

# St. Catherine's Community Services Centre



## Annual Report 2020

## Foreword from the Chair

The unique challenges of the Covid pandemic has tested our ability to provide, and in some cases increase, the level of services we provide to the community. The on-going provision of essential services such as Meals on Wheels, Childcare, Community Education and family and personal support is key to our ethos as a charity and community based organisation. I am delighted St. Catherine's remained open throughout 2020 and continued to provide services and support families albeit in a different manner in some case.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all our staff and volunteers, under the guidance of our Director of Services, who have put their shoulder to the wheel during very challenging times. As Chair, I also wish to record the gratitude of St Catherine's to all our Board members for their expertise and time.

The Board, management and staff are grateful for the continual support of all our funders listed under each programme in the Annual Report. We acknowledge their support as a mark of confidence in St. Catherine's and our services and programmes.

We have come through 2020 as a resilient organisation that is capable of responding and adapting to adversity. Our aim as always is to continue to offer sustainable community services. As we come out of the pandemic St Catherine's will continue to develop the range of supports and services we offer, including new programmes, to meet the post pandemic needs of the communities we serve.

**Adrian Dunlevy – September 2021**

## Note from the Director of Services

The story of our 2020 Annual Report is undoubtedly the arrival of Covid 19 last March and our response to it. Covid definitely changed the way we work in St. Catherine's but importantly it never stopped us working. While our doors had to close during the lockdowns our Centre was manned daily and we continued to provide essential services and support people by telephone, email, Zoom and in person where necessary and always in compliance with Covid regulations and protocols.

As a snapshot of 2020:

- Our Meals on Wheels never missed a day of service while our volunteer drivers and staff provided a friendly face to older people cocooning and in isolation.
- Our childcare staff supported parents by telephone and sent out activity packs and resources during the first lockdown. Both services remained open during the second lockdown for vulnerable children and essential workers
- Our education programmes continued to work face to face and remotely with learners and supplied materials and laptops as well as personal and family support. We were able to finish our courses in June and start our new programmes last Autumn
- Our Traveller health, family support and community development programmes worked tirelessly to provide Covid advice, information and support to the community in addition to the "normal" supports provided around health, housing, education and family support

- The need for family support was never greater. Our Teen Parent Support programme staff supported teen parents remotely and face to face and also worked intensively with a number of vulnerable families who required additional supports
- The pilot of the Carlow Social Prescribing service began last October

Our response was only possible due to the hard work, flexibility and dedication of our staff and volunteers in all our services. This hard work is continuing to respond to the post Covid needs of families and communities as we emerge from the worst of the pandemic.

Unfortunately, issues that have emerged and are emerging and impact on adults and children include bereavement and loss, isolation, poor mental health, increased levels of anxiety, poorer outcomes in education and developmental issues for children and poorer health outcomes due to reduced access to health and therapeutic services.

As always I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank:

- The people of Carlow who continue to support us and use our services
- Our 70+ volunteers and supporters without whom we couldn't survive
- Our 60 members of staff for always going the extra mile
- Our Board members for their expertise and guidance
- Our funders and partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.
- All the services based in St. Catherine's and the other services that use our Centre

**Niall Morris – September 2021**

## 2020 in Figures

**161**

Socially Monitored  
Alarms and  
Pendants were  
Installed

**21,300**

Meals on Wheels Cooked and  
Delivered

**14** women attended  
our Time for Me  
Wellness Group

**34** Traveller  
women engaged in  
healthy group  
activities

**20** attended  
Ethnicity celebrations

**3000+**

Health related  
engagements with the  
Travelling Community

**8** Mothers from Moving On  
went on to further  
education/training/jobs

**67** QQI Level 4 component  
Awards

**15** Making

Connections learners  
engaged in QQI Level 3  
training with 1 Major  
Award achieved

**113**

QQI Awards  
delivered in  
Community  
Education

**103** Traveller Men  
engaged in healthy group  
activities in Carlow &  
Kilkenny

**241** Women engaged  
in the 3 year Catalyst  
Programme.

**162** Learners

attended **17** Digital  
Skills courses

**8** LFEL learners went  
on to education/training

**7** earned QQI Level 4  
Major Awards

**50** went into training

**26** secured jobs

**70+**

Volunteers engaged  
in St. Catherine's

**3** secured employment

**107**

Children attended our 2  
childcare services weekly

**63** Teens supported  
in the Teen Parent  
Support Programme

**4** supported to stay in  
school

**2** . . .

**€28k**

Saved by 90 savers  
in our new  
Community  
Savings Club

### New in 2020

- Our Centre was manned daily during Covid. Essential services such as Meals On Wheels & family support continued daily
- The Carlow Social Prescribing service pilot began
- Tusla CCA programme funded intensive family support
- Healthy Carlow funded a Time for Me Programme

## Who we are!

Our mission is to provide quality services responsive to local needs, based on equality, diversity, justice and inclusion with a view to empowering and enriching individuals, families and communities in Carlow and its environs.

