

Social Care Ireland

Annual Report 2022-2023



SOCIAL CARE IRELAND

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"Social Care Workers are professional practitioners engaged in the practice of social care work. Social care work is a relationship-based approach to the purposeful planning and provision of care, protection, psychosocial support and advocacy in partnership with vulnerable individuals and groups who experience marginalisation, disadvantage or special needs. Principles of social justice and human rights are central to the practice of Social Care Workers."

- Social Care Workers Board, CORU

Social Care Ireland Mission Statement

Social Care Ireland provides Members with advocacy, representation and support in the practice of Social Care Work, as well as an opportunity to improve the Standards and quality of Social Care Work in Ireland.

Social Care Ireland welcomes members from across the Social Care Work profession, including Workers, Managers, Educators and Students.

The Mission of Social Care Ireland is the following:

- To provide a consistent and cohesive voice both privately and publicly to key issues relevant to Social Care Work, Management and Education
- To help bring elements of Social Care Education, Training and Practice closer together
- To aid consultation for outside agencies on the development of the Social Care Profession
- To follow some of the successes of other professions in providing a common voice for different branches of the same discipline

Chair Annual Report

Social Care Workers continue to work on a daily basis with people when they are at their most vulnerable, attending to their emotional and social needs in a way that many other professions do not.

Social Care Ireland, as the professional body for Social Care Workers in Ireland, has continued to advocate for the Social Care Worker who practices in so many vastly different areas from the disability sector to the community and voluntary sectors, education and welfare services, mental health services for both children and adults, residential care to name but a few. Social Care Ireland achieved Charitable Status in 2018 and continues to adhere to the obligations of the Charity Regulatory Authority to ensure its continuity as a Charity. Membership of Social Care Ireland is integral to the organisation's progression, and this has continued to grow over the past several years.

We have strived to ensure that the voices from Social Care as a profession, whether those voices come from front-line workers and management or from the most up-to-date research, practice evidence and education, are represented at all levels.

The primary vehicle for this is through how our Board continues to be structured with three members representing frontline workers through the Workers Advisory Group (WAG), three members from Management from the Irish Association of Social Care Management (IASCM) and three members from practice education from the Irish Association for Social Care Educators (IASCE). This is to ensure that all aspects of the Social Care sector are represented. The commitment of the Board Members of Social Care Ireland is significant and is very much appreciated by, not only myself as the Chair, but also the rest of the organisation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the current Board Members for their time and service and of course to thank those who have served the Board so well in the past, for their time commitment and expertise; all of which they have given so generously in a volunteer capacity.

While a Board can provide governance and direction from a strategic perspective, it is our very small staff team and the rest of our volunteers on the various Committees, Significant Interest Groups, Advisory Groups, Strategic Planning Group, the many other subgroups along with our Finance Committee that makes Social Care Ireland an organisation of which I am very proud. Representing Social Care and pushing our profession forward in what are extremely challenging times, particularly when all Health and Social Care professions are facing such a crisis in recruitment and retention, is a testament to the commitment and dedication of all involved.



Social Care Ireland successfully navigated the tricky waters of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as cuts in funding. Fortunately, we managed to secure additional funding from TUSLA Child and Family Agency to ensure that we could continue to fund our CPD Officer post. This has come at a crucial time for the Social Care profession with the recent opening of the Social Care Register under CORU. This will mean that, going forward, Social Care Ireland can be an even greater resource and support for our members who are registered or planning to register.

Examples of this support include continuing to provide excellent courses to aid Social Care Workers in meeting the criteria for their CPD Portfolio and continuing to provide information and advice to those who are navigating the registration process. Our CPD Officer has been engaging with employers on all things registration for many years and continues to do so.

We would like to thank the Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) office of the HSE for their continued support and funding to the CPD Officer post in Social Care Ireland and for their support to us as a professional body over the last number of years.

We would also like to thank all members of Social Care Ireland and look forward to welcoming more Members over the coming months and years.



Leon Ledwidge

Chair

Social Care Ireland

Report from the Workers Advisory Group (WAG)

September 2022 - September 2023

Written by Paula Byrne, Chairperson of the WAG

The WAG continued to meet bi-monthly online for the year 2022/23. We have attracted several new members to the group which now stands at 11 members. We continue to recruit new members when possible.

