



NEWS

RehabCare Newsletter

and Views...

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Time to slow down - you've a disability!

South / Mid West Region p 2

By Heather Williams, Service User, Park House

Eastern Region p 3

When I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis over 25 years ago, the 'medical experts' led me to believe that life was to stop for me.

West / North West Region p 6

Well, it was put on hold until I decided to take life back into my own capable hands. This only happened because of my own determination and the help from my family, friends, and more positive people, such as my fellow peers and staff in Park House Day Activity Centre, Stillorgan, County Dublin.

North East Region / Midlands p 12

Since being diagnosed, my husband John and I have reared two daughters, and are proud grandparents of two. I have also furthered my education without it costing too much or finding it too difficult; I was never a very good pupil.

Creative Writing Corner p 15

I did a long distance course for two years in 'Creative Writing' and received my diploma for it. The Irish Wheelchair Association ran writing workshops for people with disabilities and this led me on to writing two anthologies of short stories and poems; the money raised from the sale of the books was donated to the Irish Wheelchair Association and Chernobyl. I have also written stage plays one of which, 'Come Live with Me', has won an award.

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Over the years I scanned papers and local newsletters for workshops that were accessible to me and also of interest. These I enjoyed and I learnt a lot. I also did a two-year training course through the Irish Wheelchair Association, sponsored by Area Development Management (ADM), which trained 12 of us, all people with disabilities, to get involved with what was new then Partnerships. Then my own Southside Partnership ran a week's workshop training for a variety of courses in which I also participated. This is now run on a yearly basis under the name of Local Development Training Institute (LDTI)

This is where I began my political career. They didn't know what they were unleashing - I was drawn to the idea of lobbying like a magnet. After the two years training with the Irish Wheelchair Association and ADM, I was asked by the Irish Wheelchair Association to be their Member Activist Service Co-ordinator. This would be a part-time employment with pay. I was back in the employment arena after a period of 25 years, I was ecstatic! I arranged over a period of two years two national demonstrations from Parnell Square to Dail Eireann - stopping traffic was a great buzz and it was even better to get some of the issues addressed. From there I moved on to doing administration for their magazine Spokeout and am currently working in their Information Resource Centre giving and researching information relevant to people with disabilities.

I was voted on to the Transport Strategic Policy Committee for Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council by other disability organisations and have impacted strongly on access for people with disabilities in my local community.

Then a bigger bug - the general elections, bit me. I went forward as a candidate for the Independent Health Alliance; I didn't get in, however disability awareness was now very much to the forefront in my constituency of Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown. One of our candidates in the alliance, Finian McGrath, did get elected and is doing very well.

I am now ready to try for the local elections in 2003. Is the general public ready for my campaign trail again on disability issues? I hope so, 2003 being the European Year of People with Disabilities and Ireland hosting the 2003 Special Olympics, these issues should be fresh in everyone's minds, along with abilities rather than disabilities.

At times it is hard and I do get tried. However I receive a lot of support from people I don't even know. A letter every now and then through my letter box thanking me for making a difference to them in their local community is what keeps me going, that and my family, friends in Park House, and work colleagues.

I would encourage and support people with disabilities to try and do the same. You can make a difference.

Slow down when you have a disability? Some chance.



Reflections on the Physical and Sensory Resource Centre, RehabCare Bantry

By Peter Collins, Service User, Bantry

My name is Peter and I am recovering from a stroke. As a service user of RehabCare Bantry, I wish to express my opinion of the above Centre, which I do appreciate very much.

I was slow in coming to use the centre having spent several months in hospital. I felt a bit institutionalised but thankfully it was whilst in hospital I found out about the centre.

I find that there is something for everybody to do no matter what a person likes. Great care is given to satisfy everybody's preferences. The staff are so helpful and caring to everyone's needs. Day trips are arranged catering to everyone's needs, both far and near which are very nice especially with all the good weather we had this year. I would hope that most towns in West Cork would have a centre like Droumleigh Park sometime in the future, fingers crossed.

The day that Daniel came!

By Jackie O'Herlihy, Service User, Hollyhill

It all began when I got the tour dates from Aiden, our manager in Hollyhill. Pat another fan and myself wrote to Daniel's Hotel in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford. He was staying there on tour and we invited him to visit us when he was in Cork.

Pat was in charge of photocopying the letter and posting it off, and I rang the hotel to check that Daniel got it!

We could not believe it some days later on Wednesday 16th July, when Daniel phoned our centre looking for directions. Pat and I were going to Daniel's concert that night in Cork and we were determined to persuade him to come to our centre the next day, especially as we gave him hand written directions on how to find us in Hollyhill after the concert.

The rumour had spread about Daniel and next day lots of people were pacing the floors. Every time the phone rang we hoped it was Daniel.

By 4:00pm, we had almost given up hope but to our delight Daniel walked in and a flustered Caroline welcomed him. Aiden showed Daniel to our main Workshop where I almost fainted with shock-especially after my kiss from Daniel!



Daniel was so kind and polite, he signed autographs and smiled for many photos even though he told us he was tired he made time for everyone. He also thanked Pat for the letters he got from us in his hotel.

Daniel had to go all too soon, as he was visiting a Nursing Home in Ballinora before his evening concert.

I could not believe that Daniel came to visit us! But he did!

Photograph shows -Jackie O'Herlihy, Pat O'Hara, Aiden O'Brien, Caroline West, Daniel O'Donnell (of course)!!

Raised garden project at RehabCare Bantry

By John O'Brien, Service User, Bantry

This project started in June of this year. FAS made funding for this project possible and all the staff on the community employment scheme were involved in the building of this garden along with service users who were able to partake.

There was a lot of planning in the design and all staff and clients were involved in the process from the start to where we are today.

One of the clients, a former builder, John O'Brien has been managing the project and all the clients have participated in any way they could, even watching the project was fun for those who were physically unable.

This project has been of interest to all staff and clients and much work still needs to be done. It will be ongoing for years to come and it is hoped that many more people will benefit from it.

Our next dilemma will be to cement the surrounding area for accessibility and safety purposes. Planting will be the final stage and it is hoped all clients can then enjoy a bit of gardening from a user-friendly height. We are looking forward to next summer when we can sit out in the garden and enjoy the view. We will keep you informed about this project in the next newsletter.



Trip to Sligo

By Phil Durkin, Programme Supervisor, Ballyfermot

RehabCare Ballyfermot went for a three-day break to the town of Sligo at the beginning of May. The trip was great fun and everyone had a ball. We stayed in the Towers Hotel, Sligo, it was good accommodation and the food was excellent. We then went on various outings, which included Yeat's museum, the local gallery, and a trip to Strandhill, and shopping. At night we hit the local hot spots, which everyone enjoyed, as the Ballyfermot gang love to sing and dance the night away. It was a very enjoyable few days, and everyone can't wait for the next trip. So if anybody is interested in going to Sligo over the next few months, do it, as it is well worth the visit. The picture below shows some of our service users enjoying the sea air at Strandhill, Co Sligo.



Kylemore Life House Singers Perform at the Special Olympics Village

By Phil Durkin, Programme Supervisor, Ballyfermot

24th June the Kylemore Life House Singers performed at the Special Olympics village. It was a great day as the place was buzzing with people and activities. Two of our service-users, Sally Toner and Diane Talbot, had their hair and make-up done on a neighbouring stall. It was amazing as these were no ordinary hair-dressers/beauticians, instead a two-person performance team called Osadia dressed and painted to the level of glamour extreme. Their creations were amazing and Sally and Diane had a ball while looking fantastic. Also, our gang got involved with the Samba workshop. The musicians demonstrated and shared their skills with the audience; everyone loved this as you could actually play the drums with them. Again, another good day out and it was great to say that the Kylemore Life House Singers got their chance to perform at the Special Olympics Village.



