

NORTHSIDE COUNSELLING SERVICE LTD

ANNUAL REPORT

Northside Counselling Service Limited



2017

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD 2017

As chairperson of Northside Counselling Service I am continually reminded by how fundamentally important the work and presence of this centre is in our community, no more so than when we celebrated our 30th anniversary in November. To see the history of how we developed, the challenges there were overcome, and all our important successes, laid out so unequivocally was inspirational. In its existence, Northside Counselling Service has provided 100,000 hours of accessible, free counselling to our community; that is a figure to be very proud of. Beyond this figure are the people who because of life circumstance have struggled with issues such as depression, anxiety, loss and hurt. We know that when our mental and emotional health is impacted upon, it makes everything else in our lives so much more difficult to manage. These hours were possible because the vision of the founders was made possible, by their hard work, and the hard work of many who have come after them. In that respect, I want to note that in our 30 years we have trained close to 200 hundred accredited counsellors. Many of our counsellors would not have had the opportunity to gain such a profession without the approach and culture that has been the hallmark of our diploma in counselling course. It is our counsellors who have been to the forefront of the successful delivery of all those hours. As I said, inspirational.

In 2017 despite the continued impact of the funding cuts on our finances we have persisted in maintaining the services we deliver, while at the same time continuing to explore how to add to the quality of what we do. The feedback from our clients is consistently encouraging, denoting the positive effects of our work on their lives, and consequently on the lives of their family, friends, and neighbours. As we continue to make progress with new systems, capturing more statistics and information, we become clearer on how to evolve in addressing the needs in our community.

Northside Counselling Service continues to work hard to meet these needs; we work hard to see as many clients as possible and make every effort to minimise waiting times. We have made some further progress in regards to developing counselling for young people, and continue to support older people through the HSE funded Ageing with Confidence Programme.

However, it is important to concede the on-going threat to our services posed by funding cuts, and the uncertainty created by proposed changes in government registration for counsellors, and the impact on our diploma courses. Indeed, recognising the changing social, political and funding context we have succeeded in developing and sustaining significant strategic relationships as part of our effort to overcome and redress this situation. I want to thank the board for their continued vigilance and hard work in maintaining high standards of governance under challenging circumstances. We remain very

grateful to our funding partners Tusla Child and Family Agency, and the Health Service Executive for their continued support to Northside Counselling Service and the vital work that we do.

Additionally, I want to recognise the great work of all the counsellors, supervisors and staff who support and deliver of our services.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I wish to thank everyone who works so diligently and continues to support Northside Counselling Service, and the people and community that we help and serve.

Odran Reid

Chairperson

INTRODUCTION

Northside Counselling Service Limited (NCS) is a voluntary professional and community based counselling service and training centre. Now in its thirtieth year Northside Counselling Service continues to provide an essential and professional counselling service and training school.

GOVERNANCE

Northside Counselling Service Limited is a registered charity governed by the Board of Directors who come from various professional backgrounds; the Board maintains the legal, financial, professional and ethical standards of NCSL.

MANAGEMENT

The Centre Director with the support of Administrative and reception staff carry out the operational management of the service. NCS has over forty professional counsellors working in the Centre. Each of these counsellors volunteers their time generously. In order to maintain standards, the Centre engages a team of Supervisors all of whom meet the IACP criteria for clinical supervision.

OUR COUNSELLING SERVICE

The Centre is open for counselling five days each week from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 10.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. on Fridays. All counselling in NCS is provided free of charge and ability to pay is not a barrier to our services. For clients who feel they can contribute to our work facilities are in place to make a donation.

The following statistics demonstrate the range and depth of our work.

