

St. Catherine's Community Services Centre



Annual Report 2021

Foreword from the Chair

St Catherine's Community Services Centre is unique in the range of supports which it provides to the local community. Throughout the unprecedented challenges of recent years, the Centre has continued to adhere to its stated aims of responding to local need while maintaining the highest principles and standards with respect to inclusion, equality, individuality and diversity. Although there were many difficulties to overcome, services continued unabated to support people to take control over their own lives and to participate fully in society.

The services provided supported people from all ages and backgrounds across the community, ranging from Early Childhood and Preschool Care, Parental, Family and Personal support, Afterschools, Community and Lifelong Education, Social Prescribing, Meals on Wheels and Socially Monitored Alarms, through formal interventions and appropriate referrals.

Under the excellent guidance of our Director of Services the staff continued to maintain their resilience and responsiveness to a highly professional level to ensure that increased opportunities for participation in services could be maintained for those at risk of exclusion through poverty and disadvantage.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to acknowledge the immense volume of hard work undertaken by the Director of Services and all of the staff as well as our many volunteers without whom St Catherine's would not be the vibrant and welcoming Centre that it is. We the Board, extend our heartfelt thanks to all. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Board of Directors who continue to be so generous with their time and their invaluable experience and expertise.

The Board, management and staff of St Catherine's also gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of our funding bodies with whom we work very closely and collaboratively to deliver a comprehensive community service. St Catherine's aspires to continue to respond innovatively and appropriately as required to the identified needs within our community.

Marian Duffy – December 2022

Note from the Director of Services

While Covid remains with us still, its impact on society and on St. Catherine's and the communities we serve has thankfully greatly reduced compared to 2021. While undoubtedly challenging we continued to learn in 2021 how to work with and around Covid to ensure we provided as many of our services as effectively and safely as we possibly could. While in the first half of the year our doors were largely closed due to the prevalent Covid restrictions we continued to provide essential services and support people by telephone, email, Zoom and in person where necessary.

As the year progressed, we were able to open our doors and welcome back our children, our groups, our learners and our staff. Our whole Centre was transformed to ensure we could maintain social distancing and strict infection control procedures. This involved new flows

of people through the Centre, reduced capacity and screens in meeting rooms and offices, the provision of outdoor shelters and play areas, improved ventilation and the provision of sanitisers and facemasks as part of our ever-evolving Covid Response Policy and Plans.

As in 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 services remained open throughout the year for vulnerable children and children of essential workers. Indeed all our services responded to the increased need for support throughout the year. This was only possible due to the hard work, flexibility and dedication of our staff and volunteers in all our 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 60+ volunteers without whom we could not operate
- Our 58 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 – December 2022

2021 in Figures

149

Socially Monitored Alarms and Pendants were Installed

34

Traveller women engaged in healthy group activities

20

attended Ethnicity celebrations

121

People engaged in Social Prescribing

358

Learners attended **39** Digital Skills courses countywide

60+

Volunteers engaged in St. Catherine's

€27k

Saved by 91 savers in our new Community Savings Club

25

Families supported by the new Family Support Worker

20,530

Meals on Wheels Cooked and Delivered

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

4 QQI Level 4 Major & **54** Minor Awards

208

Traveller Men engaged in healthy group activities in Carlow & Kilkenny

7

LFEL learners went on to education/training

5

earned QQI Level 4

Major Awards and **49** Minor Awards

4

secured employment

122

Children attended our 2 childcare services weekly

20 women attended our Time for Me Wellness Group

3000+

Health related engagements with the Travelling Community

18

Making Connections learners engaged in QQI Level 3 training with 2 Major Awards achieved

27

Women attended the International Women's Group

15

Syrian Women attended the Syrian Women's Group

58

Teens supported in the Teen Parent Support Programme

4

supported to stay in school

3

went into training

New in 2021

- Our Centre was manned daily during Covid and provided essential services such as meals on wheels, family support and childcare for essential workers and vulnerable families
- A new full-time Family Support Worker post was added
- The new Play Therapy service pilot commenced
- 10 families engaged in the Healthy Streets 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 2021. There were over 70 volunteers who regularly assisted in Meals on Wheels, Administration and Reception, Caretaking, Childcare and After Schools. Due to Covid we were unable to hold our Annual Volunteer Christmas party however we thanked all volunteers.

