

# NATIONAL NEWS

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"The Only disability in life is  
a bad attitude"  
Quote by Scott Hamilton

"It is not the strongest of the  
species who survive or even  
the most intelligent,  
but the ones who are most  
responsive to change."  
Quote by: Charles Darwin

## Brother René Stockman, Superior General's visit to the Limerick Services

During his visit to Ireland in October 2001 Brother René Stockman, Superior General of the Brothers of Charity visited the Limerick Services. He met with numerous members of staff and service users. Brother René took the opportunity to clarify the usage of the word "Charity" in the name of the organisation. "The name should be taken in its original context, which refers to the Christian message of loving others as one would love oneself". He asked that this message be brought home to all members of our services and to the outside world.

Bro. René Stockman, Superior General with the Deputy Mayor of Limerick

*During Brother René's visit to Limerick photographs were taken and these photographs were issued in the National Annual Report 2001. Unfortunately due to a labelling error Brother René Stockman's name was omitted from the photographs in which he appeared. We would like to apologise to Brother René for this.*

## Strategic Plan

Nixon Consulting was retained by the Brothers of Charity Services to help in the process of developing a strategy to guide the development of the organisation and its services over the next few years. The remit involved working closely with the National Services Directorate and also involved extensive consultation with senior staff in each Region.

A report on the Services aspect of the strategy is currently being planned at National level. The core elements identified under the services aspect are mainstreaming, from the nursing to the enabling model, involvement in education and addressing the needs of specialist high profile groups.

## Personal Outcome Measures

For the past while the buzz words on the corridors have been "Personal Outcomes", but what exactly does that mean to you and I? How will it change the lives of our Service Users?

We all dream about making our lives better. Sometimes these dreams are our secret hopes. They might be specific ideas about what we want to achieve in life and how we want our lives eventually to be. Sometimes they are just vague notions of careers and lifestyles. Having a plan can help make changes in how people live and reach their dreams.

People with disabilities and their families are beginning to learn that they can control their own future, even when they need support to reach their goals. After all, when it's your life, you should be the one directing it.

Personal Outcome Measures are all about helping people to achieve their rights and their dreams. Its about setting out on paper what a person wants and how the service is going to aid them and their families in fulfilling their needs.

Personal Outcomes focus on the items and issues that matter most to people in their lives. Organisations that are working on personal outcomes recognise the connections between the service, the intervention, and the whole person.

Training includes information gathering strategies, practice interviews, applying personal outcomes supports and measures and an overview of person centred planning.

Personnel Outcomes will be used as a coordinated planning tool for use with Service Users and their families. It will fit well with our Ethos document, "Going Forward Together" and enable us to implement its key objectives.

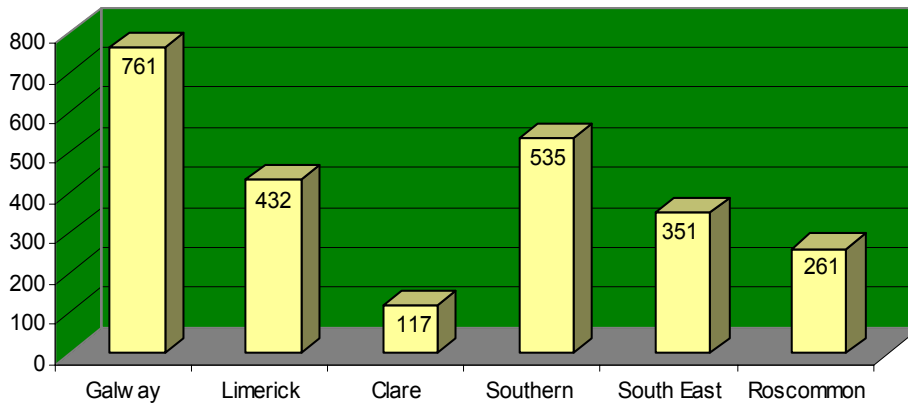
Although many Regions have made a decision to adopt the system locally, a decision has not yet been reached to implement the system nationally.

Having undertaken the training myself, I am convinced that there are lots of advantages to the method. It highlights what the service users want - you would be surprised that its not often the big thing, but the little things that make the difference in peoples satisfaction levels, e.g. a request for art tools or particular music.

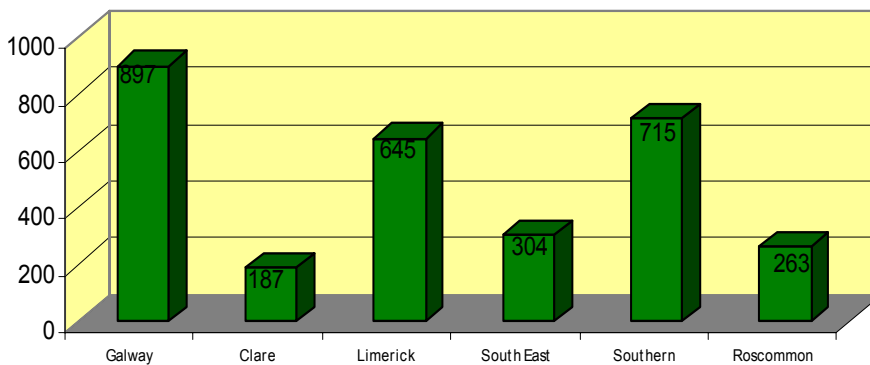
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# SERVICE USER AND STAFF NUMBERS FOR THE YEAR 2001

Total No. of Staff by Region



Service User Figures 2001



Staff figures and Service User Numbers have not changed greatly over the past year. The tables show the number of Service Users and Staff in each Region. This is just a taste of what is available in the National Annual Report for 2001.