### **Aims:**

- To ensure work is responsive to local need with respect for equality, individuality and diversity
- To empower people to take control over their own lives and to participate fully in society
- Reduce barriers to participation of those most at risk of exclusion, poverty and disadvantage

### **Objectives:**

- To involve and consult with participants, target groups and local community in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of all programmes and activities
- To work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups to ensure an effective, coordinated and strategic response to local needs
- To proactively encourage and facilitate the participation of those at risk of exclusion, poverty and disadvantage and to do this through the provision of information, support, community and developmental education
- To promote and support voluntary work as a means of providing services and to recognise and value the role and work of volunteers
- To evaluate and plan the work of St Catherine's on a regular basis in order to ensure that it is remaining responsive to identified need

### **Our Volunteers**

St. Catherine's would like to thank all our volunteers for their hard work and commitment to St. Catherine's in 2019. There were over 70 volunteers who regularly assisted in Meals on Wheels, Administration and Reception, Caretaking, Childcare and After Schools. St. Catherine's hosted our Annual Volunteer Christmas party in December to say thank you to our volunteers. Over 45 volunteers attended.

### **Our Board**

We would like to thank all our Directors for their time and commitment to St. Catherine's.

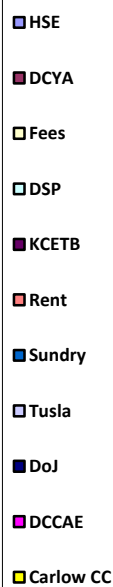
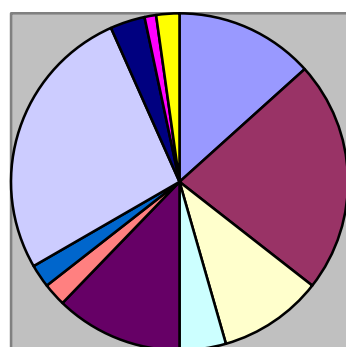
We also welcome our new Director Eamonn Ellis, who joined us in 2020. Our Directors are:

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Adrian Dunlevy (Chair)    | - Frank Comerford (Secretary) |
| - Brian Buckley (Treasurer) | - Marian Duffy                |
| - Maura Dowling             | - Msgr. Brendan Byrne         |
| - Sean Scanlon              | - Eamonn Ellis                |

A staff member, Andrea Dalton, also attends Board meetings. St. Catherine's Board met 8 times in 2020 both in person and remotely. The Audit sub-committee met twice. The members are the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Director of Services.

## Financial Overview

<b>2020 Summary Profit and Loss Account</b>		
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Programme Funding	1,514,475	1,704,414
Income from Services	153,372	167,957
Rental Income	39,109	43,927
Sundry Income	37,174	9,455
<b>Turnover</b>	<b>1,744,130</b>	<b>1,925,753</b>
Less Programme & Administration Expenses	1,688,563	1,914,093
Plus Other Operating Income		
Government Grants Received & Released	6,951	5,993
<b>Operating Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>62,518</b>	<b>17,653</b>
Plus Bank Interest Received	106	106
Interest payable	0	0
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>62,624</b>	<b>17,759</b>



### St. Catherine's Sources of Funding 2020

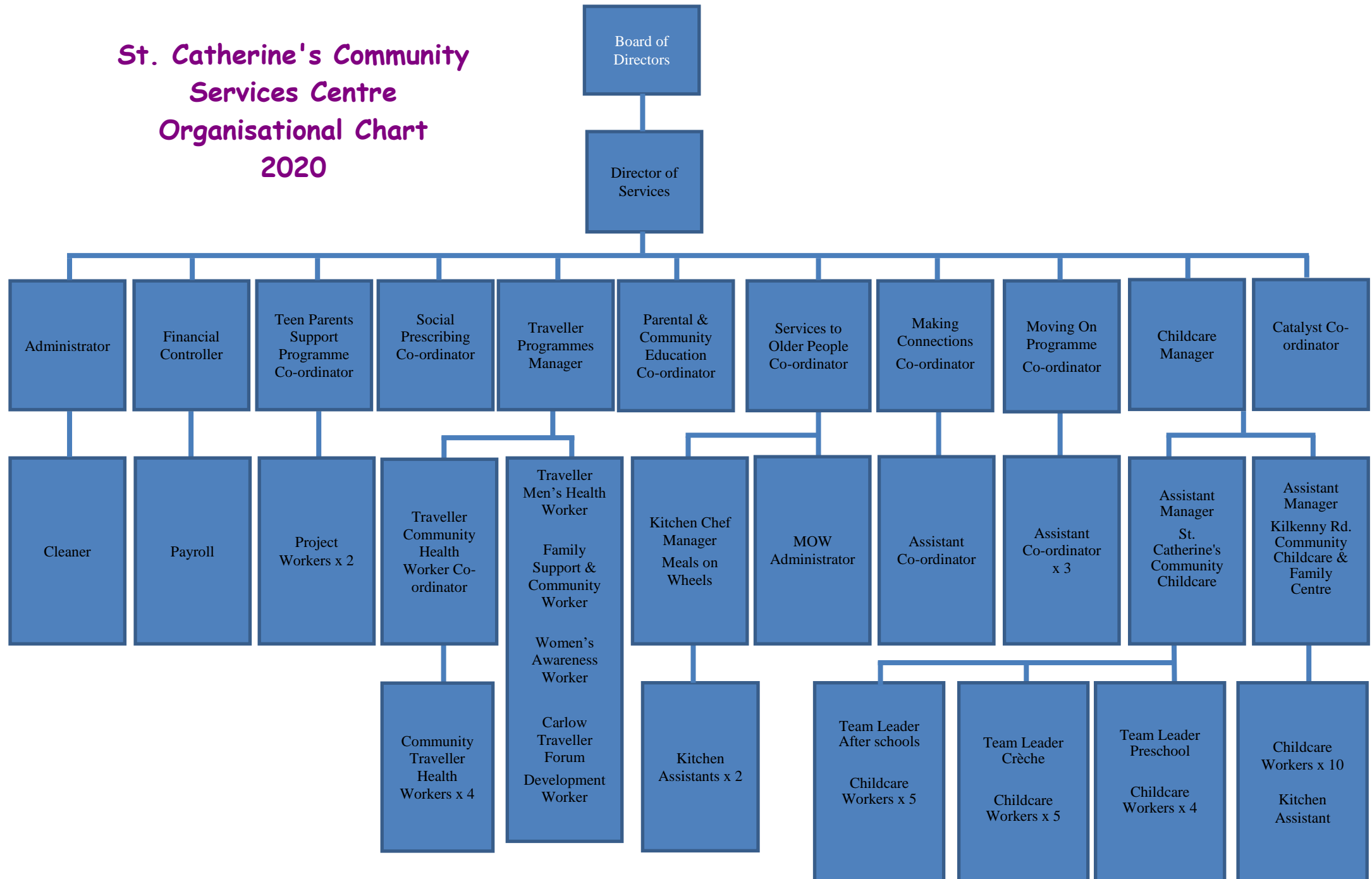
Tusla = 24%  
 Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs = 20%  
 Health Service Executive = 12%  
 Service Fees = 9%  
 KCETB = 11%  
 Dept. of Social Protection = 4%  
 Rental income = 2%  
 Dept. Communications, Climate Action &  
 Environment = 1%  
 Carlow County Council = 2%  
 Department of Justice & Equality = 3%  
 Covid Wage Subsidy = 10%