Our Board

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

Our Directors are:

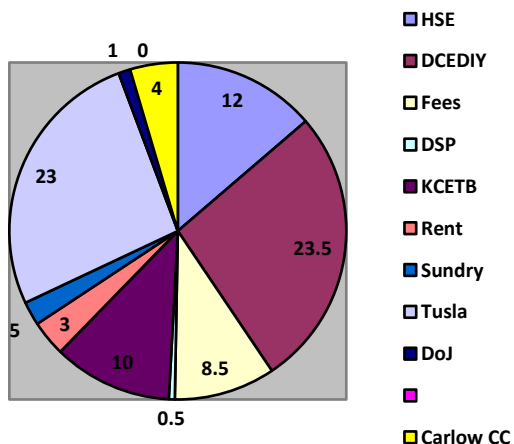
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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Marian Duffy (Chair) | - Frank Comerford (Secretary) |
| - Brian Buckley (Treasurer) | - Adrian Dunlevy |
| - Maura Dowling | - Msgr. Brendan Byrne |
| - Sean Scanlon | - Eamonn Ellis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

A staff member, Andrea Dalton also attends Board meetings. St. Catherine's Board met 9 times in 2021. The Audit sub-committee met twice. The members are the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Director of Services.

Financial Overview

2021 Statement of Financial Activities						
	2021			2020		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Income						
Donations	3,900	-	3,900	200		200
Government & Funder Grants	861,917	982,864	1,844,781	774,665	1,073,738	1,848,403
Total Income	865,817	982,864	1,848,681	774,865	1,073,738	1,848,603
Expenditure						
Charitable activities	651,054	1,074,906	1,725,960	696,336	1,033,258	1,729,594
Net Income/(expenditure)	214,763	(92,042)	122,721	78,529	40,480	119,009
Transfers between funds	(51,920)	51,920	122,721	(14,480)	14,480	119,009
Surplus/(deficit)	162,843	(40,122)	122,721	64,049	54,960	119,009
Prior financial year adjustment	-	-	-	33,650	-	33,650
Net movement in funds	162,843	(40,122)	122,721	97,699	54,960	152,659

