
SEANAD ÉIREANN

Motion re: Maternal Mental Health Supports

That Seanad Éireann –

— Recognises –

- that the period after childbirth is a time of significant physical, emotional, and mental adjustments and that post-natal care is critical for the health and wellbeing of mothers, babies, and their families,
- that in particular mothers need access to affordable and timely mental health resources, such as counselling, therapy, and peer support, to address potential issues like post-natal depression, burnout and anxiety,
- that the Maternity and Infant Care Scheme currently provides for 2 postnatal visits to a GP, comprising an examination of the baby at 2 weeks old and an examination of the mother and baby at 6 weeks old, while a public health nurses will visit the mother and baby at home, usually within 72 hours of returning home from hospital, and visits thereafter are confined to structured checks on the baby's development,
- Commends the '*Year of Care*' campaign and other initiatives that have highlighted the structural deficiencies in State provision of supports, including in particular mental health supports, for new mothers in their homes,
- Endorses the call for comprehensive, year-long, post-natal support for mothers, to ensure that mothers receive the support they need to recover fully and to thrive, benefitting not just the mother but also the child, the family and society as a whole,
- Calls on the Minister for Health to commit to the necessary expansion of services, to include increased funding, improved access to mental health services, postnatal check-ups for up to 1 year and the establishment of community-based support networks throughout the State, so as to ensure every mother has the resources she needs to thrive.