Sundry Income at 2% includes funding from Pavée Point/Tusla, Pobal Childcare Re-opening and Capital grants, Treoir, Carlow County Development Partnership, and 3CEA.

St. Catherine's work is funded from funding agency grants for specific programmes and services, service fees and rental income and donations. We would like to acknowledge and thank our funders, service users and donors for their continuing support.

**Our funders are listed on our end page**

# St. Catherine's Community Services Centre Organisational Chart 2020





# St. Catherine's Childcare Services

## OVERVIEW OF OUR SERVICES:

- We operate community childcare services with full and part-time places in St. Catherine's from 9.15 – 5.30 and Kilkenny Road from 8.30 - 5.30
- We provide high-quality, child centred services that are affordable, inclusive and enable parents to engage in employment, training and work.
- We provide a safe stimulating space for all children to support them develop and reach their full potential
- At St. Catherine's, 22 places are available for wobblers and toddlers and 29 places for pre-school and ECCE children. In the afternoon we have 34 afterschool places available daily
- At Kilkenny Road Childcare Service, 22 places are available for wobblers and toddlers plus 33 places for ECCE/preschool in the morning and 16 in the afternoon.

“Absolutely brilliant Crèche, I always felt so safe leaving my child”.. Parent

## OUTCOMES/SUCSESSES/ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 107 children from 99 families attended our 2 services
- 24 parents were enabled to engage in training and education in St. Catherine's and other training/education centres
- Both services engaged with the Better Start Quality Assurance Programme
- 34 After schoolers were supported with their homework
- Kilkenny Road participated in the School Milk Scheme Pilot carried out by UCD.

**COVID 19:** The number of children in our services in 2020 was reduced due to the Covid lockdowns. Both services reopened in September and remained open during the second lockdown for vulnerable children and children of essential workers

A big focus was put on infection control, enhanced cleaning, new room layouts, new collection/drop off areas, staff training, new equipment and materials and a host of Covid policies and procedures

## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Both services participated in a 'Christmas Jumper Day' fundraiser for Focus Ireland.
- Covid compliant Santa visited our outdoor areas and the children had their Christmas Party in-house and in their pods.
- Each pod took part in a Christmas Show that was sent to parents via the Little Vista App.
- Due to Covid 19 Restrictions children were invited in at an allocated time for their Graduation. They received their learning journal, an activity pack and had a graduation photo taken.



## CONTACT:

Name: Pauline Byrne  
Job Title: Childcare Manager  
Email: [paulineb@catherines.ie](mailto:paulineb@catherines.ie)  
[childcare@catherines.ie](mailto:childcare@catherines.ie)

## FUNDERS:



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Department of Social Protection

**TÚSLA**  
An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency



Office of the Minister for  
Children and Youth Affairs  
Oifig an Aire Leanaí  
agus Gnothaí Óige



# Community and Parental Education

## Back to Education Initiative Community Strand

### OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES:

#### • LEARNING FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

A 28 week community education course that actively addresses the intergenerational cycle of educational disadvantage and poverty by offering participants a positive basic holistic community education opportunity that is accredited and linked to progression. It ran from September 2019 until March 2020, Monday to Friday 9.45am until 1 pm.

#### • PREPARATION FOR WORK

Due to Covid 19 the Preparation for Work Course did not run in 2020. Learners from Learning for Everyday Life however were kept engaged and supported until the end of June. The focus of this engagement was on improvement in basic education and in particular literacy and numeracy.

