



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Presentation to The Citizens' Assembly

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HSE Sexual Health and Crisis
Pregnancy Programme

Building a Better Health Service

CARE COMPASSION TRUST LEARNING



Overview

- Remit of HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme
- Crisis Pregnancy in legislation
- Who experiences a crisis pregnancy?
- Decisions made following a crisis pregnancy
- Key research, statistics and trends
- Role of funded services

Crisis Pregnancy and The Law

- Defined in Irish legislation:
‘a pregnancy which is neither planned nor desired by the woman concerned and which represents a personal crisis for her’

The experience of crisis pregnancy in Ireland

- Approximately 1/3 of women who have been pregnant in Ireland have experienced a crisis pregnancy
- These women and their partners come from all socio-economic backgrounds, relationship status and age ranges(average age is 24 years old)

Why the pregnancy is a crisis?

- Various reasons, often particular to the age of the woman and the point in her life the pregnancy occurs
- Most commonly reported reasons “*it wasn’t planned*”; many consider they are “*too young*”
- Also reported “*financial concerns*”; “*relationship problems*”, “*health concerns*”

Decisions made following a crisis pregnancy

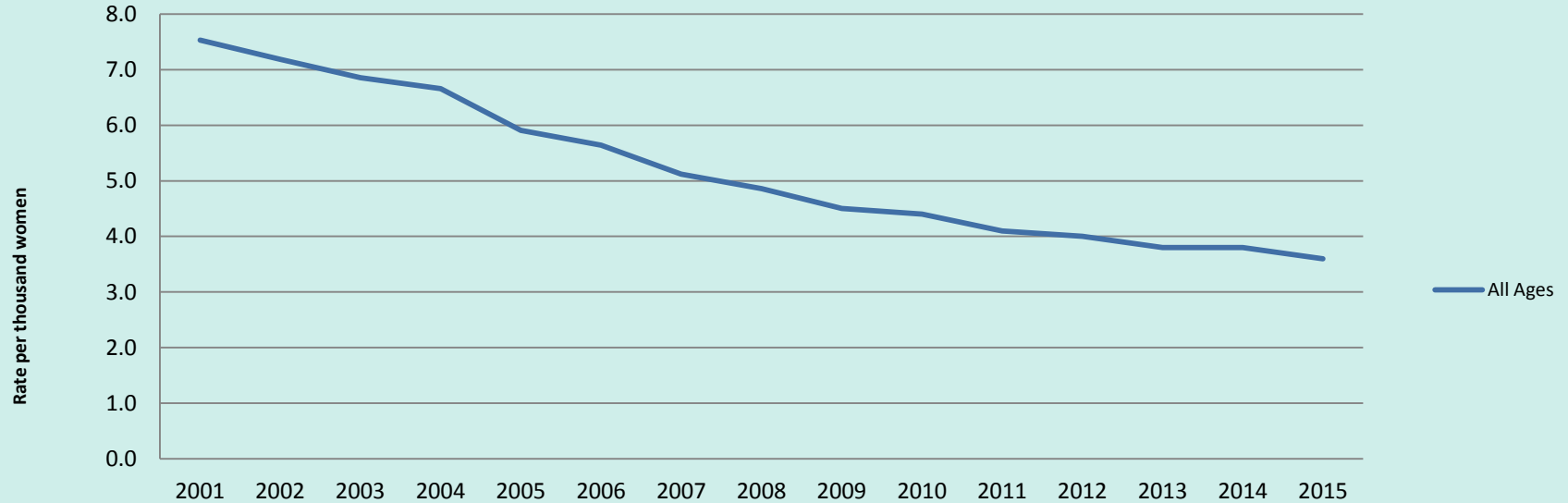
1. Parenting- the most common decision at 73%
2. Abortion- 24% of women reported this as the decision of their last pregnancy
3. Adoption-the least common decision at 1%
numbers of domestic infant adoptions have fallen from a high of 1443 in 1975 to 7 in 2015

Abortion data

- Data collated by Department of Health UK
- Gradual decline in numbers attending abortion services since 2001
- 3451 women in 2015 gave Irish addresses at UK abortion clinics

Abortion rate

Abortion Rate for Women from Ireland in UK abortion clinics 2001-2015



Irish Women who attended abortion services in UK in 2015

- Women were from all 26 counties
- Majority in their twenties and early thirties (65%)
- Majority had an abortion before 9 weeks gestation (70%)
- Majority were married or in a relationship (65%)
- Majority were white Irish (80%)
- Just under half reported previously having a child (47%)
- Approximately one fifth had previously had an abortion (19%)

Abortifacients/Abortion Pill

- Abortion pills are designed to induce an abortion in pregnancies less than 9 weeks gestation and are used in medically supervised clinics in countries where abortion is legal
- The supply of abortion pills or any other prescription medication over the internet is illegal

Research on Abortion Pills

- Between January 2010 and December 2015, 5,650 women from the Island of Ireland consulted with 'Women on Web'
- The numbers consulting 'Women on Web' increased from 548 in 2010 to 1,438 in 2015