One of the major events which occurred in 2022/23 was the completion of research undertaken by Dr Martin Power, Lead Researcher and a long-standing member of the WAG and Dr Saintuya Dashdondog. This important research 'Perceptions around professionalisation in social care work in Ireland', was undertaken at a pivotal time for Social Care Workers as we embrace the recent opening of the Register for Social Care Workers. The outcomes and knowledge coming from the finding of this research will benefit the WAG in its work and guide us in developing structures that will enhance our ability to support Social Care Workers in the coming years.

Following on from the completion of the research, we secured funding for the printing of the research and used this to distribute to members in attendance at a workshop presented by Dr Martin Power and members of the WAG at the SCI Conference in March 2023.

The WAG has continued to advocate for, advise and provide support on worker's issues presented at our meetings. We have continued throughout the year through SCI and CPD to support workers where possible in getting ready for the opening of registration in November 2023. Additionally, we have advocated within the Board of SCI on 'workers issues' throughout the year, for example, the proposed reduced numbers of Social Care qualified staff working within children's residential centres.

Members of the WAG have continued to attend councils and meetings within the HSE, TUSLA and the HSCP representing the workers issues. We had WAG members represented on Steering Groups for HIQA ([National Standards for Adult Safeguarding \(hiqa.ie\)](http://hiqa.ie)) and [Guidance on a Human Rights-Based Approach in Health and Social Care Services \(hiqa.ie\)](http://hiqa.ie)) and the HSE ([national-framework-for-medicines-management-in-disability-services.pdf \(hse.ie\)](http://national-framework-for-medicines-management-in-disability-services.pdf)).

The WAG through its two Significant Interest Groups (SIG), the Disability SIG, who represent the interests of those working within the Disability Sector and the CAMHS SIG who represent those working within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to advocate for the professionalisation of the discipline of Social Care within its sector. We have continued to address issues presented to us by members within both of those sectors within the structures of our group.

Members of the WAG were involved in the work undertaken on behalf of the SCI Board on the development of the SCI Strategic Plan for 2022/2025, and in its implementation.

Paula Byrne

Paula Byrne

Chair

Workers Advisory Group (WAG)



Annual Report from IASCM SIG 2022-2023

Written by Caitriona Clarke (Chairperson IASCM SIG)

This summary report is related to the period from September 2022 to September 2023. Throughout this period, the IASCM SIG continued to use Zoom's online platform to conduct most of their meetings. This has supported more consistent attendance and engagement from all members.

The IASCM SIG continued to make quarterly donations to Social Care Ireland as follows:

Quarter 3 (2022): €1,500 donation

Quarter 4 (2023): €1,500 donation

Quarter 1 (2023): €1,500 donation

€1,050 for SCI Conference Tickets for the Mentorship Programme & €500 conference sponsorship for a drinks reception for conference attendees.

Quarter 2 (2023): €1,500 donation

Quarter 3 (2023): €1,500 donation

€4,550.00 Critical Incident Stress Management Training (20 places for SCI members)

The IASCM continues to provide a Training Grant scheme open to current SCI members. The applications are reviewed by the IASCM SIG group and funds up to €300 are provided. From September 2022 to September 2023 a total of €2,025.00 was approved to support courses and training to SCI Members including -

- Diploma in Traumatology and PTSD, City College, Dublin
- Certificate in Neuro Dramatic Play
- Critical Incident Stress Management Training
- Professional Supervision Skills

- Understanding working with people with ADHD
- Reflecting and responding to Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control
- LGBTQI Awareness training

CISM Training

The group, following discussion, identified a need for training in area of Critical Incident Stress Management. A course and a trainer who could provide this was sourced and a venue was offered by a member of the IASCM SIG. 20 places on this course were sponsored for SCI members. This course is accredited internationally by the University of Maryland and each participant on completion received a Certificate in Individual and Group Crisis Intervention & Peer Support.

Mentorship Programme

This year, the IASCM took the opportunity to sponsor three students to attend the SCI conference who were mentored by staff members working in Social Care settings connected to organisations of members of the IASCM SIG. This was a great opportunity for the students involved, who were all members of SCI, and proved to be a very positive experience overall. We hope to continue to support this mentorship programme into the future in partnership with SCI and with volunteer mentors from Social Care organisations.

The IASCM continue to promote and encourage its members to endorse SCI to their organisations and encouragement for students, workers and managers to join SCI, often using the training opportunities available when becoming a member.

The Garda Vetting Service has continued to grow strongly over the past 12 months with the monies generated from this venture funding all of the above extra training. This funding has enabled the IASCM to support ongoing activities in collaboration with SCI.

