

NATIONAL NEWS

Issue No. 1

Spring 2002

- *This is the first edition of the National News”.*
- *I would be grateful for your views and any articles you might like to offer.*
- *The National Secretariat intend producing this newsletter three times a year.*
- *Contact the Editor: Gina Magliocco National Secretariat Kilcornan House, Clarinbridge, Galway. e-mail:ginmag@eircom.net*

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Welcome from the National Director of Services

Welcome to the first edition of the Brothers of Charity Services National Newsletter. This venture was first planned three years ago as a support to our National Structures and now that the National Development Officer, Ms. Gina Magliocco has joined our services, there is somebody to take responsibility for its publication.

It is not always easy to know the level at which to pitch a national newsletter in a service such as our own – with high levels of regional autonomy combined with one national direction and focus. It is hoped to publish the National Newsletter on three occasions during the year. We aim initially to focus on issues of national interest, both within the Brothers of Charity Services and also within the broader field of intellectual disability.

An article from one of the regions will be included in each issue to assist with information sharing throughout the service and Gina will also be reading our Regional Newsletters: Postbocs - Galway Services, The Grapevine - Limerick Services, Inter Link - Southern Services, Newsletter South Eastern Services, Rosbocs - Roscommon Services for items that would either enlighten or entertain all of us. I would like to thank all of you for the skills and energy you contribute to publishing such newsletters as they greatly assist in information sharing and in building a common identity within the regions.

Our new National Newsletter is in no way meant to replace any of these excellent publications which I always read with great interest. I hope the National Newsletter also will help to enhance our identity as a national service and I would sincerely welcome your comments, recommendations, advice and also any articles for publication.

With my kindest regards to everyone.

Winifred O'Hanrahan
National Director

DISABILITY BILL

According to the Government Press Release, the bill will deal with key issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities. This bill's core focus is a range of measures designed to remove barriers and support access for people with disabilities to everyday activities. Much of the change envisaged is infrastructural, covering areas like, transport, access to public buildings, advocacy & assessment of need.

Curiously, missing from this bill is any "Right" to needs assessment or service, funding details, direct payments are not mentioned, nor does this bill include any mention of adult care orders.

Public Services: Puts the Government policy of mainstreaming services for people with disabilities on a statutory footing. This policy will be fully implemented by 1-1-2006.

Public Transport: to be disability accessible. This policy will be phased in most buses and taxis to be accessible by 1st January 2010 and all rail by 2015, with interim dates for partial implementation in specific sectors.

Assessment of Need: Provides for an assessment of need and related services. These services will be available from 1st January 2003.

Advocacy Services: Establishes an advocacy service through Comhairle from 1st January 2006.

Sign Language: Statute based sign language interpretation and videophone interpretation services facilities for people who are deaf will be available from 1 January 2006.

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National Directorate & Standing Committees

The Brothers of Charity Services, National Directorate

The National Directorate is the national executive which shares the responsibility for the overall day-to-day running of the Brothers of Charity Services Ireland. It is composed of the Regional Directors of Services and the National Director, and reports to the Brothers of Charity Regional Team..

Mary Comer. The purpose of the National Secretariat is to support the National Director.

Various National Standing Committees have been set up over the past couple of years by the National Director to investigate current practice, develop national policies and to examine a way forward for Brothers of Charity Services in very specific areas.

The Standing Committees are made up of representatives from each of the Regions and a Co-ordinator is appointed. Each Committee operates under agreed terms of reference.

Working Groups are formed to make recommendations in relation to certain key areas of service development.

A list of the various committees and their appointed Co-ordinators follows for your Information.

**Sean Conneally
Evaluation.**

**Tony Collins
Finance.**

**Patrick McGinley
Web Site.**

**Mary Hehir
Human Resources.**

**Denise Shaw Kelly
Training & Development.**

**Eddie O'Dea
National Working Party on
Multi-disciplinary Services.**

**Eddie O'Dea
National Abuse Treatment
Group**

**Ann O'Connor
Good Practice on Abuse
Investigation and
Treatment**

**Mary Hurley
National Designated
Persons Group**

**Gobnait Ni Chruialaoi
Planning for Service Users**

Role of the National Director

The role of the National Director, is to ensure that the organisation as a whole is well managed and operates within its agreed objectives and priorities, within the law and within allocated budgets. The role is a national one and is not involved in the direct running of the regional services, except insofar as there is cause to do so because, there is concern that a particular region is not operating according to the ethos of the Brothers of Charity and/or to the policies set down by the Regional Team.

The National Secretariat.

The National Secretariat, consists of the National Development Officer, Gina Magliocco and the National Directors' Personal Assistant,

National Standing Committees, what are they for and who is the Coordinator.

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies carries out research on behalf of its members, it also negotiates at a national level on behalf of its members.

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies (providing services to people with intellectual disabilities) is a National Umbrella organisation for voluntary non-statutory agencies that provide direct services to people with intellectual disability. The National Federation is serviced by a full time Secretariat based in Oranmore, Co.Galway.

The National Federation consists of 52 member organisations throughout the Republic of Ireland. Between them they provide services for in excess of 20,000 people with intellectual disability and employ some 13,000 people. They account for annual revenue expenditure of some 379 Million Euro. The Current Chairperson of the National

Federation is Winifred O'Hanrahan, National Director, Brothers of Charity Services

The Federation is governed by its members through the Chairperson and Board of Directors. There are ten area committees who elect one person to become a member of the Board of Directors. The Chief Executive of the National Federation, Brian O'Donnell, also sits on the Board of Directors.

Further information on the National Federation and its Membership can be found on: www.fed-vol.com. This web site is also very useful for information about Intellectual Disabilities generally and international contacts.

