

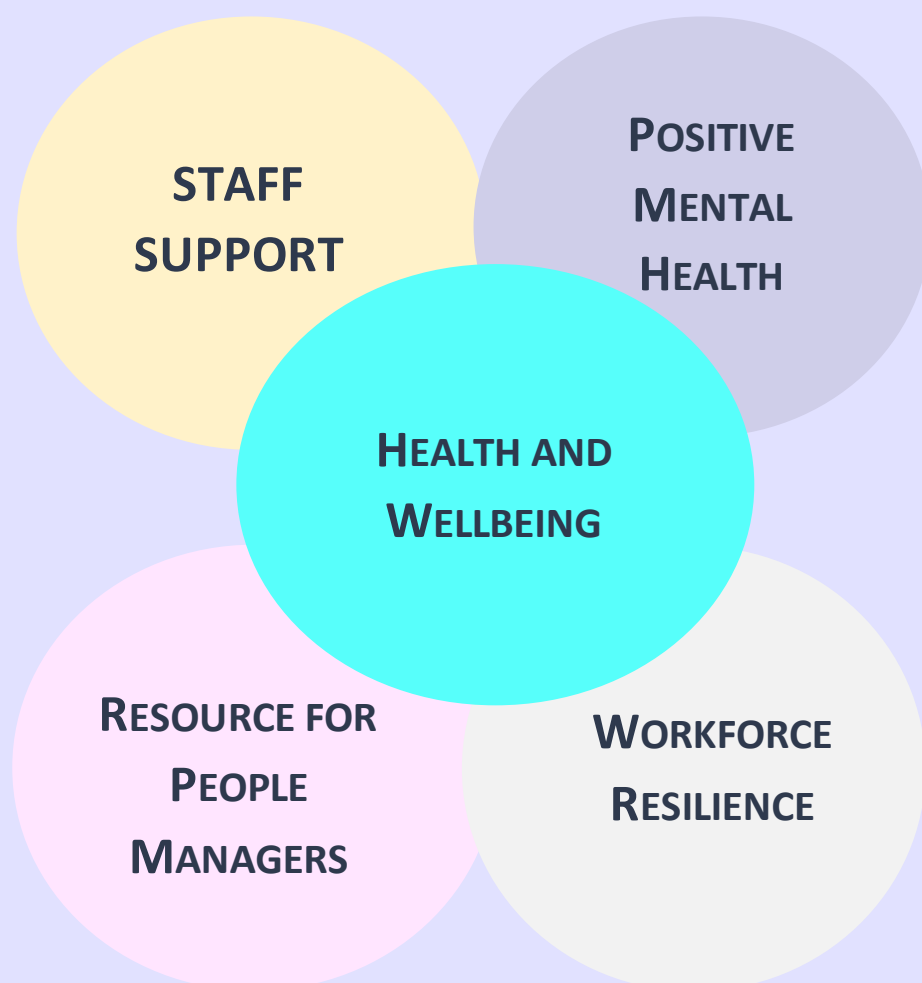
# Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS)

Seirbhís Chúnaimh  
d'Fhostaithe na Státseirbhíse



Civil Service Employee  
Assistance Service

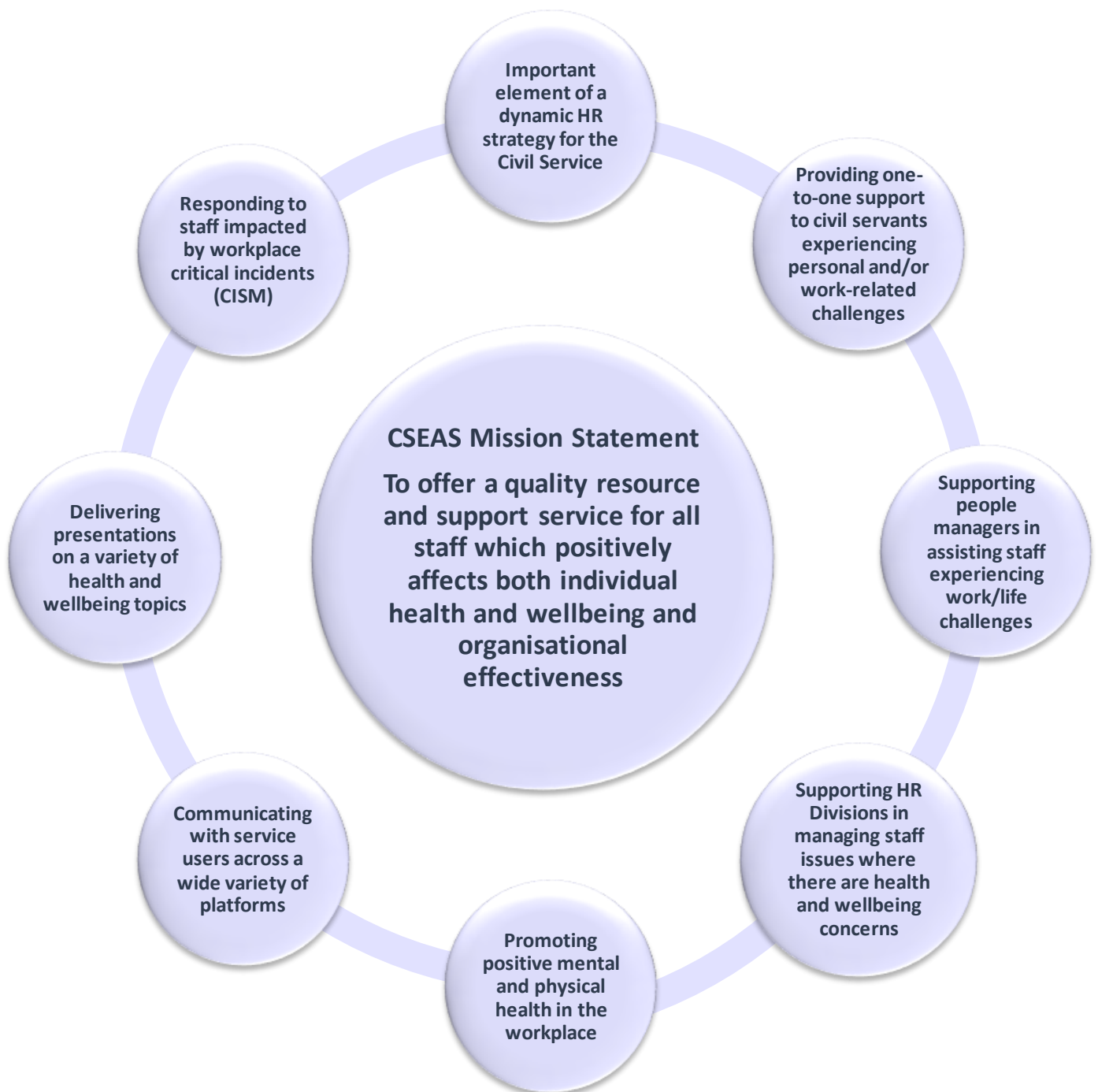
## Activity Report 2019



**SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING  
WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE**



An Roinn Caiteachais  
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe  
Department of Public  
Expenditure and Reform



See Appendix 5 [About the CSEAS](#) for further details

**The CSEAS plays a key part in the Civil Service ethos of promoting employee wellbeing and organisational effectiveness**

**15% of Civil Servants made contact with the CSEAS in 2019**

**The CSEAS supports the employer's duty of care to its employees under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 in the area of psychosocial issues**

## Contents

Foreword.....	2
Introduction.....	3
CSEAS 2019 Activity Snapshot.....	4
Stakeholder Linkages at a Glance .....	10
CSEAS Activity Trends 2015 - 2019 .....	11
APPENDICES.....	16
Appendix 1: Details of CSEAS Activity 2019 .....	17
Table 1: CSEAS Casework by Department/Office.....	17
Table 2: CSEAS Casework by County .....	18
Table 3: CSEAS Casework by Grade.....	19
Table 4: CSEAS Casework by Category .....	20
Appendix 2: CSEAS Health and Wellbeing Promotion 2019 .....	21
Appendix 3: CSEAS Electronic Platform.....	25
Appendix 4: Stakeholder Linkages .....	26
Appendix 5: About the CSEAS.....	29
CSEAS Structure.....	34
Appendix 6: Contacting the CSEAS.....	35
CSEAS Team 2019 .....	36

## FOREWORD

I am delighted to present the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) 2019 Activity Report which showcases the work of this support service. In 2019, the CSEAS continued to adopt an innovative and collaborative approach to delivering on our commitment to enhance the wellbeing of the individual staff member and the organisation. The work of the CSEAS supports and complements the work carried out by management and HR to promote a workforce that is valued, healthy and resilient.

Many of us experience challenges from time to time as we go through life, including work pressures, family and relationship problems and other personal issues. Having access to a confidential service that can provide a listening ear, guidance, information and support can go a long way to assist in managing the varied challenges we face. The CSEAS does just that.

In February 2019, the CSEAS officially launched the People Managers' Guide; a resource to assist managers in dealing with issues that frequently arise in the workplace. The launch highlighted the importance of dealing with difficult workplace issues in a sensitive, proactive and open way leading to a positive impact on individuals' wellbeing and improved overall organisational performance. The guide acts as a valuable reference tool for managers and it also shows the pivotal role the CSEAS plays in supporting the Civil Service as an employer of choice.

Throughout the year the CSEAS has provided one-to-one support to over 4,000 individuals across all Departments and Offices and practical information to a further 1,700 staff. As well as providing individual support, the CSEAS also delivered 280 presentations during the year on a wide variety of wellbeing topics reaching an estimated 6,000 members of staff. As the Civil Service evolves and changes, the CSEAS continues to adapt appropriately so as to continue to be an integral and invaluable resource to all.

I would like to thank the CSEAS for providing a professional, confidential and supportive service to a growing and evolving workforce. The breadth of work and initiatives detailed in this Report provide me with every confidence in the ability of the Service to support staff and management in dealing with any challenges they may face. I wish the CSEAS continued success in 2020 and beyond.



Paschal Donohoe T.D.

Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform

## INTRODUCTION

The Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) activity in 2019 presented in this Report includes a detailed breakdown of service usage by demographic and year-on-year comparisons.

In 2019, 15% of civil servants contacted the CSEAS of which, 11% availed of one-to-one support. This indicates the pivotal role the CSEAS plays in promoting and maintaining a healthy and resilient workforce.

A wide range of presentations/workshops were delivered by the CSEAS across Government departments on a variety of health and wellbeing topics. (see [Appendix 2](#) for details).

The CSEAS People Managers' Guide was officially launched in February 2019 by Aidan O'Driscoll, Secretary General, Department of Justice and Equality. This Guide is designed to assist both people managers and HR Divisions in supporting staff facing challenging life events. The development of this tailored Guide contributes significantly to Action 6 of the People Strategy for the Civil Service 2017–2020 by providing support and resources to managers and empowering them to better support their staff.

Engagement with stakeholders is key to ensuring that the CSEAS responds to the ongoing and emerging needs as the Civil Service continues its process of renewal (see [Appendix 4](#) for details).

The panel to the right represents a snapshot of CSEAS activities in 2019. The main body and appendices of this Report provide a more in-depth analysis of CSEAS activities during the year.