The IASCM SIG has also continued to support the on-going development and improvements within our sector through the HIQA Advisory Group for National Children's Social Services Standards. The group was committed to staying informed about the requirements for the recent CORU registration and other relevant developments in Social Care.

We will continue to advocate and represent the views of Social Care management and support the continued growth and development of SCI in the year ahead.

Caitriona Clarke

Caitriona Clarke

Chair

IASCM

IASCE Annual Report 2022-2023

Report Submitted by Siobhan Quinlan: IASCE Chair

The following report details the activities of IASCE in the academic year September 2022 to September 2023.

Supporting Care Leavers accessing Third Level Education

IASCE formed a subgroup working on supporting Social Care leavers in third level colleges. Pat McGarty is the lead IASCE member spearheading this initiative within IASCE. Each member college has a nominated person to act as a support for social care leavers. An initiative for care leavers was introduced by DFHEI National Access Plan which was launched in August 2022. The initiative is supported by TUSLA and representatives of all SCW HEIs. The initiative will initially focus on support structures for care leavers and enhanced communication with TUSLA. The initiative objectives include pre-entry support, learning support, retention support, designated point of contact per HEI and website information. EPIC also engaged with this project.

4th Edition of Applied Social Care Textbook

A call for contributions for the fourth edition of the Applied Social Care text book was made to IASCE members in September 2022. The book is edited by Dr. Kevin Lalor, Dr. Teresa Browne and Dr Perry Share. Throughout the academic year, several IASCE members contributed chapters to the edited book. The book is titled "*Applied Social Care: An Introduction for Students in Ireland*" and the 4th edition is due for publication in late 2023.

Fitness to Practice training by La Touche Training.

Several IASCE members participated in a one-day training provided by LA Touche Training on Fitness to Practice. The training included Fitness to Practice Policy, awareness of Garda Vetting procedures, Fitness to Practice versus Fitness to Study, protection of the public and the associated obligations of same. Members who attended commended the training and the potential to repeat the training in this academic year is up for review.

Attendance Policy

A working group on the implementation of attendance policies in academic modules across member colleges was established to assess the variation in interpretation by member education providers of the criteria published by CORU. In the absence of clearly defined minimum attendance requirements in the criteria (other than 800 placement hours), it was noted that latitude and variation for attendance requirements has arisen across HEIs (including variation in monitoring and reporting practices). The subgroup noted the following: as a result of the absence of defined minimal regulatory requirements, a query regarding the implementation of this criterion occurs in relation to non-placement modules. The group noted that the regulator does not stipulate a quantified attendance requirement for Social Care Worker (SCW) programmes other than work placement hours; however, the regulator inspects against the requirement to attend. The absence of regulatory guidance in respect of attendance quantum is leading to variations in practice both in programme delivery by HEIs and in inspection findings by regulatory review teams.

The IASCE attendance subgroup took an inventory of HEI attendance requirements across the country. That review found variations in SCW programme attendance requirements, monitoring practices and the consequences of not meeting attendance requirements (such as including extra work, additional assessment, links to Fitness to Practice etc.).

In addition, it was noted that for several HEIs, the SCW programme attendance requirements appear to diverge from the overall policy regarding attendance and monitoring of attendance for their organisation. The consequences of non-attendance or breaches of attendance policy also appear to be at variance with the application of overall organisation policies, such as Student Codes of Conduct.

Protection of the Title through SCWRB

An issue arose for discussion at IASCE meetings regarding emerging posts in Social Care not using the protected title and role specification for that role if it exists. Members raised concern that some organisations are using a variety of titles for Social Care Workers in lieu of the protected title. This is an ongoing issue that needs to be monitored. Many posts are advertised in national media, with various titles including Social Care Assistant and Health Care Assistant. These roles do not appear to have minimum qualifications. The discussion noted that SCI were engaging with the Department of Health and HSE regarding this development. IASCE members noted that this item is largely in the remit of union/SCI representation.

IASCE representatives on the board of SCI

On the completion of their terms on the Board of Social Care Ireland, Helena Doody and Teresa Brown were replaced by Noelin Fox and Catherine Carty during the academic year 2022/2023. Due to Catherine Carty taking on a role within CORU, she was replaced on the SCI board by Jennifer McGarr in September 2023.




