

News and Views

RehabCare Newsletter

July 2005

RehabCare

Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

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Hot new look

By now all of you will have seen the new RehabCare brand. This vibrant and refreshing new look has been developed to represent the key values and principles of our organisation - as it nears its 10th birthday.

The essence of our new identity

The look and feel of a brand is important, and we want it to be instantly recognisable as RehabCare. However our brand also has to reflect the values our organisation seeks to live by and deliver on a daily basis. In short, what we do is our brand.

To get to grips with what we are all about, the design agency Creative Inc.

spent time meeting with RehabCare representatives. They experienced an organisation that strives on a daily basis to develop and deliver innovative, person-centred support services to individuals within their own community.

A key message they heard loud and clear was that RehabCare is a "can do" organisation. Numerous examples were relayed showing that real and positive changes have and can happen in individual's lives through the development of partnerships between services users and staff/support circles.

To see examples of our new brand and read how it developed see pages 2 & 3...



Editor's Note

This edition has many articles on all the great fundraising you did for the devastating Tsunami that affected so many people's lives. I really enjoyed reading about all your great efforts and events. Well done everyone.

This edition also has a special feature issue on Rehab's re-branding and the Customer Satisfaction Survey.

The staff spotlight will feature an article on the feedback from the staff views and it highlights the key recommendations moving forward from these assessments.

Make sure you have a look at all the great things happening around the country. You never know maybe you can use some of the ideas in your own centres. And if you fancy yourself as a poet, check out our Summer competition on page 15.

Let us know what you think.

kathleen.morris@rehabcare.ie

A brief outline of our many services

Resource Centres

Our community-based resource centres provide a one-day per week service designed to enable users develop independent living skills, and become true members of the local community.

Each person is helped to draw up a personal plan consultation with their support circle (family, friends, etc.), which maps out their interests and commitments, as well as activities they would like to do. Programmes include activities such as independent living skills, personal development, and work in the community or in controlled shops, community integration, social and leisure activities.

Home-Based Respite Services

Home-based respite services offer many people a valuable opportunity to take a break from their usual care arrangements.

Our range of flexible, home-based services also include home support, home help and hospital discharge services. These services are designed for people who require support and assistance with a range of daily living activities, such as domestic tasks, personal care, community participation and social and leisure activities. The services enable people to continue living at home, whilst maintaining their independence.

Our hospital discharge service offers an alternative to residential or nursing homes by providing a full package of home support services to the older person, enabling them to return to their own home and community once medically stable.

holiday. At the same time, it gives their families a break from full-time caring. Each respite period is tailored to the individual needs of the service user.

Home-Based Services

In addition to centre-based respite care, we provide a wide range of responsive home-based support packages. We also offer primary carers temporary relief from the demands of round-the-clock caring - both on a planned or emergency basis. The service is also beneficial to the person being cared for as they can remain in their own environment whilst their carer has the opportunity to take a break.

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"The services from RehabCare is a Godsend!"
Patient who avails of Dublin home-based respite

Supported Accommodation

In partnership with Noreen Housing Association Limited, we provide supported accommodation services to meet a diverse range of needs within the local community - from people requiring high-level support to those who can live independently.

Residential Care

Our high support service offers healthcare and other specialist residential care on a 24 hr/24 weekly per year basis. With a safe, secure and homely environment, residents are involved in making decisions to help them achieve their full potential. Through this service, many residents go on to explore alternative living arrangements, essentially leading to a more independent support service.

Sheltered Workshops

These workshops are primarily aimed at getting the participants back into the work environment. Participants can also access programmes in the areas of social and leisure, independent living skills, personal development and lifelong learning.



National RehabCare Advocacy Council (NRAC)

NRAC consists of elected service user representatives who are responsible for putting forward their views and issues of the highest level within RehabCare. In establishing NRAC, we ensure that service users have an independent voice within the organisation. We support the work and development of NRAC through the funding of a dedicated advocacy officer, independent facilitators and advocacy training programmes.

"With help and guidance from RehabCare, my life has completely changed."
Service User, Resource Centre, Ballinacorney



Leaflet



Folder



The end result

After many months of discussions, Creative Inc. developed a new image for RehabCare that captures the essence of what we are all about and that will build a strong identity over the coming years.

To ensure instant recognition on everything we do, our name has now become our logo. Though clever use of typeface, colour and an all-encompassing strapline it has been given a unique identity.

Our new strapline: 'Investing in People, Changing Perspectives'

Our strapline will appear on every piece of literature we produce and it quickly and effectively sums-up exactly what RehabCare seeks to achieve across our different services. In everything we do we actively work to bring about a positive change in perspectives in society for individuals with a disability and others marginalised in society. An arrangement of three colours referred to as the smile or scarf has been used

to represent those moments, both big and small, when an individual feels that they have achieved something positive in their lives. The change could be using a PC for the first time, enjoying an activity, a carer going to the cinema for the first time in years, or turning the key in their new home.

The smile is there to represent that moment when 'can't' is turned into 'can'.

Protecting our brand

Implementing and using a company brand requires discipline along with



Conference Stand

clear policies and procedures. I have taken on the task of co-ordinating the implementation of the new brand and external contracts related to this to ensure that we always represent the brand correctly.