Fundraising for Ballyfermot

By Phil Durkin, Programme Supervisor, Ballyfermot

A few months ago at a house meeting a number of our service-users asked how they could help in fundraising for the centre. They decided that a Bingo night was the answer, as it's a fun night out and also makes money. Since then Ballyfermot have organised a bingo night once a month. It has been a huge success and the profits are going up each month. We also receive some prizes as donations from local businesses and service-users. Overall, it is a great idea and has really helped our centre, so well done to all the gang in Ballyfermot. Finally, below is a picture of just a few of our regulars at one of our bingo nights.



Women's Mini Marathon

By Phil Durkin, Programme Supervisor, Ballyfermot

One of Ballyfermot service-users Sally Toner took part in the women's mini marathon at the beginning of June. Sally spent months training with her sister Mary Lake. The money they raised was then given to RehabCare Ballyfermot. The total was a whopping €594.60. I would therefore, like to take this opportunity to thank Sally and her sister Mary for their generosity and hard work, as the money has certainly made a difference to RehabCare Ballyfermot. Below, is a picture of Sally with her medal from the Women's Mini Marathon.



Environmental Awareness Workshop

By Raymond Chan, Programme Supervisor, Park House

Clients of Park House Day Activity Centre attended the environmental awareness workshop sponsored by the Environmental Section of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. The speaker was Ms. Eleonor O'Kane (Environmental Officer).

Proper waste disposal, measures to minimise household waste, and recycling were discussed. At the end of the workshop the county council donated a compost bin to Park House for the clients' compost making project.



Front Row
(Right to

left) Raymond McMahon, Eleonor O'Kane, Mary Byrne, and Patrick Hannon

Second Row: Eamon Parker, Irene Dodd, Cecilia Hickey, Walter O'Donnell, James McCann, Owen Callanan, Pauline Warner, and Tony Shortall

Fundraising for Park House

By Raymond Chan, Programme Supervisor, Park House

Last June 2003, Mrs. Pauline Conlon, wife of the late Pat Conlon (client), organised a dart tournament to raise funds for Park House Day Activity Centre.

Showed in the picture Mrs. Conlon handing over the cheque to Mr. Des North CSM of Park House. Along with them are Peter Flynn, Matt Hennessy, Majella Burns (staff member), and Owen Callanan (Park House Local NRAC-Chairman).



Women's Mini Marathon 10K June 2003

By Sr. Theresa Rankin, Service User, Park House

How can I put into words for you to understand, the excitement and joy I shared with so many, on my first Women's Mini Marathon in Dublin.

I had been looking forward to this day for quite some time; my anticipation was so great that after filling in the application form, I mailed it without enclosing my registration fee. There were four of us going from Park House Day Activity Centre, Natalie Mooney, Bridget Kennedy, Majella Burns, they had all done the Mini Marathon before and I, Sister Therese Suzanne was on my first Mini Marathon in Dublin. Being physically challenged I needed to have some very fit and capable people to push my wheelchair the 10 kilometres. Three very wonderful young university students offered to do this for me, their names were Lucy, Noreen and Oisin and they were my guardian angels.

We were all blessed with a beautiful glorious sunshiny day. My brother James, who was visiting me from Scotland, came with me to Sandycove Dart station. We had arranged to meet Natalie Mooney and her daughter Lucy there. James and I were very early so after he brought me to the station platform he went to get a take away coffee.

James my brother had been pushing my wheelchair all the time of our holiday, so no way was I going to allow him to push me the 10K. The plan was for him to travel to the start line and see us off, and then we would meet up at an already decided location on our completion of the mini marathon. On our walk from the train station to the starting line we laughed and laughed. The costumes and outfits that the men taking part in the marathon were wearing were unbelievable. They were such great sports. Some wore psychedelic colourful wigs, and some had mesh stockings of colours impossible to describe. There were even bride and grooms in the full wedding outfit including the high heel shoes. How they managed to walk in these shoes was beyond comprehension.

We had decided to walk to the rear of the many thousands of people; it was very difficult not to hit the wheels off the walkers in front of my wheelchair and Natalie's wheelchair. I was afraid someone would be injured so we have to move quite a distance. This was of great benefit to us in many other ways. We could walk at our own pace and we could view much better the amazing sights of such a vast crowd of people.

The crowds who had gathered at the side of the roads certainly cheered us on; there was great camaraderie of all that were taking part. Each of the pushers of our wheel

chairs took turns after the completion of each kilometre. All of the people taking part helped one another; there was a great spirit of caring and giving with joy and unconditional love.

The view from the back of the thousands of participants was great. We could see the massive crowd especially when we turned at Merrion Road to go up to the Stillorgan dual carriageway. We were on one side of the road and when you looked up the other side of the road, the thousands standing there were a sight to be hold. It made you feel so good at being just a little part of such a wonderful occasion of generosity, love, kindness and thoughtfulness. On each side of the road there was entertainment from many groups of musicians and singers. All there to cheer us on, no matter how slow we were we got the same applause.



When we came up to the last K Noreen and Oisin told me they wanted to run the last K, and they did indeed. With me in my wheelchair we went flying down the road at top speed, it was fantastic. It made me feel like I was running. We crossed the finish line at 5:30pm and received our medal of proof of our participation in the Women's Mini Marathon. All of us felt wonderful that we were able to take part in such a well organised and fulfilling sport activity. Please God we will have the opportunity to take part in the Women's Mini Marathon sponsorship that day for ST LUKES HOSPITAL DUBLIN FOR CANCER RESEARCH AND CANCER CARE. We say a very big THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO US IN SPONSORSHIP FOR THIS CHARITY.

Bundoran

By Margaret Norris, Service User, Lifford

On the 11th of June we left Lifford for a holiday in the holiday town of Bundoran, Co. Donegal. It was a lovely day for our journey to the holiday town. We were going to be staying in the Central hotel in the town for a few days. There was three staff with us on the trip, we got settled in and then we were divided into two groups. One group went with Ann for a walk around the town. The other group including myself went canoeing for a couple of hours in the afternoon

It was lovely on the lake, no wind or rain. The first night we didn't eat in the hotel we went up the town for a meal and after the meal we went to a bar to watch the Ireland match. After the match we went to the Hollyrood for a nightcap. We went bowling on Thursday and had dinner in the hotel at night. We went home on Friday after a lovely holiday. Many thanks to all the staff for taking us there.



Access All Areas

By Siobhan Maloney and Mark McCafferty, Service Users, Galway

Access all areas is an art exhibition, which has run for the last five years in Galway. It is held during the Galway Arts Festival in July and the work is displayed in the Eyre Square shopping centre. This year's theme was sports and recreation. We chose the G.A.A. theme for our canvas. It took us three days to design and make our project. The opening night was the 17th of July. A big group attended. There was a wine and snack reception, which Marty Claire organised.



Macnas Play

By Frank Butcher, Service User, Galway

I took part in a play with Macnas called 'The Mysteries' for the Galway Arts Festival. It was a story about Our Lords life. I had to attend rehearsals a few nights a week for a month before the show. The dress rehearsal was on the 10th of July and we had a show every night until July 21st. It was hard work but good fun. It was performed outdoors in the University tennis court so we occasionally got wet, but that's Galway! There were big crowds every night. The people I did the play with were very nice and friendly. I made a lot of new friends. We had a big celebration on the last night. I am going to continue with my drama and Macnas hopes to put on another play at Halloween.