## CSEAS Key Facts 2019

- 15% of serving civil servants contacted the CSEAS during the year of which
  - 11% availed of one-to-one support
- The numerical breakdown of the above percentages are :
  - 5,790 civil servants contacted the CSEAS of which
    - 4,088 engaged in one-to-one casework
    - 1,702 telephoned/emailed the central CSEAS helpdesk and/or sought information from individual Employee Assistance Officers (EAOs)
- 12,353 sessions\* were provided
- 12% of work-related issues were manager consultations about staff wellbeing concerns
- 280 presentations were delivered across Government Departments and Offices on health and wellbeing related topics
  - Based on average attendance patterns at these presentations, the CSEAS addressed approximately 6,000 civil servants
- CSEAS responded to 7 workplace critical incidents
  - 71 staff members personally impacted by critical incidents received one-to-one support
- The launch of the CSEAS People Managers' Guide (hard copy) took place in February
- CSEAS Connect Newsletter – 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> issues were published
- CSEAS was present at Union Conferences highlighting the Service

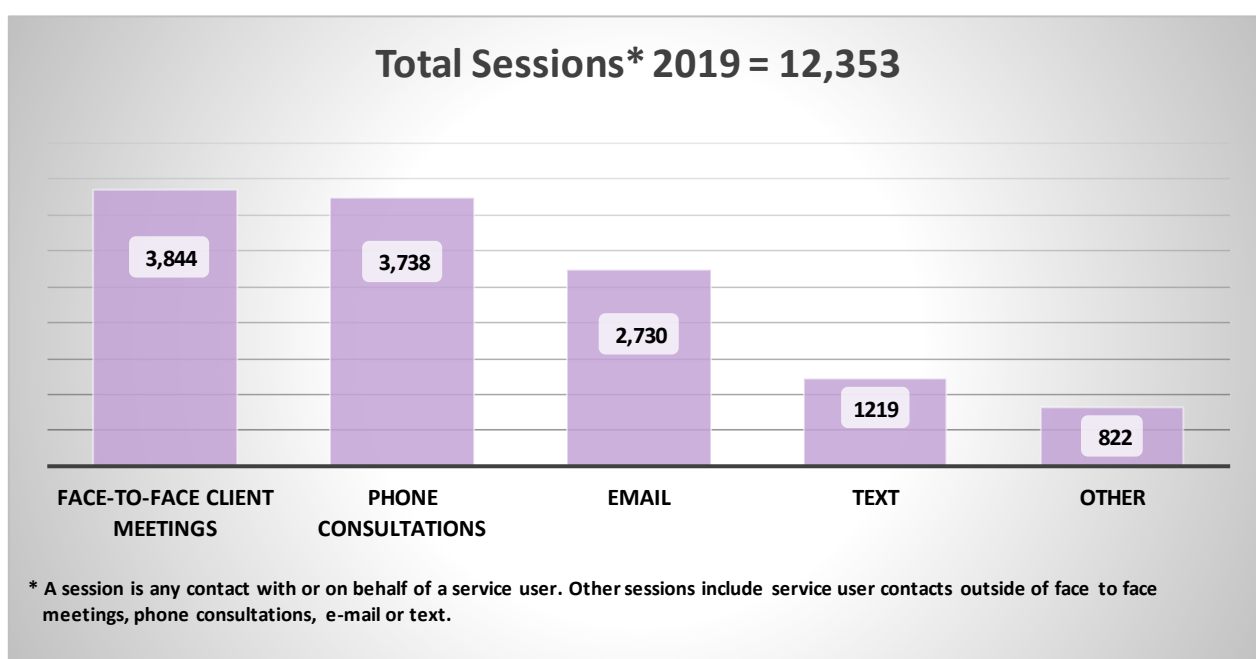
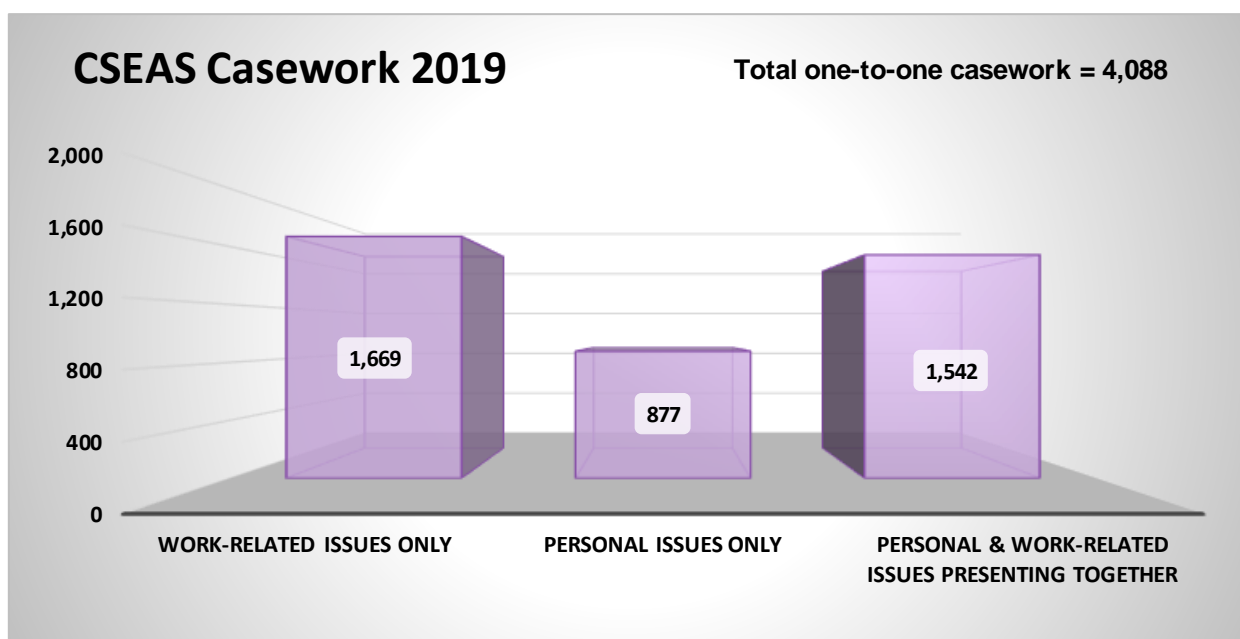
*\* Sessions refer to service user contacts/contacts on their behalf (face-to-face, phone, email, text)*

# CSEAS 2019 ACTIVITY SNAPSHOT

See [Appendix 1](#) for details

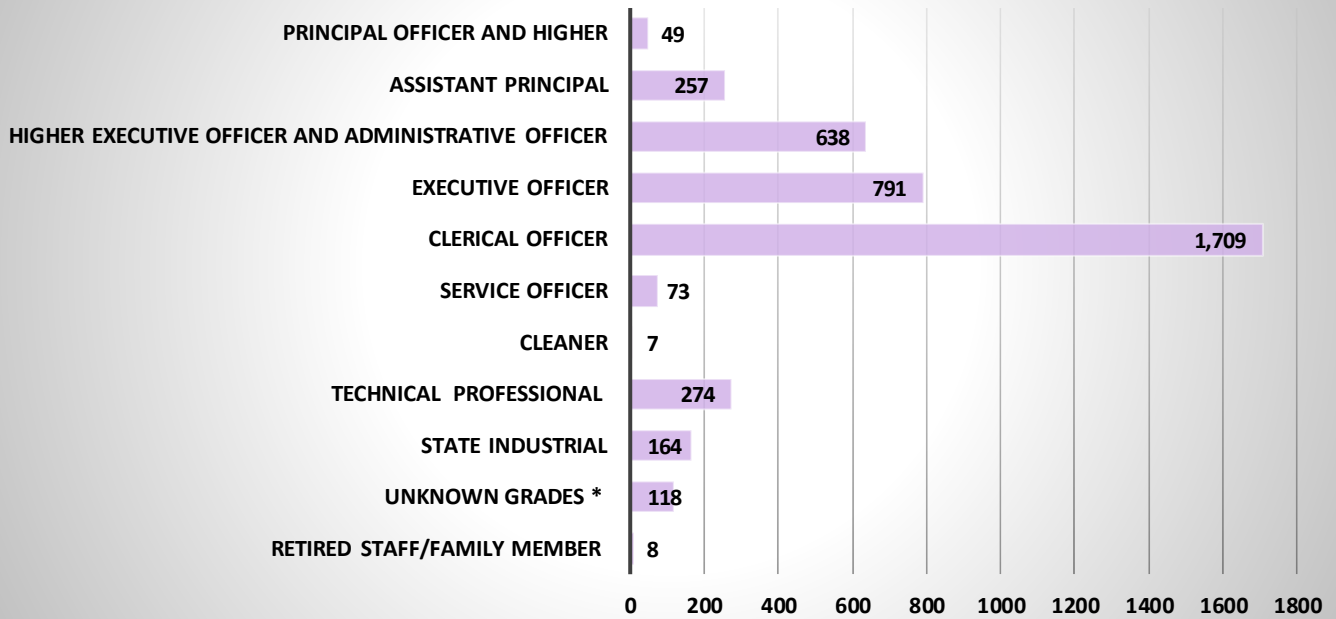
**15% of Civil Servants contacted the CSEAS in 2019**

**11% of the above represents one-to-one casework – the balance comprises CSEAS Helpdesk contacts and information requests**