I have recently sent out new stationary which you should have already received and in the coming weeks I will be issuing a pack which includes guidelines on the proper use of the brand along with a range of new templates. We are also in the process of developing new literature for RehabCare, including:

RehabCare folders and service information sheets

RehabCare brochures

RehabCare stands and banners

New signage at service locations

Templates for individual service brochures

In the meantime, if you have any queries about our new brand identity please don't hesitate to contact me at: sarahjane.dillon@rehabcare.ie
or
(01) 205 7206

One final thought...

The development and implementation of the new brand is the culmination of a lot of hard work over the last eighteen months throughout RehabCare. I hope you agree that this work has brought us a fantastic new image that will lead us forward into the next decade and beyond.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

RehabCare gets the thumbs up...

A resounding message that our key customers are very satisfied with the service we provide was the outcome from the National Customer Satisfaction Survey carried out last year.

The survey was undertaken to identify current satisfaction levels with our services, show us what we do well, and give us ideas for areas that could be targeted for further development and improvement.

The survey team set out to discover how various groups viewed our services. The three key customer groups were:

Service users

Health boards

Families of service users

To ensure that the survey was objective, it was carried out on RehabCare's behalf by an external company - Lansdowne Market Research. The company conducted one-to-one interviews with randomly selected service users and representatives from each health board, and gathered information from families through a questionnaire.

The outcome

Feedback from service users on our services was very positive and complimentary to the RehabCare team. Service users spoke very highly of staff, about the philosophy of the service and the positive changes that the service had brought about for them. In particular, the survey demonstrated service users very high satisfaction with staff's demeanour, the level of respect they showed service users and their willingness to support service users.

Overall, service user's feedback indicated they were very happy with and motivated by the broad range of activities and programmes they take part in within RehabCare services.

These helped support them in developing a social outlet, in generating a sense of achievement and independence and helped integrate them into their local communities.

Within the range of programmes on offer in resource centres, work is seen as a valuable developmental programme and service users indicated that they would like the opportunity to avail of more community-based work placements.

Service users involved in the survey indicated they were very satisfied with the level of interaction and the choice and control they have in deciding if and when they invite family members/significant others into the service. In contrast to this, family members did indicate that they would like to get more involved in the individual planning process.

Going forward

In response to this feedback, the RehabCare management team in partnership with the Programmes and Research team will be striving to develop greater awareness of the individual planning process among families. There is a need to continuously review and improve the process to ensure that plans are person-centred, relevant to and support service users in achieving their individual goals and objectives.

Feedback on the National RehabCare Advocacy Committee (NRAC) was very positive and highlighted service user's strong sense that they were encouraged to stand up for their rights and that they don't have to 'settle for things'. To ensure that NRAC penetrates all RehabCare services, the NRAC National Development Officer will be working closely with service users and staff teams to strengthen the local, regional and national NRAC forums.

Although the participation of health board representatives was less than initially hoped for, RehabCare was able to gain valuable feedback from the survey that will allow us to strengthen relationships with our funder going forward. Overall, feedback from those who took part indicated very positive

attitudes toward RehabCare, with very positive characteristics associated with our organisation, including:

- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Reliability
- Approachability
- Responsiveness
- A sense of trust

Health board feedback indicated they would like a more formal structure in their communications with RehabCare, a request that is currently being reviewed by RehabCare's executive team.

The survey showed very high levels of satisfaction with RehabCare among family members of service users, who consider ours a very strong service and professional organisation. Key areas of satisfaction included:

- The positive impact the service had on their relative's life
- The dependability of the service
- The hours of service provision
- That staff listen to them
- Their communication with the RehabCare team

Overall, what has emerged from the customer survey is a strong sense of satisfaction with the services RehabCare provides and ideas for areas we need to build on going forward. In order to ensure that this high standard is maintained it has been agreed that another survey will take place in 2006. Improved response rates will also be targeted from health board representatives and family members. This will allow RehabCare to compare results and see the success of actions resulting from this survey.

Well done to everyone involved and let's all remember:

The road to success is always under construction!

FETAC Awards - well done everyone!

Kildare Computer scholars

Last month seven clients in Kildare reaped the awards of months of hard work on the FETAC Communications module. Imelda Carroll, tutor said:

"This was a great achievement for everyone who participated in developing their education."



Receiving awards are [Front row L- R]: Paddy Corr, John Dunne, Josephine Doyle, Gretta Whittle, Deirdre Whelan, Paula Molloy, and Ulick Behan.

Waterford computer scholars

By Jason Barry

A great night was had by all on Wednesday, 2nd of March 2005 when five people from RehabCare picked up their FETAC computer course awards. The five people awarded certificates were: Jason Barry, Terry Coady, Gordon Bowers, Maria Allen and Fiona Morrissey.

Advanced computer scholars

Six people from RehabCare in Waterford went to the Inter.Com Initiative on the Upper Yellow Road to collect their certificates for completing a five-week advanced computer course. Councillor Davie Walsh presented certificates to proud recipients Terry Coady, David Supple, John Foskin, Jason Barry, Pauline O' Meara and Lorraine Lanigan.