**A key factor to the success of both programmes is in the intensive individual and family support given to participants**



### CONTACT:

Name: Andrea Dalton  
Job Title: Co-ordinator of Community and Parental Education  
Contact email: [andread@carlow.ie](mailto:andread@carlow.ie)

*'Learning for Everyday Life has helped me restart my education journey. I am looking forward to doing Level 4 now'*  
**LEFL Participant**

### OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- LFEL Number Starting 18
- Of the 18 participants attending:
  - 9 had no previous qualifications
  - 4 had Junior Cert or equivalent
  - 3 had LC or equivalent
- Number Completing 12
- No Achieving QQI Accreditation 9
- Number Achieving Major Award 7
- Number completing a Food Safety Qualification 10
- Number that progressed onto PFW N/A
- Number completing a 4 week work placement N/A
- Numbers to progress onto further education/TUS/CE 8
- Number that took up employment 3
- Numbers completing Manual Handling Course N/A
- Family support was provided to over 17 families and 40 children whose parents were enrolled on above courses

**COVID 19** – Restrictions forced a move to remote working with the group for part of the year. As personal and peer support are so critical to success, staff remained very engaged during lockdown and face to face classes resumed as soon as was possible.

### FUNDERS:



Carlow County  
Development Partnership  
Comhaidiríocht Idirbairbh Theanta Chontae Cheatharlach



**TUSLA**  
An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency



**eth**  
Boird Oiliúnaíochta agus Oiliúna  
Clárúcháin agus Chaitheamh  
Ailseimne agus Coirne  
Education and Training Board

# Community and Parental Education

## Community Education

### OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES:

#### EVENING CLASSES

Facilitates access to short term community based adult education courses. It is low cost and accessible and gives participants a very good experience of their first step back into education. Courses included Yoga, Make Up & Nail Art, Healthy Eating and Nutrition.

#### DIGITAL SKILLS FOR CITIZENS PROGRAMME

Supports people to participate fully in Ireland's digital society by providing digital skills training to people who have never used the internet before. Classes can be delivered on a computer, tablet or smartphone.

#### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S GROUP

This provides a space for non-Irish women living in Carlow, who are experiencing isolation to come together. It is activity based and assists women to improve their English, develop friendships and skills and settle into the local

*'International Women's Group has helped me make new friends and improve my English. I look forward to going every week'*  
**International Women's Group Participant**

### OUTCOMES/SUCSESSES/ACHIEVEMENTS:

- In 2020 despite Covid, 265 participants partook in a variety of part-time courses.
- Digital Skills Internet and Email Courses - 17 courses of 10 hours each were organised and 162 participants took part in them. Training was also organised externally with Forward Steps Tullow, Baltinglass Library, Athy Library, Care Athy, Baltinglass Community Hospital and Turas Nua in Naas and Carlow
- Healthy Carlow funded a Time for Me Programme – A 12 week positive mental health programme was organised and advertised. The maximum allowed of 14 enrolled and 3 classes were held before classes were postponed due to C19
- International Women's Group was organised and 14 participants were on an enrolment list. This was cut short by Covid. Funding was secured to run until June 21

**COVID 19** – Covid 19 restrictions forced the postponement and cancellation of most group work. The nature of these courses did not lend themselves to online or remote delivery. Personal support and social interaction are critical to success.



### CONTACT:

Name: Andrea Dalton  
Job Title: Co-ordinator of Parental and Community Education  
Contact email: [andread@carlow.ie](mailto:andread@carlow.ie)

### FUNDERS:



Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaíthe ar son na hAeraíde & Comhshaoil  
Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment



# Traveller Programmes

## Community Development and Family Support

- 1107 family support contacts in 2020 including Meitheals
- Representation on the Traveller Interagency Group and LTACC
- 34 Traveller women engaged in groups focusing on health & fitness, crafts, wellbeing and driver theory training
- 20 Traveller women attended in house Traveller Ethnicity Celebrations

## Carlow Traveller Forum

- 29 members in Carlow and Tullow
- Engagement online due to Covid
- 10 members trained in Safe Talk
- Members shared photo collages on social media to mark Ethnicity Day
- Participated in St. Catherine's online vigil to promote suicide awareness

## Covid 19 Impact

Services responded to a huge increase in demand for Covid information and support. Most support was delivered remotely. St. Catherine's remained open and 1 to 1 support was provided as needed in compliance with health guidelines.

Practical supports included helping people access online services, delivering food parcels to families in isolation, supporting families' access schoolwork, providing wellness packs to vulnerable women and supporting people access testing and



## Primary Health: Community Traveller Health Worker Team

- Continues to improve health outcomes for families in Carlow by increasing awareness and uptake of health services
- The team had 967 health-related contacts with members of the community
- Pre-Covid 30 women attended 5 groups focused on positive lifestyle factors and 20 women attended 3 open mornings focused on cancer and mental health.
- In 2020 the team worked to promote positive strategies to target the risk factors for cardiovascular health with 30 individuals, diabetes with 51 people and mental health with 93 people

## Traveller Women's Awareness Worker

- Supported women to engage with local domestic violence services and services to engage with Traveller women
- Organised St. Catherine's 16 Days of Action campaign for Women's Aid's
- Delivered culture awareness training to services and attended local DV network

## Traveller Men's Health Worker

- The service covers counties Carlow & Kilkenny. It supports improvements in all areas of health including cardiovascular, mental health and diabetes awareness.
- 1049 contacts with Traveller men including outreach and drop in's in 2020
- The number of men who attended group activities with health checks and inputs:
  - Cardiovascular 57
  - Mental Health 103 (increase in 2020)
  - Diabetes 27
  - Participated in physical activity 21
  - Substance misuse support & information 27

