

## Press release

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# Minister for Justice and Director of the Probation Service welcome publication of Research Report on Mental Health

From [Probation Service \(/en/organisation/25cc7-probation-service/\)](/en/organisation/25cc7-probation-service/)

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- **report looks at the issue of mental health among persons supervised by the Probation Service**
- **Justice Plan 2021 commits to establishing a new cross-Departmental Task Force on Mental Health**

At a virtual event this morning, the Minister for Justice Helen McEntee launched “Moving Forward Together: Mental Health Among Persons Supervised by the Probation Service”, authored by Dr. Christina Power, Senior Clinical Psychologist at the Probation Service.

Launching the report, Minister McEntee thanked Dr Power and her team for producing such an excellent piece of work despite the challenges faced. Commenting on the report the Minister said:

“Providing for the complex needs of people with mental health difficulties who come into contact with the criminal justice system is a priority for me.

“I am very conscious of the need for us, as a department, to work collaboratively with all of our key stakeholders, particularly those who are experts in their fields. I believe that this is the only way we can design and build the appropriate structures and processes to provide the necessary supports for those we are working to help.”

The Minister continued:

“We all recognise how vital research into mental health issues is, and this is especially so for the vulnerable people who are under the supervision of the Probation Services.

“The publication of this report marks an important step in informing and developing best practice for working with people with mental health problems and delivering integrated interventions with mainstream health services in the community.

“My Justice Plan 2021 commits to the establishment of a new cross-Departmental Task Force on Mental Health. This new taskforce will consider how best to provide for the mental health and addiction challenges of those imprisoned, and their primary care support on release.”

Minister McEntee’s Justice Plan 2021 commits to establishing the Taskforce this spring. A high level implementation plan for the taskforce will also be published by the end of the year.

Referring this particular area of work, Minister McEntee said:

“Delivering on this requires cross-departmental collaboration, planning and implementation of an appropriate model of care for this vulnerable group and I am working closely with the Minister for Health on moving this forward.”

Commenting on the report, Director of the Probation Service, Mark Wilson, said:

“The Probation Service has supported clients with mental health problems for many years. While we knew it was an important area for the focus of our work, we did not have research to detail the frequency or severity of the problem.

"Dr Power's report now provides that evidence and will inform how we can improve outcomes, both through the work of Probation staff, our funded community projects and through collaborative work with our colleagues in the health services."

The Director concluded:

“The report also highlights the compounding problems of addiction, poor family relations, and the absence of stable accommodation for many of our clients. Achieving better outcomes, and reducing levels of reoffending, requires us to develop greater alignment in service delivery across many social services.”

The Report has been published and is available below.



### **Moving Forward Together: Mental Health Among Persons Supervised by the Probation Service**

[Download \(https://assets.gov.ie/259916/aabe0811-8637-4a49-ba79-87fb2a4faaf3.pdf\)](https://assets.gov.ie/259916/aabe0811-8637-4a49-ba79-87fb2a4faaf3.pdf)

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