A special thank you

The clients and staff of RehabCare would like to thank Mary Whelan of the BTEI and Mary Murphy of the Adult

Literacy services in Kildare, for their ongoing funding and support of educational programmes.

Vocational Training Opportunity Schemes

By Mary Nora Curran, Kildare

On Friday September 5th in 2002 I started my three year course at VTOS Bishop Birch Training Institute, Waterford Road, Kilkenny. When I first started there I met a lady called Ms. Geraldine Moran, the VTOS Co-ordinator, John Kerwick, the Caretaker and Charlotte Beattie, the Secretary.

Geraldine showed me all around the different classrooms to meet all of the teachers and to find out what they do. After meeting everyone I went home. I have been attending VTOS everyday since from 9am-1pm. Then I come back to the centre in the afternoon. I enjoy it but it is very challenging. If you want to find out more information about VTOS, the website is www.vtoskk.ie or e-mail address at info@vtoskk.ie

Get ready to rock at the Tall Ships Festival

By Declan Purcell, Wexford

Details have been announced of a three-day festival to coincide with Waterford's hosting of the start of the Tall Ships Race in July. The event will take place from 6th-9th July 2005 and it's sure to be a spectacular sight that will no doubt attract a lot of attention.

The festivities will formally begin on the afternoon of Wednesday, July 6th when the Mayor of Waterford will Host a symbolic Civic Reception in the large room at City Hall. This will be followed by a public ceremony on the riverside at 4pm that will feature input from all four 2005 host ports as well as race organisers Sail Training International.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR DURING THE FESTIVAL:

Free International Music Events

Almost 40 bands including acts from Japan, Trinidad, the UK and the United States will perform free gigs each day during the festival at the many stages dotted through Waterford.

Date: July 6th-8th

Stages will be situated at: **John Roberts Square, Greyfriars, Henrietta Street, Keyser Street, Barronstrand Street and Gladstone Street. William Vincent Wallace Plaza** will also have individual musical themes.

Traditional Crew Parade

Another festival highlight worth noting is the parade of crew members from each ship in their traditional garments through the streets from Ballybricken to Lombard Street.

Date: Friday afternoon, July 8th.

Fireworks Display

The festival climax will feature a spectacular fireworks display entitled 'Suirfire' which will light up the skies above the Tall Ships berthed on the River Suir. This will be a picture perfect moment.

Date: 11pm on Friday, July 8th.

Supported Employment in Kildare

Two people share their stories about getting a job



John Dunne

I want to share my story with you about supported employment. I think it is a great thing and I want to tell you how it helped me get a job and how it could help you too.

How I found out about Supported Employment

We had a group meeting about this in our centre. In the meeting I found that it is about going into employment in the community and you get paid by the hour. I am delighted that I discovered Supported Employment, it was a great experience for me and my life has changed dramatically in the last two years.

What I did to get a job

I was asked to make a list of what I wanted to do and

then the job coaches brought me to the FAS office in Newbridge to sign up with them. The job coaches told me about a job in a menswear shop in Edenderry, Co Offaly. I liked the sound of it, so I went for an interview with the owner. The job coach came with me and that made me feel more comfortable with her there to support me. I don't have a lot of confidence sometimes, but I got the job and I was really happy and now I work part-time and earn my own money.

RehabCare support

I get the CIE bus to work and I get the RehabCare bus to Kildare every Thursday and Friday. I need RehabCare to support me because I am not confident sometimes. I do literacy, numeracy, computers and work skills programmes in the centre. The staff are always there to ask questions about my job and talk to if I have any problems.



Paula Molloy

Supported Employment is about people with disabilities going out to work and getting paid in a job. Job Coaches support us to find the job and assist you when you start off working. They can come with you in the beginning to make sure it all goes well for you if

you want. They also support us if we loose a job. If things don't work out I can also come back to the centre full-time. Most people work part-time for one or two

days a week and they spend the other days of the week in the centre. I have lots of new friends in work. This year I am going to the Christmas party with everyone. I think it's good to do Supported Employment.

How to find out more about Supported Employment

If you want to find out more about Supported Employment ask the staff in the centre and tell your family at home. Then you have to keep trying to get a job. It takes time to find a job that you like but keep trying, it's worth it in the end.

Art Therapy

'Reflections' - a celebration of talent

By Ray Chan, Park House, D.A.C

Park House Day Activity Centre recently had their Art Exhibit entitled 'Reflections' at the prestigious Art Centre of Bank of Ireland in City Centre. The opening night was a huge success. Mr. Tom Mc Garry General Manager of

East/South-East and Ms. Catherine Slattery, Regional Manager of South East - RehabCare were present. Ms. Margaret Gillard, Operational Director of RehabCare was the honorary guest who opened the exhibit.

'Reflections' was a celebration of the great artistry of clients in Park House showing to the nation the superb quality of talented artists we have in residence. Indeed art has opened a new door among the clients of Park

House Day Activity Centre. This exhibition highlights what can be achieved above and beyond expectation when people are given the proper support. May this event serve as an inspiration to all resource users of RehabCare that it's not the disability but the ability and to the community may this inspire you to support and accept people with disabilities towards a better Ireland.