Group activities included driver theory, pool tournaments, swimming and walking

## CONTACT:

Name: Valerie Byrne

Title: Traveller Programme Manager

Contact email: [valerieb@catherines.ie](mailto:valerieb@catherines.ie)

## FUNDERS:



# Meals On Wheels

## Our Service

- St Catherine's Meals-On-Wheels service provides hot nutritious meals to older people who are unable to cook for themselves allowing them to live independently in their own homes
- The daily visit from the volunteer delivering the meal also provides social contact for recipients helping to alleviate isolation while also monitoring their well-being.
- The service continues to service Carlow Town and two outreach services – the Alzheimer Unit in Bethany House and Leighlinbridge MOW's service
- The cost of the main meal and dessert is €5.50
- The service works closely with Public Health Nurses and GP's to ensure all meals meet client's dietary requirements

## SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE TO LIVE IN THEIR OWN HOMES LONGER

## Outcomes and Achievements

- In 2020 Meals on Wheels cooked and delivered 21,300 meals
- The service caters for an average of 84 older people daily
- A pool of over 40 volunteers supports the service. Volunteers are recruited directly and through Carlow Volunteer Centre. 33 were recruited in 2020
- MOW's operate a Birthday Book. A new card making volunteer joined us to help make handmade birthday, get well and anniversary cards for our recipients
- St. Catherine's is member of the HSE Service Providers Forum, Carlow Age Friendly County Committee and Carlow Community Response Forum
- Staff completed "Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults" training

## Covid 19

MOW's on Wheels produced more meals in 2020 than ever before in response to Covid. Many of our long serving volunteers had to cocoon but with the help of the Volunteer Centre and support of the community we recruited excellent new volunteers.

Our kitchen staff worked tirelessly to keep the service going to meet the surge in demand for meals. Our Admin Team supported throughout and kept in touch with our recipients and cocooning volunteers by telephone to ensure all were safe and well



## CONTACT:

Name: Edel Keogh

Job Title: Senior Community Development Worker for Older Peoples Services

Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Liaison Officer

Contact email: [edelk@catherines.ie](mailto:edelk@catherines.ie)



Funders

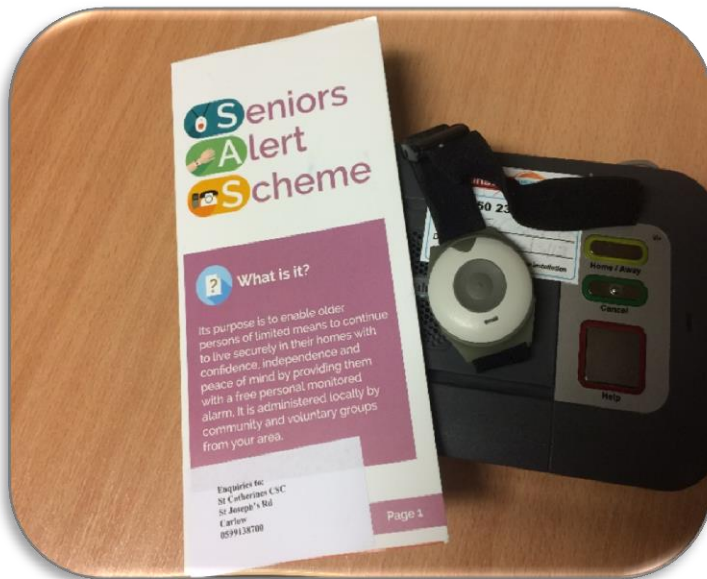
An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

# Senior Alert Service (SAS)

## What is the Senior Alert Service

- SAS is an alarm in the home that is monitored 24 hours a day ensuring older people in need can summon help instantly in emergency situations
- The alarm is worn as a wristband or pendant
- People over 65 with a landline or mobile can apply for the alarm
- St Catherine's coordinates the provision of the service in Carlow town and surrounding areas
- The service can be accessed directly by people over 65 or their families and referrals are also made through Public Health Nurses, the Gardai and local Community Alert representatives

**SUPPORTING older people to live at home safely and securely with peace of mind knowing that help is only a press of a button away if they should need it!!**



## CONTACT

Name: Edel Keogh  
Job Title: Senior Community Development Worker for Older Persons Services  
Contact email: [edelk@catherines.ie](mailto:edelk@catherines.ie)

## OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- 161 applications were made for alarms and pendants in 2020
- As an essential service, applications continued to be processed throughout the COVID 19 lockdown. Much of the work was done by phone, email and post
- SAS was promoted in the local press, on St. Catherine's social media, through the Public Health nurses and in presentations to local community groups
- SAS provided peace of mind and security for older people and their families allowing them to live independently in their own homes

FUNDERS:



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

## Making Connections

### MAKING CONNECTIONS CARLOW

Making Connections is a KCETB funded Local Training Initiative (LTI) offering educational supports to individuals who have become distanced from mainstream education and training programmes. Participants are referred from agencies and support services that work with clients who are in recovery from addiction, substance misuse, transitioning from homelessness and linked with the Probation Services.

Making Connections supports recovery through education, raising competency levels and offering tailored flexible training. The unique element of the training is the ‘one to one’ delivery of the programme. Learners have the opportunity to complete QQI Level 3 nationally recognised qualifications.