Statistical Activity on Counselling 2017

Gender	Number of Clients	Percentage of Total
Female	247	68.42%
Male	114	31.58%
Total	361	100.00%

Session Status	Number of Sessions	% of Total Sessions
Attended	3273	77.61%
Cancelled	837	19.85%
Cancelled by Counsellor	6	0.44%
Did not attend	101	2.10%
Total	4217	100%

Presenting Issue	No of Occurrences	% of Episode Count
Abuse	7	1%
Addiction	6	1%
Bereavement/Loss	77	15%
Child (Parental Separation)	3	1%
Financial Difficulties/Employ	3	1%
Mood Problems	132	25%
Other	57	11%
Relationships/Marriage	59	11%
Stress/Anxiety	186	35%

Supervision Type	Counsellors Attending	Sessions
Internal Group Supervision	127	57
Internal Individual Supervision	312	312

CLIENTS ATTENDED FROM FOLLOWING LOCALITIES

Artane	Ayrfield	Baldoyle	Balgriffin
Ballymun	Belcamp	Belmayne	Beaumont
Clarehall	Clongriffin	Clonshaugh	Clontarf
Coolock	Clonshaugh	Darndale	Donaghmede

Donnycarney	Drumcondra	Dublin City Centre	East Wall
Edenmore	Finglas	Glasnevin	Howth
Kilbarrack	Killester	Kinsealy	Kilmore
Malahide	Marino	Portmarnock	Priorswood
Raheny	Ringsend	Santry	Sutton
Swords	Whitehall		

LINKS WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

We co-operate with the local community through Northside Partnership, of which our centre director is a member of the board of directors, the Health Service Executive, Dublin North East Drugs Task Force, Coolock Health Centre, the Gardai, Coolock Community Law Centre, the Citizens Information Centre and numerous local resource centres.

Our Centre Director stepped down as chair of the Association of Agency Based Counselling in Ireland AACPI. However, we continue to play a significant role in the development of the AACPI and through them look to influence national policy. We continue to build on key relationships with counselling organisations in our locality – Target and The base. Through this we have explored ways of tackling issues which are common to our services.

SUPERVISION OF COUNSELLORS

Counsellors are supervised on an on-going basis by our team of supervisors. Supervision is provided in order to maintain the quality of the service to clients and to ensure the well being of Counsellors. Supervisors are an essential part of our training programme and support trainees as they begin their client work and progress on their journey to becoming accredited counsellors.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Ageing with Confidence Programme

This initiative was developed by a partnership between Northside Counselling Service Limited and the former Northern Area Health Board in consultation with Age and Opportunity. It was the first programme of its kind to be run in Ireland; the project is funded by the Health Service Executive. We continued our contract with the Health Service Executive and ran three groups this year.

TRAINING SCHOOL

The three-year part-time training course offered by NCS is an accredited course of the IACP since 1997. We had one course this year with our second years moving into third year. Disappointingly, despite strenuous efforts we were unable to get a new diploma course established this year. The main reason for this was the uncertainty created by government plans for the registration of counsellors and psychotherapists. While this was disappointing, our current second year students all began working with clients and have successfully moved into the final year of their training.

SOURCES OF FUNDING 2017

Our core funding in 2017 was provided by the following Government Departments and Statutory Agencies:

- The Child and Family Agency/Tusla
- Health Service Executive, DTF
- National Lottery (small grants project)

Additional funding came from donations from our clients and the fees from our Training School. We also receive a payment from the Health Service Executive for the organisation, management and facilitation of the 'Ageing with Confidence' programme.

ACCOUNTANTS AND AUDITORS

Our auditors are Fitzpatrick Morris and Barrett (FMB). This is the first full year of doing our accounts in house, which has proven very successful. A first draft of the audited accounts were reviewed by the treasurer, and a number of adjusts and recommendations have been made. We are looking at surplus of c.5k at year end. The full set of accounts will be sent to each director on receipt of same. We continue to note the financial challenges on the organisation at this time but will strive to operate flexibly to respond to these.

NCS 30th Anniversary

This year we celebrated our 30th anniversary. To mark this we held an event in the Hilton Hotel on the Malahide road. Over 70 people were able to attend; this included some of the founders of Northside and our current trainees. So many people have contributed positively to making what we do such a success, and it was a wonderful opportunity to recognise and thank everyone for their invaluable contribution.

The evening afforded us time to remember our beginnings, to celebrate our many achievements and developments along the way, and to demonstrate our commitment to continue to respond to the needs of our community in the future.

Karl Tooher
Centre Director