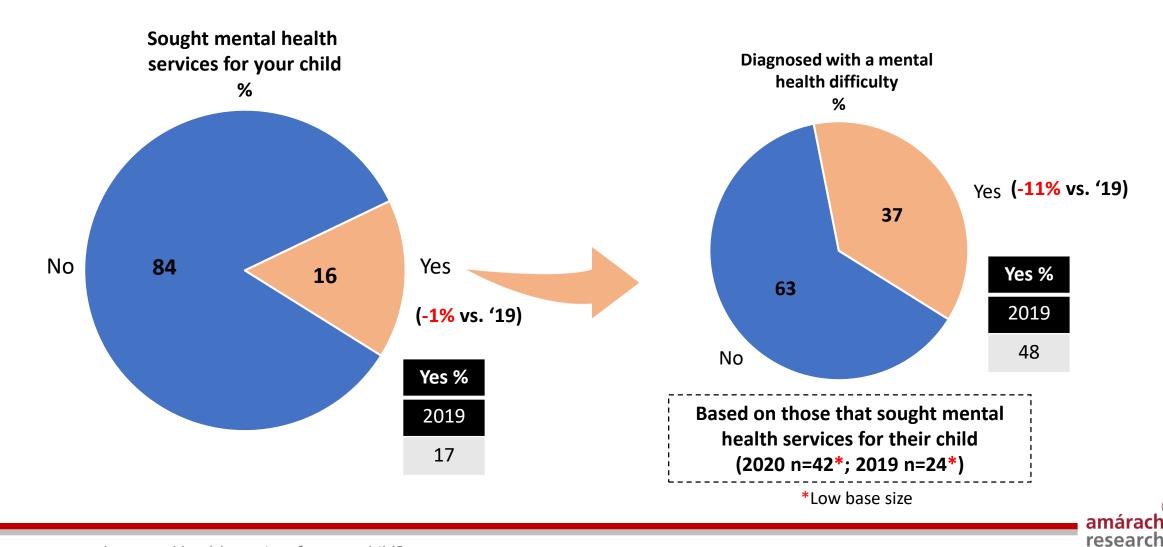




### The number of parents to U18s who have sought mental health services for their child remains similar to last year at 16%



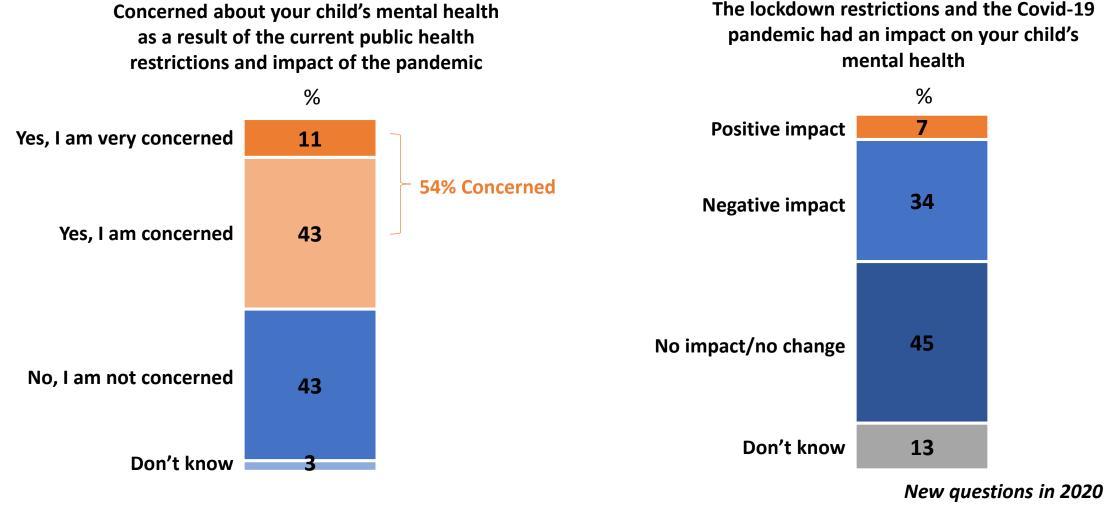
(Base: Respondents with children under 18 – 2020: 270; 2019: 140)