*“Encouragement when I did not believe in myself, the start of all my dreams come true” .....learner quote.*

### Outcomes, Achievements & Engagements

Onsite learning was suspended in March due to **COVID 19 restrictions**. Learner engagement was supported via online platforms, phone calls and postal packs. Onsite training resumed September 2020

- 15 Learners participated in QQI accredited modules (ongoing)
- 13 learners engaged remotely
- 2 Major Awards Achieved
- 1 Learner progression to Community Employment Scheme
- 1 Learner progression to QQI Level 8

### Learner Story

**2018:** The opportunity to engage with Making Connections came at a time when I was ready to move on with my life. The part-time nature of the course worked well for me. Working one to one allowed me to work at a pace suited to my learning style. It gave me confidence as my skills developed.

The educational and practical skills facilitated by the programme and tutors offered me a practical approach to learning, with an eye on future education options that would suit my skills and goals. One of these goals was to go to college.

**2020:** I applied and got a place in Carlow College, St. Patrick's. I start my QQI Level 8 English Degree in September 2021

*James Nolan, Carlow*

### CONTACT:

**Name:** Maureen Egerton

**Job Title:** Making Connections Coordinator

**Email:** [maureene@catherines.ie](mailto:maureene@catherines.ie)

### FUNDER:



**etb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Chill Chainmigh agus Cheatharlaigh  
Kilkenny and Carlow  
Education and Training Board



# The Carlow Catalyst Programme for Women

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:

The Carlow Catalyst Programme for Women is a needs based countywide project aimed at increasing women's personal potential and ability to access and engage in employment, education and training. The Carlow Catalyst programme is specifically aimed at women not in paid employment, who are not registered as unemployed and who are interested in entering or re-entering the labour market. All programme actions are delivered through a partnership approach with representation from local community and statutory agencies.

**Catalyst finished in September 2020**

Interested women chose supports including:

- Ongoing advice and support on future training, education or job options
- Information on and links to relevant support agencies or services
- Non-accredited hobby and confidence building courses
- Basic computer skills training
- Job seeking and career preparation skills
- QQI accredited and work-related training and qualifications
- Meaningful work placements



**CONTACT:** Sinead Fox/Orlaith McHugh

Job Title: Project Coordinator

Email: [sineadf@catherines.ie](mailto:sineadf@catherines.ie),  
[orlaithm@catherines.ie](mailto:orlaithm@catherines.ie)

*"When I joined my confidence was very low and I honestly could not imagine myself having the courage to look for work. However, this course made me realise that I had many qualities that I had not yet recognised in myself and I could be an asset to a potential employer. Having completed my work experience I now believe that of myself"* Participant 2020)

## OUTCOMES, SUCCESSES & ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020:

- 9 new women enrolled with the Catalyst programme and engaged with the services and supports on offer in 2020
- 2 hobby courses and 2 Preparation For Work Courses were delivered in Carlow town and Tullow
- 1 ICT course was delivered
- 24 QQI Level 3 component certificates awarded

## Overall Outcomes 2017 – 2020

- 241 women engaged in activities
- 26 women progressed into work and 50 progressed to further education/ training
- 6 QQI accredited Preparation for Work courses were delivered to 62 women
- 17 personal development and confidence building hobby courses were delivered to engage the most disadvantaged women
- 6 ICT skills courses were delivered
- 76 individual support plans were put in place to support participants into employment, education or training
- 60 participants were certified in Manual Handling

**FUNDERS:** THIS PROJECT IS PART SUPPORTED BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AND THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF) AS PART OF THE ESF PROGRAMME FOR EMPLOYMENT, INCLUSION AND LEARNING, (PEIL) 2014 – 2020.





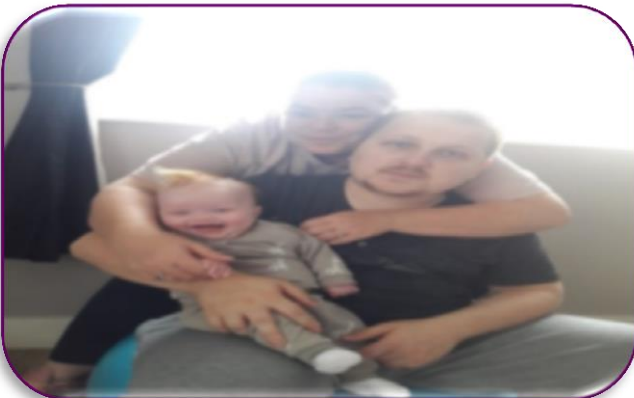
# Teen Parent Support Programme

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:

- The TPSP service covers counties Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary
- The philosophy of TPSP is to offer a non-judgemental, non-stigmatising, holistic service to teen parents. We endeavour to be client led, flexible and creative in meeting individual needs.
- This is a targeted support service which focuses on specific areas of a teen parent's life in order to improve their overall outcomes in relation to parenting thus empowering them in their parenting role.
- It provides early interventions which are needs led and outcome focused, to enhance and support the wellbeing of all teen parents and their children.
- TPSP supports teen parents to remain in or return to education.
- We encourage existing services to work collaboratively to respond to the needs of teen parents.

## Covid 19 Impact

TPSP continued to provide support to existing teen parents and new parents throughout the year. Most support was delivered remotely but face to face support was provided where necessary in a Covid compliant manner.



