



“Person Centred”

“People First”

“Can Do”

“Partnership”

“Innovation”

# RehabCare

Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

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# News and Views

## RehabCare Newsletter

January 2006

RehabCare

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# Take the passion and make it happen!!

## What's Happening in 2006?

RehabCare is celebrating ten years in operation, providing a range of support services to people with disabilities and disadvantaged groups. There will be spectacular activities and celebrations in the New Year that will help us to celebrate the anniversary and increase the public awareness of RehabCare. From the very beginning as a Resource Centre in Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim with 34 people, to today's services providing support to over 2000 annually and staff of over 750.

## What's the theme of the event?

Take the passion and make it happen! RehabCare is passionate about supporting and meeting the needs of individuals within or without services. Major unmet needs have been identified for people with disabilities nationally. RehabCare will continually be an advocate and are determined to provide quality services to reach out to as many possible.

## Who's involved?

Everyone is involved in this anniversary from service users, staff and management. RehabCare 10 (RC 10) has established a

steering committee with representatives from all across the board. There are also many sub-committees working on various projects around the country locally and regionally for RC 10.

## So when does it all start?

The Taoiseach Bertie Ahern has been enlisted to share the feeling by launching RC 10 with more than 500 RehabCare service users and staff at a glittering day of celebration in the Mansion House on January 24th 2006. Further information will be provided on this soon.



## Happy New Year message

I would like to wish all RehabCare service users and staff and their families a very peaceful and prosperous New Year.

We are also greatly anticipating the celebration of RehabCare's 10-year anniversary, which will kick off on January 24th 2006, will be a special year for all involved with RehabCare. I look forward to working with all of you throughout 2006.

*Angela Kerins,*  
CEO, RehabCare.

## What else is planned?

- A nationwide volunteering programme is being developed by RehabCare as a flagship project of the year along with a year-long calendar of events
- A major piece of research work to gauge the impact of RehabCare on the lives of the people who use its services over the last 10 years
- RehabCare will host a major international conference on Person Centered planning in Dublin early next summer
- Awards programme for achievements by service users, staff members, volunteers, businesses or community organisations who have made a contribution to the growth of RehabCare
- Fundraising events are expected to include a national penalty shoot-out competition where members of the public can pit their wits against established players from all codes
- Major RehabCare in the community day
- Loads of local events organised such as – talent competitions, art exhibitions, photography exhibitions, events, open days, and official openings. The list has no end...

## Aims for the RC 10 year

- To celebrate the success of organisation
- To help raise the awareness of RehabCare locally, nationally, internationally
- To demonstrate to all the RehabCare is the premier provider of services and continued search for excellence
- To create a legacy by developing a volunteering structure that will enhance the services we currently provide

## So what does Angela our CEO say about all this?

“There are many reasons for us wanting to celebrate RehabCare’s tenth birthday and the first is to say a really big thank you to all of the staff, service users and supporters who have shared in our success.

But as well as marking the achievements, both individual and collective, of the last decade, we want

RC 10 to help shape how RehabCare will develop over the next ten years and beyond. We deliver community based programmes and we feel it is important to involve communities in our work through a thriving volunteer structure. We also want to showcase the talents and abilities of our service users to show more people the huge contribution they can make to community life.”

## How can we get involved and help out?

Each region will set up its own committee on a regional and local basis so everyone will be involved at some stage. If you are interested in participating please contact your local manager.

## Final thoughts

Take the passion and make it happen celebrate RC 10 year in style. Enjoy the various events and get involved. So that YOU can make it happen!!

## Editor’s Note



New Years resolutions, I don't know about you but I certainly have no problem keeping them year after year. They just seem to get recycled again and again particularly the ones about diet and exercise. I hope that each of you enjoyed your time off and are well into your resolutions and that you keep them like me, year after year.

We have a jammed packed edition with great articles on award nights,

creative programmes and adventures taken over 2005. Thanks to you News and Views continues to be a success and I look forward to working with you throughout 2006!

Best Wishes, *Kathleen*

**Kathleen Morris**  
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## Presentation Day in Lifford

By Charlie O'Kane

We had our Presentation Day on the 15th of November and it was a great success. This was due to the careful planning and good efforts of the staff. The Service Users all got certificates for different programmes and activities they had taken part in. They all had guests invited who were mostly family and friends. There were other guests such as the General

Manager Kevin Clancy of RehabCare, representatives of external employers, instructors who had done programmes with the Service Users and other Support Workers. We had two very special guests to entertain us called Dominic Kirwin and Gary Gamble. They were both surprise guests, especially Gary Gamble as Dominic Kirwin was here last year so

we suspected that he was going to be here again this year. Dominic Kirwin presented some of the certificates and then sang to entertain us. Gary Gamble did his impression of Daniel O'Donnell, which he did really well. There was a lovely buffet provided by the staff. Everyone enjoyed it. The afternoon finished up with Karaoke – Disco style!



## Joy and Sadness in Ballinamore on being selected on the Connaught Special Olympic Team

On Wednesday June 22nd the news came to us that seven athletes from the Connaught team had been selected the previous night, to go to the National Games in Belfast in June 2006. As the names were read out you could see the joy and excitement on the faces of those selected, and the disappointment on the ones left behind, a bit like watching the voting on 'You're a Star!' All the athletes had won gold medals at regional finals over the previous months, a month later two more athletes were added to the team.