Civilisation project

By Siobhan Maloney, Joe Potter and Mary Kate Murphy, Service Users, Galway

We go to the teacher every Monday afternoon. His name is Gerry and he is very nice. There are thirteen of us in the class.

This year we learned about people all around the world from the beginning of time. We did a project throughout the year and we all wrote stories and drew pictures for it.



At the end of the year we all got certificates for our work and had a party. At the party we presented Sibeal (our supervisor) with our project. We really enjoy our class and we are looking forward to starting again.

A tour of Lissadell House

By Mary Kate Dolan, Service User, Sligo

During the summer a number of different outings were organised for different groups service users to visit places of interest to us in our area.

On one of those trips, we had a chance to see Lissadell House. This is a very old mansion that was home to the Gore-Booth family.

There was a lot of talk about the house recently on the news as it was up for sale and the local people wanted the government to buy it. Although the government thought it would cost too much money. A family ended up buying it for themselves. It was good to see it before changes could be made to it.



Our group had a free tour of some of the rooms and we were told the history of the house and of the people who lived there, one of whom was the famous Countess Markievicz.

At the end we had a photograph taken outside the house and we went for coffee in Yeats Tavern and chatted about what we thought of the house. It was very interesting but I would not like to live in it.



Westport Holiday

By Ann Divilly, Service User, Galway

In early September I went on a holiday to Westport in Co. Mayo with my housemates. We stayed in a beautiful hotel called 'The Clew Bay' in the middle of town. There was music in the hotel at night. Westport is a lovely town with lots of sites to see such as Westport house and Croagh Patrick- we didn't climb Croagh Patrick this time! We visited the shops around the town and everyone was very friendly. I can't wait to go back again.

Computer Classes

By Margaret Carr and Ruth Cleary, Service Users, Sligo

Eight Service Users from General Industries attended Computer classes for a period of ten weeks from February to April. In these classes we covered areas such as using the mouse, starting up and shutting down the computer, doing spell check, typing passages, capital letters and full stops, and sending E- Mail.

Four students go to the class, one time for one hour, every one has their own computer and we save our work on a floppy disc. The classes are held in the computer room in our centre.

Myself, Adrian Cornwall, Rosalind Kirby, Bernie Cullen, Margaret Stenson, Patricia Beglin, Ruth Cleary, and Pauric Gillen all attended this session of classes.



A further six weeks classes were arranged for four of the group in June, this group had the job of typing up all the articles for the newsletter which was published in July, just before we went on holidays.

We were very proud of the newsletter when it was finished, we saved all the articles on floppy disc and the Champion office printed it for us.

Allyson Powers is the Computer Tutor and she makes the classes great fun as well as teaching us how to use the Computer.

Pictured below is the computer class, which typed up the articles for the recently published newsletter.

Back Row: Pauric Gillen, Allyson Powers, (tutor), Margaret Carr,

Front Row: Margaret Stenson, Bernie Cullen.

Go for life programme

By Maureen Gorman, Service User, Sligo

Fifteen of us took part in the "go for life" here in the centre. The "go for life" programme helps people get more involved in physical activity, and sport for the older person. We love doing exercises, so when our Programmes Supervisor Florence asked us if we were interested, we said that we would love to take part. Two tutors, Catherine and Antoinette came to visit us in the centre. They did a presentation, and showed us the exercise programme. Then at the end of the session, they asked if any of us were interested in becoming trainers/leaders.

This meant that we had to take part in a workshop. At the end of the workshop, we had a short exam, in which we had to do a short presentation on why exercise was so important to us, and the benefits.

We also had to do a practical demonstration of the exercises. We really enjoyed this, it was great fun. We also worked with parachutes and balls, where we had to unfold the parachute. We all stood around in a circle, and we lifted and lowered the parachute. To make it more fun, we placed two balls in the middle of the parachute. It was great craic.

On Thursday 3rd July, we had our exam and presentation. I was very nervous. All week, we practised our exercises. We decided that the best way was to divide into four groups. One group did the benefits of exercise- Paddy, John Haran, John O Kelly and Pdraig. One group did the main exercise- Anne, Patrice, Aidan, Geraldine and Alice.

And finally, the last group did the cool down exercises- Aisling and Thady.

We were all delighted when our tutors Catherine and Antoinette said we passed. We let out a loud cheer. Then we had our presentation of our certificates, and our photographs taken. Catherine said that our photo and our article would be included in the "Go for life" newsletter.

Now that we are certified trainers, we are going to have classes in the resource centre twice a week with 4/5 clients. We will have to fill in a log of each class that we carry out, and we have to send this back to our tutors, Catherine and Antoinette. This is to show that we are keeping up with our exercise classes.

***Certified trainers:
Mary, Maureen,
John O Kelly, John
Haran, Paddy,
Aidan, Geraldine,
Edel, Patrica, Alice,
Anne, Josie,
Aisling, Pdraig
and Thady.***

***Tutors: Katherine
O'Rourke and
Antoinette Roddy.***



Health Promotion Groups

By Pauline Brennan and Mary Duffy, Service Users, Sligo

Our Women's Health group commenced in early June for six weeks, and covered every area of health working from Head to Toe. Each session lasted two hours and everybody had an opportunity at the end of each session to ask questions or seek advice.

Overall there was great enthusiasm about this group as issues that were often regarded as difficult to talk about were discussed openly.

We were very lucky to have Ms. Anna Kenny, who is a Tutor with the centre of Nurse Education for Sligo/Leitrim facilitate the group, Anna put a lot of work into the preparation and presentation of the material and always appeared to have time to talk with any of the ladies on a one to one basis afterwards.

Videos, charts, discussion and pictures were used to impart the information.

Anna very kindly gave us copies of all her presentations in order that we could run smaller health information groups at a later date for any of the ladies that felt uncomfortable participating in the larger group.

The group ran for six weeks and on the seventh week every one received certificates of participation followed by tea and biscuits served in the programmes area.

Anna joined us and some of us had an opportunity to talk to her about things that were private to us. It was a great group and our themes were "Proud to be a woman". And I look after myself because "I'm worth it."

The Men's health group is due to commence in late September and Mr. Gerry Tuohy who is also a tutor in the centre of Nurse Education will facilitate this group.



Pictured is Ms. Anna Kenny with the Ladies Health Promotion Group after receiving their certificates of Participation.

M.C.R Club

As told by Anne O'Rourke and Mary Leyden, Service Users, Sligo

There are seven of us that are members of the senior citizens club in the M.C.R., Maureen, Paddy, John, Patricia, Mary, Josie and Anne. We go to the club every Monday afternoon between 2.30-4.30pm. We play bingo, have a cup of tea, and a best of all a good chat with all of our friends.

We are going to the club now for the last five years, and we have made great friends there. One of our friends recently passed away, Mrs Smith and we greatly miss her.

We are all very close, if any of the members are in hospital, we will go and visit them, or have a mass said for them.

I love the M.C R, as we are always busy, organising day trips. In the past we have gone to Carrick-on Shannon, Ballina, Donegal, Mayo. As a group, we often go out for dinner and go to the Hawks Well. We organise our own social evenings and parties.