"I don't feel alone. I know that if I need any help or information I can contact TPSP and ask for it and they give it to me".  
....Teen parent

## OUTCOMES, SUCCESSES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 63 teen parents engaged with the service
- 4 teen parents were supported to remain in secondary level education.
- 13 teen parents took up the service out of 22 new referrals received
- 7 came from Carlow, 5 from Kilkenny and 3 from Tipperary
- There were 11 mothers and 2 dads
- Referrals: 4 Midwife, 4 Self, 4 Social Work and 1 Ossory Youth Service
- 2 teen mothers attended TPSP Antenatal Classes. 11 mothers and fathers were sent antenatal packs and supported remotely
- Linked in remotely with 35 post primary schools in Carlow/Kilkenny/Tipperary to promote the service.
- 3 mothers progressed into education on St. Catherine's Moving On Programme
- Worked with Tusla Social Work on Pre-birth assessments with 5 teen parents
- TPSP staff co-facilitated with Barnardo's on TLC KIDZ, a programme for families post domestic abuse
- Intensive family support was provided to a family under Tusla's Creative Community Alternatives programme
- On-going practical family support was provided to 5 new community families

## FUNDERS:



## Contact:

Name: Bernie Loughman

Job Title: TPSP Co-ordinator CW/KK/TS

Contact email: [berniel@catherines.ie](mailto:berniel@catherines.ie)

# Carlow Social Prescribing Service

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:

- The Carlow Social Prescribing Service is a new pilot service launched in October 2020.
- The service offers free supports that aims to reduce social isolation and improve people's health and wellbeing.
- Social Prescribing is about supporting the health and wellbeing of people by using community-based activities and supports such as exercise, art, community health education, gardening, holistic therapies, fun activities etc.
- The Carlow Social Prescribing service is for people over 18 registered with a GP in Carlow town or Graiguecullen.
- The service is suitable to individuals that need some support to mind their health and wellbeing.
- A person can be referred by a health professional, community worker or by self-referral

*"Feelings of loneliness, downheartedness, depression and nervousness are all on the increase in 2020", according to newly released statistics from the Central Statistics Office (CSO).*

## OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL PRESCRIBING:

- A reduction in social isolation
- Enhanced Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Improved self esteem
- Lowering of stress and anxiety
- Higher participation in exercise, social groups, volunteering, green spaces and bibliotherapy
- Improved access to issue specific support agencies e.g., Money Advice and Budgeting Service and Focus Ireland
- Increased knowledge of local community and voluntary services
- Decreased reliance on GP and Primary Care services
- Reduced crisis presentation to A&E



## CONTACT:

Name: Sinéad Fox

Job Title: Social Prescribing Coordinator

Contact email: [socialprescribing@catherines.ie](mailto:socialprescribing@catherines.ie)

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Carlow Social Prescribing service was formed and became fully operational at the end of 2020.
- 5 individuals commenced their engagement in the service supports.

**FUNDERS:** 'THE HEALTHY IRELAND FUND SUPPORTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFAIRS'



Healthy  
Carlow



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



CARLOW  
COUNTY COUNCIL



An Roinn Comhshaoil,  
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide  
Department of the Environment,  
Climate and Communications

# The Moving On Programme

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:



The Moving On Programme aims to enhance the lifelong prospects of young mothers in Carlow by enabling them to achieve inclusion in education, training, enterprise opportunities, the local labour market and their own communities.

The aims of the programme include:

- The provision of a suite of training leading towards a QQI level 4 Major Award in Employment Skills
- To achieve progression to employment, further education and training through the identification and development of realistic career or academic paths
- Through education, learning and key worker supports; build learners personal capacity, thus improving their life prospects and that of their children
- To focus on the personal development and welfare of each participant
- To support and value the parenting role
- To engage in advocacy and work with other organisations to support policy development and social change.
- To raise the confidence, self-esteem and personal aspirations of each learner

## CONTACT:

Name: Orlaith McHugh

Job Title: Moving On Coordinator

Contact email: [orlaithm@catherines.ie](mailto:orlaithm@catherines.ie)

*'Thanks so much for everything, I really don't think I would have gotten through the last year and stuck with the course if it wasn't for the support and encouragement of the staff on the Moving On' .....*  
**MOP Learner 2020**

## OUTCOMES/SUCSESSES/ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **19** learners started the 19/20 programme, with **15** completing
- **14** learners secured work placements
- In total there were **67** minor awards achieved
- **16** learners achieved their Manual Handling certificate
- **1** learner progressed into mainstream further education at QQI Level 5
- **3** learners returned to the Moving On Programme in September 2020
- **4** learners secured employment
- **'Class Bottles'** mini company was a successful enterprise for the learners
- In December 2019 after 6 years as the MOP Coordinator, Thomas Farrell left for pastures new. Orlaith McHugh The new Coordinator was appointed in March 2020

## COVID 19

**Restrictions** forced a move to remote working with the group for part of the year. Despite this the '19/20 Programme remained active. Staff continued to provide learners with academic, personal and family support right up to programme completion.