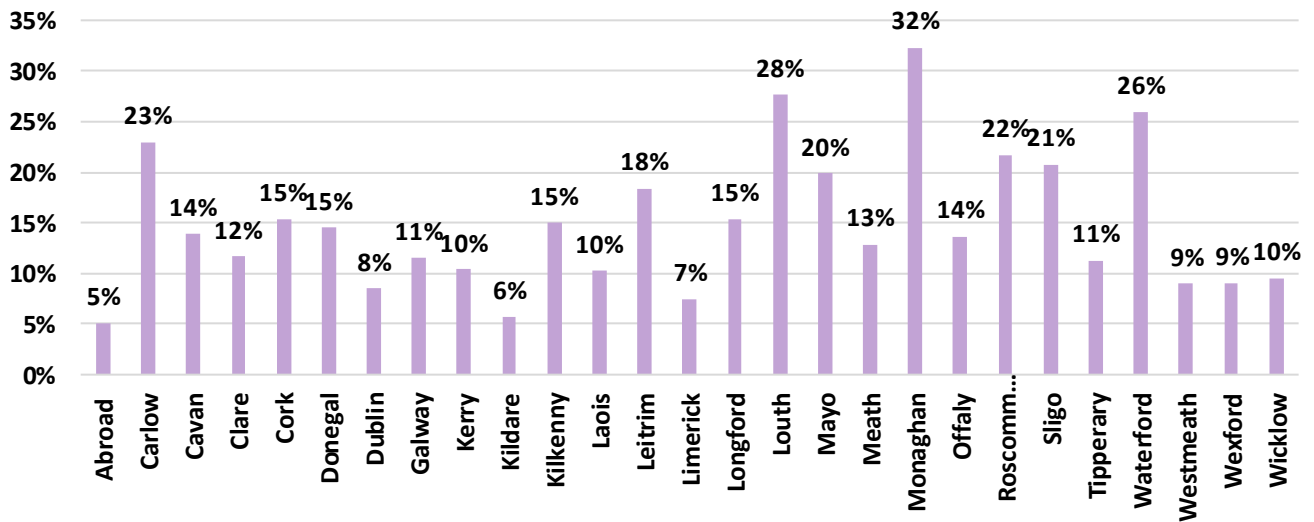
## CSEAS Casework by Grade 2019

Total one-to-one casework = 4,088

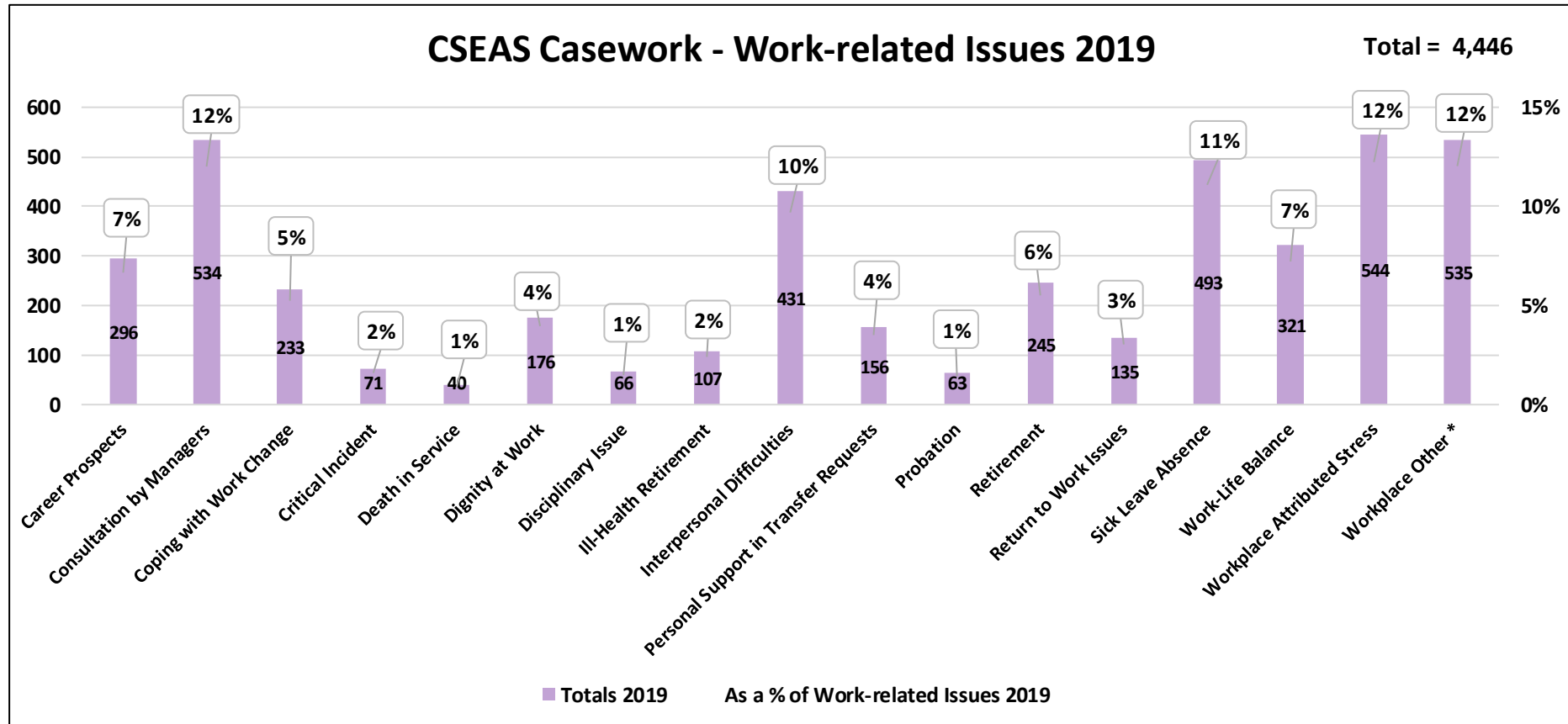


\* Unknown Grades refers to CSEAS cases where the grade was not disclosed by the service user

## % Usage (serving staff) by County across the Civil Service 2019



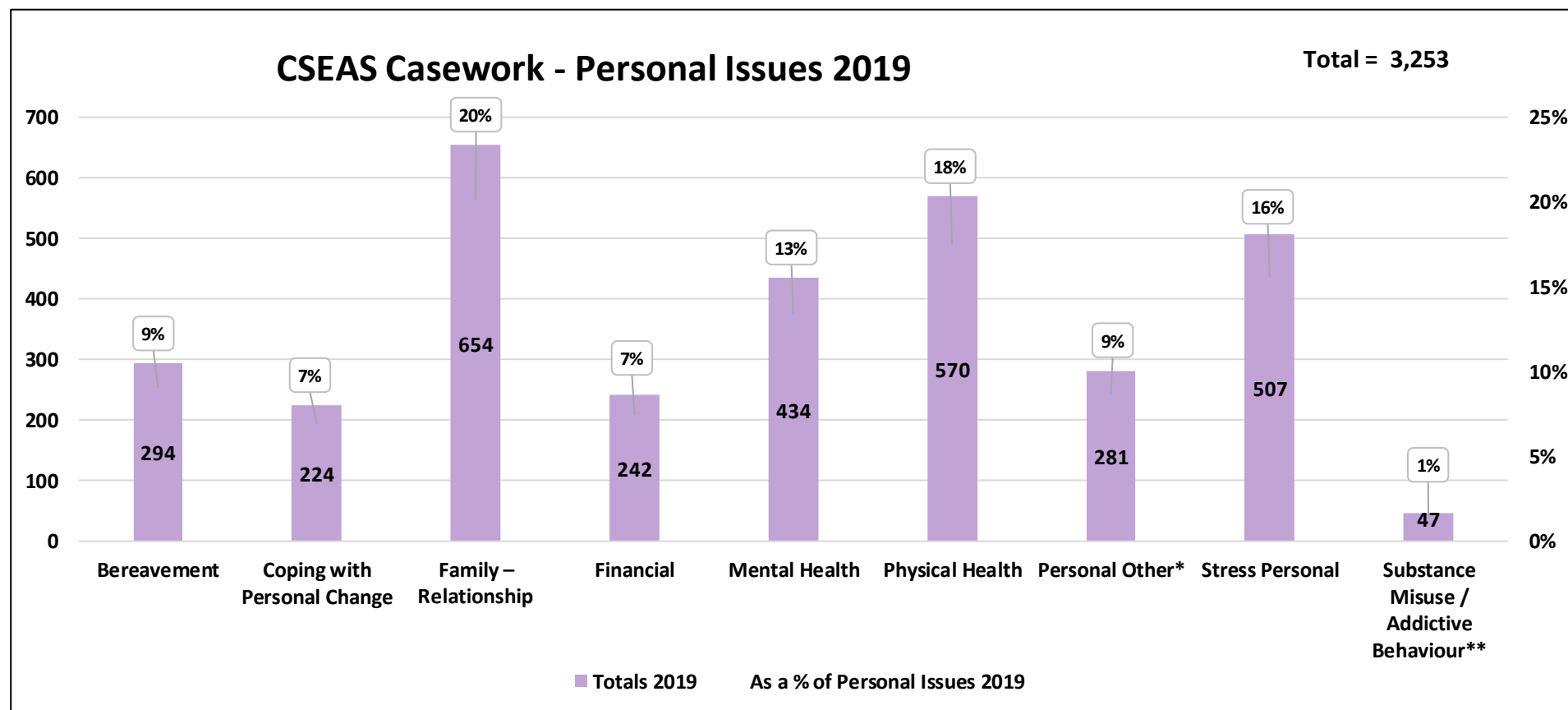
One-to-one clients using the CSEAS often wish to discuss a combination of issues. These issues are reflected individually in the figures below:



\* This category includes issues such as personal hygiene, violent incident and workplace issues/challenges excluding those categorised

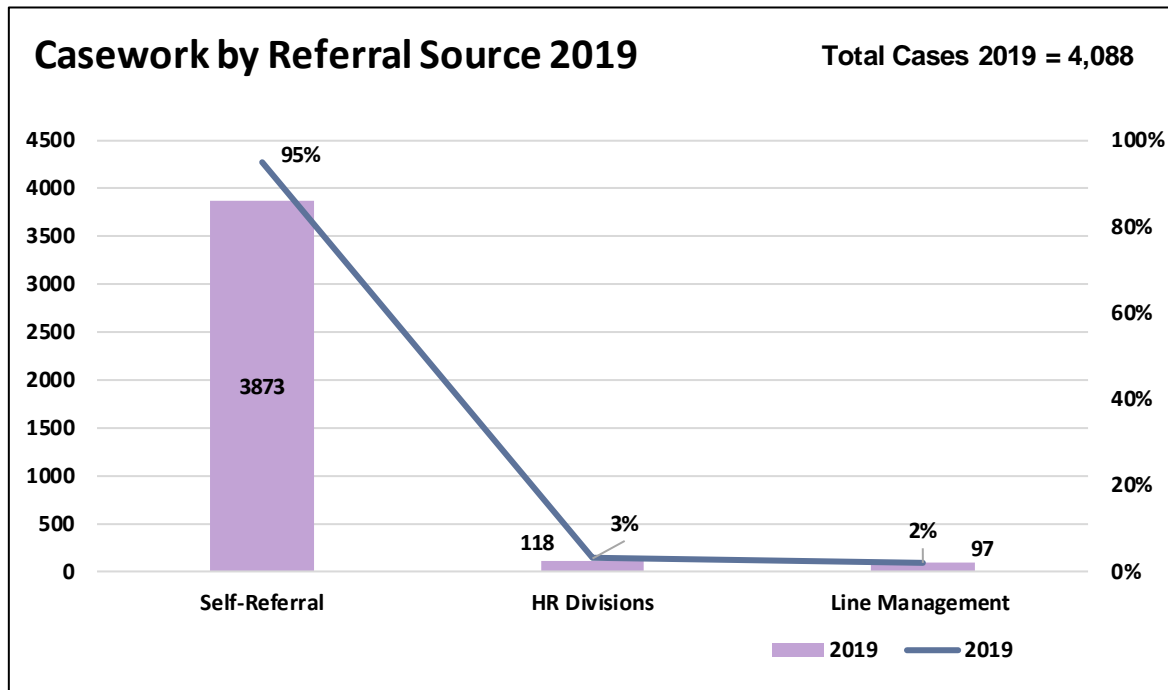


One-to-one clients using the CSEAS often wish to discuss a combination of issues. These issues are reflected individually in the figures below:



\* This category include issues/challenges such as domestic violence, maternity and personal issues excluding those categorised

\*\* This category includes issues with alcohol, drugs, gambling, internet etc.



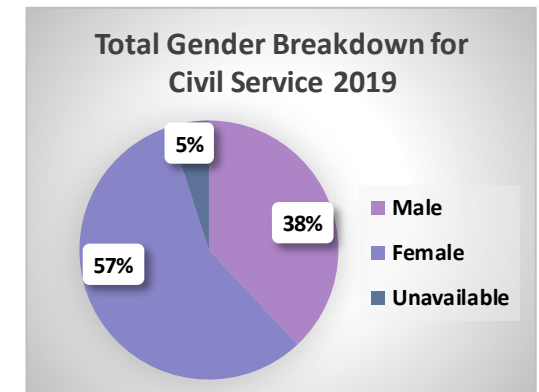
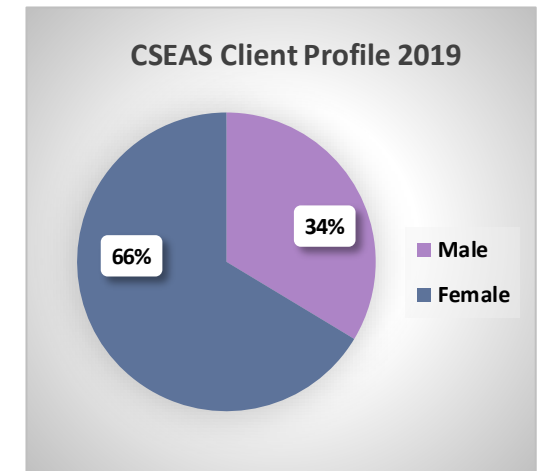
### Casework by Referral Source 2019

Self-referrals are service users who contact the CSEAS directly.

