



Press Statement

Friday 31st January 2020

College of Psychiatrists urges caution around use of language, diagnostic terms and medication references when canvassing and debating before the fast approaching Election Day

The College of Psychiatrists urges election candidates and politicians to be cautious of the language and terms they use which can create hurt, further stigma and misinformation around mental illness disorders and distress. While the College welcomes references to developing Mental Health Services, mental health promotion and other proposals around mental health over the next five to six days of intense pre general election activity it asks that they (candidates) refrain from using stigmatising and inappropriate terms related to mental health and illness.

Future Oireachtas members and government decision makers using diagnostic terms inappropriately, incorrect references to life saving approved and regulated medications and generally stigmatising words traditionally used around people who have lived with extreme mental distress can be very damaging. At any point in time any person in Irish society is vulnerable to mental health distress and illness but stigma can hinder a person seeking the help and support they may need.

See College Election Manifesto for information here which along with this press statement has been sent to all political parties.

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Notes for the Editor:

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland was formed in 2009. It is the professional body for psychiatrists in the Republic of Ireland. The Mission of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland is to promote excellence in the practice of psychiatry. The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland is the sole body recognised by the Medical Council and the HSE for the training of doctors to

become specialists in psychiatry and for the continuing assurance of the career long competence of specialists in psychiatry. The College supports the delivery of mental health services in line with the recovery model and supports the delivery of the 2006 national policy on mental health services A Vision for Change in line with recommendations for adjustment 11 years on.