Art Therapy- A special thank you

None of this would have been possible without the dedication and belief of the following people: Majella Burns the art teacher at Park House Day Activity Centre, Ms. Jenny Kirkwood of Bank of Ireland and Anthony Newsome of Intro Art. Thank you.

Arthritis doesn't stop Tony's art



By Ray Chan

Tony is a client of Park House Day Activity Centre who is a very happy go-lucky man. Tony has suffered from arthritis for a long time, but he never lets it get in the way of his cross-stitch. Watching Tony do cross-stitch is amazing - he can make the Irish Blessing without even a pattern. It is people like Tony who never lose their fighting spirit to move on with their lives whatever life throws at them, and their positive attitudes makes my job so worth while.



Ann Donnelly proudly shows off her certificates awarded to her by the Credit Union.

Ann draws a winner

By Ray Chan

Ann Donnelly a client of Park House Day Activity Centre was the proud winner of the regional level Drawing Contest approved by the Credit Union.

West/North West

Events Out & About

Goodbye and Good Luck

By Aine O'Grady,
Galway Resource Centre

The service users and staff of Rehab Care Galway were sad to see the departure of Finbar Colfer and Jeanni Birchill from the service last February. Finbar was the Community Service Manager in Galway for three and a half years. He was a dedicated manager who always had a lot of time for everyone he worked with and he will be greatly missed.

Jeanni worked in the Sheltered Occupational Service in Galway and last year ran a gardening project with the service users in the area, which was based in Heather Grove. Everyone will also sadly miss Jeanni.

All the best Finbar & Jeanni.

Tsunami Coffee Morning

On Thursday 20th January, we had a coffee morning in aid of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to help fund the work they are doing in Asia after the Tsunami disaster. We had a huge turn out and we managed to raise a spectacular €458.80 - so well done everyone.

Thanks a million for your generosity.

Pool Sharks in Galway!



Professional players are becoming very concerned about the extremely high standard of pool being played in RehabCare, Galway. Tom Shine organised the competition and 18 people from all services in Galway took part. The four players who made it to the semi-finals were Declan Griffin, Kevin Walsh, Ambrose Coyle and Sean Letsome. Kevin Walsh and Ambrose Coyle battled it out in the finals, with Kevin coming out the winner.

Following on from this, a doubles competition was held and Tom Shine and Ambrose Coyle managed to beat Peter Forrest and Martin O'Brian in the final to win the coveted cup.

Well done to everyone who took part, and look out for future competitions.

Blue Teapot Play

Galway Sheltered Workshop

We were delighted to have had a play in our workshop on Wednesday the 9th February.

It was called 'Personal Outcomes, That's the One', and was performed by a theatre company called 'The Blue Teapot'.

The show was a roaring success and everyone really enjoyed it. What made it even more special was the fact that one of our own service users (Frank Butcher) is an actor with the company. The Blue Teapot Company is a credit to everyone involved and is made up entirely of disabled actors and is available for performances across the country.

For more information about the 'Blue Teapot' please contact Alan on (091) 764079.

Art In Progress



Michael Ward and Pauline Brennan from RehabCare Sligo master printmaking at the ModelNiland Gallery workshop

ModelNiland Workshops

By Pauline Brennan, Sligo

At the end of last year RehabCare Sligo and the ModelNiland Gallery held a number of drama and art workshops under the supervision of tutors Linda Hunt and Emma Meehan.

Nine service users from our centre (myself, Ann O'Rourke, Bernie Cullen, Adrian Cornwall, Michael Ward, Carmel Leyden, Mary Kate Dolan, Mary McMahon and Blath O'Dowd) had a chance to develop our skills.

Here's an account of some of the sessions I took part in:

The art sessions took place between the Gallery and RehabCare. At our centre we learned how to make beautiful paper out of old toilet rolls and kitchen towels. First, we soaked them in a basin with coloured water and then drained and processed the resulting pulp in a blender. Using a screen we shaped the pulp and then added dried flowers, leaves, twigs and small branches to form patterns and designs. Another time we went up to the gallery where Linda showed us how to make prints using rollers and polyester sheets.

As part of our drama class Emma asked us to sit or stand in a circle, doing our exercises and making up little sketches. This was a lot of fun. Throughout the various sessions we enjoyed being part of role plays and poem reading. At the end of the classes we rehearsed a play, "Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs".

All the people we met at the Gallery were very gracious to us. I hope we can do it again sometime.

Castlebar gets 'Arty'

By Deirdre Garvin

The Adult Education Department of the VEC in Castlebar funds an art course which a group of people including myself from the RehabCare centre attend. We all have great fun and we are learning so much.

Our teacher Carmel is brilliant and she makes us work very hard. We made some lovely Valentine and St. Patrick's day cards and we've also painted pictures of winter and a cottage in the sunset.

We are all improving every day, so watch this space!



Martin Loftus (left) and Raymond Costello (right)



Mary Moyles (left), Sean Walsh (centre) and Mary Colleran (right)

Mid West/South

What's been going on?

Tsunami Appeal

On Friday 14th January service users and staff in RehabCare Limerick raised €434 in aid of the Tsunami Appeal. The money was given to the Red Cross account to help with their life saving work with families in the effected areas.