Last year, we hosted a group of senior citizens from Wexford. We had a great evening in the Sligo Park hotel, we had dinner and drinks afterwards, followed by a good old singsong. The next day, we went on a boat trip on the Shannon, and we had a great time.

I really look forward to Mondays and the club, as its great to get out and about and have friends outside the centre. I love chatting about what's happening around the town, and reminisce about the old days and how much Sligo has changed.

Special Olympic Games

By Martin Costello and Raymond Costello, Service Users, Castlebar

On June 21st seven of us went to Dublin in order to see the Special Olympic Games. Bernadette and Lorraine brought us up in the van. We arrived in Dublin about 6.00am. Parking was in the Dublin hospital. We walked down to Croke Park. We were there about 7.15 or 7.20. Mary McAleese and Dennis O'Brien the chairperson of Special Olympics Ireland were there. Both Mary McAleese and Dennis O'Brien made speeches. The Corrs and U2 provided music. Ronan Keating and Samantha Mumba opened the show. Among the other guests were Patrick Kielty, Colin Farrell, and Nelson Mandela who officially opened the event and Special Olympic founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver. There was also the biggest Riverdance. Ronan Tynan and Rita Connelly sang the Special Olympics song 'May we never have to say goodbye'. Team Ireland gave a great performance at the Special Olympics. The Special Olympics ended on June 29th We all enjoyed ourselves and it was very late when we got home the next morning 4.30am but it was worth it all.

Newgrove Housing

As told by John O'Kelly, Service User, Sligo

A day that I will remember for a long time is the day I first turned the key in the door to my new home - the 11th of February 2002.

This was the first day I started living up in the supported accommodation in Claragh Glen, Sligo. There are eight of us now living in two houses in a lovely quiet area of Sligo. We all got involved in choosing the carpets and furniture for the rooms and decorating our bedrooms, this has helped to make the house feel more homely.

I was very sad leaving my old house but I am delighted with how my life has changed in a good way. When I lived on my own I felt lonely and insecure at times. But now since I have moved to my new house I feel much happier, secure and content. I now have three friends to share the house with and to talk to in the evenings and chat about the events of the day.

I am now able to join in different activities in the community and feel more independent as I have a key to come and go as I choose. I feel that I am able to get on with my life knowing I have the support and help of the staff in the houses at times when I need it. We all take responsibility for our own jobs in the houses and we have learned about budgeting for house bills, shopping, outings and day-trips.

Recently we had house-warming parties in the two houses where we invited our family and friends to come to visit us and see us in our new homes. This made us very proud to be able to show people around our home. Some of us took part in a gardening class in the centre and we have now planted some lovely window boxes and tubs of flowers around the house. On a good day we are able to sit out on the patio and have our dinner outdoors and enjoy our lovely garden and just sit, chat and relax.



Pool Tournament

By Adrian Cornwall, Service User, Sligo

We ran a pool tournament in the day centre recently, and almost every one got involved. We held matches during down time and at lunch breaks. The pool table was in big demand, because if there was not a match being played, then someone was always waiting to practice for their match.



John Kent, the local Sports shop owner sponsored two beautiful trophies, one for the winner and a smaller one for the runner-up.

There were 10 teams in the beginning and every team had to play each other. After many weeks of games we had a final, between Aidan Mc Govern and John McMunn, there was great excitement as the local newspaper photographer, Carl Brennan came to take pictures for the Champion, which is our local newspaper.

It was a very close match with Aidan winning the final, and John was the runner-up. Both players were delighted with the result as the Trophies were worth all the practice and dedication.

Pictured is the presentation of trophies to Aidan Mc Govern (winner) and John Mc Munn (runner-up). Included in the picture are Teresa O Boyle, Jim Mahon, Maureen Fallon and Eamon Wheeler.

Swimming



**By Michele Finn and Thomas Connolly, Service Users, Sligo
Typed By Bernie Cullen**

We have recently started swimming classes on Wednesday afternoon in the pool at the sports complex. We have a lovely swimming coach called Lorraine Kerins. She is very encouraging and gives us loads of advice. We are very lucky because we have the pool to ourselves along with Rosses

Workshop. The people that go to the Swim classes from RehabCare are,

- Michelle Finn, Gerry Gillen, Eileen Niland,
- Geraldine Gilroy, Margaret Carr, Fidelma Coyle,
- Ann O Rourke, Aisling Egan, Thomas Connolly,

The pool is divided in half so we are all in the shallow end and don't have to worry about going out of our depth. We get to use different types of floats to help us swim. But before we get to the pool we have a lot of organising to do. We all have to remember to bring our towels, swim gear, swim hats, toiletries, ear plugs and flip flops if we need them. Then we are ready to go!

The swimming is great exercise. We get to meet other people and have met some friends from my old school at St Cecilia's. Our swimming coach is very proud of our progress so far. The highlight of the classes was the day the Special Olympics team joined us in the pool for a training session, the picture above shows us all in the pool with the Special Olympics team from Gibraltar.

Our visit to President Mc Aleese

By Niamh Cunnane and Patrina Flynn, Service Users, Castlebar

We headed off from the train station and along the way met up with some of the others. We got into Dublin at half eleven. We then went shopping and had lunch in Heuston Station. Our taxi took us out to President McAleese's house. Once in there we got some finger food, wine and drinks and an orchestra. We all sat outside. Then we all headed inside because President Mc Aleese was making a speech. Then afterwards we all went back outside and took photographs of the President. I met her husband, and he shook hands with me. Comhaltas Ceoltori Eireann was also playing and they were very good. Neil Mulhern presented the President with a glass bowl and she loved it. There were ladies going around with strawberries and chocolate, and they were lovely. Then we had a tour around Aras an Uachtaran. It was really lovely inside. Then we had to get a taxi back to the train station. We all hated going home.

Patrina Flynn, Sean Walsh, Neil Mulherin, Niamh Cunnane and Mary Moyles in the Papal Cross car park in the Phoenix Park



Our Trip to Athlone

By Martin English, Service User, Castlebar

Tuesday July 22nd, 2003, and a group of us set off on a tour of Athlone. We were to sail on the Shannon. We were told to be at the N.T.D.I before 8.45am. Our journey took us through three counties, Roscommon, Westmeath, and Offaly. Among the towns we passed were Castlerea, Co Roscommon, Williamstown, Co Roscommon, Ballinlough, Co Roscommon, and Knockcroghery, Co Roscommon, which is famous for its clay pipes. We arrived in Athlone about 11.30am. We went on a barge. We sailed up the Shannon. On board was a dog who was friendly with everyone. We had tea and biscuits on board. We arrived at Clonmacnoise, and I must say it was great to see one of Ireland's most famous landmarks. We then returned to our tour bus, which had driven to Clonmacnoise. We were now in County Offaly. Our bus drove through Ballinahown. Our bus passed a sign pointing to the village of Ballycumber, which is the village of Simon Casey of Pop Idol fame. We drove through Athlone again. We had lunch at the Hudson Bay Hotel. We then went to the Athlone Shopping Centre before we went home. I bought three Agatha Christie books. They were The Mystery of The Blue Train, Five Little Pigs, and Partners In Crime. We arrived in Castlebar at 6.30. A good time was had by all.

Judy Lynskey with her new friend, which she met while sailing on the Shannon





Sports Day

By Patrick Reynolds, Anne Flynn and Damien Bagge, Service Users, Ballinamore

Every year in Ballinamore we have a sports day - it's held in our centre, service users and staff take part in all the events. With all the publicity surrounding the World Games in Ireland this year we were approached by a 2nd year class from the local secondary school to join up with them...we accepted.

