



## **Pieta Confirms All Therapy Centres Will Remain Open Following Financial Review**

***The charity announces that it will be employing additional therapists and redeploying admin staff who had been at risk of redundancy. There will be no downgrading of Centres.***

**5<sup>th</sup> June 2020:** Pieta, Ireland's national suicide and self-harm prevention charity, has today confirmed that its fifteen centres plus four outreach centres will not be downgraded or closed following an internal financial and operational review.

Pieta moved its delivery of therapy for those experiencing suicidal ideation, self-harm and those bereaved by suicide to over the phone in March following Covid-19 restrictions, and also continues to support those in immediate crisis through the 24/7 crisis helpline.

The postponement, due to Covid-19, of Pieta's flagship fundraiser Darkness into Light, proudly supported by Electric Ireland, left the charity with a very significant funding gap. Pieta relies on the public for 80% of its funding to ensure it can provide its national mental health service free of charge. The people of Ireland responded to the challenging financial situation with generous support for the 'Sunrise' appeal which, along with a number of other initiatives, raised an incredible €6 million and significant awareness for Pieta.

These funds together with the Government wage subsidy scheme, increased support from the HSE and a 30% pay cut to staff from April to June of this year means that Pieta is in an improved financial position.

Key points arising from the review include:

- All fifteen Pieta centres, plus its four out-reach centres, to remain open
- There will be no downgrading of any centres
- Centre hours will be restored back up to January 2020 levels.
- From next month, Pieta will engage in a phased reopening of centres for staff and will resume face-to-face counselling services from September, in accordance with government guidelines post Covid
- 14 additional 'full-time equivalent' therapists will be employed, 8 will support face-to-face counselling and 6 will join the Helpline team to meet the increased demand
- 10 full time equivalent Centre Manager roles and 33 Clinical Support roles, that were identified at risk of redundancy in April 2020, will now be redeployed
- From July 1<sup>st</sup>, pay for all staff will be restored to pre-Covid levels



- The HSE has agreed to provide Pieta with additional funding of €114,608 per month, commencing in July. This funding must be spent on supporting the provision of 300 hours per week of therapy to high risk clients.
- Pieta will also be engaging with Government and the HSE on a sustainable funding model for the delivery of services.

Speaking about the Financial Review, Pieta CEO, Elaine Austin, said; *"I want to express my gratitude to the Pieta team and to our supporters across the country for their help, support and patience over recent weeks. Due to the overwhelming generosity and kindness of the people of Ireland, and increased support from the HSE and our corporate partnerships, Pieta is now in a more secure financial position, and we can confirm that our vital services will continue to be delivered across all of our Centres nationwide. The support has been unparalleled and very humbling. The response to our distress call also signalling the collective voice behind the value and necessity of suicide prevention – a strong gesture given in solidarity and in hope for all those silently suffering. We know people need our service now more than ever in these times of crisis, and it is important that people know that we are here and they are not alone."*

For more information or to donate, please visit [www.pieta.ie](http://www.pieta.ie)

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**ABOUT PIETA**

Across its 15 centres in Ireland and 4 outreach centres, Pieta offers free counselling to those suffering from suicidal ideation and to people who are engaging in self-harm. Pieta operates a Suicide Bereavement Counselling Service providing free counselling, therapy and support to individuals, couples, families and children who have been bereaved by suicide. Staff are fully qualified and provide a professional one-to-one therapeutic service.

**HOW TO CONTACT PIETA**

To avail of Pieta's services, which are free of charge, please visit [www.pieta.ie](http://www.pieta.ie) for all Centre contact details. Pieta provides 24/7 support – if you are suicidal, self-harming or bereaved you can contact Pieta 24/7 via the Freephone helpline on 1800 247 247. You can also text HELP to 51444 (standard message rates apply). For further information on Pieta and its services, visit [www.pieta.ie](http://www.pieta.ie).