Special thanks go to everyone who turned up to support this worthy cause and for their generosity.

Drama

All our budding actors and actresses returned to our drama classes in February. Our new drama titled 'Green Acres' an environmentally friendly production went on the stage in late April.

We're all going on a Summer Holiday

Holiday plans are afoot and the destination this year is 'Lagos' in the beautiful Algarve. We will be going for one week in September and if last year is any indication of how much fun it will be, it's sure to be great craic.

My Knitting Class

By Patricia Ryan, Limerick

I go to Ballynanty Resource Centre every Wednesday morning for a knitting class. This class starts at 10am and finishes at noon. I really like my teacher 'Martina' she is very helpful and I enjoy going to the classes.

In the past I have knitted lots of things 'Goldilocks and the three Bears', 'Little Red Riding Hood' and the 'Big Bad Wolf and Grandmother'. At the moment I am crocheting a lovely poncho to keep me warm in the winter.

Events Out & About

People of the Year Awards 2005

This year, RehabCare in Athlone are pleased to be working with National Learning Network to establish the Rehab People of the Year Awards. This is a very exciting and worthy award and eight successful nominations will be chosen from individuals and organisations who have made an outstanding contribution at a local level.

The Awards event will take place in the Radisson SAS Hotel and RTE celebrity Joe Duffy will be host on the night. The Showband Show will provide the entertainment and we will let you know all about what happens on the night soon.

The event is being supported by Athlone Town Council and Athlone Voice (local newspaper). We have ten other main sponsors from the local business sector and we would like to thank everyone for their support and generosity in backing this event.

Two Big Birthday Bashes

Happy 60th Jimmy

By Domhnall Flynn, Dundalk

The most senior member of RehabCare Horticulture team in Dundalk, Jimmy Sheridan celebrated his 60th Birthday on 4th February. A huge party was held for him at the Westcourt Hotel in Drogheda. Jimmy gave out invitations to all the lads in the Horticulture team and we went on the bus along with Gerry and Helen. Jimmy's housemates from Supported Accommodation Drogheda and Dundalk and his workmates from The Order of Malta also turned up to help him celebrate. Jimmy was also very surprised to see his sister and her husband who had come all the way for England for his party.

The Horticulture group bought a present for Jimmy between us; we got him flowerpots and flowers to put at the front door of his new house. The disco at the party was done by DJ JK (Jason Kelly) from RehabCare Dundalk. The

party was a great success and we all had a great night.

My Birthday and the new computers

By Lynn McGahon

I was 21 on the 14th October 2004. A big party was arranged for me in the Fairways Hotel on the 15th October. There was way over 100 people and I got lots of presents. I got lovely new clothes - a skirt, a top and a fur jacket. Everyone was coming and giving me hugs, cards and presents, it was great!

Everyone had great fun dancing. Jason and Oliver were the DJ's. They really kept the party going. I wasn't home until after 5am. As part of my birthday present people gave me money for RehabCare. There was enough money to buy three new computers and printers for the centre and I really enjoy working on them. I'd like to thank everyone who came along and especially for the lovely presents. It was the best birthday ever.

Sports

Special Olympics

By Padraig Kelly, Monaghan

I got into Special Olympics when somebody asked me to join. I decided to play basketball, to swim and to run. I practiced swimming every Saturday and I went to basketball on Tuesdays. My friends and I did guard of honour for the Special Olympics torch when it came to Monaghan. There were lots of people clapping and cheering and I was really proud. I saw the guards running with the torch and I really enjoyed that!

Later on I went to a dinner to raise money for the Special Olympics in the Four Seasons hotel, Dublin. I had to make a speech and I welcomed everyone from Monaghan. On the night, I sat at the top table and the guards presented me with a trophy, it was great fun and I felt really proud to be part of the Special Olympics.



Tom Dunne (left), Hillary and Jane Rooney (centre) and Anthony Farrell (right)

Helping the community

Eleven-year-old Hillary Rooney, who lives in Dunboyne, decided that she would like to do something for people in her community who have M.S. (Multiple Sclerosis). So she decided to hold a raffle. Thanks to her effort, a cheque for €410.47 was raised.

The money will be used towards funding Reflexology for people with M.S. Our sincere thanks to Hillary for her contribution. It is much appreciated.

Swimming improved my health

By Bernadette McIntyre, Dunboyne

Up to the age of 25 I never took part in competitions. Because of my physical condition it was hard enough to exercise, but then in recent years my strength built up and I began to enter competitions.

I do swimming as a form of exercise twice a week. I have learned how to keep fit and how to breathe properly. When my health improved, my swimming improved too. Being able to swim is a big achievement for me and I have much better balance after a swim and I always feel more relaxed which helps me walk better. The action of swimming and having to use your concentration is a positive thing. I come out feeling physically and mentally fit. I intend to swim for as long as I can.

From wild garden to crazy golf

By Stephen Murphy, Dundalk

At Mounthamilton house in the RehabCare Horticulture unit, one of the gardens (the Wildflower garden) never really grew well so we talked about different ideas that we could do in this area. The most popular idea was to turn the area into a crazy golf course. We told the people in the Health Board about our idea and they thought it was great and agreed to help us fund it.