In October, the Special Olympic Co-ordinator from Connacht came to measure all the participants for their tracksuits, another exciting event. The events that athletes are taking part

in are athletics, table tennis, and basketball skills. At present all athletes are on their own individual training programme, drawn up by their coach. They are the most dedicated team anybody could ask to train. Well done to all and roll on June 21st 2006 when we leave for Belfast.

We had our annual Special Olympics night out in Keshcarrigan on Friday 18th of November, 2005. Athletes from all areas attended and had a great night of music, fun and dancing. Food was supplied by the bar and Paul Donohoe played music. Special Olympic athlete Kevin Gilhooly gave a speech on the night. It all finished up about 11.30 pm and everyone went home tired but happy.

## Goodbye Heather Grove, Hello Liosbaun

By Aine O'Grady,  
Galway Resource Centre.

This was our last Christmas in Heather Grove and though we are sad to leave, we are looking forward to moving to Liosbaun after the holidays. We are going to a new building which means new beginnings for us. We will really miss Heather Grove but we will bring lots of happiness and memories of friends, events, places we went, and things we did. We look forward to making new memories in Liosbaun, and having lots of new and exciting things to do, such as learning computers, meeting new people, and finding a nice job. Change is very hard but together we can do it.

## Tea and Coffee Fundraising Day

By *Bernie Mc Dermott*

We had a tea and coffee fundraising morning in our centre with all proceeds kept locally. All proceeds went to our centre. It was first discussed at our N.R.A.C. Meeting. A sub-committee was then formed to organise it. Service users brought in groceries and cakes to make-up hampers. There were tickets on sale for prizes, and also bric-a-brac stands with very nice things on display. There was very nice food served on the day for the coffee morning.

There were three hampers as prizes which were ideal for a family. There was also a jar full of coins and everyone had to guess how much money was in it, and the prize was ten euro and it was good fun. We also had a wet sponge event, Pat Joe Doonan was the victim or target, god help him and he did for nobody could hit him. The cake sale went very well, and was bought up very quickly – I was not surprised as they were delicious. The public were very generous and impressed with everything in the centre. Overall it was a very enjoyable and successful day.

## P.w.D.I. and Galway

By *Eileen Gormley*

P.w.D.I. (People with Disabilities in Ireland) is an advocacy and lobbying group for people with disabilities to have their rights met. P.w.D.I. encourage people to raise their own voices and make sure that they are heard. This is a part of being independent and fighting for their own rights and for the rights of those that may find it difficult to make their voice heard. P.w.D.I. do not provide courses or services, but instead support by way of encouragement and lobbying.

It has been in the country for the past number of years and for a while it has also been in Galway. It wasn't very successful in Galway and unfortunately was disbanded. It has however started again in Galway, under Dermot Hayes, the new Support Officer. About three weeks ago, Dermot came to our workshop in Liosban to give us a presentation. The feedback seemed to be positive with many questions being

asked. Our Sheltered Workshop are going to stay in contact with Mr. Hayes to possibly make contact with other organisations to see if we can get some information on disability related issues. Membership to P.w.D.I. is free and can be got from Dermot Hayes at (01) 8721744. The organisation also have an excellent website [www.pwdi.ie](http://www.pwdi.ie)

## Happy Heart Club

Here in Castlebar we are very busy. We have recently set up our Happy Heart Club. We are looking at different aspects of healthy eating and combining this with lots of exercise. A more in depth report will be available at a later date. Watch this space!!!

## Marble Arch Caves, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh

By *Catalina Keys, RehabCare Lifford*

The service users planned a day out in the Marble Arch Caves, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh. The bus left the centre at 10.00 am to go to Enniskillen and everyone was excited. Sam, Anne and Dawn went with us on the day out and we all had great fun.

We arrived in Enniskillen around 11.30 am. Anne went down to arrange our lunch before we went down to the caves. We had to go down 180 steps to get into the caves and there were boats there to take us through them. There was a guide to meet us at the bottom of the steps when we got down there. The guide talked about the history of the caves before we got on the boats. There were six people in each boat.

It was open to the public; there were a lot of nationalities there. The caves had lights from start to finish, and all the rock formations were lit up with lights. We had a tour guide with us all the way through and she explained all about the different formations of the rocks. The weather was bad that day and the rocks were very slippery. We would like to thank the guide for taking us there. We went to the shop to buy souvenirs and we all had a great day and we got the bus back to the centre in Lifford.

## Engelbert Humperdinck

By *Noreen O'Malley*

On Thursday the 24th November, I had the opportunity to attend a concert in The Travellers Friend Hotel in Castlebar. My sister Maureen accompanied me. My other sister Liz was home for the weekend and is heading off to Australia for a month... lucky thing! The evening started with a warm up comedian Frankie Ford and was followed by Engelbert and the twelve members of his band. He was enjoyable to listen to however he only played for an hour, which was disappointing.

## An Appreciation

### Daniel Flanagan

Daniel passed away on the 11th November in Mayo General Hospital twelve days after celebrating his 21st birthday.