Proposal regarding the Development of a Coherent Theory Base

There was much discussion at IASCE meetings regarding the importance of consistent theoretical approaches, methodologies and research of and for the profession. A number of items regarding the progression of SCW Research were discussed:

- a) It was agreed that consideration of SCW academic publications would be timely.
- b) Proposal to hold conferences @ reading week/academic accessible period would facilitate greater attendance from academics and students.
 - 1) A teaching and learning symposium would be welcome.
 - 2) A research repository would engage the profession.
 - 3) That NISCC research re retention in the profession could be supported.
 - 4) Newer engagement strategies such as podcasts would encourage students.

The IASCE SCI representatives may reflect on some of these items further through SCI.

Financial items agreed during the Academic Year

-  IASCE member subscription has increased from €250 to €300 per academic year.
-  The IASCE student award of €100 per member college has been put on hiatus.
-  The annual EPIC bursary of €1,000 was approved for another academic year.

Garda Vetting

The issue of concern relates to member colleges who may approve a student (who is Garda vetted) to go on placement but who, in the absence of clarity from CORU about their Garda vetting process, may run into difficulties when seeking to register. This issue was brought to a meeting with CORU. It was reported that CORU did not see the issue as causing any significant problems; they appeared to be more lenient than the colleges in their approach to Garda vetting and worked on the principle of inclusivity.

They gave several examples that would not preclude registration. CORU reported that Garda vetting was not an issue in the other programmes they have registered. CORU has uploaded a video on Garda vetting on their website for guidance. It was discussed that education providers must make sure that prospective students are clear that, in situations where there is an issue with Garda vetting form, the college cannot guarantee a placement, future employment or that they will be able to register as a result of completing this course of study.

Ongoing work with the Education Advisory Group

The Education Advisory Group of SCI has noted contextual challenges affecting student's participation on Social Care degree programmes which education providers are now facing as an unintended result arising from the CORU process. The impact of this process negatively affects pathways into Social Care education for a more diverse cohort of students than the traditional 18+ LC student. The more diverse pathways include advanced entry, protected spaces for FETAC students often coming from newer communities, Erasmus placements and the practice of completing placements in places of employment. What this means is that the diversity of the student cohort is diminishing with a knock-on negative impact for the profession.

The second issue arising from the EAG is the diverse experiences of education providers going through the CORU process which has resulted in some colleges implementing stringent procedures that staff are often uncomfortable with and/or are struggling to implement. The lack of streamlined documentation from the regulatory body has resulted in different processes across member colleges. What was to be a minimum threshold has shifted considerably. For example, doing a placement in your place of work is important for courses catering for people in employment in Social Care and CORU did not provide a clear response to member colleges. The group wants to consider these issues now that all colleges have completed their regulatory process. The move of the 'minimum threshold' for education programmes to adopting this as a maximum threshold has had enormous impact on student retention.

Grand-parenting Subgroup

A subgroup has been established to look at the impact of the CORU register which opened in November 2023 for grand-parenting on prospective students, current students, former graduates, practice educators and academic staff. Work within this group has recently commenced and is ongoing.

IASCE member contributing to Curam Magazine

Charlotte Burke and David Durney attended an IASCE meeting to seek an IASCE representative to join a representative from the IASCM and WAG to replace Noel Howard who stepped down from the role in December 2023. Louise McAnarney from TU Dublin Blanchardstown campus is the IASCE representative to take over the role of editing Curam magazine moving forward.

Siobhan Quinlan

Siobhan Quinlan

Chair IASCE

CPD Coordinator Annual Report 2022-2023

Compiled by Charlotte Burke, CPD Coordinator, Social Care Ireland

Membership Update

In 2021 Social Care Ireland initiated a membership drive by reducing the fee and providing additional member benefits. We provide different types of membership subscriptions, and we are seeing a steady increase in the number of social care workers joining their professional body. In May 2021 membership was at 198 increasing to 468 in September 2023. We would like to thank all our members for their continued support.

One of the main benefits for members is access to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) workshops and events. On an annual basis Social Care Ireland have access to CPD funding from the Health Service Executive (HSE). Usually in the last quarter the CPD Coordinator gathers data from our members, advisory and working groups to identify gaps in skills and knowledge within the sector. We use this data to plan for CPD funding for the following year. The CPD can be either discipline specific or interdisciplinary, providing a space for shared learning amongst Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP's) can be immensely beneficial. This year we received a grant total of €26,840 from the HSE for CPD events and workshops, most of which were free to our members.