The sports day was held in the sports complex, we were all divided up into different teams, which consisted of service users, staff and students. Each team represented a different country from around the world. We all wore jerseys representing the different countries, i.e. New Zealand, China, Brazil, Italy, Senegal, USA and of course Ireland.

At the beginning of the games we read the Special Olympics oath out, and the games begun. We played a number of games including skittles, penalty kicks, rings, basketball skills, time trials and snatch the bacon!! As the games went on the competition got more intense and we all cheered our teammates on in their events.

Afterwards everyone said how much they enjoyed the day and we got to know the students a lot better - already there is talk of next year's sports day. As with all games there can be only one winner, ours was Brazil, congratulations to them but as they say in Special Olympics its not the winning, it's the taking part. Thanks to the 2nd years from St Felims secondary school and their teacher Seamus for helping organise the day.



My trip to Godison Park

By John McKiernan, Service User, Ballinamore

My brother Brian drove Noreen my sister and me to the airport in Dublin to catch our plane to Manchester. When we got to Manchester we had to get a train into Manchester City, then we walked a bit around our hotel, it was called the Novotel Hotel, and it was lovely.

Sunday morning we went to mass in Manchester, after mass we went to catch the train to Godison Park. Manchester United was playing Everton. Everton took the lead in 5 minutes. ManU went level after 15 minutes with a David Beckam goal, then Rudd Vannistleroy got a penalty and scored I was trilled to bits, but I kept calm because the Everton supporters did not like the penalty, but I liked the job!



After the game we went to a pub in Manchester for a drink but it was a smoky pub and my sister did not like it. We then we went to a Thai restaurant for some food, it was very hot and spicy, and very nice. Monday morning came and we packed our bags and went to catch a tram, then a train to Manchester airport to come home. I enjoyed my trip a lot.

Computer Heads At RehabCare Dunbooyne

Computer classes have been a popular feature of our centre since it first opened in Milestown, Dunbooyne, over two years ago. Tuition in computers, provided by a V.E.C. tutor, continues to be one of our most popular programmes since we moved into our new centre.

We use a wide variety of software and assistive technology that is available for use by people with physical and sensory disabilities. Some of our service users were invited to share their experience, of gaining computer skills, with you. Here are their stories.

I have good computer skills and am still learning.



My name is Paddy Mc Donnell. I have a spinal injury. I started coming to the RehabCare Centre in Dunbooyne two years ago. I took computer lessons from the beginning, as I had never used a computer before. Now I have good computer skills and am still learning.

In January 2003 I got a computer through the North Eastern Health Board's Aids and Appliances initiative. Now that I have my own computer at home I can enjoy using it at my leisure. The Internet is very useful for looking up information on my disability. For example, if my medication is changed, I can check out the new medication for side effects etc. My hobbies are Art and Photography. I use the Internet to download pictures to give me inspiration for my Art. I can store my photographs on the computer and it allows me to improve and resize my photos if I want to. My printer and scanner get lots of use too. I have become quite skilled at all of this. The Internet is also great for looking up information on all sorts of things like Art galleries and exhibitions.

My ambition is to continue my lessons to improve my skills so that I can make even more use of my computer.

There are many advantages to being able to use a Computer.



Hi. My name is Laurence Byrne and I am a Service User in Dunbooyne RehabCare Resource Centre where I am doing computer lessons. I have been doing computers for quite a while now with the help of a tutor. Before I started in Dunbooyne I had never used a computer before and thought I would never be able to do it but since I started it has become quite easy.

There are many advantages to being able to use a computer. There are programmes called Microsoft Word, Access, PowerPoint, Excel, E-mail and the Internet all of which I can use. With these you have access to any information that may be of help to you. You can write letters, play games and keep up to date with what is going on around the world.

I use the Internet to find out what research is being done and what changes, if any, are being made in relation to my disability, which is Muscular Dystrophy. My particular condition is called Myotonic Muscular Dystrophy, which affects adults mostly.

I have an E-mail address. The advantage of this is that I can contact my friends or any other E-mail address that I may need and get a reply straight away. It saves waiting for a reply in the post!



My hope is to achieve my best.

The RehabCare Resource centre in Dunbooyne is a very special place. People of all ages come to learn skills that are useful

to them in their daily lives. My name is Bernadette McIntyre and my main reason for coming to the centre is to take part in computer training. My hope is to achieve my best to further my education in computers, to find the most suitable pieces of equipment and software to further my skills in the workplace and to make my life more enjoyable.

Frances is my computer tutor. She works with the V.E.C. Learning the computer takes time, patience and practice. I use special software called via voice. First, I had to train the computer to recognise my voice. Now, when I speak into a microphone and the computer types what I say. This is very handy as I find typing for long periods to be very tiring. I am making good progress and my goal is slowly coming to realisation.

I use the computer quite a lot!



My name is Aisling Smith. I have Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. I am currently in 5th year in Secondary school. I am 18 years old. Fortunately I can use the ordinary software and hardware for the computer. My main reason for using the computer is that as well as doing the seven subjects for my Leaving Cert. (English, Irish, Maths, French, Business, Home Economics and Biology) I also do a module called Link Module. This teaches you how to write a C.V. You also do a group project and career analysis to see what kind of career you would be interested in. So, as you can see I use the computer quite a lot for this subject.

Two years ago I did the first 4 modules of the E.C.D.L. (European Computer Driving Licence) but due to illness I never got to finish it. So, that is just one of the hopes that I have for the future. Another hope I have is that when I finish school I would love to do journalism. A computer would be particularly useful in this type of work. Although, my career choices change every month, so I wonder will I ever know what I want to do!

Another reason, not only me but for everyone to use the computer is the Internet. It enhances our knowledge of Information in every walk of life.

You can teach old dog new tricks!



Hi. My name is Frank Gilligan. Due to a car accident I have spinal injuries. I now have the new title of "Incomplete Quadriplegic"! This means that I have limited use of my hands and feet.

When I was offered the chance of computer lessons in the RehabCare Resource Centre here in Dunbooyne my first thoughts were "I know nothing about computers and I have only one finger to use on the keyboard. I'll never be able to master this". Thanks to very patient staff and very good I.T. tutors I can now use a computer. Because of my disability I can't use an ordinary mouse so I use a joystick type of mouse instead. This is the only change I have had to make.

I now have the honour of being the Secretary of the National RehabCare Advocacy committee here in Dunbooyne. This job means that I have to write all my letters on the computer. Thanks to this new skill I have written letters, on behalf of N.R.A.C., to everyone who can, and will, better the lives of people with disabilities.

I will be sixty years old next May. So it is possible to teach old dog new tricks! I am getting my own computer shortly so I can work from home. If somebody had told me three years ago that I could learn to write this article using a computer, I would have laughed at them. This skill has given me a new outlook on life.

The president comes to Ireland

By Wayne Mooney, Service User, Dundalk

On Thursday the 24th of July, It was a great day for RehabCare. The President of Ireland Mary Mc Aleese came to officially open RehabCare's Horticulture Centre and Resource Centre. Her husband Dr. Martin Mc Aleese came with her. There was a great big crowd around the centre when the president came, we all clapped and cheered when she came through the gates. All at the centre wore nametags.

She arrived at the centre at 2:15 she was looking around the centre at all the activities we do, some of us were doing snack cookery and some of us were doing our profiles. A harp and Irish music played and encore productions put on a short play of " The Wizard of oz" and after that they made up a little song with the help of our writer in residence Sandy Sneddon.