He had spent the previous six months there and had undergone three surgical procedures and was a model patient throughout. Daniel was a quiet and unassuming man who was dedicated to his work in RehabCare. He loved football and was a strong Mayo supporter, although on more than one occasion was heard to shout "Up Kerry." Every week he bought the RTE Guide in order to check out all the sporting events and these would be discussed at work. He attended his art class every week, his use of colour and attention to detail was quite exceptional. He was a remarkable young man and showed consistency in all his endeavours. May Daniel who is now close to God intercede for all of us who miss him so much.

*Ar Dheis De go raibh a anam dilis.*

## A Summer to Remember

*By John O'Kelly, Anne O'Rourke and Josie Cullen, Sligo Resource Centre*

On Friday the 28th of July our summer holidays began. This was the last day at the Resource Centre and unknown to us at the time, it was going to be an amazing action packed holiday. Here are the details on some of the many day trips we arranged with the staff in our supported accommodation.

### Day Trip 1

We made a trip to Belleek Pottery and went around to visit the pottery actually being made as well. Also this is one of only two places that still make china in Ireland.

### Day Trip 2

This was a trip to Cavan Crystal with the most enjoyable part of the day being the spin on the old fashioned trains in the Leitrim and Cavan Railway Museum in Dromad.

### Day Trip 3

We visited Ballymote and went to the eagle flying sanctuary. We visited animals some of which we had never laid eyes on before. This was followed by a most enjoyable concert listening to Big Tom in The Southern Hotel.

### Day Trip 4

Feeling quite energetic we went to a country fair in Tubbercurry. It was full of stalls and Anne managed to pick up a small handbag. Then it was onto Castlebar and the last destination being spectacular Westport where we had a lovely lunch and later visited Lord Athermounts Statue. He was the main landowner in days gone past.

### Day Trip 5

On Thursday of the last week of the holidays it was off to Knock for mass followed by a lovely lunch in Charlestown. After the meal we went on a sightseeing tour around Co. Roscommon. We visited Dr. Douglas Hyde's house. He was the

first President in Ireland. Also while in Roscommon we made our way to Forest Park and then onto Kings House.

### Day Trip 6

Another day trip took us to Killybegs, the fishing capital of Ireland. John has fond memories of relatives who used to live in this area in days gone by.

Not only did we attend all these day trips together but John also managed to stay a few days at his sisters Nuala's house. Also visiting Port Laois where he had a wonderful open air mass in a field behind the house. John also received some amazing news. His niece is getting married to a man from county Carlow and also his nephew is getting married to a lovely girl from right here in Sligo.

Meanwhile Anne and Josie also had a small trip to the Holy Well in Sligo and also a visit to Anne's cousins house.

Overall it was agreed that this summer everyone had a perfect holiday, we were kept busy and got to see some amazing sights. Luckily, for Ireland the weather was sunny and dry. Many thanks to our wonderful staff in the house, for helping to make this summer definitely a summer to remember.



*Back row: Helen Alder, Fidelma Coyle  
Front row: Ann O'Rourke, Josie Cullen*

## Drama and Personal Effectiveness

*By Aisling Egan and Carmel Leydon*

We took part in a VEC ran course, which lasted for twenty weeks. The course was called Drama and Personal Effectiveness and is a FETAC accredited course.

Through the drama we worked on how we show our feelings and emotions and ways to help us express these. We also did some role-plays on helping us to make decisions and building our confidence. Our tutor was called Cathy Brennan. She was very helpful and great to work with. Towards the end of the course we put on a performance to the service users and staff in the centre. The performance was called "The Winning Dream", which was about two brothers who lived on a farm and won the lotto. Everyone thought it was very funny.

We felt that the course was very good and we learned a lot from it. Everyone who took part in the course said they liked it and loved being involved in a group. We had a lot of work to do for it but it has paid off! We all got letters from the FETAC to say we had passed the course and will be receiving our certificates soon.

We are now currently in a weekly drama group in the centre which is run by Declan Drohan who is a drama instructor from Sligo I.T.



*Aisling and Carmel in discussion with Declan Drohan in the drama group*

## The Grand Jury

By Martin Hanley

Encore Productions made arrangements to go to the Court House and Sandy took us down to look around the building. Hugo took us on a guided tour around the building. We asked him lots of questions about what happens in Court. Bronagh came up with her idea about the Judge and Jury. The Community Guard, Sgt. Vincent Jackson, came to the centre and we asked him some questions as well.

We came back to the Court House to see the Jury being picked and watch a trial as well. We came up with nine songs and some lines as well. Mary Frances plays the Judge, Liam plays Andy, Karen plays Bizzy Lizzy, Anita plays the jury, Jason plays Sneaky Pete, Oliver plays Jimmy, Bronagh plays Maggie and Martin plays Handsome Devil.

## Road Racing

By Brian McArdle, Dundalk

One of my interests and hobbies is road racing. To do road racing the public roads have to be closed. You have to get permission from the Council and the Gardai. Road racing involves motorbikes, sidecars and drivers. There are lots of different kinds of motorbikes – Yamaha, Honda, Kawasaki, Norton's, Classic, Suzuki, and Jakati. They have all different engines and designs and colours.