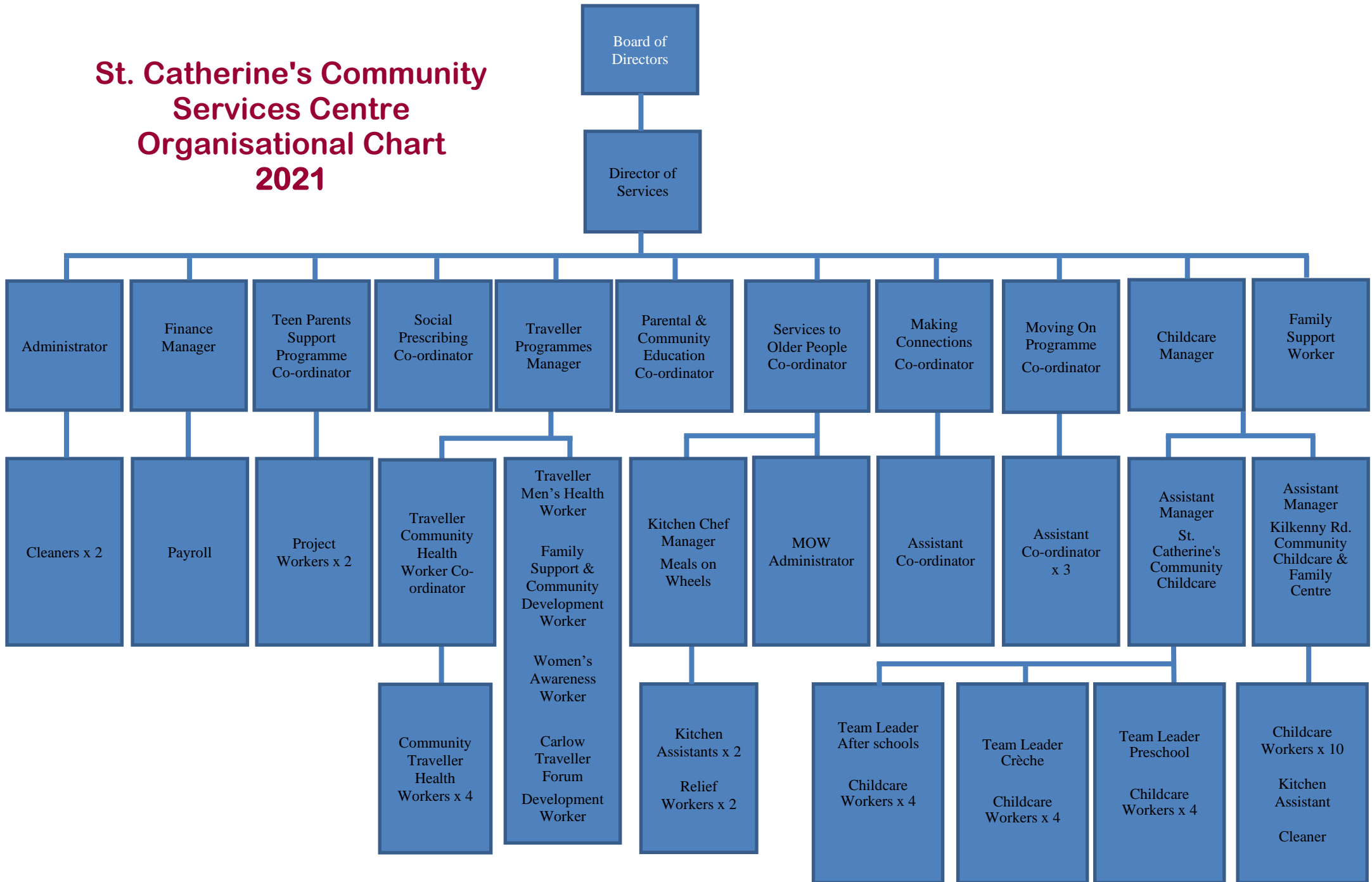
Sources of Funding 2021



Tusla = 23%
 Dept. of Children, Equality, Disabilities, Integration and Youth = 23.5%
 Health Service Executive = 12%
 Service Fees = 8.5%
 KCETB = 10%
 Dept. of Social Protection = 0.5%
 Rental income = 3%
 Dept. of Justice = 1%
 Carlow County Council = 4%
 Covid Wage Subsidy = 12%
 Other Income = 2%

Other Income includes donations and funding from Treoir, Pavee Point, CCDP, Pobal and Irish Rural Link. 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.

St. Catherine's Community Services Centre Organisational Chart 2021



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 feel so safe leaving my child”..Parent

OUTCOMES/SUCSESSES/ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 122 children from 100 families attended our 2 services
- 26 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 2021 was reduced at times 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

The focus continued on infection control, enhanced cleaning, our new room layouts and collection/drop off areas, staff training, new equipment including air purifiers 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 and had a graduation photo taken.



CONTACT:

Name: Anne Marie Ormond
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childcare@catherines.ie

FUNDERS:



An Roinn Coimisce 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 Gnóthai 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 2020 until May 2021, Monday to Friday 9.45am until 1 pm.

• PREPARATION FOR WORK

PFW began on the 17th of May. The course ran for 7 weeks for 15 hours per week. Due to Covid restrictions it was not possible to run the 4-week work placements. This time was used instead to make up for time lost on LFEL.

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

'Thanks for believing in me, and making me see, how capable, great I am, making me see my future is going to be amazing, because I got the opportunity and the tools to make it work, big thanks to all the staff...LFEL Learner

OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- LFEL Number Starting 13
- Of the 13 participants attending:
 - 2 had no previous qualifications
 - 9 had Junior Cert or equivalent
 - 2 had LC or equivalent
- Number Completing 10
- No Achieving QQI Accreditation 9
- Number Achieving Major Award 5
- Number of Minor Awards Achieved 49
- Number that progressed onto PFW 9
- Number completing a 4-week work placement N/A due to Covid
- Numbers to progress onto further education/TUS/CE 7
- Number that took up employment 4
- Numbers completing Manual Handling Course 5
- Family support was provided to over 7 families with 15 children whose parents were enrolled on above courses

COVID 19 – Restrictions forced a move to remote working with the group until face to face work resumed in April. As personal and peer support are so critical to success, staff remained very engaged with learners



CONTACT:

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

FUNDERS:



Community and Parental Education

Community Education



"I would recommend this programme to all people, especially from other countries because they can find new friends, support, belonging" **International Women's Group Participant**

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. Unfortunately we could not offer these courses in 2021 due to Covid restrictions.

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 & SYRIAN WOMEN'S GROUPS

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 while further integrating into the local community.