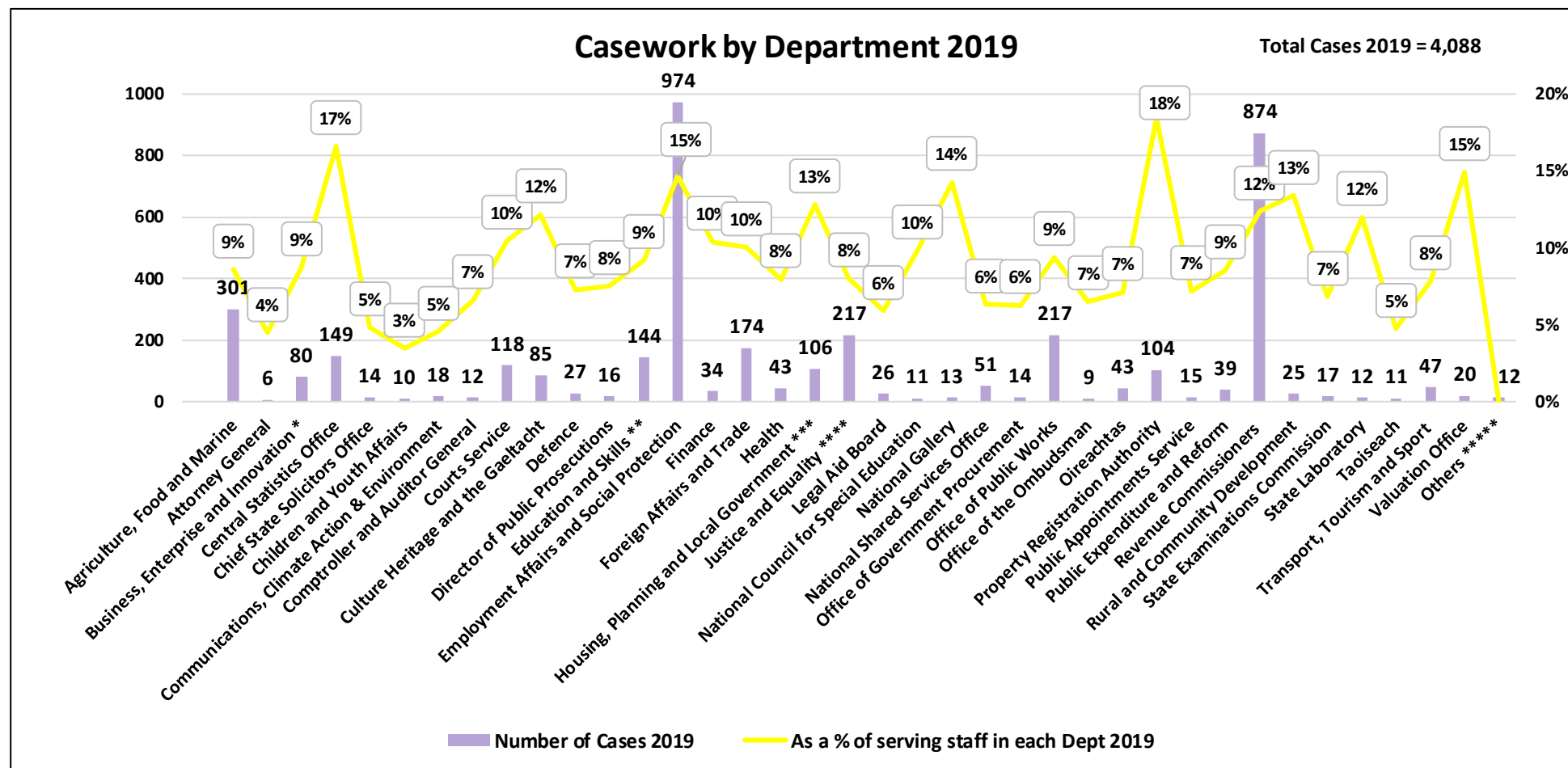
Self-referrals also include suggested referrals to the CSEAS by the following:

- HR
- Line Manager
- CMO
- Colleague
- Union

In keeping with Data Protection Regulations, the CSEAS only accept formal referrals from HR/Management where there is a risk to life e.g. suicidal intent or, where the referral has been recommended by the Office of the CMO.



5% figure above includes 1,886 State Industrial staff for whom a breakdown by gender is not available



- \* includes Labour Court, Company Registration Office, Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement, Workplace Relations Commission
- \*\* includes National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Commission to inquire into Child Abuse and the Residential Institutions Redress Board
- \*\*\* includes Met Éireann
- \*\*\*\* includes civil servants in the Irish Prison Service, IHREC, Data Protection Commission, Probation Service, Policing Authority,
- \*\*\*\*\* includes Garda Ombudsman (GSOC), National Library, National Museum, President's Establishment

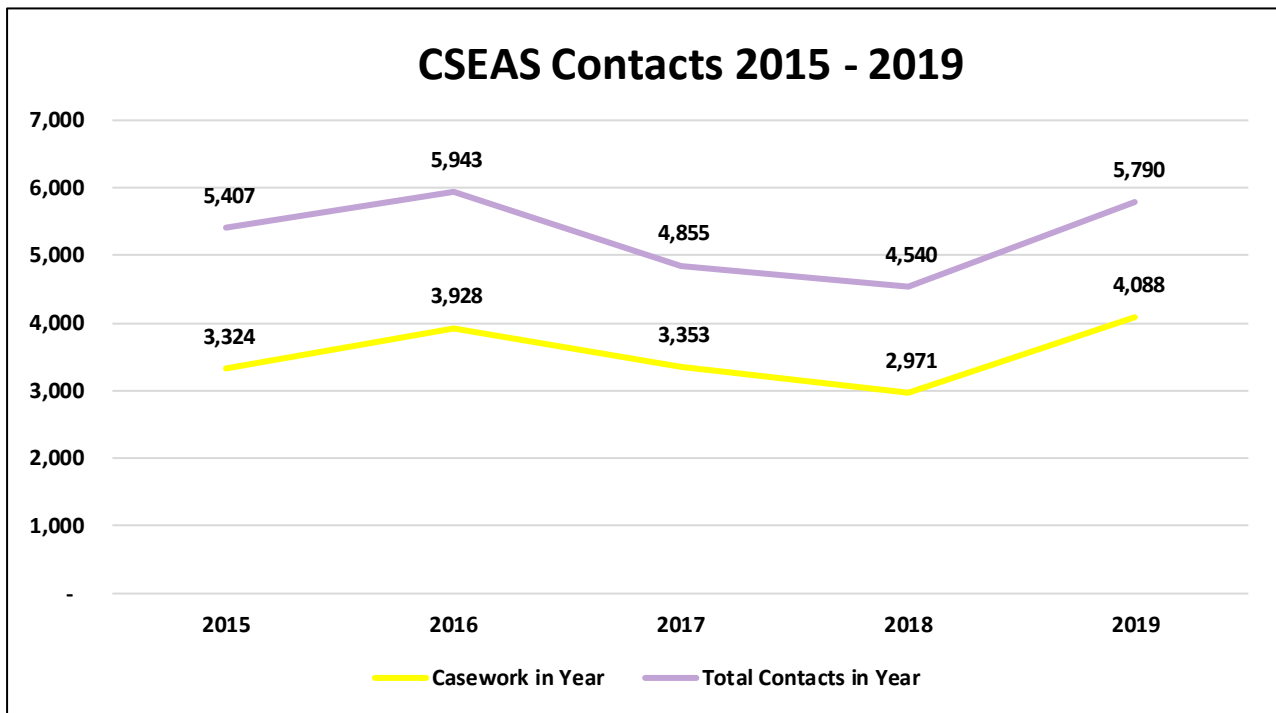
## STAKEHOLDER LINKAGES AT A GLANCE

Ongoing engagement with its stakeholders is a vital component in the work of the CSEAS. See [Appendix 4](#) for details

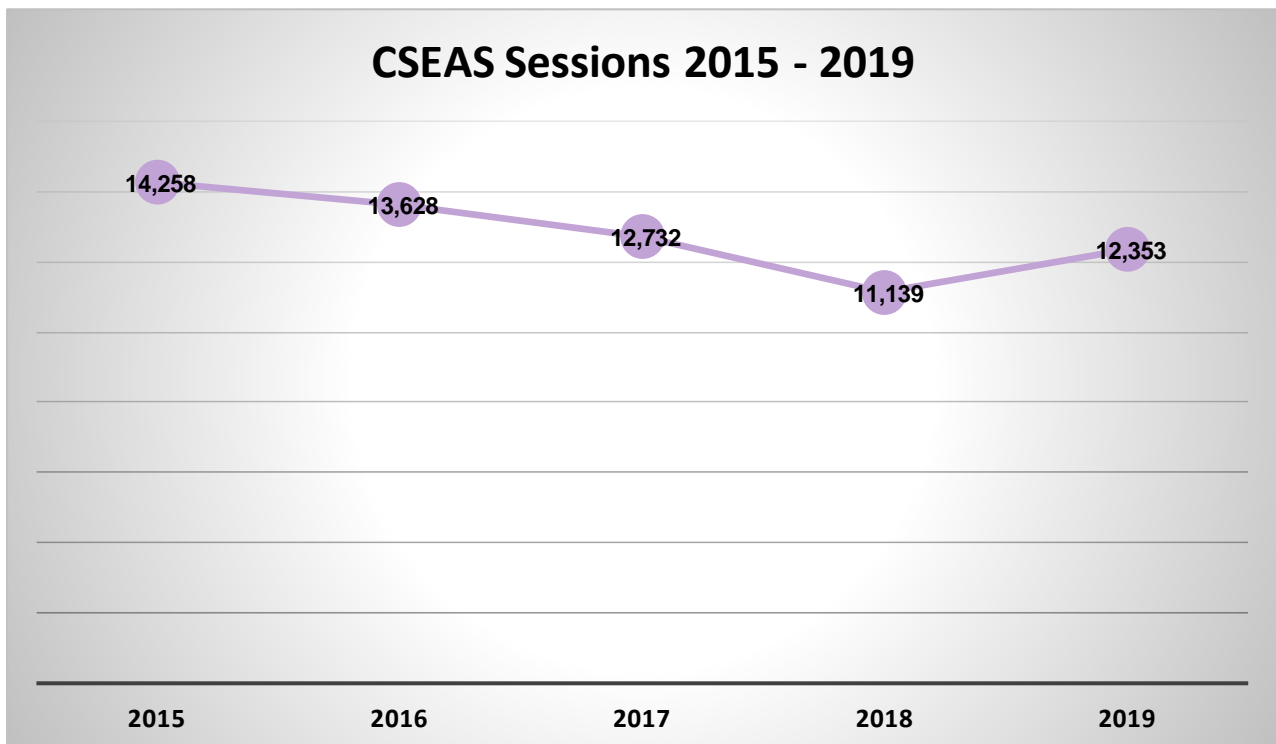


\* See [Appendix 6](#) [CONTACTING THE CSEAS](#)