# Over half of parents are concerned about their child's mental health as a result of the lockdown restrictions and overall impact of the pandemic. A third feel the pandemic will have a negative impact on their child



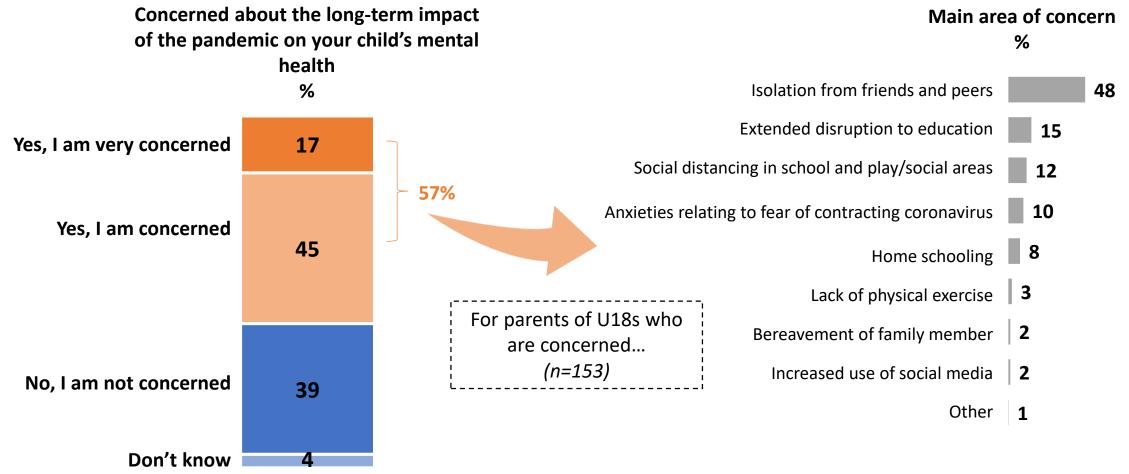
(Base: Respondents with children under 18 - 2020: 270)



## Parents are most concerned about the long-term impact isolation from friends/peers, due to the pandemic, is having on their child's mental health



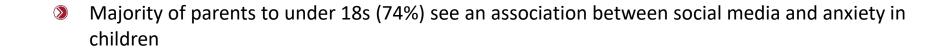
(Base: Respondents with children under 18 – 2020:270)





#### Summary: Mental health and children





Two thirds of parents (67%) worry about their child's mental health, increasing by 10% from last year

16% of parents to under 18s have sought mental health services for their child

Over half of parents (54%) are concerned about their child's mental health as a result of the lockdown restrictions and overall impact of the pandemic

• With a third (34%) who feel the pandemic will have a negative impact on their child's mental health

Over half of parents (57%) are also concerned about the long-term impact of the pandemic on their child's mental health – they are most concerned about the long-term impact isolation from friends/peers is having on their child's mental health.



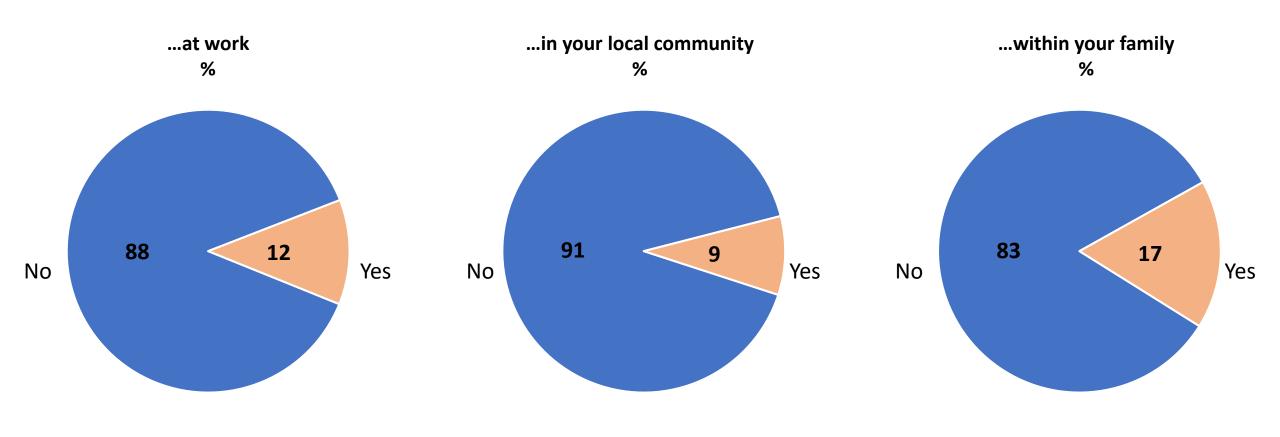
# **SECTION 6:** Rights and discrimination