My job in Toymaster

By Brian McArdle, Service User, Dundalk

I work in Toymaster here in Dundalk town. I started last Christmas and I enjoy my work very much. I travel in and out on my bicycle to start work at 9am and I usually finish about 6pm. Some of my jobs are stacking and putting empty boxes out the back of the building collecting toys from the store in Forkhill. Putting toys that are kept up into the Clubroom. I also pack the shelves and Hoover the store and check that everything is tidy. I also go on the deliveries. My day is very busy but I like it.

About Feelings

By Gerard McKenna, Service User, Monaghan

I have been attending sheltered workshop for 25 years. I have enjoyed it. However, I wish there had been other choices for me all those years ago. I always wanted to learn to drive and go to work in an office. I feel my family and society never gave me the opportunity. I like living in Ireland. I live on my own. My family support me with shopping, budgeting and transport. I feel isolated where I live in the country. I would like to live in a town so that I could go to, the theatre, cinema, pub, and nightclubs, invite friends to dinner and join the gym.

I make the most of my life. I love to garden and grow beautiful flowers. I already have my spring bulbs. I love the spring because of the birth of new colour, the stretch in the evenings, the birth of the calves, the leaves on the tree's and the warmer weather.

Canal View Court

By Bernadette Corrigan, Service User, Monaghan

We moved into our new building on the 1st of July this year. It took us a while to get used to it. We all had a say in what the building would be called, Canal View Court. Every one put a name into the suggestion box of what they thought the building should be called. Canal View Court was the name drawn out of the box. We all liked the name. One of the girls made a plaque out of wood and carved and painted the name on it. Her name is Amanda Parker. Amanda is good at art and craft and we are all proud of her skills in producing such a lovely plaque. The plaque is on the wall as you walk in the door of the new building. It is a lovely building to walk into in the mornings. We have got used to it at this stage. We like it, so every morning we come into work and meet our friends. It gives us something to do and gets us out of the house. It is a good reason to come to work instead of looking at the four walls. It gets us out bright and cheer in the morning times. So we keep ourselves busy at all times. We are near the main road and the shopping Mall. We are on the mall road, it is busy at all times with the traffic, so there is always lot's going on around us. The building itself is nice and bright and the canteen is lovely. We get on well with everyone at the centre. We are going to have an opening day sometime in November for families and friends. Perhaps next year we will have our official opening.



Amanda Parker with the plaque she created for Monaghan's new Centre. Amanda first drew the design of the sign and got feedback from the Service Users before she started. Amanda chose teak wood to work with. She then drew the design on the wood and then routed and burnt the edges. Amanda then applied coats of varnish.

Olympic games opening

By Jackie Hughes, Service User, Dundalk

Myself and Olive and the boys from Drumcar went to Dublin to the opening of the Special Olympics Games, it was magic to be with so may people from all over the world, Dundalk hosted the Greece team and I saw them come out along with all the other countries. I also saw lots of celebrities such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Colin Farrell, Mary Mc Aleese, Samantha Mumba, U2, The Corrs, Ronan Keating and lots of others. The atmosphere was electric. We were all waving our flags. I really enjoyed the experience I was so proud to be there. Later Olive and myself went for a treat before going home.

Arts & Crafts

By Melita Cobbe, Service User, Portlaoise

Ciara came in on Wednesday mornings. She helped us to do our pictures. I brought in a picture of Ciara and myself and put it on the acetate, and I put a camera recorder beside it. I have my picture at home now. Ciara asked me what colour would I like on it and I told her wine at the back of it. When the picture was finished, Ciara put masking tape on the back of our picture and brown tape. We all did tiles out of clay; I did a fish on my tile. We did not paint them yet; Ciara brought them home with her to put them in the oven.

Last week I worked with Ciara making a clay fish and a wall tile. It was great fun and I really enjoyed doing it. First of all I got some wet clay that I rolled to make it easy to work with. When it was ready I pressed a fish mould into the clay and made a beautiful fish. I was very pleased with my work. Next Ciara showed me how to make a butterfly tile for a cup or to hang on the wall. Ciara helped me to cut the tile into small sections then we drew the outline of a butterfly on the tile and I completed the full image. I also made up some wire decorations that will be used to make the tile look modern and nice. Everyone did their own collage, some of us brought them home and others left them in the centre. At the end we did a group collage, which will be hanging in the centre. We had a small party for Ciara when she left and we had a great time. (By Michelle Coonan). It was funding from the VEC that enabled us to have arts & crafts. All service users really enjoyed the sessions and we hope to have Ciara back again soon.



Hugh Coyle 5th on left in photo, is a member of the Monaghan Harps GAA Club. Hugh was presented with a certificate for his long life membership. Hugh never misses a harps game, no matter where it is, or what the weather conditions are. He

always travels with Mick Farrell the P.R.O. He is in charge of the flags for all the games on Sundays. Hugh's favourite player on the Harps team is Darren Swift. The person he most admires is Oisín Mc Conville, and his best friend is Kathleen Smith. His dream is to be a great Footballer!

Gaisce Award Ceremony

By Eddie Gilligan, Service User, Navan

I did lots of courses for this award. I cared for old people in St Clare's in Stamullen for 8 weeks. I also did a fitness course in the gym in Navan in Claremont Stadium and a computer course in typing. I did research in schizophrenia, wrote it up and gave a speech called "Living with Schizophrenia" in front of an audience of over fifty people.

The award ceremony was held at the Kilmore Hotel in Cavan. Some of my family went with me. The hotel was packed with people getting their awards. Barry O'Hanlon from Fair City was a special guest. When he presented me with my medal I asked him for his autograph.



I wish to thank Sophia Maher from RehabCare in Navan; now in Cavan for all the help and support she gave me.

Summer Visit to Mountmellick Wednesday 18th of June

By Michelle Coonan, Service User, Portlaoise

We organised a day trip to Mountmellick for everyone at our centre. We travelled on the townlink bus. When we arrived we went to the Old Mill Restaurant for our lunch. The food was very good and we enjoyed our surroundings. When we were finished we went for a walk around the town and out the Tullamore Road following the Sli na Slainte route. Caroline had the camera and photographed the group. We are looking forward to seeing the pictures. We had a little rest after the walk and we were then ready for home. Before we headed to the bus we visited the Mountmellick Development Association. We were shown around their lovely building and we learned how they support local employment and run many courses. We waited for the bus at Irishtown to bring us back to Portlaoise. We all enjoyed the day.



PCAP: (Portlaoise Community Action Project)

By Nuala Lawlor and Mary Fitzpatrick, Service User, Portlaoise

We went for an interview on 4th of March to PCAP and we got it. We started in Egans on 10th March. John did a training course with 18 girls. Some of them got jobs. The course was good. Frank was in charge of us. A girl from the Heritage came to visit us to have a chat about jobs. But nobody was interested in a job in the Heritage. We all enjoyed the course. They are all meeting up in the bar Monday night but Mary and Nuala aren't going.



The Special Olympics

By Elaine Fahy, Service User, Navan

I was getting all excited at home to get ready to go to the Special Olympics. I got all my clothes ready and put them in my bag for packing, they were all my Ireland gear. When we got up to Islandbridge we had to sign in before we got on the bus. We headed to Leixlip town.

We met the host family and introduced ourselves to them. Then they brought us to our rooms. We took our clothes out of our bags and went down and had our tea. After tea we went outside to see the horse and dogs. Then we had to go to bed early because we had to train for basketball next morning.