The whole course was finished in three days. First of all we cleared the area and levelled it. Then the six holes were marked out with lots of corners to make it difficult. After this we covered the area in concrete, which we mixed with green dye to make out the playing area. When this had set, concrete with red dye was put down two inches higher than the green concrete over the rest of the area to stop the balls from hitting off each hole. Some obstacles were then put on each course to make it harder to play. We then got some yellow flags to put in the holes to make it look like a golf course.

Service users asked friends and family for any unwanted putters and golf balls and now that we have them we can play away. We go for a game at lunchtime or at the end of the day if all the work is done and we all enjoy the fun of playing. During the summer we hope to hold competitions and we all look forward to this.

Arts & Crafts

Pottery classes

By Amanda Parker, Monaghan

I started the class before December 2004, it is a small group of people and the teachers name is Fiona. We started making small pieces to get the feel of the clay. The clay is grey in colour and when it dries out it turns white. We made Christmas angels, trees, and chime decorations for the tree at Christmas. Fiona takes the finished thing we make out of clay and puts them in the kiln where they are fired at a very hot temperature. After they come out of the kiln, we paint them with special paint and then Fiona dips the objects into a glaze to put a shine on them and to harden them. Then they are fired again in the kiln.

We are now making bigger items and things are getting more interesting and creative, some people are making pots and boxes in the shape of a hearts, wings and even clocks. I really enjoy my pottery classes and I find it very relaxing.

Design Competition

Five individuals from Athlone submitted design ideas for the National Intellectual Disability Database Annual Report Cover design competition. A certificate of merit was presented to Laura Gaffey, Kitty Tumelty, Tony Shaughnessy, Kyra Kinirons and Carrie McCormack for their entries.

Well done everyone, keep up the good work!

Activity Breaks

By Bernadette McCormack, Navan

The four groups of nine Service Users and three staff who spent three nights each at the Bel Erne River Village in Belturbet found that not only was the town friendly and warm, but that there was also plenty of activities other than fishing to make our stay a memorable one.

The cottages we stayed in were lovely and because of the weather a real coal fire and plenty of cups of tea were required to keep nice and cosy. Walking along the river and through the interesting little town gave us an appetite on our first day for a lovely meal in the Seven Horse Shoes followed by music and dancing in the local pubs.

We found that this was not the only activity planned for us though. We visited the Shannon Pot where the river starts, the Derry Tully Falls, went bowling in Co.Cavan, fishing and at night time a table quiz between the cottages was arranged.

Retail therapy was provided not only in nearby Cavan and Sligo, but for a change (from Euro) in nearby Enniskillen. The break was rounded off by a visit to the magnificent Slieve Russell Hotel for a fabulous 3-course meal.

Many thanks to all the staff, especially the drivers who helped in the evenings, Bel Erne River cottages and the nice people of Belturbet. A special word of thanks also goes to those who helped fundraise for the trip in particular the Navan Lions Club, Moynalvey GAA Club, and all those who supported the recent table quiz.

Thank you all very much.



Pictured at the Tullamore Coffee Morning: P.J. Fox, Greg Callaghan, Olive Hickey, Kieran Shields, Eugene Conroy, Keith Hewson (R.I.P.), Geraldine Harrington, Jimmy Dooner, Ursula O'Brien, Fiona Geoghegan, Christine Delaney, Marie Keegan, Jenny Monaghan, Michael Morris, John Claffey.

Tsunami Appeals

RehabCare Dundalk

After our Christmas holidays all our thoughts were on the Tsunami and the tragedy in South East Asia, so we had a group discussion and decided to hold a fund raising day on the 14th January.

On the day, we organised the following events:

- A dance-a-thon
- Sponsored silence
- Draughts challenge
- A coffee morning
- A sponsored walk in the afternoon

We also decided to have our own special remembrance ceremony so we painted stones from the beach and wrote a message on them. Then we went for the walk along the Navy Bank and threw the stones into the sea as we remembered all those who had sadly died.

Everyone took part and it was a great success, we got huge support from our families and the community. Overall we raised over €2,000.

Some thoughts about Tsunami

By Anita Guest, RehabCare Dundalk

I was shocked to hear about the Tsunami disaster. Many people lost their lives and their homes, schools and hotels. The men lost their livelihoods and they can't make a living. We give you our hope and prayers to all the people for their lives lost. We hope that the money raised will be spent on the things you miss most even though it can't replace your lost family.

By Jason Kelly

It was so sad to here about it. A lot of people were left homeless and lots of children were left without their parents. They have no houses to live in or no schools or food to eat. We need to help them as much as we can. Lots of people are trying to raise money so

they can start to build their lives back. I think we should all help as much as we can.

By Liam O'Reilly

It was very sad. They will miss their mums and dads and their children. They lost boats and houses which were washed away in minutes by the big wave. Now they have nowhere to live and no way of catching fish for the hungry mouths. What a disaster. Our thoughts and our prayers we offer you.

Coffee Morning

By Jimmy Dooner, Greg Callaghan, Ursula O'Brien, Joe Mulvin, Tullamore

On 13th of January we organised a coffee morning in aid of the Tsunami Disaster. We sent out flyers to local businesses to let people know the time and venue. One of our friends Christine made lovely flower arrangements in baskets, which went down a treat.