#### A small proportion of Irish adults have experienced some discrimination due to mental health difficulties in various aspects of their life



(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800)

Have you, or a family member, ever experienced discrimination due to mental health difficulties...



New questions in 2020

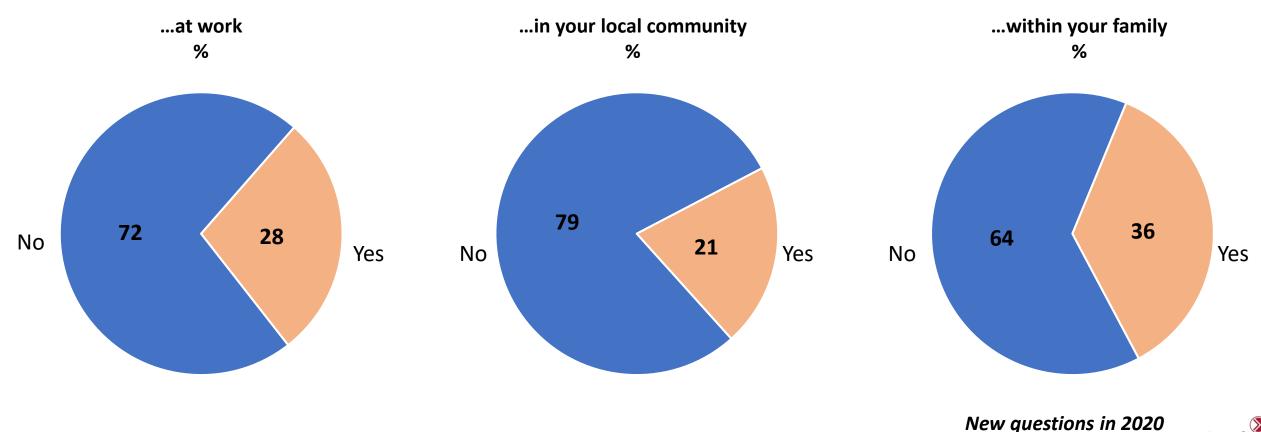


Encouragingly, there is a bigger proportion of those who have had positive experiences of disclosing mental health difficulties at work, in the community and within their family



(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800)

Have you, or a family member, ever experienced <u>positive experiences</u> of disclosing mental health difficulties ...



#### **SECTION 7:**

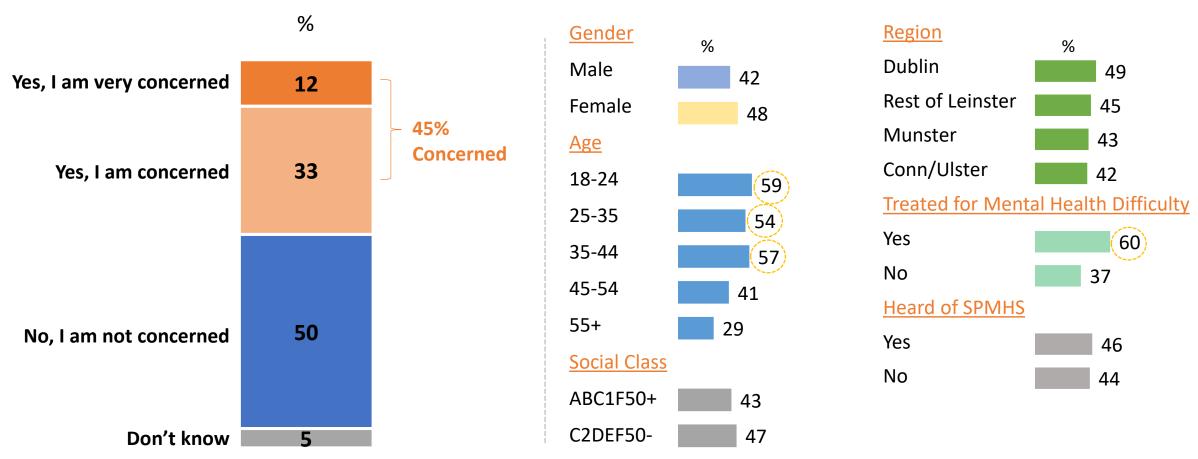
Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions

#### 45% of Irish adults are concerned about their mental health or a family member's mental health due to the Covid-19 pandemic



(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800)

#### **Demographics for Concerned**



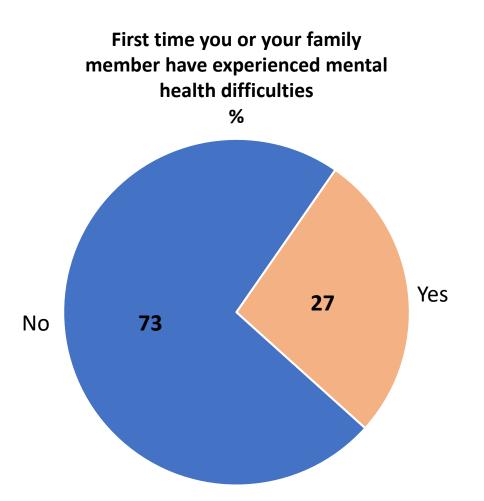
New questions in 2020

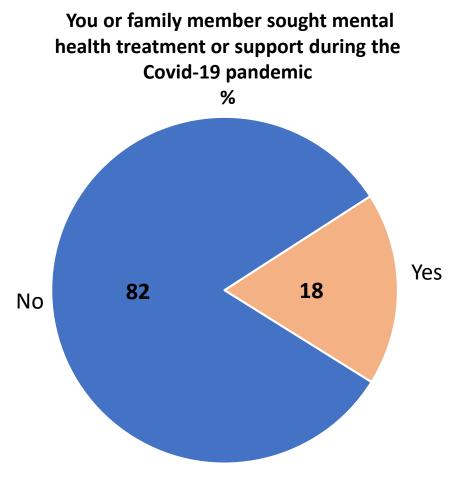


## For those who are concerned, a quarter are experiencing mental health difficulties for the first time and 2 in 5 have sought treatment/support



(BASE: Concerned about your/family member's mental health due to the Covid-19 pandemic – 2020: 361)