CONTACT:

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

OUTCOMES/SUCCESSES/ACHIEVEMENTS:

- In 2021, despite a vastly reduced amount of community education provision due to Covid 19 lockdown over 400 participants partook in a variety of part-time courses
- DSCG - 9 online training courses and 30 in person training courses were completed in 2021. A total of 358 trainee surveys were submitted. The programme was completed in 2021 and all training targets were met. The total number of surveys completed during the lifetime of the project would represent over 2,500 trainees
- Healthy Carlow funded Time for Me, a 12-week positive mental health programme. 20 participants benefited. Healthy Carlow were very complimentary on the work carried out. The course included Healthy Eating for a Healthy Mind, Relaxing Art, Look Good Feel Good, Make Up, Growing your own Healthy Food and an Introduction to Holistic Health
- 27 women attended the International Women's Group, funded by the Department of Justice. 50 hours of English, 10 hours of DSCG and 10 hours of relaxing art were provided
- 15 women attended the Syrian Women's Group and took part in two-hour digital skills classes over 5 weeks. Each person received a tablet and training on how to use it to access services online.
- **COVID 19** restrictions forced a move to remote working with the group until face to face work resumed in April. Staff provided intensive support during this period.

FUNDERS:



etb

Bord na nOideachán agus Tréin
Cill Chainnigh agus Chatharlach
Kilmore and Carlow
Education and Training Board



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



CARLOW
COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHARÉAD AN tSÍOCHÁIN



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Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Traveller Programmes

Community Development and Family Support

- 1080 community development and family support contacts including Meitheals
- Support and advocacy for Travellers in education, housing and social welfare and support with complex family needs
- Representation on the Traveller Interagency Group and LTACC
- Group activities and individual support
- Supported Traveller Pride, Traveller Ethnicity Day and other events

Carlow Traveller Forum

- 20 members in Carlow and Tullow and 60 in person contacts
- 3 Forum meetings and 6 Outreach visits
- Participated in National Traveller Mental Health Day in Knock, Women's Aid End to Gender based Violence campaign, Ethnicity Day and Traveller Pride
- Participated in a KCLR radio interview 'Women's Bits'
- Created a poetry video and celebrated mass for World Suicide Prevention Day

Covid 19 Impact

Services responded to a huge increase in demand for Covid information and support. 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 vaccination facilities



Primary Health: Community Traveller Health Worker Team

- Continues to improve health outcomes for families in Carlow by increasing awareness and uptake of health services
- Travellers access 80% of their health information through CTHW's
- The team had 1502 health-related contacts with the community, a 50% rise on 2020
- Contacts were individual and group settings
- Key supports included Covid and vaccine information, medical cards, bereavement support, screening support, referrals to health and support services, substance misuse, child immunisation, counselling support, and supporting children with special needs, healthy lifestyle, immunisations, mental health and cardiovascular health

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.
- 1068 contacts with Traveller men including outreach, groups and drop in's in 2021
- Key supports focused on issues including Covid and vaccine information, diet & nutrition, stress, blood pressure, mental health, exercise, bereavement, alcohol, smoking cessation, referrals to health and support services, substance misuse, counselling, healthy lifestyle and cardiovascular health
- Group activities included driver theory, pool tournaments, swimming, walking, horseshoes and bowling
- 30 men attended the annual Pieta House Darkness into Light walk for mental health.

CONTACT:

Name: Shane Hamilton

Title: Traveller Programme Manager

Contact email: shaneh@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
- St. Catherine's is member of the HSE Service Providers Forum, Carlow Age Friendly County Committee and Carlow Community Response Forum

SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE TO LIVE IN THEIR OWN HOMES LONGER

Outcomes and Achievements

- Meals on Wheels cooked and delivered 20,530 meals in Carlow town and environs in 2021
- The service catered for an average of 80 plus older people daily
- A pool of 40 volunteer drivers delivered meals weekly. Carlow Volunteer Centre support the recruitment of our drivers
- 33 Volunteer Drivers cocooning due to Covid19 continued to receive support calls from St Catherine's Meals on Wheels staff
- 9 Recipients had a dinner and gift delivered to them on Christmas Day
- 29 Meals on Wheels volunteers were presented with plaques in recognition of their long years of service at the Carlow Volunteer Centre Recognition Awards night
- MOW's operate a Birthday Book for recipients. Volunteers help make handmade birthday, get well and anniversary cards
- Carlow Community Garda Unit supported recipients
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults E-Learning Module completed