We enjoyed playing our games every day. They were very tough. Then one or two nights we had parties and discos. It was brilliant. The opening ceremonies were amazing. The only bit I liked was the fireworks and the flame being lit. In the Tallaght arena we received our medals. Then we went to the closing ceremonies they were brilliant.

When I went home I missed all my new friends and that was the saddest bit of all about the Olympics.





Jokes

By Joe Brennan, RehabCare Lifford

Q. What age is a man if he is three times the age of his son, if after 15 years the son is half his age?

A. 45 and 15 is the age because after 15 years they would be 60 and 30 years old.

Q. Why does a cow look over the hedge?

A. To see what's on the other side?

Q. How many eggs are in a square dozen?

A. 48, a square dozen is 12 multiplied by 4.

1987 All-Ireland Final

By J.J. Martin, Dunboyne

Oh Meath, they are the champions,
they win it tough and fast,
to bring the Sam Maguire
aboard the Boyne to last.

Sean Boylan is the Manager
with football in his head.
The good old team they always win,
he feeds them herbal bread.

Gerry Mc Intee is a surgeon
who operates the ball,
which sends it over or under the bar,
a delight to one and all.

Brian Stafford, he was a delight to watch
while the ball was in his hand.
He placed himself to kick it
and over the bar it land.

Robbie O Malley, he owns a pub,
he doesn't give them beer.
But when they march behind the band
we'll give them a rousin' cheer.

David Beggy, he was very fast,
he ran just like the hare.
He jumped six feet off the ground
and caught the ball in the air.

I've only named a few of them
to show how good they are,
or we'll take them to the "Round O"
And give them a bloomin' jar.



J.J. Martin is from Cavan and avails of the Na Driseoga respite service in Navan from time to time. The staff of Na Driseoga, bring their guests to the RehabCare Resource Centre in Dunboyne twice weekly, where they participate in many of the activities available here. We are sure you will enjoy his poem as much as we have.

Friends

By Sammy Fleming

I lie down with my friends talking about the day
People just talking about the day and the past
Dry but it's windy and I hope I can stay
I am cold now this place is freezing me fast
All that I can see is walls that close me in
I hear the music of persons close
To the taste of soft perfumed sin
I am happy, now it's as clear as day
It's up to me to stay

Our New Centre

**A Poem by Martina McMeel
Monaghan Sheltered Workshop**

Our new Centre is bright,
It fills me with delight,
We are situated in a more
Busy part of the town.
We can see all that is going on around.

Our Staff are very clever,
I hope they stay with us forever.
They are always willing to help us out,
If there is a problem, they never shout.

Smoochy Bouncer

Poem by Jason Kelly, Dundalk

The Bouncer was caught kissing the wizard's
Daughter he got thrown out of oz and came
to Dundalk, he had no money so he came to
the centre for a cup of tea he knocked on the
door and I answered he said can I come in for
a cup of tea I said I would put the kettle on.

NRAC

Hi Everyone,

The editor of News and Views has kindly offered NRAC a one page spread in the newsletter. This is a great opportunity to keep everyone updated on NRAC activities and achievements around the county. If your NRAC committee would like to submit any comments/ suggestions/ideas/photo's please send them to Michelle Joyce or your Regional NRAC representative. The National Committee will keep you updated on deadlines for submission. So here it goes hope you enjoy!!!!!!!!!!!! Michelle Joyce

Dr Angela Kerins received an Honorary Doctorate of Law where NRAC members attended this occasion



Below are some comments from members

"I was delighted that I was invited and I really enjoyed myself and to represent NRAC on this special occasion"

Mary Frances McAteer
Dundalk Resource Centre

"I thought it was a good night and that our Chief Executive got an award."

Bronagh Boothman
Dundalk Resource Centre

Great turnout and we all really enjoyed ourselves and we would like to congratulate Angela well done. National Committee Members.

Date for your diary

Yes it's that time of year again. We are planning for our NRAC Annual General Meeting. Dates are 4th/5th November in Dublin. We hope to have 2 representatives from each centre around the country

attending. Looking forward to seeing you all again. Congratulations to all participants in the Special Olympics World Games 2003.

Comment from a participant

I Bernie McDermott attended the Special Olympics World Games celebrations the Rehab Group put on in Roslyn Park on the 23rd July 2003. I was thrilled to be there and really enjoyed myself. All the athletes received a beautiful glass dish with our names engraved. The meal was lovely as was everything else. A great night was enjoyed by all. Congratulations to all the athletes well done.

Another achievement from NRAC this year was having Regional Meetings where regional Representatives on the National Committee go to link in with centres in their region. This has been very productive and working together as a team.

NRAC Annual General Meeting

4th/5th November 2003

Each year NRAC committees are getting stronger and this is evident in the success of the NRAC AGM which was held over two days. Over the course of the two days all the underlined issues were addressed.

Day 1

Welcome address by Michael O'Brien

Workshop on Advocacy

Guest Speaker from Liverpool Ms Karen Flood "Personal experiences on Self-Advocacy"

Presentation on Charter of Rights by Jimmy Dooner & Nicky Orr

Personal experiences from National Committee

Speaker Ms Karen Flood "Setting up First Steps"

Closing session by Tim Lee

Day 2

Opening Address by Laurence Byrne

Nomination of Candidates for Election Nominees by Region East/South East Region, North East/Midland Region, South/Midwest Region, West/North West Region and Voting.

Open forum for setting the agenda for the following year 2004

Presentation of cheque to Bray Resource Centre on Charter of Rights Competition by Bernie McDermott & Patrick Hargadon.

Announce newly elected National Committee

Presentation to outgoing committee by Ms Angela Kerins

Closing session Ms Angela Kerins

Feedback on your comments:-

Good bell system

Enough time given for each topic

Comfortable atmosphere

My dietary needs were taken into consideration it was no problem.

Need sign language for next year.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the outgoing committee for all their hard work throughout the year and also to wish the newly appointed members of the National Committee every success for the coming year. Also I would like to commend everyone present at the AGM for their active participation throughout and to reinforce that without local committee and NRAC representatives NRAC would not be as successful as it is today.

Well Done

Michelle Joyce

NRAC National Committee Members 2004 elected at the AGM on 4th -5th November 2003

East/South East Region

Ciara Garvey
Bray Resource Centre
Beechwood Close
Boghall Road
Bray
Co. Wicklow
Tel: 01 276 1665



Patrick Hargadon
Bray Resource Centre
Beechwood Close
Boghall Road
Bray
Co. Wicklow
Tel: 01 276 1665



North East/Midlands Region

Laurence Byrne
Dunboyne Resource Centre
Rooke Road
Dunboyne
Tel: 01 825 5641



Jimmy Donner
RehabCare
Kilcruten Business Park
Tullamore
Co. Offaly
Tel: 0506 24613



West/North West

Bernie McDermott
RehabCare
New Golflinks Road
Ballinamore
Co. Leitrim
Tel: 078 44132



Margaret Norris
RehabCare
Finn Valley Enterprise Park
Lifford
Co. Donegal
Tel: 0754 9141430

South/South East/ Midwest Region

Jane Spillane
Limerick Resource Centre
11 John Street
Limerick
Tel: 061 312876



Simon Buggy
RehabCare
Dosco Industrial Estate
South Douglas Road
Cork
Tel: 021 4362701



Seminar's & Conferences

An Adapted Physical Activity Partnership Conference supported by the Irish Sports Council.