Disability Special Interest Group- Social Ability Self Advocacy Group

For the third consecutive year, Social Care Ireland are delighted to be part of this innovative project. Social Care Ireland have successfully been awarded funding from the HSE of €7000 per annum. Josephine McLoughlin (<https://www.legalcapacity.ie>) the Advocacy Coordinator has supported the project since mid-July 2020. We are immensely proud of all the hard work the group have achieved to date.

Social Ability Carlow Kilkenny is a self-advocacy group for people with disabilities. The group originally came together in 2017. Their vision is that people with intellectual disabilities living and working in Kilkenny/Carlow would be supported to be autonomous, have their right to equality upheld and become active valued members of their wider community.

There are currently 10 people with disabilities actively engaging in the self-advocacy group. They meet monthly and, on some occasions, they undertake fieldwork to complete our projects. Their goals for the year 2022/ 2023 were as follows:

- Working towards independence and self sufficiency
- Advocating on accessibility
- Increasing membership size and links with local advocacy groups in provider organisations.
- Fulfilling personal goals

CORU

The CPD Coordinator continues to regularly attend universities to speak to both students and Practice Supervisors. The uptake has accelerated with the opening of the Grandparenting rule which commenced on 30th of November 2023. The CPD Coordinator continues to provide both online and in person CPD/CORU information sessions free of charge. Since May we have facilitated 11 online sessions with approximately 600 participants joining us. Since January, over 70 service providers have contacted us to provide these information sessions both online and in person. We are reassured that the social care sector is seeking reliable information from their professional body about registration.

The feedback has been extremely positive in that participants feel more competent about the process of registration, and they can make an informed decision, especially if they are not currently practicing under the protected title 'Social Care Worker'.

One concerning piece of feedback was the lack of understanding from employers about their responsibility for registration. We are now targeting HR and senior managers to upskill them in their role as they need to feel comfortable signing off on the *Proof of Professional Practice* and the *Employer's Opinion of Competence* forms. These forms were always going to present a challenge to the sector, especially for people not currently working under the title social care worker as this will be the only title protected under the legislation.

All the information regarding CORU is updated regularly on the SCI website and after any event an email is sent to participants providing them with the step-by-step process they need to follow to register. From these online sessions a participant can also reach out to the CPD Coordinator requesting linking in directly with their organization if they feel it would be beneficial. The plan is to continue meeting the demand of these CPD/ CORU information sessions throughout 2024.

Standards of Proficiency and the Education Advisory Group (EAG)

One eligible route of the grandparenting rule is to complete an assessment of professional competency. Currently the assessment is not available from the Social Care Workers Board in CORU, and we don't know what methodology they will use to gather this information, but we have been reassured that the social care worker will have to map their practice using the Standards of Proficiency. If a registrant finds themselves in this category, they need to upskill their knowledge around the standards of proficiency.

A useful tool currently on the Social Care Ireland webpage is an e-Book edited by Dr Denise Lyons and Dr Teresa Brown. The book has a single chapter on each of the eighty proficiencies. Each chapter represents the writer's understanding of the proficiency they have chosen and offers insights into the context in which they work, their professional relationships, and how these shape their professional identity as social care workers.

<https://socialcareireland.ie/guide-to-the-standards-of-proficiency-for-social-care-workers/>

The CPD Coordinator arranged a meeting online with Adrian McKenna and Dunia Hutchison to see what support SCI could offer around upskilling social care workers and the assessment of professional competency. This meeting took place on 31st of July 2023. Adrian and Dunia had conducted a pilot survey for CORU and one of the key findings identified as a gap in practitioners' knowledge in understanding the standards, especially if they have not taken on a student recently (under the new system).

This caused some concern as one of the key strategies of the National Health & Social Care Professional's office is practice placements for all twenty-six professions that come under their remit. All professions are struggling with recruitment and retention. CORU's criteria for education providers and standardising best practice is that students need to be supervised by social care workers while on placement. If practicing social care workers are not supported to upskill on the standards and support student placements, the numbers of students that the universities can admit in the first year will be reduced. We wait with trepidation for practitioners who are contracted under different titles such as project worker or support worker, as if they do not grandparent in, one of the consequences is they will not be able to supervise students from 2026 onwards. Will we lose social care workers in these emerging practice areas?