Covid 19 – Our MOW's service never missed a day in 2021 thanks to the dedication of our staff team and volunteers. They also kept in touch with all our recipients and cocooning volunteers to make sure everyone stayed safe and well



CONTACT:

Name: Edel Keogh
Job Title: Senior Community Development Worker for Older Peoples Services
Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Liaison Officer
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Senior Alert Service (SAS)

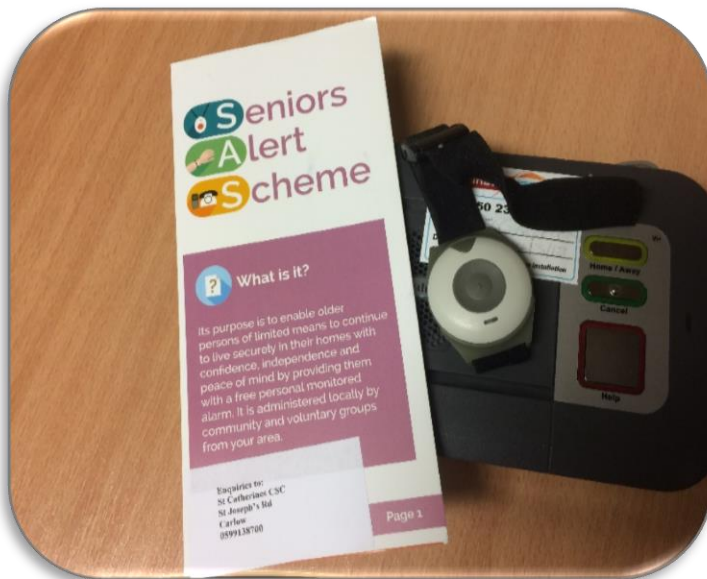
What is the Senior Alert Service

- The 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. This alleviates the fear of living alone and supports independence
- The alarm is worn as a wristband or pendant
- 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!!

What our service users say:

- “I can stay in my own home”
- “It has given me back my independence”
- “The Senior Alert Service saved my mother's life”
- “We don't have to worry about our parents now”
- “It is affordable. The first year free really helps”
- “We are confident to live on our own having the button and alarm”



OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- 149 applications were made for alarms and pendants in 2021. The number of mobile phone applications increased notably in 2021
- As an essential service, applications continued to be processed throughout the COVID 19 lockdown. The work was done in person, 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
- The Senior Alert Service Successfully complied with all POBAL regulations during Covid19

CONTACT

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

FUNDERS:



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

Making Connections LTI

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.

Outcomes, Achievements & Engagements

Due to Covid 19, remote learning arrangements including personal support, were in place from January. Face to face tuition resumed in April.

In 2021:

- 18 Learners engaged with QQI accredited modules remotely and in person
- 2 QQI Level 3 Major Awards were achieved
- 7 Learners submitted modules for certification
- 2 Learners progressed to employment

CONTACT:

Name: Maureen Egerton

Job Title: Making Connections Coordinator

Email: maureene@catherines.ie



Learner Story

I began with the Making Connections course in 2019. I didn't understand what it was about at the start, but they explained everything to me. I was very nervous and didn't know what to expect as I left school very early in life. I never was good in school as I didn't learn much and tried to get on in life but didn't succeed.

I ended up in addiction for a long time. I had no confidence at all, my life was crazy, and I ended up in two treatment centres. I couldn't get it together but then I did, and progress began.

When I started Making Connections. I thought I wouldn't last that long but I'm here three years later and I love it. I love coming in for the chats and learning. It gives me a boost and loads of confidence. I have learned so much I thought I would never do. During the last two years with Covid, we missed out on so much. I found my confidence was going. I wasn't in a learning place and in contact with much people over the restrictions. But now, I am back on track learning and have my confidence back.

I read more, do a lot on computers. I've learned so much. I couldn't thank the girls enough and Making Connections. It makes so much difference having someone believing in me that I can do anything I put my mind to.

FUNDER:



etb

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

Family Support

OVERVIEW OF THE SERVICE:

Specific family support services have always been in place for teen parents and the Traveling community and family support is offered within educational programmes such as Moving On and Learning for Everyday Life. However, up until July 2021 there was no dedicated Family Support Worker and this limited the family support we could provide.