They can drive up to 170 miles per hour. Some of the great riders were the late Joey Dunlop and Richard Britton. These two riders were killed while racing. Other great riders are Martin Finnegan from Dublin, Adrian Archibald, Natalie Coakes (who is a female short circuit rally driver) and Gary Jess.

I really love the craic and the buzz at the races. I have been to Cookstown, Ulster Grand Prix, Sun Flower, Skerries, Kells, Walterstown and Athlone.

I have got lots of autographs and pictures from the different drivers around the circuit. I have also done a project on road racing.

## Our Holiday to Cork

By Olive Hickey and Christine Delaney

On Tuesday the 8th of November a group of seven people went for two nights to Cork. We stayed in a hotel and the name it was The Clarion. Some of us went for a look around the shops. On Wednesday 9th we went to Fota Wildlife Park, which we all enjoyed. We went to Cobh after Fota Wildlife Park and we also saw Cobh Cathedral. We had lunch in Cobh. After that we went back to the hotel. We had our dinner in a restaurant near the hotel. At night we could get sandwiches in the hotel if we were hungry. We all went to bed at 11:00 pm because we were very tired. On Thursday the 10th we went shopping in Pennys. We left Cork at 11:30am and we stopped on the way home to have our lunch, the name of the restaurant we had lunch in was 'The Horse & Jockey' and the food there was lovely. We arrived back in Tullamore at 4:30 pm on Thursday evening. We all had a great time and would love to go back to Cork again some time.



## Michael Judge Memorial

By Eugene Farrelly

We went on a bus to the Father Michael Judge Memorial. It was very interesting. On the bus were John Mc Kiernan, Maura Leddy, Eileen Maguire and Lily Lavin. We saw lots of scenery on our way there. We saw giant footprints and we sat on the bench. We got our photographs taken by the sea. We then went in to Gertie's Pub. There was a car painted in the Kiltubrid colours. We had our photograph taken with the Kiltubrid coloured car, because Kiltubrid were after winning the County final. The car was coloured red and green. After that we went back to the centre. We had a great day.

## My First Holiday

By Siobhan Sharkey

One of my goals was to go on a holiday on my own with my friends. In August of this year when I went to Kerry with my friends Dolores and

Sandra for a weeks' holiday. Irene who used to do the sewing course with us in our centre was organising a coach holiday to Kerry. Dolores and Sandra had already been on one of these holidays before. They asked me would I like to go with them. I spoke to my parents who at first were a bit nervous but I told them that I was an adult and would really like to go. I saved €20 in my bank every week.

There were about 50 people on the bus going on the same holiday. They were really nice and friendly. As Kerry is a long drive away we stopped for something to eat on the way. The hotel was lovely. I shared a room with Dolores and Sandra. We had great laughs.

During the day we went on trips around Kerry, Dingle, Muckross House, Tralee and the Ring of Kerry. At night we had dinner and a few drinks and craic in the Hotel. There was music most nights. I wasn't home sick and made some new friends.

I bought presents for family and friends. I felt very independent and I am saving already for next year.

## Happy Hour

By Martin O'Connor

We have a programme in our centre called 'Happy Hour'. It is about how we deal with our feelings. Our feelings can be sad, happy, lonely, frightened, angry, worried. We discuss a feeling and give examples of them by role-play, drawing or colouring a picture. We also have work-sheets, which we work on. We do relaxation as well at the end of each session. I think it is a good programme and we have good laughs, this is why we called it Happy Hour.

## Composer

A composer called Elaine Agnew came to our centre for three months to work with us. It was part of the Cross Border Project.

She gave us chime bars and we made music. She also gave us postcards of different areas around the border and we had to use different musical instruments to make music about these postcards.

We got to perform our music that Elaine composed in the Carroll Centre at DKIT. There was an Orchestra, St Vincent's Girl's Choir, boys and girls from Newry and us on chime bars and cymbals. Michael O'Suilleabhain played piano. It was really good fun.

## JJB SPORTS

By Martin O'Connor

I go to Special Olympics every Friday morning with my centre to JJB Sports. It is a huge Centre.

I already do work experience one morning a week in a gym in Dundalk and I always wanted to do more work.

With the help of Gerard Roe our Horticulture Co-ordinator I applied to Adrian in JJB sports for some work experience. I now work on a Monday and Friday mornings. I put together the pitches and after the match I take them apart. I move goals and tidy up around the pitches. I am really enjoying my work.

## Work Placement

By Eugene Conroy

I have been on a work placement with Atlantic Home Care, since the end of October 2005. This involves working in the garden centre and when weather is bad I work in the shop. I have found that the course that I did with Atlas very interesting. This gave me a good understanding for my placement with Atlantic Homecare.

This placement has really helped me with my independence and relaxation. This opportunity was brought about with the help of the staff at Atlantic Homecare and Elaine, my Programme Supervisor. My goal is to get a part-time job from this placement in Atlantic Homecare.