We all were assigned different jobs and we managed to collect €758.33 which we gave to the Irish Red Cross.

NRAC Committee Members

National Committee

Chairperson: Jimmy Dooner

Vice-Chairperson: To be confirmed

Secretaries: Simon Buggy & Mary Browne

Committee Members:

West Region:

Nicky Orr & Margaret Norris

East Region:

Patrick Hargardon & Martin Flanagan

South Region:

Michael O'Brien & Simon Buggy

North East Midland Region:

Jimmy Dooner & Mary Browne

Dundalk Resource Centre

We are a newly elected local committee in Dundalk Resource Centre.

Committee Members:

Anita Guest, Martin Handley, Siobhan Sharkey, Stephen Murphy, Martin O'Connor and Oliver Handratty.

We are looking forward to holding our NRAC meeting every two weeks and discussing things with our full group in the Centre. We are looking for an external facilitator to support us at our meeting. Interviews are being held at the end of March and Anita is on the interview panel.

Newly elected Local Committee Members in Lifford

Chairperson: Charlie O'Kane

Vice Chairperson: Ann Quinn

Secretary: Mary Mc Ghee

Treasurer: Helena Crawford

Committee Members:

Margaret Norris, Adrian Devenney, Josephine Sweeney

NRAC Castlebar

The Annual General meeting was held in the RehabCare building on Breaffy Road Castlebar on the 7th February. The new committee elected was:

Chairperson: John Higgins

Vice Chairperson: Neil Mulhern

Secretary: Patricia Cavanagh (returned 2nd term)

Assistant Secretary: Daniel Flanagan

Treasurer: Paul Gibbons

Committee Members:

Deirdre Garvin, Aoife Keane, Bridget Geraghty, Mary Moyles, Niamh Cunnane

Tsunami Fun Day Appeal

By Lee Colfer Acting Chairman NRAC Committee, Wexford

We all had a great day helping to raise funds for the Tsunami Appeal. We played darts, pool, bingo, did a sponsored car wash (they all had gleaming cars going home) and donated our lunch money for a week.

The NRAC Committee would like to thank everyone who took part and made the day a success. Sam Devlin was the overall winner in the pool and darts (well done Sam) with me being the runner up in the darts, and Andrew O'Connor was runner up in the pool.

The best sports of the day were Stella McClean and Helen O'Dowd who entertained everyone and had a great laugh playing their game of pool. The NRAC Committee would like to thank the staff for sponsoring the prizes for the day. Thanks also to JJ Scallan for doing the photography and to the games referees. Thanks to Gordon, Tina, Annette, Pat, Laura, Frances, Liz, Herbert, Celine and Tommy for their help and support. Thanks to all the staff that supported our car wash and well done to JJ Scallan, Stella McClean and Sean O'Kennedy who worked so hard with me to get all the cars done. Congratulations to Sam on his double win which makes him undoubtedly the Centre's games champion.

After all our hard work, we managed to raise €303 to help all the people in need.

NRAC

By Aidan Hogan

I joined RehabCare Limerick on 13th June 2002, when I first started I kept to myself a lot but as time went on, my confidence improved and in April 2003 I was elected onto the local NRAC Committee.

We meet for one hour every second week and then once a month we call a centre meeting, every one comes to this meeting and we get a chance to discuss things that come up within the centre for example 'safety issues', or if people are ignoring rules. We often bring things to the attention of staff through the centre meeting. As a group, we put it to other service users about the one year term and asked for a second year, because we felt that we were just starting to develop our skills in the first year. The centre agreed and we got our second year term. We also run a bonus ball lottery each Wednesday, everyone contributes €1.50 and with the money made we use it to contribute towards centre breaks and parties.

Our committee have attended Advocacy conferences in the Greenhills Hotel and other information giving seminars. These are good because we are kept up to date on our rights and entitlements and we also get a chance to meet with people from other services in the community.

Jane Spillane was elected onto the National Committee last year and she attended meetings each month in Dublin, she also participated in Policy Training and enjoyed it very much. Our term is up in April this year and the centre will hold a new election I hope the new members enjoy themselves as I did as it gave me experience and improved my confidence.

Information on the Internet

Learn music online

Music Network has officially launched <http://www.learnmusic.info> - the first online directory of music teachers and schools of music in Ireland. Created in response to continuing demand and the most comprehensive source of such information in the country, <http://www.learnmusic.info> is free to use, interactive and searchable by instrument, genre and county.

Updated daily, the directory includes more than 500 entries from 32 counties and contains information on 73 instruments ranging from piano and violin to Tibetan Singing Bowls and African drums.

RehabCare Intranet

Over the past number of months RehabCare has been working with a web design company to develop the RehabCare Intranet. An Intranet is a website designed specifically for internal use within an organisation and enhances communication between members.

Following the Strategic Review of RehabCare in 2003 the need to enhance communications and access to information throughout the organisation was recognised. As part of a strategy to improve communication the Intranet has been developed.