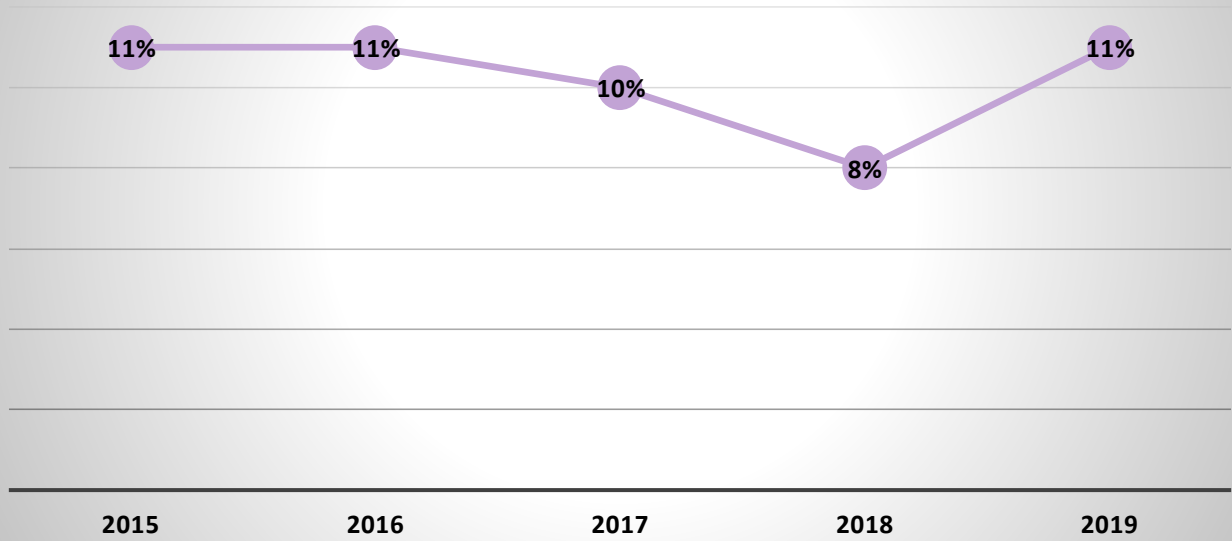
# CSEAS ACTIVITY TRENDS 2015 - 2019



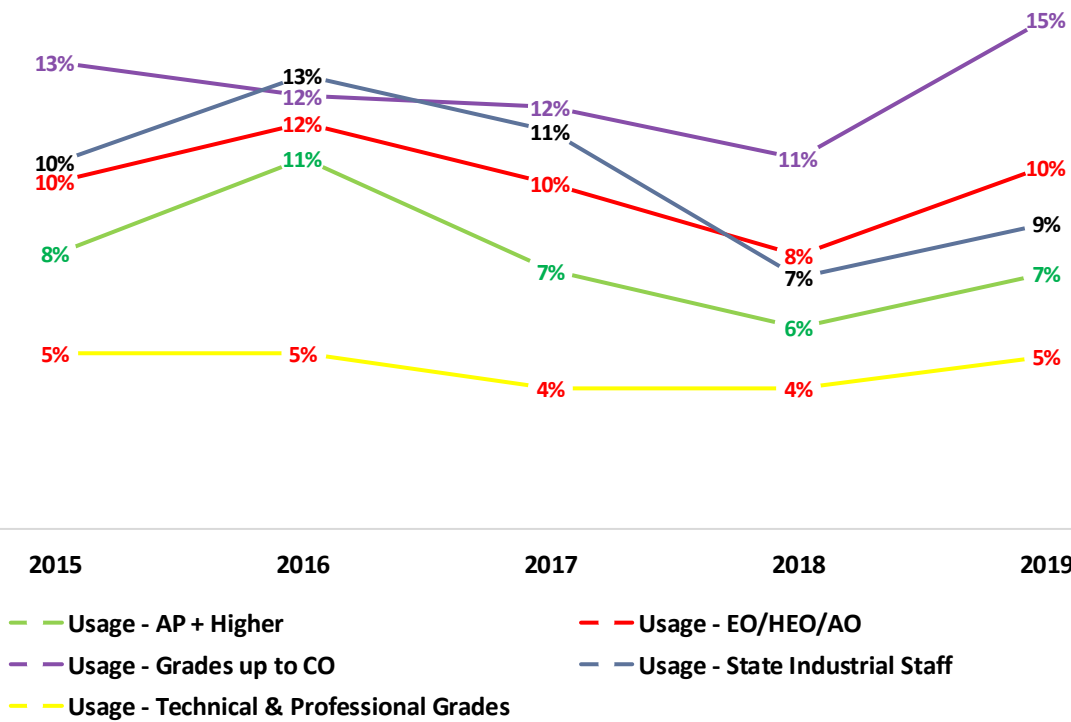
— “Total Contacts in Year” include callers/emails to the central CSEAS helpdesk and email address together with callers to individual Employee Assistance Officers requesting information only



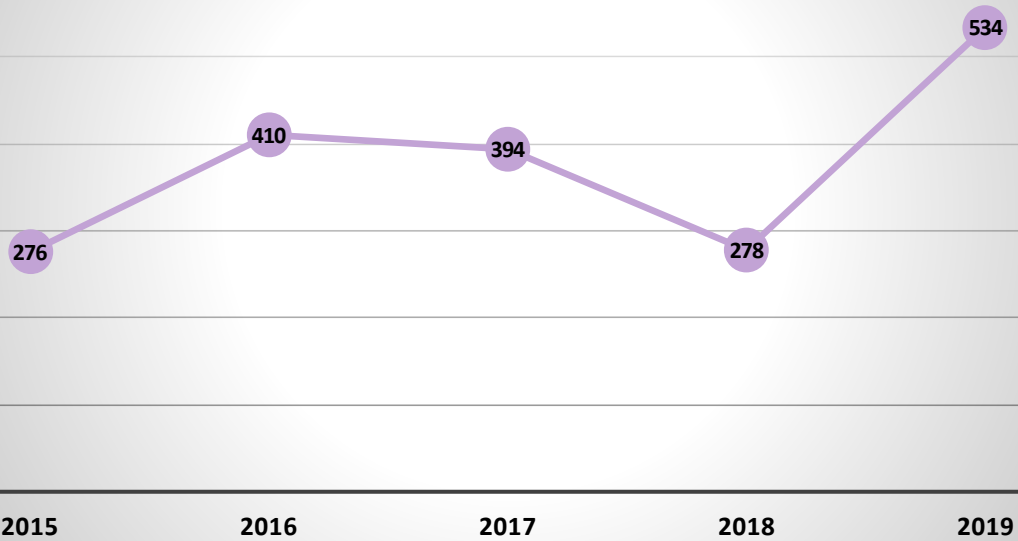
## CSEAS one-to-one usage across the Civil Service 2015 – 2019



## CSEAS one-to-one usage by Grade 2015 - 2019

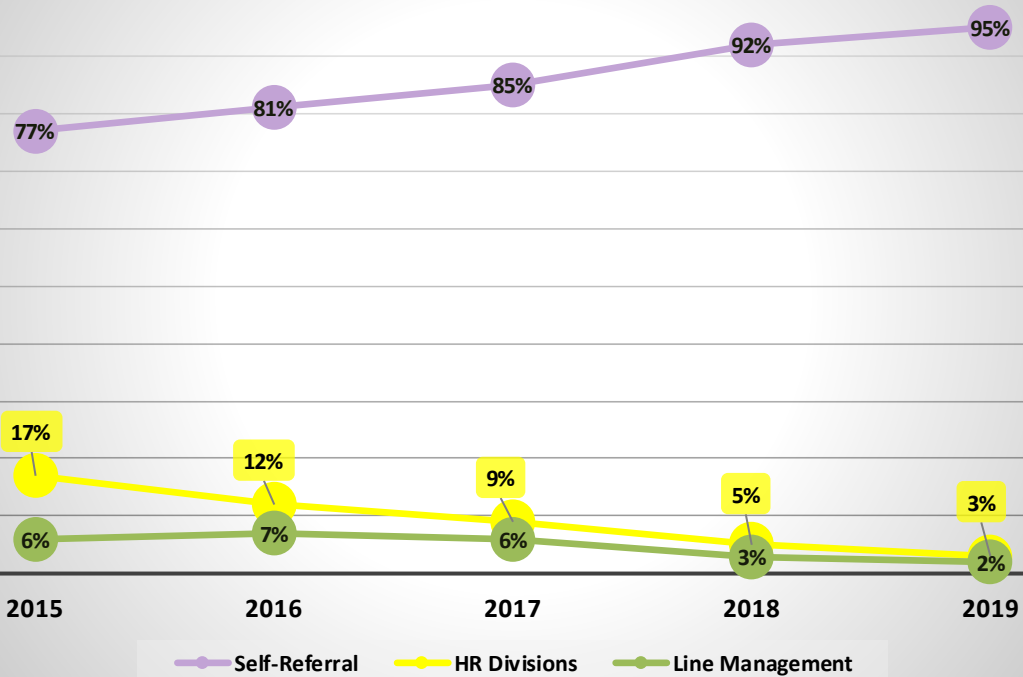


## Consultation by Managers



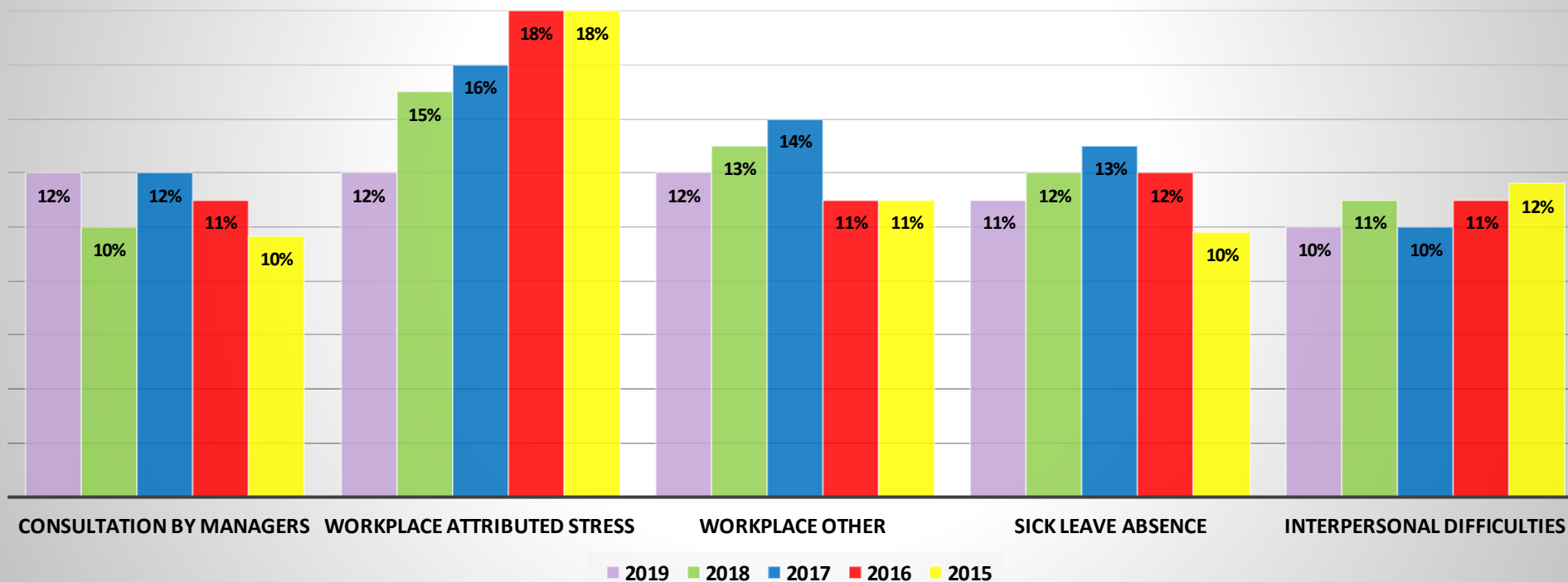
\* Consultation by managers in their role as People Managers

## Casework by Referral Source 2015 - 2019



## CSEAS Casework

**Top five work-related issues presenting as a % of total Work-related Issues in 2019.**  
*2015 to 2018 are shown for comparison purposes*

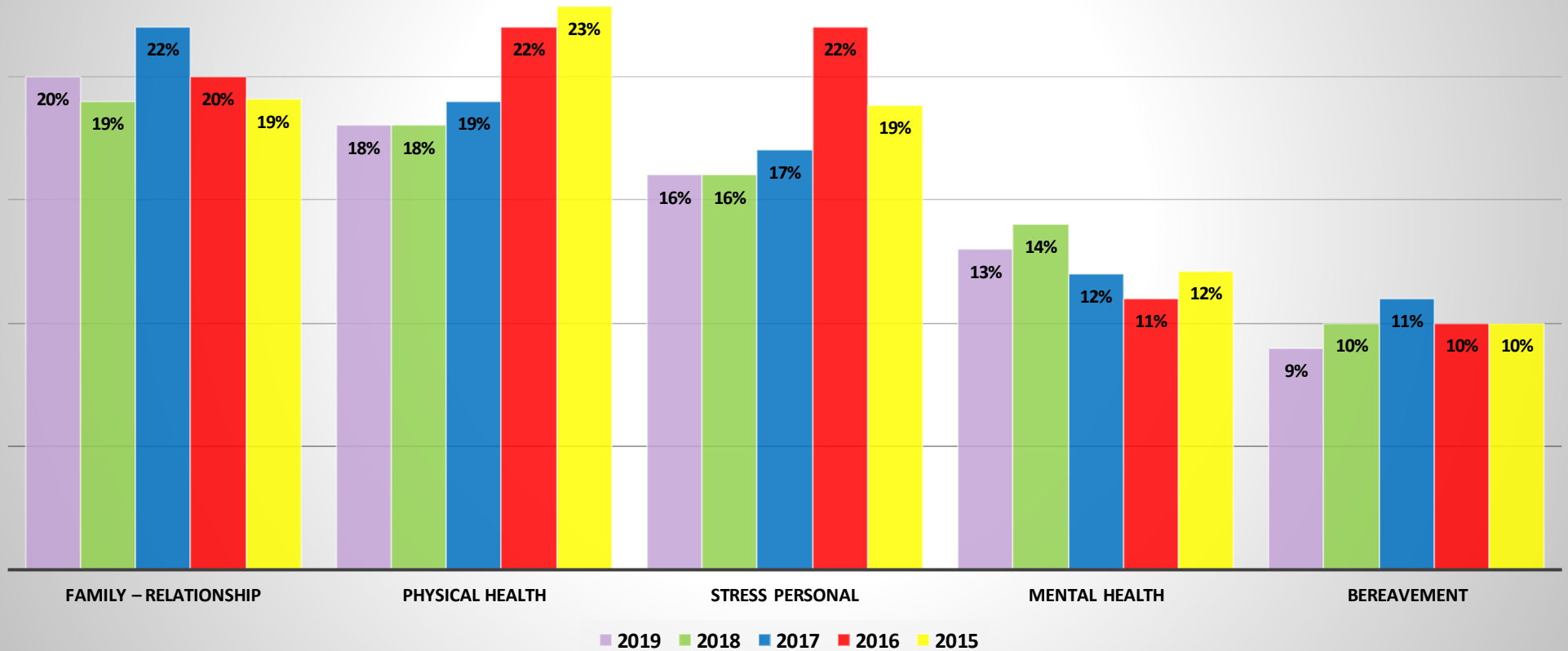


Workplace Other includes issues such as personal hygiene, violent incident and workplace issues/challenges excluding those categorised