## My Day Out in Dublin

*By Dolores McKeever*

I went to Dublin with Sandra and a Staff Member. We got the train to Connolly Station then we got a taxi to Jervis Shopping Centre. We went for lunch to KFC. I got chips, a chicken burger and coke. Then after lunch we met Paul. Paul took us on a visit around the Today FM studio. We meet two of the DJs. They were Tony Fenton and Philip Cawley. Philip took Sandra and I into his studio. He showed us how the show goes out live. He explained to us all about the different buttons that were on the desk in front of him. Then we went to Ian Dempsey's studio. Ian wasn't there but his producer was. She gave Sandra and I a CD that Ian was going to release for the Special Olympics. I really enjoyed my visit around the Today FM studio. Before we left we got presents from the crew. Thanks to everyone for making our day one to remember.

## Gardening

We went to National Learning Network (formally known as N.T.D.I.) to do gardening. We started digging the plots for the seeds we planted which were mint, parsley, thyme and chives. We then covered them with moss peat each person have their own plot.

To walk to National Learning Network it takes about an hour so we use the Town link, which gets us there in about ten minutes. We planted different types of lettuce, sunflowers and cabbage. We have a different section for flowers. We have two small green houses, which help our seeds to grow quicker, and then we plant them outside in the ground. We use the lettuce and scallions for salads at the centre.

## A beautiful place I know

*By Melita Cobbe*

I know a place where I go for a walk it's called Rathdaire Lake. There are trees and a bridge and Swans on the lake. The trees are green and the swans are white and they are lovely to look at. I take photographs of them then I bring my video Recorder with me and film them. It is just gorgeous; the sky is blue, the bridge brown and the water blue and grey. Sometimes people go down there to fish, they wear red coats and brown boots. I really like it there.

## My trip to Lourdes

*By Margaret Phelan*

I went to Lourdes in September for five days with the Franciscans Pilgrimage. I had never been there before. I prayed for all my family and friends and placed their petitions in the petition box at the Grotto. I lit some candles for my family and friends as well. Every day while we were there we got mass. On Saturday night we went to the candle light Procession. The lights of the candles were lovely in the dark of the night. There are a lot of shops in Lourdes selling all sorts of religious goods. It was great that the French currency was the same as the Irish. There were thousands of people there from all over the world. I particularly enjoyed the International mass with all the little children dressed in traditional costume. We had a party on Sunday night with all sorts of nice things to eat and drink. I took a lot of photos while I was there. It was my first time to fly.

## Special Award

*Paul O'Neil recently completed his ECDL in the Limerick Centre for the Unemployed.*

The course was run over 16 weeks and included modules in 'Microsoft Word, Excel, File Management, Powerpoint, Access and Internet/Email'. On Thursday 29th October Paul attended a special award ceremony in the Pery Hotel, Limerick. The certificate was awarded to him by Deputy Mayor for Limerick 'Lily Wallace'.

## Dunnes Stores work

In October this year I was approached by Trish Davern and asked if I would like to work part-time for a merchandiser based in Dunnes Stores, Limerick.

I started work the following Monday at 7.30 am and worked for 2 hours three days a week. I stocked Tropicana products on the shelves and I loved this work. The job lasted for three weeks.

At the moment I am waiting for more work to come my way and I have registered with 'Work Access'. They gave me a job coach and she helps me to apply for jobs and interviews. I hope I can get a part-time job. I am really glad I came to RehabCare and love all the activities that I am involved in.



### Centre Holiday to Portugal

*By Aidan Hogan, RehabCare Limerick*

On Saturday 3rd of September Limerick Resource Centre Service Users & Staff left Shannon Airport for Faro Airport in Portugal. The annual centre holiday had started! Good food, beautiful scenery, swimming, museums, boat trips, shopping and nights out and in were just a few of the many activities enjoyed by all.



### Wexford Trip

*By Martin Dooley and Kieran Shields*

On Tuesday the 27th of September 2005, we went on annual holiday to Wexford. We stayed in the Talbot hotel. When we arrived at the hotel we got our bags and headed to the lobby to check in. There were two people to each room we got our keys and went up to our rooms to unpack. We went for a bite of lunch then some of us went to the leisure centre for a swim while others went to the shops. After dinner we went down to the bar for a few drinks. On Wednesday morning we all got up at 7.30 am for our breakfast. Then at 9.30 am we all went to Johnstown Castle and then we went to the Bunrody ship. It was all very good.

The hotel was lovely and everyone enjoyed themselves. We all hope to go back again.

## RehabCare Carlow Awards Night

By Carol Langton

Everyone in RehabCare Carlow who attended the awards night in the Dolmen Hotel on Tuesday 11th October had a brilliant time. It was a great success and luckily everything went according to plan. Many of the clients received awards and certificates for their extraordinary efforts in different programmes. There was excellent entertainment provided by the singing group Ability and solo performances by John Langton, Edward Brooks and Teresa Huff. Playing the tin whistle were Carol Langton and Anne Donoghue and on

keyboards Marie Fennelly and Irene Daly. Compare for this part of the night was Michael Carton. There was a fine display of art, craft, flower arranging, cooking, gardening, knitting, crochet and woodwork produced by the clients throughout the year. The huge crowds that turned up to the Dolmen that night added to the overall success and all who attended had a great night. All the clients would like to say a big thank you to all the staff and FAS workers without whom none of this would have been possible. Also a special thank you to the Carlow Rose Maura Murphy, Pat McPhillips (Regional Manager) and Kevin Barnes (Programmes Department) who were special guests on the night.