Social Care Ireland with support from the Education Advisory Group will utilise a two-pronged approach. Primarily to see if we can coordinate information sessions around the standards of proficiency and the importance of supervising a student to facilitate future practitioners, and to support future recruitment. Firstly, the e-Book on the standards of proficiency will be utilised it has a lot of resources already contained in it. And secondly as part of the criteria for educators, when a social care worker or practice supervisor supports a student, the universities offer training. We are

hopeful we can collaborate to meet this CPD gap together.

The National Health & Social Care Professionals Office (HSCP)

The National HSCP office has launched their latest strategy; HSCP Deliver - A Strategic Guidance Framework for Health & Social Care Professionals 2021-2026 under Slaintecare. Part of the office's strategic plan is to review practice placements for all HSCPs. There are several pilot projects happening nationwide to try and rectify the recruitment and retention challenges. The strategic plan started with collaborating with Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and Physiotherapists around the recruitment of international students in consultation with CORU. The CPD Coordinator and several Higher Education Institutes (HEI) were part of several workshops during the earlier consultation process. When the office move through the priorities of the strategic plans Social Care Ireland will be notified and consulted further.

Projects to Date:

As part of Registration, Social care workers need to be able to write reflectively to capture their learning from formal or informal CPD; reflecting on how the learning had an impact on practice and how they integrated it into their role. A reflective practice e-learning module was identified as a useful tool to assist all HSCP's in their obligation under their Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics to engage in CPD and to keep their skills up to date.

Some CPD Coordinators within the Professional Development Network (PDN) and the National HSCP office collaborated on this project. This is now available to download for all HSCPs on HSELand (<https://socialcareireland.ie/reflective-practice-elearning-module/>). It is divided up into two modules. The first module is an introduction to reflective practice and the second module is for more experienced practitioners. Depending on what type of learner you are this is a useful resource that has utilised a breath of different mediums to accommodate the differences in how adults learn. The CPD Coordinator in Social Care Ireland facilitated a pilot in-person reflective practice workshop with eight participants. The feedback assisted in streamlining this workshop and the plan is to roll it out in 2024/2025.

There is an updated Supervision module on HSELand; it has been updated for supervisors and supervisees. This is a useful tool in understanding the stages of professional development and reflective practice that can be integrated into the supervision process.

Nuala Flynn from the National HSCP office and the CPD Coordinator participated in the Social Care podcast on supervision and our reflections from practice. Well done to Audrey Moore and David Bagnall for all their hard word editing the podcasts.

<https://socialcareireland.ie/podcasts/>

Upcoming Priorities.

- c) Continue providing information sessions regarding CPD and CORU both online and in person
- d) Explore further in -person reflective practice workshops
- e) Some identified CPD practice areas for 2024; Leadership, Social Role Valorisation, Motivational Interviewing, Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities, and Decider skills
- f) The title for the next Social Care Ireland Annual Conference in 2024 is; **Beyond Registration: the challenges of equality, diversity and inclusion for social care workers and the communities they serve.**

- g) In collaboration with the Advisory groups, we are building up SCI repository, with such things as Positive Framing on what a Social Care Worker is (identity)
- h) Update our CPD portfolio (we are awaiting some documentation from CORU on the auditing process and once this is completed, we will add this to our portfolio).

Charlotte Burke

Charlotte Burke



Financial Report 2022-2023

Compiled by the Finance Committee in Social Care Ireland

As per the minutes of the AGM, Louis O'Moore, as SCI Treasurer, attended the AGM remotely and provided a verbal overview of the completed year end accounts for year ended 31st December 2022 and the current Management Accounts, P&L and Balance Sheet including a statement of receipts, disbursements and revenue. All filings are up to date with Revenue and copies of the filed accounts and current Management Accounts have been shared with all members of the SCI Board and are available upon request from members.

Louis O'Moore confirmed, on behalf of the Finance Committee's opinion, in respect of Social Care Ireland's position as a viable going concern and reiterated the need to continue to focus on revenue generation and a frugal financial approach to costs and expenditure in the coming year. He highlighted that there continues to be a need to significantly expand SCI membership which will have both a positive knock-on effect financially, in addition to strengthen SCI's base in respect of Lobbying and representation and further supporting the role of the CORU Registration Board.

Other Financial considerations include generating and ringfencing an agreed budget to support the actioning of the Strategic Implementation Plan, the need for individual SIG's and Advisory Groups to promote and drive membership forward in addition to fundraising and revenue generation initiatives themselves. Another consideration will be the financial viability and capacity to increase the directly employed workforce in SCI, and this will be kept under review by the Finance Committee and the SCI Board of Directors.

