



7<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

Deputy Louise O'Reilly, TD  
Dáil Eireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2.

**PQ: 32662/19**

To ask the Minister for Health the amount allocated through his Department and or the HSE for the provision of services to persons suffering from gambling addiction in each of the years 2011 to 2018 and to date in 2019; the number of persons availing of such services in each year; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**32663/19**

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons treated for gambling addiction to date in 2019; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**32670/19**

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons treated for gambling addiction to date in 2019, by age range and gender; the geographical location in which they were treated; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

The National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) started collecting specific information on cases treated for problem gambling use in 2010. See attached Appendix on the NDTRS. As the numbers are small an age/gender and geographical breakdown was not possible.

The figures in the below table relate to the number of cases reported to the NDTRS who recorded gambling as their main problem substance. Please note that the NDTRS data is case based, which means that there is a possibility that individuals appear more than once in the database, for example where a person receives treatment at more than one centre or at the same centre more than once per year. The figures reflect assessments and entries into treatment (new cases and previously treated cases returning to treatment) and do not include the number of cases continuing in treatment from preceding years.



Reporting treatment for gambling to the NDTRS **is optional**. This option is facilitated by the NDTRS for individual services who wish to use the data for their own purposes. Therefore these data **cannot** be considered complete or representative of treatment for gambling in a national context.

For the Deputy's information there were 181 cases assessed and treated for gambling as a main problem in 2011, 221 cases in 2012, 197 cases in 2013, 184 cases in 2014, 208 cases in 2015, 195 cases in 2016, and 219 cases assessed and treated in 2017, as reported to the NDTRS.

**Main Problem Gambling By Year Treated**

	Year entered Treatment						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 *
<b>Main Problem Gambling</b>	181	221	197	184	208	195	219

\* Figures for 2018 are currently being finalised and therefore the figures provided are provisional. Provisional figures indicate that there were 257 cases assessed and treated for gambling as a main problem in 2018.

As of 31/07/2019, with approximately 33% of 2019 data available on LINK, there are 82 cases assessed and treated for gambling as a main problem in 2019.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,



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Joseph Doyle  
National Planning Specialist

## Appendix

### NDTRS Terms & Conditions

Any of the data published here may be freely used, but remains the property of the NDTRS. To safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of the data, all users must agree to the following conditions:

1. NDTRS data are not to be presented in either written or oral form that could directly or indirectly identify an individual patient.
2. Tables containing NDTRS data should not be published where any individual cells contain less than 5 cases.
3. The responsibility for interpretation of the data lies fully with the data user. Please contact the NDTRS should you have any queries on data interpretation.
4. The data provided below supersedes any previous analysis done as figures may change due to data validation processes.
5. The NDTRS should be clearly acknowledged as the source of the data in any publication or presentation in which the data are used.
6. The NDTRS must be provided with a copy of all documents in which NDTRS data are used.
7. The HRB National Drugs Library should be provided with a copy of any published paper in which NDTRS data are used.

### National Drug Treatment Reporting System

Treatment for problem alcohol and drug use in Ireland is provided by statutory and non-statutory services, including residential centres, community-based addiction services, general practices and prison services.

For the purpose of the NDTRS, treatment is broadly defined as 'any activity which aims to ameliorate the psychological, medical or social state of individuals who seek help for their substance misuse problems'. Clients who attend needle-exchange services are not included in this reporting system. From 2004 onwards, clients who report alcohol as their main problem drug have been recorded by the system. These data have been presented in an earlier paper in the HRB Trends Series (Fanagan *et al.* 2008). Drug treatment options include one or more of the following: medication (detoxification, methadone reduction, substitution programmes and psychiatric treatment), brief intervention, counselling, group therapy, family therapy, psychotherapy, complementary therapy, and/or life-skills training.

Compliance with the NDTRS requires that data be collected for each new client coming for first treatment and for each previously treated client returning to treatment for problem drug use in a calendar year.

Staff at the NHIS unit in the HRB process the anonymous, aggregated data, which are analysed and reported at national and EU levels. The main elements of the reporting system are defined as follows:

*All cases treated* – describes cases who receive treatment for problem drug and/or alcohol use at each treatment centre in a calendar year, and includes:

*Cases assessed only* - describes cases who were assessed but who did not progress to treatment

*Previously treated cases* – describes cases who were treated previously for problem drug/alcohol use at any treatment centre and have returned to treatment in the reporting year;  
*New cases treated* – describes cases who have never been treated for problem drug/alcohol use; and  
*Status unknown* – describes cases whose status with respect to previous treatment for problem drug/alcohol use is not known.

Each case refers to an episode of treatment. Therefore ‘previously treated cases’ could appear more than once in the data, in a calendar year, if for example they receive treatment at more than one centre or at the same centre more than once per year.

NDTRS does not publish figures less than five to ensure that an individual cannot be inadvertently identified.