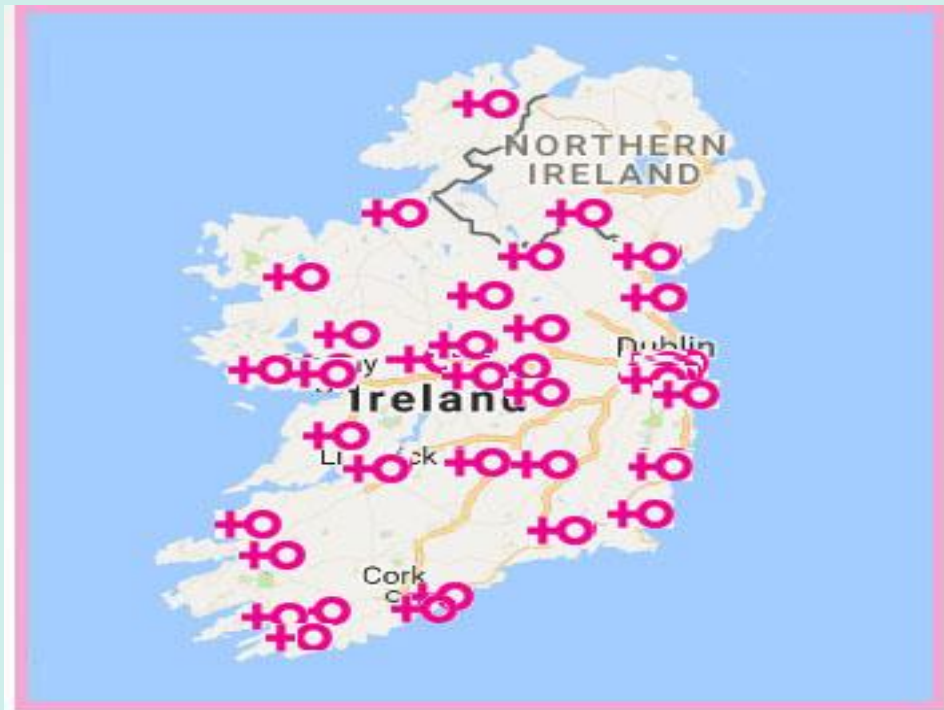
Research on Abortion Pills

- During period 2010-2012, the study also showed that 1,642 women were sent the abortion pills within island of Ireland

Crisis Pregnancy Services in Ireland

- Counselling on all 3 options provided under the legal framework of 'Abortion Information Act' 1995
- 16 funded crisis pregnancy counselling services across over 40 locations

Locations of funded crisis pregnancy services



Crisis Pregnancy Counselling

- Provided free of charge
- Non-directive, Non-judgemental, Client centred
- Provide a space to consider all three options

Crisis Pregnancy Counselling

- Information is provided on the options available:
 - Parenting
 - Adoption
 - Abortion

Abortion Information Act 1995

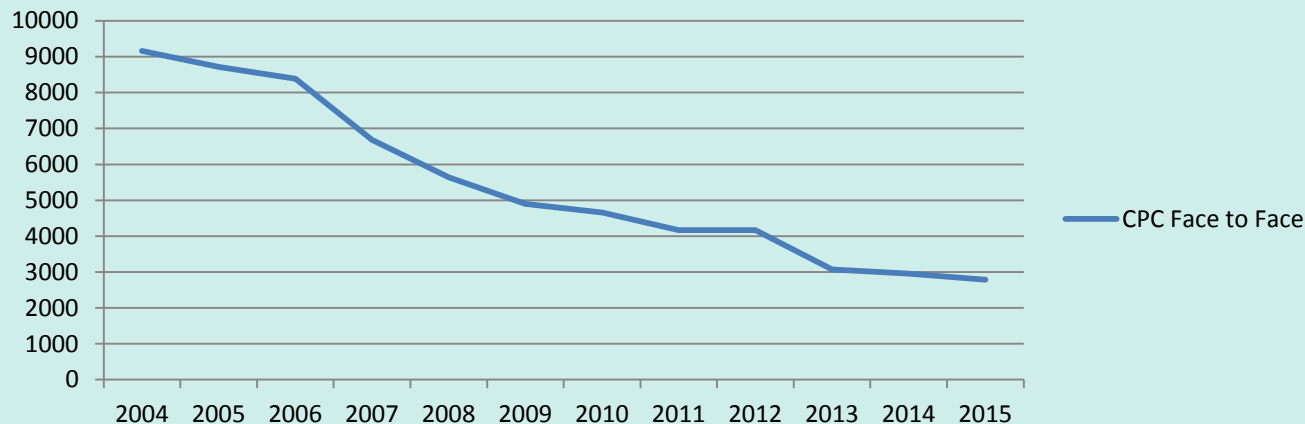
- Outlines specific circumstances by which information can be provided
- No service in Ireland can advocate for or promote abortion
- Appointment with abortion service provider must be made by the woman herself
- Law allows for conscientious objection

Abortion Information Act 1995

- Advances in technology mean 'Act Information' such as names and addresses of Abortion providers in other countries are widely accessible to majority of the population
- Women do not need to attend a crisis pregnancy counsellor to access this information

Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Services

CPC Face to Face



Concerns with other counselling services

- Pose as genuine counselling services, often targeting those seeking information on abortion
- Show inappropriate images, use delaying tactics, influence the choice a woman makes
- Not state funded

Concerns with other counselling services

- Any women who have been affected should make complaint to Gardai
- Women reminded to seek out only state funded crisis pregnancy counselling through www.positiveoptions.ie

Post-Abortion Counselling

- Provided by same funded services that provide crisis pregnancy counselling
- Uptake of post abortion counselling is low, reflected in other countries where abortion is legal

Post Abortion Medical Check-up

- Available to all women free of charge post abortion
- Medical check carried out by GP or family planning clinic
- Contraceptive needs discussed with woman

Thank You