Publication of Governance Statements & National Guidelines

Please note that Governance Statements have issued on the following:

Financial Reserves

The Brothers of Charity Services and its Governing Body, the Regional Team is responsible to its stakeholders to account carefully for all funds both public and private, to manage the Service's finances wisely and to plan for the adequate funding of services desired by the service users, including the provision and maintenance of facilities. The finance policies of the Governing body are designed to establish guidelines for the security of services provided to service users and to

provide guidelines for the Service Regions' chief executive officers, the Regional Directors of Services.

Admissions, Transfers & Discharges.

The Regional Team is the governing Body of the Irish Brothers of Charity Services for People with an Intellectual Disability and as such is the legal owner of the services and is responsible for all admissions, transfers and discharges across its services. The Regional Team designates the Regional Director of Services as the person responsible within his/her functional area for sanctioning decisions on the following:

New people who are offered a service; the movement of an individual to a

different part of the service; and a service user leaving the service.

National Guidelines on Service Users Records and Files.

This document outlines the principles of record keeping, which will be followed throughout the Brothers of Charity Services. It is important that the Services have an effective filing system in place. This system should ensure that there is careful supervision in respect of service users' files, maintaining the right balance between the necessary level of confidentiality, and an appropriate level of availability to service users, their families and those who require access to the files for their work. Good records and files are an indication of good practice!

CONFERENCE SECTION

OFFICE FOR HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Stephen Shortell, (Annual Maureen Dixon Lecture) entitled "Improving Quality of Care Through the Practice of Evidence Based Management" will take place on the 23rd May 2002 in the Great Southern Hotel, Dublin Airport. The OHM will seek nominations from employers for attendance at this event. For further details regarding participation please contact your Human Resource Office.

"High Functioning Autism and Asperger's Syndrome—New insights and Practical Approaches" is a 2 day conference taking place in the Spa Hotel, Lucan, Co Dublin on 9th & 10th May 2002. It costs EUR 245. Contact: Hedgehog Training Consultancy, Derbyshire, England. Phone: 00 44 1433 631036 or e-mail them on: heg.hog@virgin.net.

Irish Society for Autism is hosting an Autism Study Weekend on 3rd, 4th & 5th May in Bellinter House, Navan, Co Meath. Phone: 01 8744684 for further details.

AUTISM

Training Opportunities

Children First & You Workshops 2002. Level 1. Basic Child Protection Awareness Training.

The aim of these workshops is to increase awareness & knowledge of Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children in preparation for implementation. The target group is multidisciplinary staff working in Health Services, Community Services, Acute Mental Health Services

Hospitals and Voluntary Agencies, associated with Health Board, and working with Children.

Workshops will be provided for a period of a month in each county for interdepartmental and interdisciplinary teams across the Health Board Services.

For further details about training in your area contact your Regional training officer.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

To promote safety and comfort, follow these principles whenever you use your computer:

Adjust - your body position & your work environment. Find your comfort zone, and adjust within this zone.

Move- Vary your tasks so that you can move around.

Relax- Stay aware of physical tension such as clenching your muscles and shrugging your shoulders.

Listen—to your body, take action to relieve any tension or discomfort.

Brothers of Charity Services

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We would love to hear from
you—suggestions/ articles
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*Next Issue will highlight the
Southern Services*

DISABILITY BILL continued..

- **Employment:** Puts the 3 target for employment in the public service on a statutory footing with effect from 1st January 2003.
- **National Disability Authority:** Gives significant new powers to the National Disability Authority to oversee implementation of the legislation including powers of entry & inspection.
- **Genetic Testing:** Puts a moratorium from 1st January 2003, until 31st December 2009 on genetic testing for commercial purposes.
- **Universal Design:** Provides for the establishment of a Centre for Excellence in Universal Design by 1st January 2003, with specific reference to I.T. telecommunications and built environment.

Members of Brothers of Charity Services are represented on the Disabilities Bill Task Group, this group have issued a response to the Bill through the National Federation. The Chairperson and Chief Executive of the National Federation met the Minister and have arranged for further consultation through the Task Group. It will not come as news to anybody that the National Federation Task Group have issues with the proposed bill, particularly as it does not confer an automatic right of access to an Assessment nor does it confer an automatic right to Services once need has been assessed.

A further more detailed submission is on its way to the Minister and we await a response.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHT-GALWAY

Rosedale School

Rosedale School, in Galway City, educates 51 children with a severe or profound learning disability, including pre-school education.

The development of special classes or schools for children with a severe or profound learning disability became a reality after the 'O'Donoghue' High Court judgement. This judgement required the state to provide education for children with a severe or profound learning disability. Over the years agencies like the Brothers of Charity Services provided education in Child Education and Development Centres (CEDCs).

The Brothers of Charity Services have contributed significantly, over many years, to the ongoing in-service training of staff working in CEDCs.

It was felt that it would be a great loss to the children involved to withdraw this pool of expertise when the centre was established as a special school. The Brothers of Charity Services kept its existing management structure within the school, the Team Leaders of the CEDC and pre-school section were also retained.

What is unique in relation to Rosedale School is that the educators from the Brothers of Charity Services work side by side with the teachers and special needs assistants. Recruiting teachers with expertise in this area proved difficult initially, requiring a considerable commitment from the educators who remain in post. This provided continuity in the educational programme of the children and assisted in the induction of the Department of Education and Science staff. As many of the educators have training including RNMH and Montessori, this partnership flourished, and the children, who have multiple needs, reaped the benefits of having those professions' skills available to them.

NOTICE BOARD

NATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT 2001

Please note that information needed for the publication of this report will be requested at the end of April 2002.

It is essential that we achieve a timely return on any information requested, also please put aside any photos you deem appropriate for the National Annual Report.