## CSEAS Casework

Top five personal issues presenting as a % of total Personal Issues in 2019.  
*2015 to 2018 are shown for comparison purposes*



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: DETAILS OF CSEAS ACTIVITY 2019

**Table 1: CSEAS Casework by Department/Office**

	Number of Cases 2019	As a % of serving staff in each Department 2019	Total Serving Staff (Established & State Industrial) at end Sept 2019
Agriculture, Food and Marine	301	9%	3,509
Attorney General	6	4%	135
Business, Enterprise and Innovation *	80	9%	917
Central Statistics Office	149	17%	897
Chief State Solicitor's Office	14	5%	290
Children and Youth Affairs	10	3%	291
Communications, Climate Action & Environment	18	5%	397
Comptroller and Auditor General	12	7%	182
Courts Service	118	10%	1,128
Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht	85	12%	698
Defence	27	7%	370
Director of Public Prosecutions	16	8%	213
Education and Skills **	144	9%	1,565
Employment Affairs and Social Protection	974	15%	6,637
Finance	34	10%	327
Foreign Affairs and Trade	174	10%	1,735
Health	43	8%	540
Housing, Planning and Local Government ***	106	13%	827
Justice and Equality ****	217	8%	2,707
Legal Aid Board	26	6%	442
National Council for Special Education	11	10%	112
National Gallery	13	14%	91
National Shared Services Office	51	6%	808
Office of Government Procurement	14	6%	223
Office of Public Works	217	9%	2,308
Office of the Ombudsman	9	7%	138
Oireachtas	43	7%	604
Property Registration Authority	104	18%	564
Public Appointments Service	15	7%	209
Public Expenditure and Reform	39	9%	457
Revenue Commissioners	874	12%	7,073
Rural and Community Development	25	13%	187
State Examinations Commission	17	7%	250
State Laboratory	12	12%	100
Taoiseach	11	5%	233
Transport, Tourism and Sport	47	8%	601
Valuation Office	20	15%	134
Others *****	12	Not Applicable	145
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,088</b>		<b>38,044</b>

\* includes Labour Court, Company Registration Office, Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement, Workplace Relations Commission

\*\* includes National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Commission to inquire into Child Abuse and the Residential Institutions Redress Board

\*\*\* includes Met Éireann

\*\*\*\* includes civil servants in the Irish Prison Service, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Data Protection Commission, Policing Authority, Probation Service

\*\*\*\*\* includes Garda Ombudsman (GSOC), National Museum, President's Establishment

**Table 2: CSEAS Casework by County**

County	Total CSEAS Cases by County	Total Staff in Civil Service by County at end Sept 2019	% Usage (serving staff) by County across the Civil Service 2019
Abroad *	20	391	5%
Carlow	45	196	23%
Cavan	51	367	14%
Clare	57	490	12%
Cork	339	2,208	15%
Donegal	122	840	15%
Dublin	1,560	18,413	8%
Galway	122	1,062	11%
Kerry	102	984	10%
Kildare	62	1,082	6%
Kilkenny	63	420	15%
Laois	67	656	10%
Leitrim	56	304	18%
Limerick	107	1,434	7%
Longford	104	678	15%
Louth	165	597	28%
Mayo	120	604	20%
Meath	101	784	13%
Monaghan	43	133	32%
Offaly	72	527	14%
Roscommon	54	249	22%
Sligo	182	876	21%
Tipperary	104	920	11%
Waterford	172	662	26%
Westmeath	102	1,137	9%
Wexford	81	892	9%
Wicklow	15	157	10%
Location unavailable		981	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,088</b>	<b>38,044**</b>	

\* Staff posted abroad figure does not include local recruits

\*\* Includes State Industrial Staff. Excludes Garda Civilians and Prison Officers as they do not come within the remit of the CSEAS.

**Table 3: CSEAS Casework by Grade**

	<b>Total Cases 2019</b>	<b>2019 Cases as a % of Serving Staff in each grade</b>	<b>Numbers in grades 2019 <sup>1</sup></b>
Assistant Principal	257	9%	2,958
Clerical Officer	1,709	15%	11,644
Cleaner	7	8%	93
Executive Officer	791	10%	7,969
Higher Executive Officer and Administrative Officer	638	11%	5,894
Principal Officer and Higher	49	4%	1,242
Service Officer	73	12%	591
State Industrial	164	9%	1,886
Technical Professional	274	5%	5,579
Unknown Grades *	118	-	188
Retired Staff/Family Member **	8	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,088</b>		<b>38,044</b>

<sup>1</sup> Separating General Service Grades from Professional & Technical Equivalents

\* Unknown Grades refers to CSEAS cases where the grade was not disclosed by the service user

\*\* This category relates mainly to Death in Service / death of a retired staff member

**Table 4: CSEAS Casework by Category**

One-to-one clients using the CSEAS often wish to discuss a combination of issues. These issues are reflected individually in the figures below:

<b>Work-related Issues</b>	<b>Totals 2019</b>	<b>As a % of Total Work-related Issues 2019</b>
Career Prospects	296	7%
Consultation by Managers	534	12%
Coping with Work Change	233	5%
Critical Incident	71	2%
Death in Service	40	1%
Dignity at Work	176	4%
Disciplinary Issue	66	1%
Ill-Health Retirement	107	2%
Interpersonal Difficulties	431	10%
Personal Support in Transfer Requests	156	4%
Probation	63	1%
Retirement	245	6%
Return to Work Issues	135	3%
Sick Leave Absence	493	11%
Work-Life Balance	321	7%
Workplace Attributed Stress	544	12%
Workplace Other *	535	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4446</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Personal Issues</b>	<b>Totals 2019</b>	<b>As a % of Total personal Issues 2019</b>
Bereavement	294	9%
Coping with Personal Change	224	7%
Family – Relationship	654	20%
Financial	242	7%
Mental Health	434	13%
Physical Health	570	18%
Personal Other**	281	9%
Stress Personal	507	16%
Substance Misuse / Addictive Behaviour***	47	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3253</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>7699</b>	

\* Includes issues such as personal hygiene, violent incidents and other challenges excluding those categorised

\*\* Includes issues such as domestic violence, maternity and other challenges excluding those categorised

\*\*\* Includes issues with alcohol, drugs, gambling, internet etc.

## APPENDIX 2: CSEAS HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROMOTION 2019

At the request of Government Department/Offices, the CSEAS is available to deliver presentations/workshops on a variety of topics. These sessions are tailored to suit the specific needs of the requesting Department/Office and may cover a variety of topics within the same presentation. The CSEAS aims to be flexible in accommodating the needs of management and staff in these instances. The table below outlines our work in this area in 2019 categorised by Department/Office.

Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
<b>Agriculture, Food and the Marine</b>	Information on the CSEAS	4	<b>10</b>
	Positive Mental Health	2	
	Stress Management	1	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	3	
<b>Attorney General</b>	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work/ Harmony at Work	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Business Enterprise and Innovation</b>	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	<b>4</b>
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work/ Harmony at Work	1	
	Stress Management	1	
<b>Central Statistics Office</b>	Information on the CSEAS	7	<b>12</b>
	Positive Mental Health	2	
	Self-Care for HR staff	2	
	Stress Management	1	
<b>Chief State Solicitor's Office</b>	Building Resilience	1	<b>3</b>
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	2	
<b>Courts Service</b>	Information on the CSEAS	2	<b>6</b>
	Stress Management	2	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	2	
<b>Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht</b>	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	6	<b>14</b>
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work/ Harmony at Work	2	
	Work/Life Balance	6	

Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
<b>Defence</b>	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	<b>5</b>
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
	Stress Management	3	
<b>Director of Public Prosecutions</b>	Suicide Awareness	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Education &amp; Skills</b>	Information on the CSEAS	3	<b>4</b>
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	1	
<b>Employment Affairs and Social Protection</b>	Bereavement	2	<b>49</b>
	Building Resilience	1	
	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls / Distressed Customers	1	
	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	
	Information on the CSEAS	23	
	Mindfulness	1	
	Positive Mental Health	1	
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work/ Harmony at Work	1	
	Planning for Retirement	2	
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
	Stress Management	6	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	9	
<b>Finance</b>	Bereavement	1	<b>7</b>
	Information on the CSEAS	5	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	1	
<b>Foreign Affairs and Trade</b>	Information on the CSEAS	7	<b>11</b>
	Positive Mental Health	1	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	3	
<b>Housing, Planning and Local Government</b>	Information on the CSEAS	3	<b>3</b>



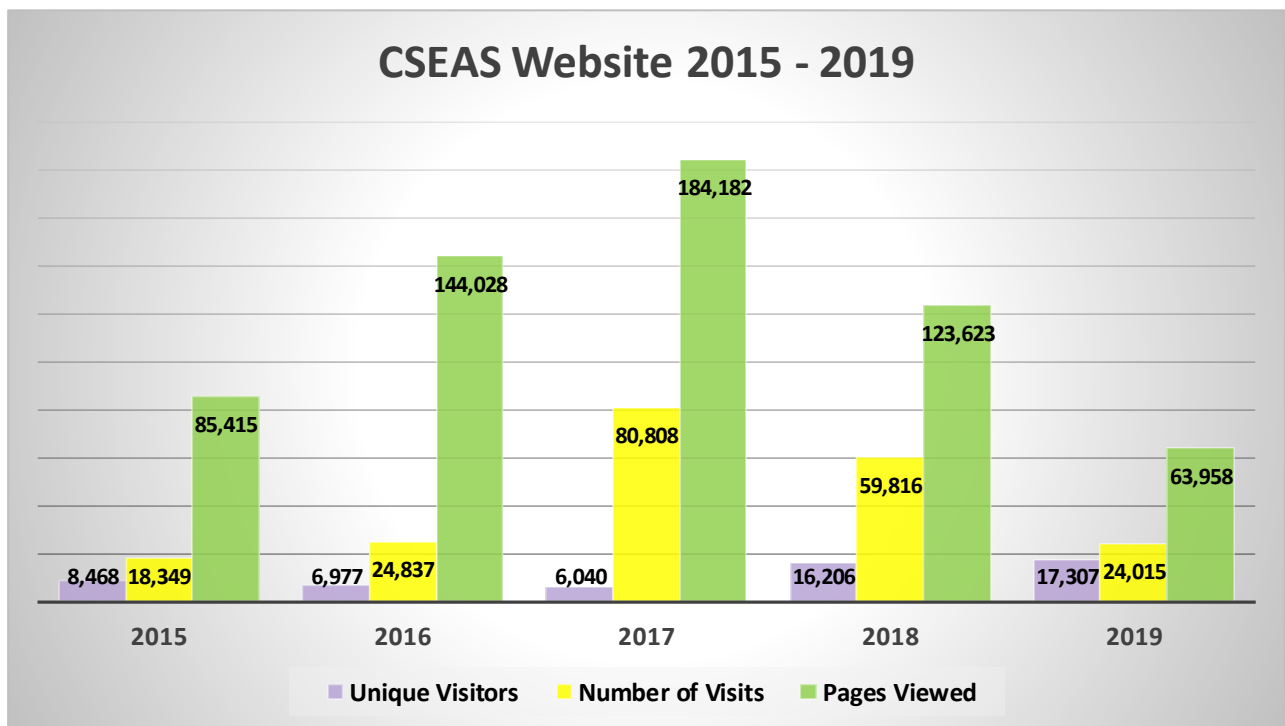
Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
<b>Justice and Equality</b>	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls / Distressed Customers	1	<b>15</b>
	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	
	Information on the CSEAS	9	
	Stress Management	4	
<b>Met Éireann</b>	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	3	<b>3</b>
<b>National Council For Special Education</b>	Information on the CSEAS	1	<b>2</b>
	Stress Management	1	
<b>National Gallery</b>	Effective Communication	1	<b>2</b>
	Stress Management	1	
<b>National Shared Services Office</b>	Self-Care for HR staff	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Office of Government Procurement</b>	Information on the CSEAS	3	<b>5</b>
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	2	
<b>Office of Public Works</b>	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	4	<b>13</b>
	Information on the CSEAS	6	
	Planning for Retirement – Input to courses run by OPW	3	
<b>Office of the Ombudsman</b>	Conflict Resolution Skills	1	<b>3</b>
	Information on the CSEAS	2	
<b>Office of the Revenue Commissioners</b>	Building Resilience	3	<b>64</b>
	Frontline Staff / Shift workers Self Care	10	
	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	5	
	Information on the CSEAS	19	
	Planning for Retirement	3	
	Positive Mental Health	14	
	Stress Management	1	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	9	
<b>Oireachtas</b>	Positive Mental Health	1	<b>2</b>
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	1	

Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
Property Registration Authority	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	4
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
	Positive Mental Health	2	
Public Appointments Service	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls / Distressed Customers	1	4
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work/ Harmony at Work	1	
	Stress Management	1	
Public Expenditure and Reform	Information on the CSEAS	4	6
	Self-Care for HR staff	2	
Rural and Community Development	Information on the CSEAS	1	4
	Positive Mental Health	1	
	Stress Management	2	
State Laboratory	Positive Mental Health	1	2
	Stress Management	1	
Taoiseach	Bereavement	1	3
	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls /Distressed Customers	2	
Transport, Tourism and Sport	Information on the CSEAS	3	4
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers / People Managers' Guide	1	
Valuation Office	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	1
Workplace Relations Commission	Stress Management	1	1
Interdepartmental: AO Graduate Development Programme – Leadership Module	Building Resilience and The Corporate Athlete	9	9
Union Conferences	Information on the CSEAS	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>280</b>

## APPENDIX 3: CSEAS ELECTRONIC PLATFORM

The CSEAS website is a key communication platform which provides comprehensive information and support on a wide range of health and wellbeing topics. As well as being an important reference point for staff, it highlights CSEAS publications, events and news.

The website had a total of 17,307 unique visitors in 2019, representing an increase from last year. April 2<sup>nd</sup> saw the highest number of pages viewed on the website at 1,891 views. The top three areas viewed in the year were Workplace Wellbeing with 6,344 views, The People Managers' Guide with 4,574 views and the EAO Contact Details with 2,851 views. The CSEAS acknowledges and thanks the OGCIO for the ongoing expertise and support in the maintenance of the website.



## APPENDIX 4: STAKEHOLDER LINKAGES

A vital component in the work of the CSEAS is our ongoing engagement with stakeholders<sup>1</sup>. This is done in a number of ways, including on-the-ground engagement with HR personnel; management workshops with HR Divisions and line managers; working directly with service users; linkages with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Civil and Public Service Mediation Service (CPSMS) and other relevant bodies; attendance at Trade Union conferences; representation from the stakeholder groupings on the CSEAS Advisory Committee.



### HR Divisions

Attendance by the CSEAS manager at **Civil Service HR Managers Network** meetings ensures the CSEAS participates in the HR Manager forum on best practice HR management in the Civil Service. It is also an opportunity for CSEAS management to network across the Civil Service.

Regular attendance by the CSEAS at the **Employee Relations Network (ERN)**, a forum for HR practice discussion by HR personnel at all levels, ensures a collaborative approach in addressing HR case management issues in the Civil Service.

On request from HR Divisions, the CSEAS contributes to **Health and Wellbeing** programmes organised within Departments/Offices. CSEAS staff deliver presentations on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, Harmony at Work, Stress Management, Building Resilience, Positive Mental Health and, Mindfulness.

CSEAS management hosts **CSEAS/HR Managers Workshops** to gain feedback on CSEAS service delivery. This fosters CSEAS/HR Division relationships and communications.

The CSEAS delivers **Self-Care Awareness for HR Staff workshops** to HR Divisions on request. This initiative is in recognition of the need to support HR staff in their own self-care.

### Management

The CSEAS takes every opportunity to develop on-the-ground linkages with managers. The CSEAS proactively engages with people managers by providing support for those managing staff where there are personal and/or work-related issues.<sup>1</sup>

In 2019, this support included the official launch of the People Managers' Guide to assist managers in supporting staff experiencing work and/or life challenges. The official launch was hosted in February by Department of Foreign Affairs in Iveagh House, Dublin. Aidan O'Driscoll, Secretary General, Department of Justice and Equality, delivered the opening address and Patricia Murray, Organisational Psychologist, Health and Safety Authority was a guest speaker. Hard copies of this Guide are available from the CSEAS. The

---

<sup>1</sup> CSEAS protocols on confidentiality and GDPR are adhered to at all times

electronic version is available on the CSEAS website [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie). Throughout the year, the CSEAS delivered 34 presentations/workshops specifically relating to the People Manager's Guide and the role of the CSEAS as a support for managers. One-to-one consultations with managers for support in their role as people managers rose to 12% of work-related issues in 2019 from 10% in 2018. A contributing factor in this rise may be the increased awareness of the role of the CSEAS as a support for managers, following the high profile launch of the People Managers' Guide.

## Service Users

The CSEAS operates an on-duty Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) service via the CSEAS Helpdesk during office hours (Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm, Fri: 9am to 5.15pm, except bank/public holidays). The CSEAS also operates a central email service.

One-to-one client consultations are central to the work of the CSEAS. These contacts offer support and guidance to staff who may be experiencing personal and/or work-related difficulties.

The CSEAS engages in Health & Wellbeing promotion at the request of Departments/Offices through the delivery of presentations on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, Harmony at Work, Stress Management, Building Resilience, Positive Mental Health and, Mindfulness.

## Internal and External Links

The **Chief Medical Officer (CMO)** for the Civil Service is a member of the CSEAS Advisory Committee. Linkages with the Office of the CMO can be very valuable, particularly in supporting those absent on, or returning from, sick leave. See [www.cmo.gov.ie](http://www.cmo.gov.ie) for more information. The Office of the CMO may refer civil servants to, or suggest involvement with, the CSEAS either directly or through HR Divisions.

The CSEAS has links with the **Civil and Public Service Mediation Service (CPSMS)**. See <http://hr.per.gov.ie/mediation/> for more information. A member of the CSEAS team is a trained mediator and is listed on the CPSMS panel.

Each year members of the CSEAS team have a presence at the Civil Service **Trade Union Conferences** to promote the services available from the CSEAS.

The CSEAS is represented on the Management Committee of the **Public Service Friendly Society (PSFS)**. The Society provides financial support and advice to members of the Society who find themselves in financial difficulties. By fostering a strong relationship with the Society, the CSEAS can assist in supporting civil servants with financial concerns. Full details about the PSFS are available at [www.psfs.ie](http://www.psfs.ie)

The CSEAS is represented on the **Healthy Ireland Workplaces Framework** sub-group of Healthy Ireland (HI). HI has developed this national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Ireland over the coming generations. The Healthy Workplace initiative is an integral part of driving the Healthy Ireland agenda and makes an important contribution to healthier communities. CSEAS core values and objectives, as set out in the Mission Statement (page ii), align directly with the aim of this sub-group.

The CSEAS is represented on the **HR GDPR Working Group** within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform which consists of members from several government departments/offices.

The CSEAS has contributed to and delivered training to over 200 Administrative Officers as part of the **Civil Service Graduate Development Programme**. The training was conducted under the Leadership module and focussed on Stress Management, Resilience and the Corporate Athlete.

## APPENDIX 5: ABOUT THE CSEAS

### Who We Are

The CSEAS is the Employee Assistance Programme for the Irish Civil Service. It is a centralised service, operating on a regional basis, within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) offering supports and services to all civil servants. It plays a key part in an ethos of promoting employee wellness and organisational effectiveness. Provision of this service is a recognition that staff are a valued resource, whose continued wellbeing contributes to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Civil Service. The CSEAS supports the employer's duty of care to its employees under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 in the area of psychosocial issues such as stress, bullying and harassment, alcohol and drug misuse.

### What We Do

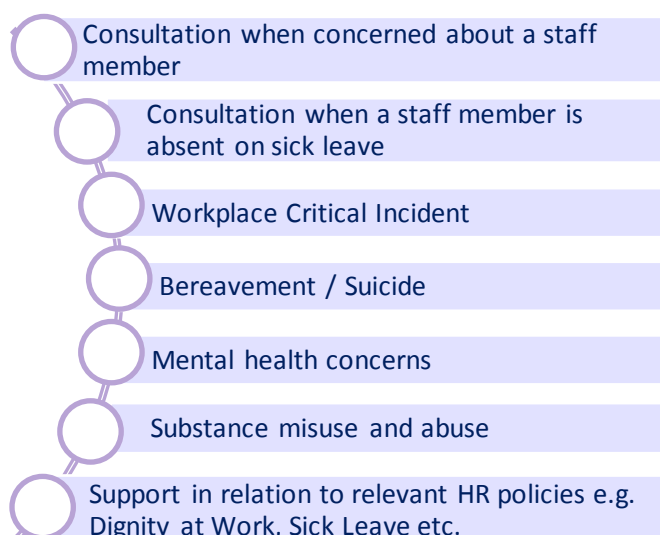
#### Support to Staff

The core element of the work of the CSEAS is supporting staff. It is a free and confidential<sup>2</sup> service provided to civil servants at times of personal and/or work-related difficulties. Such difficulties, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and quality of life. An on-duty Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) is available to provide support and assistance to service users through the CSEAS Helpdesk during office hours (Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm, Fri: 9am to 5.15pm except bank/public holidays). The CSEAS also operates a central email service.



#### Support to Managers

The CSEAS continued to proactively engage with managers<sup>3</sup> throughout 2019 by providing support for those managing staff experiencing personal and/or work-related issues. In 2019, this support included the launch, in February, of the People Managers' Guide. The publication of this report was supplemented throughout the year by delivery to several government departments of presentations/workshops on the Guide and the role of the CSEAS as a support for managers.



<sup>2</sup> Details on confidentiality and exceptions to this are available on the CSEAS website [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie)

<sup>3</sup> CSEAS protocols on confidentiality are adhered to in engagement with HR/Management

CSEAS support to managers includes the facility to anonymously<sup>4</sup> discuss staff issues arising. This allows managers to obtain support and guidance in dealing with the situation, explore options for managing it and consider the benefit of suggesting the use of the CSEAS to the staff member. In keeping with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR), the CSEAS can only accept formal referrals from HR/Management where there is a risk to life e.g. suicidal intent or, where the referral has been recommended by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO).

## Support to HR

Working with HR Divisions, the CSEAS engages in early interventions to help staff minimise sick leave absences, assist in return to work and to restore work capacity<sup>5</sup>. A flyer outlining information on how the CSEAS can offer support during sick leave absence from work was produced by the CSEAS in late 2019. CSEAS management continue to host CSEAS/HR Managers Workshops to seek feedback on service delivery and to consider how the CSEAS provides ongoing support to HR staff.

In 2019, the CSEAS continued to deliver Self-Care Awareness for HR Staff workshops. Based on organisational needs, workshops are delivered in-house with local HR staff or at CSEAS Headquarters with a mix of HR staff groupings.



CSEAS support to HR Divisions includes the facility for HR personnel to anonymously<sup>4</sup> discuss issues that can impact on staff wellbeing such as sick leave, absenteeism, return to work, underperformance, disciplinary issues and, inter-personal difficulties. This allows HR personnel obtain support and guidance in dealing with the situation arising, explore options for managing it and consider the benefit of suggesting the use of the CSEAS to staff members. In keeping with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR), the CSEAS can only accept formal referrals from HR/Management where there is a risk to life e.g. suicidal intent or, where the referral has been recommended by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO).