## FUNDERS:



## Other Services

### Counselling Service

- St. Catherine's internal counselling service responds to the emotional needs of programme participants and service users
- Clients are referred by Programme Co-ordinators and Managers
- The service is delivered in conjunction with PCI College, Dublin and is managed by their Practice Supervisor
- Covid restrictions reduced the numbers of people accessing the service in 2020. Six people accessed approximately 48 hours of support

### St. Catherine's Community Savings Club

- The CSC allows people save for upcoming items and events including Christmas, First Communion and back to school costs
- The aim is to encourage people to get into the habit of saving rather than borrowing, particularly from moneylenders and others offering high interest loans.
- Based in St. Catherine's, the Club opens every Friday from 3 - 4pm and savers can lodge any amount up to €50 per week
- In 2020 89 members were registered and savings for the year totalled €28,000. The Club was suspended from March until September due to **Covid** so savings were down on 2019.

Save towards the cost of

Christmas 2019



First Communion

Family Events  
Etc Etc

at

**ST CATHERINES COMMUNITY SAVINGS CLUB**

ST JOSEPHS ROAD  
CARLOW

**Available to Adults and children for individual savings of any amount  
up to €50 max per week**

Open Friday 12.30 - 1.30pm



**FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL**



## Access and Family Support Programme with Tusla Social Work

St. Catherine's entered into an agreement with Tusla to second two staff members to provide an Access and Family Support service to the Social Work Department in 2016. The programme provided 40 hours of support weekly to Social Work in 2020.



The work includes:

- Facilitating and supporting supervised access visits between parents and children in care
- Providing family support to empower parents and enhance parental ability
- Linking families into support networks and community services

## General Family Support



Family and individual support is widely provided to participants and service users accessing most St. Catherine's services and programmes. Support was provided for a wide range of issues including accommodation, domestic violence, child protection and welfare, access, education and rights and entitlements.

Intensive support is also provided to families with children in care. This support coupled with the increased confidence and self-esteem that parents derive from participating in community education improves parental capacity by building on the strengths of parents. This can prevent children going into care as well as helping children return from care to their families.

## Tusla Meitheal Support for Families

- Meitheal is a TUSLA led national practice model to assist families to get the help and support that they need when facing challenges that are difficult to overcome
- A Lead Practitioner works with the family to identify their needs & strengths and to put a plan in place that requires one or more services
- St. Catherine's service is mainly provided by our TPSP staff team but other programme staff are also involved and lead on occasion



### **2020 Outcomes**

- St. Catherine's engaged in Meitheals with 8 children and young people and their families in 2020
- Referrals came from the Tusla Child and Family Support Network Co-ordinator, Tusla Social Work, HSE Mental Health services, Carlow Youth Employment and self-referrals
- Challenges faced by families included behavioural and family relationship issues, educational challenges, mental health issues, addiction and parenting
- The families who engaged in Meitheals reported that they welcomed and valued the support

## Inter-Agency Collaborative Work

- HSE Traveller Health Unit and sub groups and the Regional Traveller Health Network
- Carlow/Kilkenny Traveller's Health Committee
- Carlow Traveller Interagency Group (TIG) and Kilkenny TIG and sub groups including the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee
- Carlow Integration Forum
- Tusla Child and Family Partnership, Prevention and Family Support network (PPFS) in Carlow and Kilkenny and Carlow and Kilkenny Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN's)
- Teen Parent Support Programme National Inter-Project Committees
- County Carlow Public Participation Network (PPN) and Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC)
- Aontas Community Education Network
- Carlow Kilkenny Joint Older Persons Service Providers Forum
- Carlow Age Friendly County Committee
- County Carlow Children and Young Person's Services Committee (CYPSC) and Sub-Groups
- South Tipperary CYPSC Parenting Working Group
- Irish Traveller Movement Committees and Pavee Point
- Comhairle na nOg
- Traveller Mental Health Advisory Group
- St. Luke's Traveller Working Group and the St. Luke's Patient Partnership Forum
- Traveller Culture Awareness Training Steering Committee
- Carlow Social Inclusion Forum
- Carlow Suicide Prevention Planning Group and the Consultation Working Group,
- Social Prescribing Service Steering Group
- Carlow Catalyst Programme for Women Steering Committee
- Connecting for Life

## Additional Services based in St Catherine's

- **South Leinster Citizens Information Service – Carlow Area**

Citizens Information is a voluntary organisation serving the people of Carlow since May 1983. Their mission is to increase people's awareness of their rights and entitlements and to empower them by providing a free, confidential, independent, impartial, accurate, integrated and comprehensive information and advocacy service.

- **Accord**

Accord is a voluntary organisation that aims to promote a deeper understanding of Christian marriage. They offer people the means to safeguard and nourish their marriage and family relationships through the provision of pre marriage courses and counselling services.

- **Legal Aid**

Legal Aid provides legal services in relation to civil law matters to eligible persons. These legal services include legal advice and legal aid. Legal aid means representation by a solicitor or barrister in civil proceedings in the District, Circuit, High and Supreme Courts.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous**

AA is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

- **Al Anon**

Al Anon is a support organisation for families, relatives and friends whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking,

- **Grow**

Grow is a Mental Health Organisation, which helps people who have suffered, or are suffering, from mental health problems. Members are helped to recover from all forms of breakdown, or indeed, to prevent such happening.

- **Overeaters Anonymous**

Overeaters Anonymous offers a program of recovery from compulsive eating. Worldwide meetings provide a fellowship of experience, strength and hope where members respect one another's anonymity. OA charges no dues or fees; it is self-supporting through member contributions.

- **National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities**

The National Advocacy Service (NAS) was set up to provide independent, representative advocacy services for people with disabilities.



## Our Funders