## Limerick Adventures

By Breda Houlihan, Eileen Hennessy and Billy Mulroy

During September two groups of clients from RehabCare Clonmel went on two separate trips to the Glen Of Aherlow Hotel. We took part in lots of different activities including a day's shopping in Limerick, cinema trips, a

night at bingo (unfortunately nobody was lucky!) some of us went swimming while others played badminton, table tennis, pitch and putt. We were very lucky with the weather, so we explored the beautiful grounds of the hotel. The food in the hotel was fabulous we also had a meal out. We watched some live music one night and had our own singing songs on the bus also.

The rooms in the hotel and the chalet were lovely. The staff were very kind and friendly which means a lot.

This was our third holiday with RehabCare we have also been to Cobh and the Gleneagle in the last two years. We are looking forward to many more and will start to save again in January.



## The Beauty Day

With Kelly our programme facilitator, we went to the C.T.I. in Parnell Street. We all got a make-over. The girls training there put make up, face masks, lipstick and nail varnish on me. It looked great. It was also good fun. When we were finished we brought them a box of chocolate and made them a thank you card.



## Cahir Castle

We went on the day trip this year to Cahir Castle and when we got there, we got to go into a big room to see a short film on the whole surroundings, before we got to see the Castle. It was very big inside and all around the grounds there are old ruins, which were very nice for photos, especially when you just walk into the place.

## Intercentre Presentation

We went to Wexford for the presentation of the intercentre competition. It was a great day and we had lots of music and singing and overall came second place and received a trophy on behalf of our centre in Waterford.

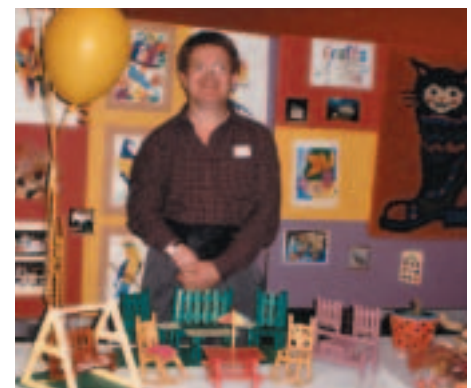
The Rehab intercentre competition has

been running in the South East for the past three years. It involves a variety of activities including board games, darts, bowling, art, and poetry and many more. Centres compete at local level and then some get through to compete at regional level for the annual perpetual trophy. The competition provides great teamwork and a sense of achievement and allows the region to network together.

## Our day at the Piltown Show

*By Geraldine Fahy, Mary Kelleher and Marcus McGrath*

On 1st September this year we closed the centre and all headed off to the Piltown show. It was a beautiful day. Some of us went on the Bus Eireann and others went on Terry's bus. There were fantastic stalls with arts and crafts, home baking, jams, cakes, breads etc., all of which were sampled. There were other stalls with cheese, sauces and chocolates. There were also stalls with jewellery and clothes. One man even went to have his fortune told... There was an animal show on including show-jumping, dog show, cows and horses. There was also lots of farm machinery on show. Four brave men and women went on some of the amusements while the rest of us looked on from a safe distance. We had lovely food in the food tent. That was our third year going to the show and we would hope to go again next year.



## Sean's Crafts

Here we see the talented Sean Skelton giving a demonstration of his work using clothes pegs and lollypop sticks. He must certainly eat a lot of lollipops!!

Sean was invited to N.L.N in Portlaoise in November to give a demonstration of his work. They were very impressed and eager to learn the skill. Keep up the good work. We are all very proud of you.

## NRAC National Development Officer

Hi Everyone,  
I would like to thank all committees for your views/suggestions/feedback throughout the year, without which we would not be as effective. I hope you enjoy reading our NRAC pages and don't forget keep sending your articles in. I would like to wish you all a prosperous New Year.

Many thanks  
Michelle Joyce

## Date for your Diary

Keep free 1st and 2nd February 2006 for your NRAC seminar. The theme of the seminar is bullying. All information will be sent to your centre closer to the date.

## Working group

*By Martin Flanagan*

Jimmy Dooner, chairperson of NRAC (National RehabCare Advocacy Council) and myself Martin Flanagan, a committee member, were asked to go on the working group for Service Users Holidays Policy.

We have had four meetings – three were in Port Laois and one in Athlone. People came as far as Donegal to Limerick and some from Dublin. We had very lively discussion at times and we were all encouraged to give our opinion. Jimmy and myself as service users were encouraged to get involved in everything.

RehabCare encourages our service users to speak up and give opinions on holidays, Christmas parties and other things that concern them.

I enjoyed being involved being part of this working group.

## Training by Michael O Brien

When I started on the Training Team in 2003, I started training in Cork, Mayo, Limerick, Galway, Meath, West Meath, Louth, Kerry, Wexford, Waterford and Carlow.

I deliver Foundation 1 training all over Ireland. When I deliver this training I speak about prejudice and perception. I also give induction training about NRAC to new staff members.

My aim is to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of what disability awareness is all about.