<sup>4</sup> Consultations should be on an anonymised basis bearing in mind GDPR obligations

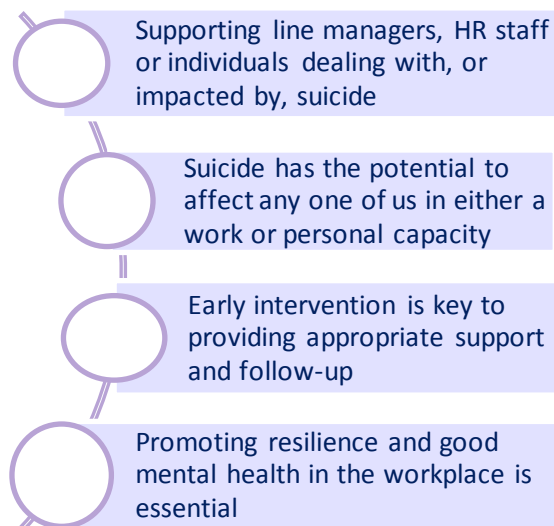
<sup>5</sup> CSEAS protocols on confidentiality are adhered to in engagement with HR/Management



## Responding to Suicide in the Workplace

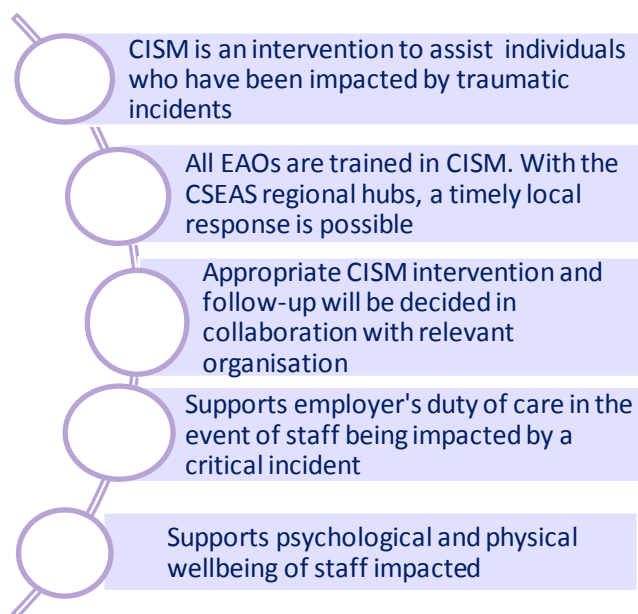
In 2019, the CSEAS supported 109 civil servants who had been affected by suicide or had suicidal ideation. "Connecting for Life", Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020, recognises the importance of developing guidance, training and support to workplaces in relation to suicide prevention.

Promoting resilience and positive mental health in the workplace is essential for a healthy and effective workforce and, recognising this, the CSEAS offers a range of presentations, leaflets and information designed to assist and support those in psychological distress. All EAOs are trained in suicide first aid having attended the HSE's ASIST and/or safeTALK training.



## Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

A critical incident in the workplace is an event out of the range of normal experience – one which is sudden and unexpected and may have a physical and/or emotional impact. In some cases it may involve the perception of a threat to life. These challenging events can have the potential to create significant distress and can overwhelm one's usual coping mechanisms. CISM is a systematic approach to managing critical incidents, incorporating interventions developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events. In responding effectively and professionally to a workplace critical incident, the aim of a CISM intervention is to minimise the potential negative consequences for both the individual(s) and the organisation.



EAOs are trained in CISM. Requests for CISM interventions for staff who are impacted by a critical incident can come from managers or HR Divisions. The CSEAS regional hubs facilitate a timely and locally accessible response when required. During 2019 the CSEAS provided CISM interventions following 7 workplace critical incidents. In addition to availing of support in a group setting, staff can avail of one-to-one CSEAS support when impacted by a workplace critical incident. In 2019, the CSEAS provided support to 71 individual staff members affected by a critical incident.

## Governance, Communications and Service Development

The **CSEAS Advisory Committee** oversees the structure of the CSEAS in the areas of governance, staffing and policy. Committee members comprise a Chairperson from DPER, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for the Civil Service, HR Managers from a number of Departments/Offices and the Secretary to the Civil Service General Council Staff Panel. For full details, see [CSEAS Structure](#).

Fundamental to core CSEAS service delivery is the implementation of a strategic communications plan to ensure the smooth delivery of service. The CSEAS has a robust communications strategy which outlines how we communicate with customers across platforms. As well as a user-friendly website, the CSEAS has a suite of publications including governance documents, leaflets, newsletters, booklets and guides. The CSEAS also delivers presentations to staff on health and wellbeing topics and participates in the HR Managers Network meetings and a number of working groups.

The CSEAS welcomes feedback from all stakeholders. A key activity within the CSEAS is reviewing, refining and developing internal policies, protocols, systems and guidelines. This assists in the delivery of a quality customer-centric service to all stakeholders.



## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The CSEAS team is committed to providing a quality service through its centres of expertise throughout the country. EAOs continually develop their skills through CPD such as formal training, shared learning, mentoring, buddy systems and peer support. This ensures continued high standards in service delivery benefitting both the individual and the organisation.

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The CSEAS recognises the need to treat all client data in an appropriate and lawful manner. We are committed to complying fully with the Data Protection Acts 1988 – 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR). The CSEAS has revised all relevant CSEAS documents and publications to comply with GDPR and has a GDPR page on the website [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie)

Available on that page are

- a GDPR Statement
- a GDPR Consent Form
- GDPR FAQs
- Confidentiality Statement
- CSEAS Website Privacy Statement

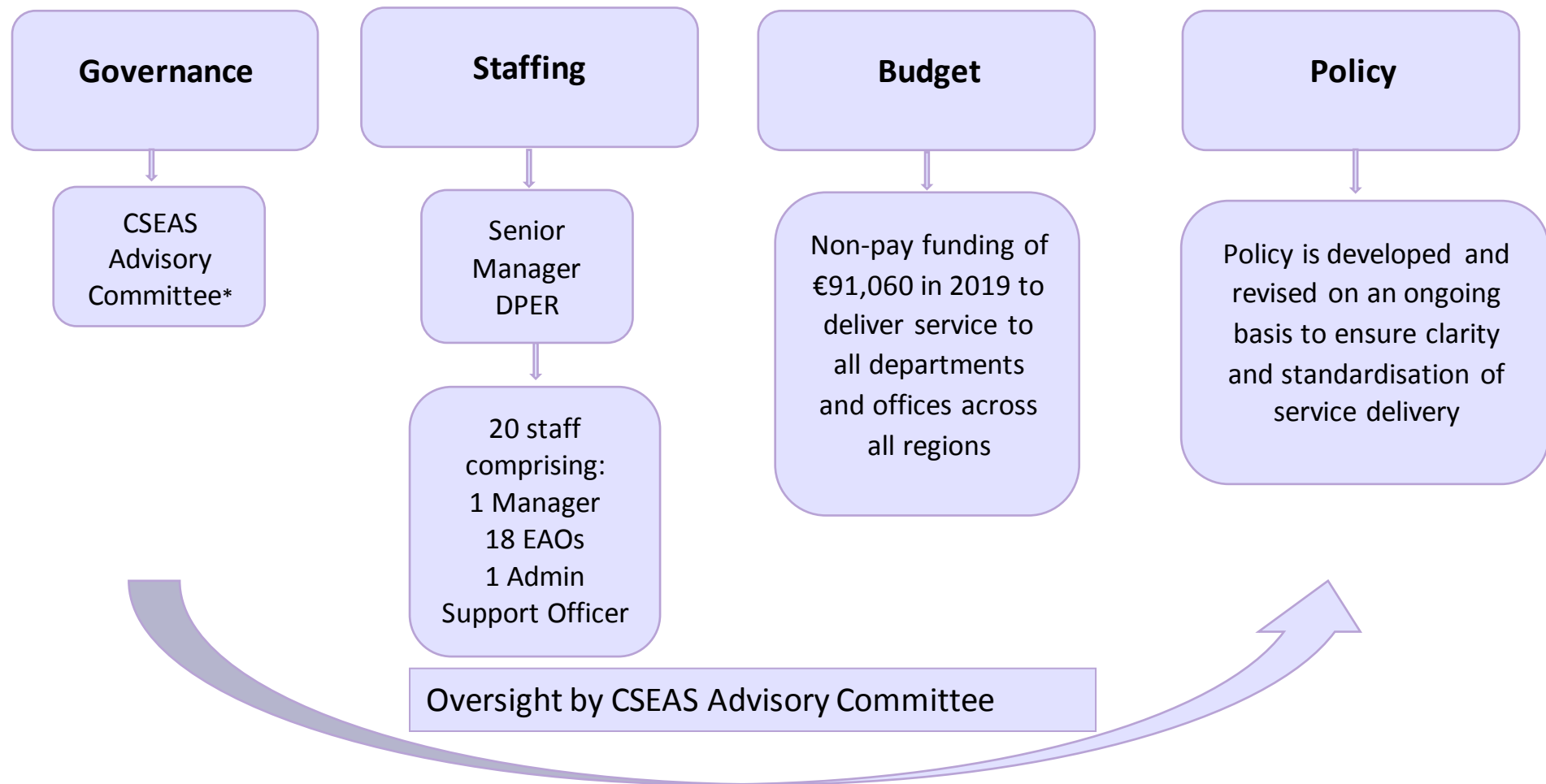
The revised CSEAS HR/Management Referral process is available [HERE](#)

## Staff Changes in the CSEAS

There were a number of staff changes within the CSEAS in 2019. The CSEAS bid a fond farewell to Karen O'Connor (Administration Support Officer), who left the CSEAS for pastures new in April and Ann Jordan (EAO), who retired in May. Karen worked with the CSEAS for just over a year and Ann worked as an EAO for many years providing service to several Departments/Offices in a number of locations. We wish both Karen and Ann well in the future.

The CSEAS is delighted to welcome, Vincent Dillon (Administration Support Officer) and Fiona Mortell (EAO). We look forward to working together in the future.

## CSEAS Structure



\*The CSEAS Advisory Committee comprises (1) A Chairperson who is a representative from DPER (2) The Chief Medical Officer for the Civil Service (3) HR Managers from a number of Departments/Offices: In 2019 HR Managers were from the Departments of (a) Employment Affairs and Social Protection (b) Finance (c) Foreign Affairs & Trade (d) Housing, Planning and Local Government. HR representatives from Departments change every 2 years on a phased basis, with some overlap to ensure continuity of experience on the Advisory Committee. (4) The Secretary to the Civil Service General Council Staff Panel. Current members of the CSEAS Advisory Committee can be viewed on the CSEAS website [www.cseas.per.gov.ie](http://www.cseas.per.gov.ie)

## APPENDIX 6: CONTACTING THE CSEAS



**Central Phone  
Number**

**0761 000 030**



**cseas@per.gov.ie**



**www.cseas.per.gov.ie**



**CSEAS**

**Department of Public Expenditure and Reform**

**4th Floor, St. Stephen's Green House**

**Earlsfort Terrace**

**Dublin 2**

**D02 PH42**

**Contact details for individual EAOs are available on the CSEAS website**

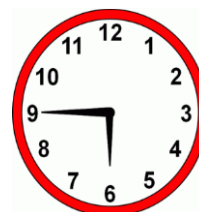


**On-duty EAO available at 0761 000 030**

**Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm**

**Fri: 9am to 5.15pm**

**(except bank/public holidays)**



**CSEAS Manager**



**Susan Clarke**

**Administration Support Officers**



**Karen O'Connor**



**Vincent Dillon**

# Employee Assistance Officers



**Ann Jordan**



**Deirdre Maye**



**Triona King**



**Bernie Moran**



**Geraldine Carey**



**Michael Stapleton**



**Margaret Fagan**



**Fran Scott**



**Carmel Dalton**



**Rosemary Branagan**



**Antoinette Mahon**



**Deirdre Farrell**





**Ann Duffy**



**Philip O'Callaghan**



**Donna Casey**



**Claire Delahunt**



**Claire Murphy**



**Derek Hollingsworth**



**Fiona Mortell**





# **CSEAS ACTIVITY REPORT 2019**

**PUBLISHED APRIL 2020**