The Intranet has been designed to ensure that RehabCare staff have quick and easy access to relevant information that is required to perform their daily jobs. Content currently available on the Intranet includes:

Useful Forms

- Policies & Procedures
- Details of Upcoming Events
- Staff Announcements
- Current Job Vacancies
- Knowledge Centre

The Intranet will allow RehabCare staff from all over the country to share ideas and obtain information on other

RehabCare Services. Over the past number of weeks all managers throughout the organisation have received their own unique Intranet passwords. In the coming weeks all RehabCare staff will receive their own individual passwords.

We look forward to continuing the development of the Intranet in the months and years to come.

Staff Spotlight

Well done!

Congratulations to Marian Sweeney and Noreen Brophy who received First Aid Certs.

Recognising Long term Service Awards

25 Years

James Coleman, Hollyhill

Caroline Howard, Carlow

Kathleen Byrne, Carlow

15 Years

Helen Flatley, Galway

John Folan, Costello

Noreen Sullivan, Costello

Noel Gardiner, Athlone

10 Years

Walter Norris, Waterford

Thank you for all your hard work and contribution over the years!

Committed To Excellence

In 2004 RehabCare embarked on a programme of Business Excellence which involved a detailed self-assessment process. The process involved a wide cross-section of staff and the aim was to identify a number of areas for improvement, which the organisation prioritised and concentrated on in 2004.

One of the AFIs identified was to undertake a comprehensive Employee Satisfaction Survey to determine the baseline levels of satisfaction of employees on an agreed range of issues, analyse the results and identify what specific areas need attention. RehabCare

engaged the independent services of Landsdowne Market Research to prepare a survey document, which was circulated to all staff. Completed questionnaires were anonymously returned to Landsdowne directly and by the level of return, staff embraced the opportunity to give feedback.

Here's what you said

Many aspects of the survey feedback were positive in particular respondents highlighted good working relationships with colleagues, good working conditions and overall job security as major features.

The three most popular terms used to describe RehabCare were:

Friendly

Progressive

Caring

Staff highlighted the most favourite aspects of their work as improving people's/client's lives, good relationships with team members/co-workers and interesting work/job satisfaction.

It was also highlighted that the organisation must pay attention to internal communication processes and on-going feedback on the contribution that they made to improving the lives of others. Some concern was expressed in relation to promotional prospects within the organisation. Whilst there have been a significant number of internal promotions in recent years, this concern has been acknowledged and was a primary reason for the introduction of the RehabCare Management Internship programme.

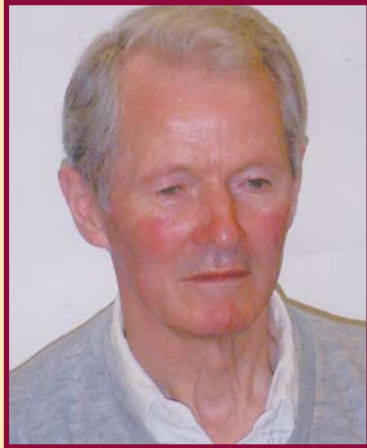
A further initiative put in place to assist staff in their personal and professional development is the introduction of a Diploma in Social Care Sponsorships. Each year, three members of staff per RehabCare region will be given the opportunity to take the diploma.

The senior management of RehabCare would like to sincerely thank everyone for their participation in this exercise and their continued contribution.

Creative writing

Poems

By Leo O'Toole



A Townland in Ireland

Far away in the land of my
forebearers
and the place they emigrated from
returning for them to the Townland
to the cottage where they were born

There was just a ruin of some stones
in the place that I had longed to see
Still standing the slip they had
planted
once in my memory, now a tall oak
tree

As I sit on one of the old grey stones
looking out over the green hills
of grass
I could see them peering out the half
door
of times long ago from the past

I took pictures of their old homeland
of the hills, the ruins and the tree
From here they went to the
new world
from the Townland they would never
see again.

My Little Friend

When I was four,
I had a little friend next door
I knocked one day for her to come
out to play
Her Mother said you won't see her
no more
For to Heaven she went
that very day

Her name was Sylvia, which I will
never forget
We became great little pals from the
time we met
Then all of a sudden she was
taken away
He does not understand I heard my
Mother say

Her age and mine now would be
the same
When we were little we played the
same games
I am an old man now and it will be
for sure
My friend will be there when I knock
on God's door.

Competition winners!

Congratulations goes to all in RehabCare Wexford for the winning entry for the competition on how many 4-letter words can you make from RehabCare.

They submitted a whopping 27!

Well Done!

Poetry Competition

Win €50 for the best poem on Summer! The winning entry will be published in the next edition of news and views, so get writing.

Individual or group entries should be submitted to:

Kathleen Morris,
College House,
Rock Road,
Blackrock.
Co Dublin.

Or you can email:
kathleen.morris@rehabcare.ie

**Entries must be received by
August 19th 2005.**

Contact Details

If you would like further information on any of RehabCare services in your area please contact us at:

RehabCare
Roslyn Park
Beach Road
Sandymount
Dublin 4

Tel: +353 1 205 7200 / 205 7206

Email: info@rehabcare.ie

Website: www.rehabcare.ie



“Person Centred”

“People First”

“Can Do”

“Partnership”

“Innovation”

RehabCare

Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

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