

Ballot Paper 1 People with problematic drug use within the criminal justice system

For each statement below, please place an **X** in the box that represents your preferred answer, or leave blank if you do not wish to answer.

1.1 The State should ensure an optimal health-led response to people with problematic drugs use within the criminal justice system.

The State should ensure an optimal health-led response to people with problematic drugs use within the criminal justice system.	Agree	Do Not Agree	Don't Know
<p>Regardless of which legal framework is chosen in future, people with problematic drug use who are suspected, charged, or convicted of any offence in which problematic drugs use is assessed to be a contributory factor should be afforded a health-led response at all stages as they progress through the criminal justice system.</p> <p>The Citizens' Assembly Use heard how therapeutic and rehabilitative initiatives including the Dublin Drug Treatment Court, community-based prisoner support services that facilitate early release from prison, education and training programmes, and Restorative Justice schemes can each contribute to the care and rehabilitation of people with problematic drugs use in ways that significantly improve health and other outcomes for the individual, their family members and wider society.</p> <p>The Courts already have significant discretion under current legislation to divert offenders to community-based or residential-based services, and/or Restorative Justice schemes. However, the use of these options is limited and sporadic, rather than mainstream and systematic.</p> <p>Key stakeholders including the Department of Justice, Department of Health, HSE, Courts Service, Probation Service, Parole Board and Judicial Council should develop agreed guidelines, inter-agency protocols and service-level agreements to give practical effect to a health-led response to people with problematic drug use engaging with the criminal justice system at any stage of the process. The objective should be to provide meaningful and beneficial alternative pathways, where appropriate, to divert people with problematic drugs use away from criminal convictions and custodial sentences and into treatment and recovery services, recognising that a custodial sentence that fails to provide access to appropriate treatment in a timely manner is more likely to exacerbate than help the underlying addiction.</p> <p>To support increased use of non-custodial options, there is a clear need for additional community-based and residential treatment and recovery services for people with problematic drug use being released from prison, or being diverted from custodial sentences by the Courts. There is also a need to mainstream innovative initiatives such as the Dublin Drug Treatment Court.</p> <p>In cases where a prison sentence is the most appropriate response to the offence, timely access to suitable treatment services should be made available within the prison system.</p>			

1.2 Additional resources for community-based and residential treatment and recovery services as an alternative to custodial sentences for convicted offenders

The Government should allocate additional resources to fund a significant increase in community-based and residential treatment and recovery services as an alternative to custodial sentences for convicted offenders referred by the Courts, the Prison Service, Probation Service or Parole Board.	Agree	Do Not Agree	Don't Know

1.3 Additional resources for prison-based treatment

The Government should allocate additional resources to fund a significant increase in prison-based treatment services for people with problematic drugs use within the prison population, with clear pathways and continuity of care following release from prison.	Agree	Do Not Agree	Don't Know

1.4 Mandatory training for personnel

All personnel within the criminal justice and health systems, including (but not limited to) medical personnel, gardai, judges, probation officers and prison officers, who have a role in implementing health-led responses to people with problematic drug use should undergo mandatory evidence-based training on trauma-informed and problem-solving responses to addiction.	Agree	Do Not Agree	Don't Know