



St Patrick's Mental Health Services Attitudes to Mental Health Survey 2020 Findings

Methodology

- A nationally representative sample of 800 adults aged 18+ was surveyed
- Fieldwork conducted 16 – 22 June 2020
- 49% of those surveyed were male and 51% female
- Age breakdown of those surveyed:
 - 18 – 24 years (11%)
 - 25 – 34 years (19%)
 - 35 – 44 years (21%)
 - 45 – 54 years (17%)
 - 55+ (32%)

Mental health difficulties

- 35% of respondents have been treated for a mental health difficulty
- Of those treated, 46% were aged in the 18-24 age group
- 74% of respondents have had someone disclose to them that they have had a mental health difficulty, mostly friends or a family member

Stigma and attitudes towards mental health

- Respondents would most likely tell their partner (73%) if their child was being treated for a mental health difficulty but 8% would tell no one
- 11% of respondents would tell no one if they were on antidepressants but 71% would tell a partner, 49% would tell a friend and 58% would tell a family member
- 57% of people would tell their partner if they were having suicidal thoughts; 36% would tell a friend; 38% would tell a family member; and 19% would tell no one
- 66% would tell a partner if they had previously been an inpatient for a mental health difficulty; 42% would tell a friend; 49% would tell a family member; and 17% would tell no one
- 63% would tell their partner if they felt they had an issue with substance abuse; 46% would tell a friend; 43% would tell a family member and 13% would tell no one
- 92% of respondents would tell someone (either a partner, family member, friend, colleague etc) if they were experiencing a mental health difficulty
- 71% of people believe that Irish society would accept someone with a mental health difficulty as a close friend
- 55% of respondents believe that Irish society would treat someone with a mental health problem the same as anyone else
- 63% of people believe that being treated for a mental health difficulty is still seen by Irish society as a sign of personal failure

- 67% believe that patients in mental health services often fully recover and lead normal lives
- 70% believe Irish society would willingly accept someone who has received outpatient mental health treatment
- 60% of respondents think that someone who experiences panic attacks could be head of a company
- 91% of respondents would raise it with their partner if they were worried their partner was having mental health difficulties
- 64% of people would be okay explaining to their boss that they needed time off work due to a mental health difficulty
- 61% believe that Irish people would accept someone who has received inpatient mental health treatment
- 73% of respondents believe that Irish people tend to view people who have spent time as an inpatient differently
- 25% of the respondents believe that the public should be better protected from people with mental health difficulties
- 61% of respondents are afraid of experiencing mental health difficulties in the future
- 21% would consider it a sign of weakness if they sought help for a mental health difficulty, yet only 8% would consider it a sign of weakness if a friend/family member or colleague sought help for a mental health difficulty
- 69% believe Irish people would willingly accept someone recovering from a substance abuse problem
- 83% believe there is a worrying prevalence of anxiety in Irish society (an increase from 77% in those surveyed in last year's survey)
- 74% would feel comfortable living next door to someone with bipolar disorder
- 70% would marry someone who had previously been hospitalised with depression
- 28% would not trust someone who experienced postnatal depression to babysit their children
- 67% of parents to children under the age of 18 are worried about their children's mental health (10% increase from 2019)
- 74% of parents to children under the age of 18 believe there is an association between social media and anxiety in children
- 16% of parents to children under the age of 18 have sought mental health services for their child and of those that sought help, 37% of their children were diagnosed with a mental health difficulty
- 12% of respondents said they, or a family member, have experienced discrimination at work due to mental health difficulties
- 9% of respondents said they, or a family member, have experienced discrimination in the community due to mental health difficulties
- 17% of respondents said they, or a family member, have experienced discrimination within their family due to mental health difficulties
- Conversely, 28% of people said that they, or a family member, have had positive experiences of disclosing mental health difficulties at work; 21% had positive experiences of disclosing in their local community; and 36% have had positive experiences of disclosing within their families

Covid-19 impact on mental health

- 45% of respondents are concerned about theirs or a family member's mental health due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with those in the 18-24, 25-35 and 35-44 age groups showing slightly more concern than other age groups
- For 27% of respondents, this is the first time they, or a family member, has experienced mental health difficulties
- 18% of respondents said they, or a family member, have sought help for a mental health difficulty during the pandemic
- 20% would consider it a sign of weakness if they sought help for a mental health difficulty during the current pandemic
- 54% of parents to under 18s are concerned about their children's mental health as a result of the current public health restrictions and impact of the pandemic
- 34% of parents to under 18s believe the lockdown restrictions and Covid-19 pandemic have had an impact on their children's mental health
- 57% of parents are concerned about the long-term impact of the pandemic on their children's mental health
- Of those concerned about the long-term impact of the pandemic on their children's mental health, the top concern was isolation from friends and peers (48%), followed by extended disruption to education (15%) and social distancing in school and play/social areas (12%)
- 72% of people believe that Irish society's response to mental health issues over the coming months will be important, with 51% saying it will be extremely important
- Thinking about the year ahead from a societal perspective, mental health is among the top three concerns of those surveyed:
 - 18% cited it as their top concern
 - 21% cited it as their second biggest concern
 - 26% cited it as their third biggest concern
 - Mental health concern is preceded only by coronavirus risk concerns and economic downturn concerns