## Article from NRAC Chairperson

*By Jimmy Dooner*

It has been a pleasure to be elected to the National Committee for 2005. It has been a good year for the committee with all the work we achieved to date. It was also a good year for the Rehab Council awards, where we accepted the Highly Commended award for The Making Changes Policy Project in 2004. As I am the Chairperson of NRAC I would like to thank Michelle for the support that she has given over the last year. I would like to thank the RET Team for meeting with the committee and also for the feedback and to local committees.

Thank you.  
Jimmy

## NRAC National Committee meet with Regional Executive Team

*By Patrick Hargardon*

This has been a very exciting time for NRAC as it was the first time we met with the RET Team in July 2005. We plan to meet up three to four times a year and discuss the future and how we can all work together.

## RC 10 Working Group

*by Simon Buggy*

RC 10 stands for RehabCare 10 year anniversary. The National Committee was asked by Angela Kerins to have a representative on the upcoming RC 10 committee. Towards the end of 2004 several people put their names forward and among these were Jimmy Dooner and myself.

In 2005 Michelle Joyce enquired as to were these people still interested to go on the working committee. The result is that Jimmy and myself are on the committee and have attended all meetings to date. Some ideas have been put into practice along with other members of the RC 10 committee.

It is hoped that in 2006 everyone will enjoy themselves for a year long celebration and that all centres that have not been officially opened will be by the end of 2006.

We are celebrating the success over the past ten years and hope to make the next ten years even better.

## List Poems

### Green

St. Patrick's Day  
Shamrock  
Cabbage leaves  
Apple green  
Green leaves.

### Red

Robin red  
Christmas  
Santa  
Berries  
Red for Danger.

### Blue

Blue Skies  
Sea waves.  
Bluebells.

### Yellow

Daffodils  
Primroses  
Sunflowers.

## What's in a name?

Nuala is my name  
Up Laois, when they play!  
All my family are very nice  
Longford is a lovely town  
Antrim is a great county.

*Nuala Lawlor*

Beautiful, I am a beautiful person,  
Really, I like work,  
Everyone is very nice when I am  
Doing my work  
And I am always happy.

*Breda Flanagan*

Going to the shop every day,  
Every day I go to work,  
Running in sport, I always look,  
Really nice,  
Yellow is the paint I use on the wall.

*Gerry Conroy*

## Creative Writing Programme in Port Laois

We spent six weeks participating in a Creative writing class with a woman called Denise Dunne and at the end of those six weeks we had put together a book of stories and poems.

The following are some of the poems and stories we wrote.

## Happy Memories

I have very happy memories of music. When I was fourteen years of age I went to Kildare to get lessons with my brother. I got lessons on the accordion and my brother got lessons on the guitar. My other brother had a band for forty years. I sang and I can sing "Country Roads".

*By Nuala Lawlor*

My happiest memories are of when myself and my children are at home all together. We sit around and have chats and tell stories. Myself and my youngest daughter sit up late at night reminiscing and enjoying each other's company. My other happy memories are to do with taking care of the animals.

*By Mary O Donoghue*

I have very happy memories of birthday parties. I had a lovely birthday party in the Montaque Hotel. My family threw the party for me. I had a cake and it was lovely. We had music there and I got lots of presents and I got two 21st Birthday keys. When it was over, we came outside and got into our cars and we all came home.

*By Melita Cobbe*

## Recipe Corner

A yummy light healthy recipe...  
To help with our New Year resolutions...

### Stuffed peppers

You will need:

- 4 medium sized peppers
- 1 packet of boil in the bag basmati rice
- ½ red onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tomatoes
- handful of parsley
- handful or fresh mint
- ½ dried oregano
- 50g crumbled feta cheese
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- salt and pepper
- Tablespoon olive oil

### Method

- 1 Using a table knife cut the top of the pepper and scrape out the seeds from the inside.
- 2 Boil the rice in the bag and leave it aside to cool.
- 3 Chop the onion, tomato, parsley, and mint and crush the garlic.
- 4 Mix them all with the rice.
- 5 Add in ½ teaspoon ground cumin, ½ teaspoon oregano. Season with salt and pepper.
- 6 Crumble in the feta cheese
- 7 Mix all the ingredients together.
- 8 Stuff the filling into the peppers, not too tightly.
- 9 Place the peppers in a baking dish with a little olive oil. Cover with tin foil.
- 10 Bake them in a moderate oven 180C/350F/gas mark 4 for about 40 minutes.

If you need help just ask!!

## Congratulations



Congratulations to Barry Sweeney who won €50 for the best photograph of an Irish winter. Above is his winning entry. Well done Barry!!

## Web Links

[www.paradigm-uk.org](http://www.paradigm-uk.org)  
UK based links on news, policy, articles, other links on disability related items.