Further charts appear on pages 22 to 25 outlining staff profile while the Service user profiles appear on pages 29 to 32. The National Annual report also contains information on the work of the National Standing Committees for the year 2001, Financial Information and Region by Region news with some great photos. Each Region was issued with a number of copies of the Annual Report, if you are having difficulty obtaining a report please do not hesitate to contact your Regional Office or the National Secretariat direct for a copy.

## PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES CONT. .

*Valued Citizens*

*Inclusion*

*Dignity*

*Integrated*

*Self expression*

*Relationships*

*Rights*

*Choice*

*Respect*

*Empowerment*

*Progressive*

*Partnership*

*Quality*

*Individual*

*Person Centred*

*Accountability*

*Values in the*

*Christian Gospel*

### Principles of the Personal Outcome Measures

The specific meaning of Personal Outcomes is defined by each person. We must discover how each person defines the outcome for him or herself.

- There is no standard definition of any outcome that applies to a group of people.
- It is unlikely that any two people will define an outcome in the same manner.
- People define their own outcomes based on their own experiences.
- Personal outcomes are defined from the person's perspective.
- Personal outcomes reinforce difference and diversity.

Because the individual outcomes assume a different level of importance for each individual, they cannot be ranked or weighted without the person. All of the Personal Outcome Measures are considered of equal importance until they are prioritised by each person. Particular outcomes may be more important for some people at particular times in their lives. Each person makes this determination by sharing information about his or her personal situation.

There are 25 Personal Outcome Measures altogether covering

Identity, Autonomy, Affiliation, Attainment, Safeguards, Rights and Health & Wellness. The training walks you through all of the outcomes in detail and you get a chance to see them in operation first hand, through the interviews you conduct, record and present.

I came away from the training feeling that this process will make a difference to the lives of our service users and staff. Service users will direct their own lives and staff will feel they are meeting the individual needs of those they work with. It will take a lot of work and cultural change, every member of staff will have to buy into the idea and row in behind it. I experienced first hand the ability to make a difference and increase the quality of life for an individual through simple measures. (Ed)

The Council on Quality and Leadership in Supports for People with Disabilities is based in Maryland, U.S.A. and is dedicated to providing world-wide leadership for greater accountability, responsiveness, and quality performance in human and social service organisations and systems.

The Council through partnership and research developed the Personal Outcome Measures System and the Brothers of Charity Services have commissioned the Council to deliver initial Personal Outcome Measures training throughout the Regions.

The 2003 Special Olympics World Games launched the country's largest ever volunteer appeal on 7th February, when it asked for 30,000 people to work at next year's World Games.

Applying to become a volunteer could not be easier, the Games website: [www.2003specialolympics.com](http://www.2003specialolympics.com) has an online application form, while a special phone line (01 8691700) has been set up to take calls. On completion of the application form, potential volunteers will be interviewed, before participating in the special volunteer training programme.

While specific skills are being sought, such as languages, computers, medical, sports officiating, there is also a huge need for general volunteers for a wide variety of tasks. From administration to entertainment, from language translation to safety, from security to transportation. There are hundreds of different types of jobs that need to be done. Over the course of the games volunteers will be needed at nearly 50 different locations, and tasks could include anything from moving and setting up equipment to making sure that there are enough sandwiches and refreshments for all.

The minimum requirements for volunteers are a commitment to the success of the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games, a friendly, enthusiastic and positive attitude and a desire to have fun. Volunteers must be able to attend interviews and training which will be held evenings and weekends. They should be available to work up to ten days during the games and pass a background security check.

Volunteers will be supplied with an official uniform, but will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation. They must be 16 years old at the time of the Games, and adhere to the no smoking/no alcohol policy in all venues. At Game time, volunteers will work at one of three types of venue, mainly in the greater Dublin Area: competition venues where sports are played; accommodation venues for the athletes and their delegations; and non-competition venues where other Game related activities will take place, such as entertainment centres.

Have you volunteered yet? Are you coaching an Olympic athlete? We would love to hear about your experiences.

**Best of Luck to all the Irish Athletes taking part in the Games.**

The National Secretariat is planning to collect practice based research undertaken by Brothers of Charity Staff during the course of their work. We would like to publish a directory of research for the Brothers of Charity Services. If you or your colleagues have undertaken any form of research relating to the intellectual disability sector, I would be very grateful if you would make the national secretariat aware through your own Regional Director of Service. Please send the title of the research and the name and contact details of the author.