The new dedicated Family Support Service ensures families referred to St. Catherine's will receive support in a timely manner that empowers and supports them to develop their parenting skills and access services that meet their. Key objectives are to:

- Provide access to information and support with an emphasis on parenting skills and links to relevant services.
- Be supportive, flexible, open and friendly
- Develop an integrated holistic approach that addresses the needs of parents and their families



CONTACT: Deirdre Brennan

Job Title: Family Support Worker

Email: deirdreb@catherines.ie

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Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

FUNDER:

"The Family Support Worker really helped me. I was struggling at home and it was great just to talk. She gave me some good tips and linked me in with other services that can help me and the kids. I feel like a weight has been lifted."A Mother 2021

2021 OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS

- The service launched in August 2021
- 25 parents availed of individual family support in person and by telephone
- The Family Support Worker (FSW) outreached to new communities including Syrian, Rohingya, Afghan and Sudanese
- Referral agreements were put in place with local primary schools, Carlow Regional Youth Services and Tusla Education and Welfare service. Tusla PPFS referred 17 individuals for family support in 2021
- A parent drop in was piloted. 4 parents attended
- The FSW chaired 3 Meitheals and was lead practitioner for another 5
- 10 families including 20 children participated in the 8-week Healthy Families programme
- 4 parents attended a Parental Self Care workshop
- The FSW developed Fun Friends sessions plans to support 20 Childcare staff engage and support parents in our two services
- Our Play Therapy pilot service started in October. 4 children commenced
- 3 parents started Counselling in our service that is supervised by PCI College
- The service developed a Post Pandemic Parenting Workshop and Information Booklet. 31 families participated in the research

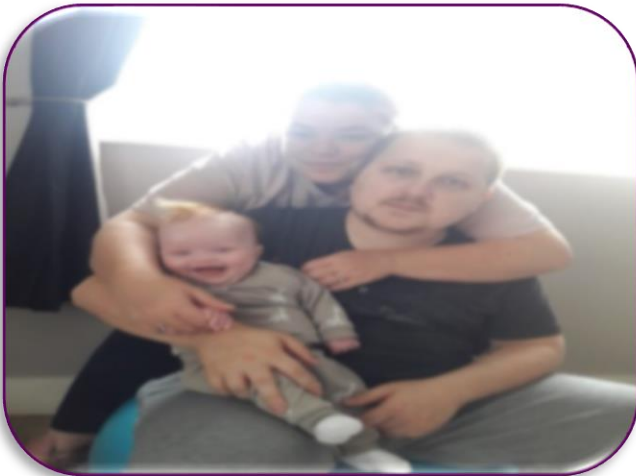
Teen Parent Support Programme

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, both remotely and in person where necessary in a Covid compliant manner.



“I was afraid to tell my parents that I was pregnant but the TPSP worker gave me the support and words to tell them”.....**Teen parent**

OUTCOMES, SUCCESSES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 58 teen parents engaged with the service
- 4 teen parents were supported to remain in secondary level education.
- 12 teen parents took up the service out of 16 new referrals received
- 5 came from Carlow, 2 from Kilkenny and 5 from Tipperary
- All 12 were mothers in 2021
- Referrals: 9 Midwife, 1 Self, 1 Empowering People in Care and 1 St. Catherine's Family Support Worker
- 12 mothers were sent antenatal packs and supported remotely
- Staff linked in remotely with 35 post primary schools in Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary to promote the service.
- 3 mothers progressed into education on St. Catherine's Moving On Programme
- Staff worked with Tusla Social Work on child protection and welfare with 4 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 6 new community families

FUNDERS:



Contact:

Name: Bernie Loughman

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

Contact email: berniel@catherines.ie

Carlow Social Prescribing Service

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:

- Carlow Social Prescribing Service is a pilot service launched in October 2020
- The service offers free supports that aim to reduce social isolation and improve people's health and wellbeing
- Social Prescribing supports health and wellbeing by using community-based activities and supports such as art, exercise, community health education, gardening, holistic therapies, hobbies, volunteering etc
- The Carlow Social Prescribing service is for people over 18 registered with a GP in Carlow town or Graiguecullen
- Referrals come from community or health professionals or by self-referral

Covid 19 Impact

Covid restrictions impacted on referrals in the first half of 2021 in particular but the SP Link Worker met and supported referrals throughout the year, both remotely and in person where necessary.