Wednesday 19th and Thursday 20th November 2003
The Earl of Desmond Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry.

The main aim of this conference is to examine the current provision for people with disabilities in physical activity and sport and to discuss practical changes, which can be made to improve access and inclusion. The final outcome of the conference being the development of a clear strategy for including people with disabilities and their families in all aspects of physical culture in Ireland.

The conference will be of interest to people with disabilities as well as service providers and government departments.

For more details on the conference see our website:
<http://www.ittralee.ie/apa/>

Seminar on Public and Patient Participation in Healthcare

Mon 17th November 2003 at 09:30
Alexander Hotel, Dublin 2.

A one-day seminar exploring the principles of public and patient participation in the Irish healthcare system.

The seminar will discuss key issues around participation with a view to identifying a set of guiding principles for increased People-centredness in healthcare. The event will be participative in nature with facilitated roundtable discussions and a cross section of presentations from all sectors.

This seminar is being organised by the Health Spoke, an independent network of voluntary healthcare organisations, facilitated by The Wheel.

For further details, please contact Aisling Dillon
Tel: 01 - 4548727 or by email: mailto:aisling@wheel.ie

Annual NDA Disability Research Conference

Tuesday 2nd December 2003
The Burlington Hotel, Dublin 4.

National Disability Authority presents
Toward Ethical Guidelines for Disability Research Annual Conference

For more information contact Jim Winter (jwinter@nda.ie)
Phone: 01 - 608 0400

RehabCare in association with Centre for Disability Studies, UCD, present one day Conference "The Essence of Person Centred Planning - Getting it Right" led by internationally renowned John O'Brien.

Venue: The Student Centre, UCD Belfield, Dublin 4. Date: 25th November 2003 (9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.) Cost: EUR195 per delegate.

For registration forms contact Marie O'Connor at 00-353-1-7168333 or email: marie.oconnor@ucd.ie

Arts and Disability Awards

The awards are designed to challenge and inspire artists to reach their potential through innovative and experimental projects. They are open to individual disabled artists or a collaboration of individual disabled artists living in Ireland, working in all art forms e.g. Music, visual, arts, drama, crafts ect. Creativity is the key factor and the Awards panel particularly welcomes applications for Disability Arts projects. Round two closing date is December 8, 2003

For more information please contact:

Arts and Disability Forum
Unit 45, Westlink Enterprise Centre
30-50 Distillery Street
Belfast
BT 12 5 BJ
Tel: 028 9023 9450
Fax: 028 90247770
Email: adf.dforum@dnet.co.uk

New Resources for Resource Room

Resources from the resource room can be obtained by phoning Lynette on 01-2057206

What you need to know? Bereavement

Epilepsy- A parents guide

Beyond Words are series of small picture books. They are designed to allow one's story's to be individually interpreted through pictures. Readers may choose to draw their own pictures on the blank pages or to discuss their own story through the pictures provided. A suggested text is also provided at the end of the book for people who prefer a ready-made story. These books were specifically designed for working with adults with learning difficulties and will be a useful resource.

Feeling Blue- looks becoming aware of depression and how to help

Making Friends- looks at personal boundaries and meeting people

Hug me touch me- looks at when touch is appropriate and when it is not

Peter's new home- looks at leaving the family home to supported accommodation

A new home in the community- looks at making a happy transition to a new home

When somebody dies- looks at learning to cope when someone dies

Food, fun Healthy and safe- looks at guidelines on how to prepare food and the do's and don't about safe and healthy eating

George gets smart- looks at personal hygiene and self-awareness

Irish fundraising Handbook- directory and guide to fundraising and non-profit work in Ireland

Internal Diary Dates:

Programme Forum Dates

East/ South East- November 13, 2002 10.30-3.30, Park House, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin

West/ North West- November 18, 2003 10.30-3.30, Sligo Resource Centre, Co. Sligo

North East/ Midlands- December 3, 2003 10.30-3.30, venue to be confirmed.

South/ Midlands- December 9, 2003 10.30-3.30, Hollyhill Sheltered Workshop, Co. Cork

Discovery Workshop- November 11-12, 2003-North East/ Midlands-- venue to be confirmed

Information Corner

During the summer all managers attended COMPASS training and COMPASS is now set up in all RehabCare centres throughout the country. Before Christmas further training will be held for Programme Supervisors.

On October 9th Michelle Joyce and Arlene Connor from the Programmes and Service Development Department made an exciting trip to Liverpool where they had the opportunity to observe a course called Partners in Policymaking in session. Partners in Policymaking is a course designed to give people with disabilities and parents of young children with disabilities an opportunity to develop their advocacy skills. RehabCare are currently looking at the possibility of running a course here in Ireland.

The Third Annual Review of the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Service Users took place over a 5-week period in August and September 2003. Fifty services were invited to participate and 23 responded taking a great deal of time and effort and feeding back the result to the Programmes Department.

A total of 429 service users were involved. This is almost double the number who participated in 2002 and indicates the increasingly important role the Charter plays within centres.

The feedback was very positive and a clear message was sent that people were happy with the standards contained in the Charter but more accessible formats were desired. There was a strong inclination towards a picture and easy read version of the document and a need for regular information sessions for both Service Users and Staff.

When conducting the review, services were asked to be as imaginative and creative as possible. There were a number of strong candidates for the most original review and special mention should go to Limericks clap-o-metre, the Charter snakes-and-ladders from Galway and the wall poster and Charter Review challenge from Kilkenny. But the favourite by one vote, as judged by the NRAC National Committee, was Bray Resource Centre who developed (no pun intended) a photography project that formed into a jigsaw designed upon the Rehab logo. Bray Resource Centre will be awarded a cheque for €200 for their efforts at the NRAC AGM 2003 for their centre.

The new version of the Charter shall be launched in November and the report of the review will be available in every centre - please contact your Service Manager. Finally thank you to all who participated and the great ideas that everyone gave.

Editors Note:

Hi Everyone,

With our Indian summer at an end we must admit that Summer of 2003 was one of the most exciting in terms of great events and good weather. RehabCare News and Views has a packed issue to offer you with lots of great days of summer including President's visits, sporting events, holidays, outings, computer wizards, and of course great poetry. In the last edition we finally got our newsletter up on the World Wide Web. So now it is safe to say for all you computer wizards that you can now access the newsletter at www.rehab.ie under the RehabCare section. Thanks again to all of you for your articles as they make a very interesting read.

The newsletter is also available by request in Braille, Large Print, Audio Cassette and of course the new PDF Format on the Internet. Please let us know your format preference. The next newsletter is due out again in December so keep those articles coming in. If you would like to follow up anything in this issue use the article contact name or contact me at the address below:

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Contest

2 Tickets for the
CHRISTMAS BALLET AT THE POINT
in Dublin

The Nutcracker presented by
THE RUSSIAN STATE BALLET 11th-14th December
2003

Saturday the 13th December/ Matinee 2.30 pm

(Best Answer Wins)

For the most creative idea for the
2004 News and Views newsletters?



REHABCARE

News and Views, published by RehabCare, the health and social care division of the Rehab Group, delivers a wide range of health and social care services in communities across Ireland for people with disabilities, their families and carers, and those who are marginalised. Each year more than 2,600 people avail of these services, which include Respite Care, Resource Centre Services, Sheltered Workshops, Supported Accommodation, Home Support and Home Based Respite, together with specific supports for people with autism. Further information is available on our website

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