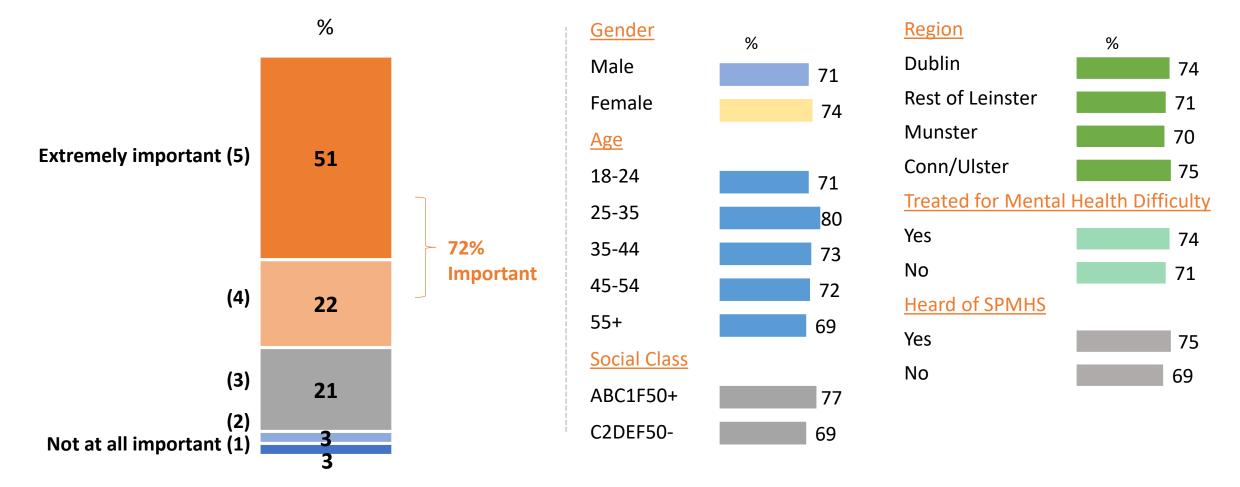
New questions in 2020



## The majority of people agree that Irish society's response to mental health issues over the coming months will be important, with over half saying 'extremely important'



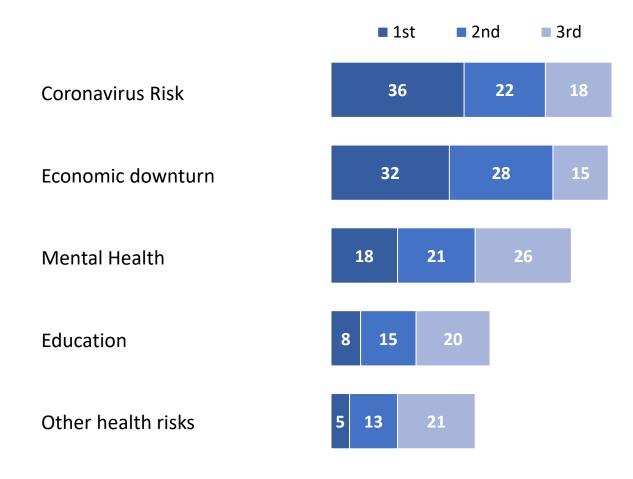
(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800)



## Thinking about the year ahead, majority of people are most concerned about the coronavirus followed by the economy and, thirdly, mental health



(Base: All respondents. 2020: 800)

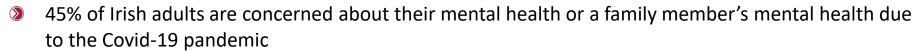


New questions in 2020



## Summary: Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions





- Those in the younger age groups are more concerned compared to the older age groups
- Those who have been treated for a mental health difficulty are also more likely to be concerned
- For those who are concerned, a quarter (27%) are experiencing mental health difficulties for the first time and 2 in 5 (18%) have sought treatment or support mainly through GP
- 3 in 10 (30%) would delay seeking help if experiencing a mental health difficulty at this time
- There is a small proportion of Irish adults (11%) whose current situation does not facilitate remote access to care financial and privacy issues would be the main barriers
- The majority of people (72%) agree that Irish society's response to mental health issues over the coming months will be important, with over half (51%) saying it is 'extremely important'
- Over the coming months, however, people most concerned about the coronavirus followed by the economy and then mental health.



#### Key findings and implications



- There continues to be stigma associated to people with mental health difficulties in Irish society, with fewer people this year agreeing that those who have been in-patients in mental health services can fully recover and three quarters who believe society views people who have spent time in mental health services differently
  - However, there is a growing acceptance of people with mental health difficulties, with more people who
    would accept someone with mental health difficulties as a close friend, would be treat them the same as
    anyone else and accepting of those who have received inpatient treatment
- On a personal level, we see an increase of those who are afraid of experiencing mental health problems themselves in the future. There is also an indication of a self-stigmatising attitude, with more considering it a weakness if they sought help for mental health themselves but less so if it was a friend
- Encouragingly, more people would be willing to talk to someone about a range of mental health difficulties. Those who would keep it to themselves has significantly declined this year, suggesting a potential change in attitudes
- The Covid-19 pandemic/lockdown restrictions is having an impact on people's mental health, with a quarter of people/their family member experiencing mental health difficulties for the first time during this period.