"I enjoyed the social walking group. I got to meet new people as well as introduce a new healthy habit in my life" ..2021 SP participant.

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 and volunteering
- Improved access to specific support agencies, e.g. MABS and Focus Ireland
- Increased knowledge of local community and voluntary services
- Decreased reliance on GP and Primary Care services



HIGHLIGHTS:

- 121 individuals engaged with the service in 2021 with 60 active cases at year end
- Over 40% of all referrals came from primary healthcare including GP's, nurses, therapists, mental health and other HSE staff
- Remaining referrals came from self-referrals and community services and
- 26 clients engaged in Digital Skills, Holistic Health, Walking and Activator Pole group activities
- 13 people enrolled on the online HSE Living Well programme
- 16 people volunteered and 11 attended educational courses

CONTACT:

Name: Sinéad Fox/Anne Darcy

Job Title: Social Prescribing Coordinator

Contact email: socialprescribing@catherines.ie

FUNDERS: 'THE HEALTHY IRELAND FUND, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & 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: Tony Duffy
Job Title: Moving On Coordinator
Contact email: tonyd@catherines.ie

'The support I got from everyone in Moving On and St. Catherine's was unreal and that's what got me through. It was hard but I made great friends and I feel really proud I did it and got on so well'
MOP Learner 2021

Outcomes, Successes & Achievements

- 14 learners started the 2020/2021 programme and 8 completed in full
- 4 learners gained the overall QQI level 4 Major Award in Employment Skills
- In total there were 54 L4 Minor Awards
- 3 learners progressed into mainstream Level 5 courses in the CIFE and BTEI
- 1 learner secured a place in the Childcare Community Employment scheme and is based in St. Catherine's
- 2 learners secured employment
- 1 of our learners had another baby and another became a full-time carer
- The annual enterprise project was completed on an individual basis as we had Covid restrictions in place in the classroom. The learners produced some beautiful, crafted pieces including facemasks, key rings and bowls which they used to start their own mini businesses.

COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS

Unfortunately due to Covid learners were unable to work onsite all year. Plans were put in place with the group to work remotely when needed. We delivered classes over Zoom and staff kept in contact and supported the learners by phone, email and the post.

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 2021. Four people accessed approximately 36 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 2021 91 members were registered and savings for the year totalled €26,840. The Club was closed for six months in 2021 due to Covid so savings were down on normal levels

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 2021.



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.

Our Kilkenny Road Childcare service



Healthy Streets Programme

Healthy Streets commenced in November 2021 with 8 families registered. The programme took place in Eire Og training grounds and An Gairdin Beo to allow for social distancing. The programme consisted of two weekly sessions, a physical activity session on Tuesday afternoons for the whole family to participate in fun family fitness activities and a healthy cookery session on Thursday mornings for parents. At the cookery session, each family received an ingredients pack which allowed them to try the recipes at home.



New Covid restrictions in December resulted in the postponement of the programme to January. Following consultation with the families, the Co-ordinator and the families kept in touch via a Whatsapp group. They also received a Christmas hamper with healthy recipes, ingredients and a skipping rope with information and tips on healthy family activities.

The programme resumed in January online due to continued Covid restrictions and two new families joined. Activity packs, including hula hoops, yoga mats, water bottles, a football and tennis balls, were sent out for families to participate in the online fitness sessions. At the end of the programme all the families came together for an event to celebrate their achievements with an exercise class with the fitness instructor and a healthy dinner for all.

All the families completed Evaluation forms. Overall, the feedback was very positive. All the families stated they enjoyed the programme. A number of families stated the cooking classes and recipes supported them as parents to develop their cooking skills and encouraged their children to try new foods. Similarly, families expressed how the exercise sessions benefited them to exercise as a family and discovering how exercise is an opportunity to spend time together as a family.

“I had stopped making something different as my son only eats certain foods but I really enjoyed it and have gone back cooking different things”

“He is an extremely fussy eater but he tried everything I made and he now loves Lemon Chicken”.

2021 Inter-Agency Collaborative Work

- HSE Traveller Health Unit and sub groups and the Regional Traveller Health Network
- Carlow/Kilkenny Mental Health sub-group
- Carlow Traveller Interagency Group (CTIG) 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
- Pavee Point and Irish Traveller Movement Committees
- Comhairle na nOg
- 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
- Connecting for Life
- Carlow Joint Policing Committee

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.