Kind regards,

Louis O'Moore

Louis O'Moore

Director

Social Care Ireland

The Annual Social Care Ireland Conference 2023

Thanks to Fionnuala and her team in the Mount Wolseley Hotel, County Carlow, who helped make the 2023 conference such a success. The theme for the 2023 conference was 'Critical Reflections on Relationship-based Practice'. Considering the year ahead, with CORU registration finally on the horizon, the theme of the conference aimed to explore all of the relationships we have within our practice, with each other, our colleagues, and the people we support. It helped to ask the question 'How do we critically reflect on these relationship-based practices, promote and protect them in a more regulated environment?' Thanks to all the Presenters who facilitated workshops, policy and practice and research and especially to all the Keynote speakers.

Dr Brian Perry: Change is possible <https://brianpennie.com/> who spoke about 'How to Find Your true North- A Guidance System for Life'.

- Catherine Kelly, CEO of WALK and Ross Hughes, spoke about 'How to implement positive practice change and the impact of this change on the lives of people with intellectual disabilities'.
- Dr Louise O Connor, Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Work in the UK, who spoke about 'Agile emotion practices recognising, valuing and developing the centrality of emotions in social care'.
- Ginny Hanrahan, CEO of CORU also provided an update on registration of Social Care.

Awards

Every year Social Care Ireland aims to celebrate the achievements of Social Care Workers. There are two awards: the Student Award and the Outstanding Contribution Award. There is an application process where people can apply and nominate someone who they think deserves the award. The winner or each member of a winning team will receive a personalised memento as a permanent token of recognition for their contribution. Additionally, there is one overnight stay for the winner and/or each member of the winning team (maximum of 4), during the annual Conference.

Congratulations to the 2023 winner of the Student Award, Ciaran Byrne, from TU Dublin Tallaght. His lecturers wrote this about him when sending in the application,

"Ciaran has been a consistently outstanding student during his 4 years studying with us in TU Dublin, Tallaght. His work has always been to a very high standard and his placements have received excellent reviews and feedback, where he was regarded to the highest level by service users and staff. All of this is achieved alongside his roles as a father, partner, person in recovery and several volunteering activities within his course and his local community.

Ciaran acts as a constant source of support to his classmates, and I have witnessed on a weekly basis the amount of time and effort he devotes to assisting other students, through talking and offering supports. He plays a leading role within the addiction community where he volunteers and supports several initiatives. He has also continued on from his placement and continues to support families within his area in addiction. Ciaran is currently conducting his undergraduate research on injection facilities and the positive impacts of this for people in addiction and communities. All this is done without fuss and/or fanfare".

Congratulations to this year's winner of the Outstanding Contribution Award, Joanne McAdam, Social Care Worker. This is what her colleagues wrote about her in the application,

"Joanne demonstrates a real passion for the work that she does and the role of social care, within her team, the wider office and TUSLA. Joanne is someone who takes on the challenges and shows intuition in her role. Since 2010, and yearly since, Joanne has run an initiative in our office distributing Christmas Hampers to the neediest of those families. This is a staff-led initiative and ensures that over 200 families benefit from kind

donations of toys and foods for the Christmas period. Some of those families would have nothing on Christmas Day had it not been for the hampers and donations received. While this initiative is something that Joanne set up and continues to run, it has become a tradition for the wider North Dublin team and something that the area positively anticipates each year. This is extra work that Joanne takes on and she does so with high degree of work ethic and passion to ensure success".

Mentorship Programme

The Student Mentorship programme was brought to inception by Adrian McKenna in conjunction with Social Care Ireland, and it was designed to facilitate access to the Annual Conference for Social Care Students who ordinarily would struggle with self and professional autonomy. It was piloted with two students being supported by two mentors for the two days of the conference. Those original participants evaluated the process and Social Care Ireland decided to support a greater number of Students at the 2023 conference. The student profile could include those who came through the college Access Programmes, those who have come through the care system, those who come from marginalised groups in society, those in recovery from poor mental health and/or addiction etc., and/or any student that has struggled to get to where they are today. We would like to thank all the mentors and students that participated.

Sponsorship

We would like to thank all our sponsors at this year's conference and hope these relationships continue.

We are working hard to organise the 2024 Conference and look forward to seeing you there.

Kind regards,



David Durney
SCI Conference Committee Chair





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