





IASW

Irish Association of Social Workers  
Cumann na hÉireann um Oibríthe Sóisialta

Social Workers are trained to provide that safe space where families and service users can express their difficulties and frustrations and problem solve to address issues within the constraints of their current reality. In this situation, this therapeutic space can be provided over the phone while Social Workers also assess the crisis level and potential safeguarding needs for the service user and/or their family.

I have been alerted to some situations where social workers are placed on annual leave and are on lists waiting to be redeployed. This surely is not the spirit of the Government message or how we should proceed while we wait for the crisis to get worse. IASW supports all redeployment where and when it is necessary, but available information does not suggest that all social workers will be redeployed just yet, and in the meantime that professional support should be provided to service users to help them cope with the isolation and difficulties associated with this level of lock down that is in addition to their significantly challenging life situations.

IASW members report that Social Workers are developing new ways of working providing telephone help lines to maintain the relationship with vulnerable persons placing them in a position to assess, support and intervene in individual situations maintaining the relationship that is at the heart of all our professional interventions, and essential to service user reconnection when the Covid-19 crisis is over.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 086 293 2164.

Yours sincerely,

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**Áine McGuirk**

**Chair**

**CC. Anne O'Connor National Director Mental Health Services, Dr. Steeven's Hospital, Dublin 8**

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