[www.autismwebsite.com](http://www.autismwebsite.com)  
Autism related information and resources

Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) is the national support organisation and advocate for voluntary organisations in Ireland who provide services to people with disabilities and disabling conditions.  
<http://www.disability-federation.ie>

The National Disability Authority, on behalf of the State, promotes and helps secure the rights of people with disabilities. The NDA's responsibilities include policy development, research and advice on standards.  
New Guidelines on Person Centred Planning can be found on the web site.  
<http://www.nda.ie>

## Charter of Rights

By Kevin Barnes

As you are aware both the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, and the Complaints Procedure were reviewed in September 2006. A special mention to everyone at RehabCare Waterford for their 'Review week suggestion box', which tackled each issue and developed solutions. Also RehabCare Tullamore, where they developed a treasure hunt with questions relating to the charter at each station. However the two prize winners as judged by Siobhan Ahearne, Home Based Service Manager, with second prize going to RehabCare Kilkenny. They developed the review into a poster design competition and their own version of "Who want to be a millionaire" entitled "Who wants to be a Charter Expert". But this year's winner was RehabCare Dun Laoghaire who turned the Charter and Complaints

Procedure into a three dimensional village complete with goal mountain, complaints avenue and freedom forest entitled "purpose town". Needless to say the service was in the heart of the town.

A total of 21 services took part in the review with 386 service users taking time to participate in its annual review. The feedback was very encouraging with people who use RehabCare services stating a high level of knowledge of both the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities (over 90%) and the same number of people felt that RehabCare upheld their rights. Similarly nine out of ten people understood what a complaint was and how to use the complaints procedure.

Feedback from staff teams was also positive. However staff did feel that some services (38%) were not in a position to uphold people right to "pleasant, safe, clean and healthy

RehabCare premises." Also staff were not as confident that Service Users would use the complaints procedure (40%). There was also a recommendation to change one proposed word in the Charter. It was to change the word 'assessment' to 'Person Centred Plan'.

Resulting from both this and last years review services and service users can expect two new pieces of information. Firstly, NRAC with support from Kathleen Morris have completed the review of the picture version of the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities. This will be sent to all services in January. Secondly, RehabCare have completed a video demonstrating the Complaints Procedure, which again will be available in the New Year. The full report of the Review of the Charter and Complaints Procedure is available from your local manager.

## Programmes Workshop

By Kevin Barnes

On December 1st-2nd 2005 RehabCare Programmes and Research Department held its National Programmes Workshop entitled "Connecting Communities" in Glenroyal Hotel Maynooth, Co. Kildare. The two days looked at supporting people to make friends in the places they live and with people that they share a common interest.

Helen Collins and Gill Goodwin who work for Paradigm in the UK facilitated the two days. It was especially pleasing to have representatives for RehabCare services present on the day. RehabCare Castlerea shared with us the inspiration story of Ann Brennan who through her natural talent and hard work became captain of the Irish ladies football team and represented her country in Belgium. RehabCare Douglas told of the work they have done with their sensory garden and how it has increased awareness of the service in the area. RehabCare Monaghan proved that people with disabilities are not just in the community but take an active part in improving the environment for everyone with the work they had achieved in developing

an area around the canal. Finally Paula Molloy from Kildare told us about her work and the new people she had met through supportive employment.

What our four presents and Paradigm proved was that making real lasting connections in the community is happening. But it's not always easy and is hard work for the individuals themselves who can face numerous barriers. Connections in the community need to be driven by the people themselves, staff can support but cannot walk the walk. But we should also celebrate people's achievements so people see our abilities.

Over 60 people from all different services across Ireland attended the two days and participated in discussions and debates long into the night. Many told me of the service and the work they are doing. Services should feel proud that they too have something to contribute to these events. We will be in touch for next year!

RehabCare's vision is that every person lives life to the full. The two days we spent together in Maynooth will not achieve that vision. But we must remember that we are on a journey and just maybe that those two days have given us ideas and actions to take us two steps closer.

## European Platform for Rehabilitation

### Knowledge Management Centre

The European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) is a network of European Disability service providers. RehabCare is a member of the EPR. One of the central aims of the EPR is to encourage co-operation amongst member organisations. In order to support this sharing of information a web-based database has been developed with information from all member organisations, the database is called the KMC. The KMC contains

information on services, projects and tools used in all EPR member organisations. Topics covered in the KMC include Acquired Brain Injury, Autism and Employment options for people with disabilities amongst other things. The KMC also provide contact names and numbers for staff in EPR member organisations. If you have information you would like to share you can add information into the KMC. In order to access the KMC you must first log into the EPR website. The address is [www.epr.be](http://www.epr.be) the Username is **rehabcare** and the password is **eposite**. You will then see a link to the KMC and again use the passwords listed above – Happy Networking!

## Internal workshop

On November 8th 2005 the Programmes Department held a one day workshop on 'Intensive Interaction' with guest speaker Phoebe Caldwell in the Glenroyal, Maynooth. On the day Phoebe provided practical solutions regarding people who are caught in a loop of behaviour that can sometimes cut them off from other people and their surroundings. Phoebe also spoke of environmental aspects that can greatly affect people and their behaviours. Phoebe has had excellent success with people she has worked with. Intensive Interaction can be done by anyone and is key for those trying to get in touch with people with little or no verbal speech. For those of you who attend this day I will be sending out the handouts Phoebe left and for those of you who were not able to attend please contact me if you would like them.

## Funding Programmes

The Ireland Funds Grant Programme 2006 aims to support projects in the areas of arts and culture, community development, education, and peace and reconciliation. Further information can be obtained by [grantsinfo@irlfunds.org](mailto:grantsinfo@irlfunds.org)