## CONFERENCE SECTION

### *Valuing People in a Changing World*

*Date: 20—21 November 2002*

*Venue: Radison SAS Hotel, Galway*

*Contact: Caroline, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies. 091 792316*

### *Service User Involvement for People Centered Services*

*Date: 22 November 2002*

*Venue: Radison SAS Hotel Galway*

*Contact—as for above.*

### **Building on the Health Strategy: Challenges for Nurses and Midwives**

is the title of a conference to be held in the Alexander Hotel, Fenian Street, Dublin 2 on Wednesday 20th November and repeated on Thursday 21st of November. There is no charge for this conference and lunch will be provided.

**Contact: The National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery on 01 8825300 or e-mail: [admin@ncnm.ie](mailto:admin@ncnm.ie)**

## STRESS

To stress or not to stress that is the question. Stress has now been recognised by researchers as a "worldwide epidemic". Although many believe that stress is beneficial as it sharpens and exhilarates you and enables you to do your job well. This is reflected in the present working culture where working late, missing meals and diary overloading are part of everyday working life. This may be productive in the short term, but can be extremely destructive long term. Help manage your stress by following the simple pointers set out below.

Simplify your life—Eliminate unnecessary tasks.

Take one day at a time. Break down tasks into manageable steps.

Become aware of your body as tension begins to build. Remind yourself to calm down.

Plan some "down time" each day.

Recognise that neither drugs nor alcohol solve problems.

Realise that it is a less than perfect world. Stop trying to be all things to all people.

Keep in mind that you have the right to be the ultimate judge of yourself and your behaviour.

Develop a sense of humour.

Develop the ability to say no without feeling guilty.

It's alright to cry—A good cry can be a healthy way of relieving tension.

Accept personal responsibility for your feelings.

Accept the uselessness of guilt and worry and develop the ability to let go.

Love and respect yourself.

When you next feel stressed take a few minutes out and remind yourself of the above.

Be happy, be healthy.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### Safe Surfing—Advice for Parents

One of the most effective ways of ensuring that your children use the internet safely is to become familiar with it yourself.

- Install filtering software on your PC. This blocks access to unsuitable sites.
- Keep the computer where you can see it in a busy part of the house.
- Make it a strict rule that the Internet can never be used without first obtaining permission.
- Explain the dangers of giving out personal information and arranging to meet anyone from a chat room.
- Get your child to talk about the sites he or she likes visiting.
- Keep an eye on e-mails being sent and received.

# REGIONAL HIGHLIGHT

## Southern Services

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We would love to hear from you—  
suggestions/ articles

*Next Issue will highlight the  
Limerick Services*

### **NOTICE BOARD**

### **NATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT 2001**

*Please note: The National Annual Report  
2001 has published and a number of copies  
have been forwarded to each Regional  
Director for distribution.*

### **DISABILITY LEGISLATION NEWS**

#### **Education Disability Bill:**

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Education Sub-Committee, on which we are ably represented by Paddy Grealy, drafted a report to be sent to the wider Federation for comment in the near future. Once this has been ratified by the members it will issue to the Department of Education and Science as our sector's response to the proposed Education Disability Bill.

#### **Disability Bill:**

The National Federation set up a Working Group to respond to the draft bill. Once again Brothers of Charity Services were well represented on this group by Gbnait Ni Chrualaio and Gina Magliocco. Following the submission and a meeting with the Minister the Disability Legislation Consultation Group was set up. Winifred O'Hanrahan is a member of this Government appointed group. Regional meetings are taking place in Galway, Dublin and Cork where people with an interest are invited to attend and put forward their own views and ideas.

As I get more information I will keep you up to date, watch this space.....



### **The 'Sonas' Project**

**The Brothers of Charity Services in the Southern Region has recently received sanction from the Department of Education and Science for the establishment of an Infant School for pupils aged 3 to 6 years who present with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).**

In the past, children presenting with ASD, aged 3 to 6 years, attended the Brothers of Charity Southern Services special pre-schools attached to our Child Development Centres. They attended on a part-time basis and some concurrently attended a local/generic pre-school. Our support to the child in local/generic pre-schools was limited. It became increasingly apparent that some children required a more intense intervention service and that we needed to increase our existing service options to include the provision of a five-day special pre-school, to allow for more specialist input to attend to their special needs.

We continued to seek resources to establish a special five day pre-school and in 2000 and 2001, special development funding was granted through the Department of Health & Children for autism and our submission was funded on a phased basis. This service was initially developed within our existing pre-schools and the 'Sonas' Services moved to Carrigaline in September 2001.

#### **The 'Sonas' Pre-school**

'Sonas' is a special pre-school for 18 children aged 3 to 6 years who have been diagnosed as presenting with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This service is operated from the former Gael Scoil premises Carrigaline, Co. Cork, kindly made available by the Department of Education & Science at a nominal rental. Eighteen children currently avail of the service and are supported by a multidisciplinary team comprising pre-school therapists, and inputs from psychology, social work and speech & language therapy. Referrals may be made for occupational therapy and psychiatry, as appropriate.

A wide variety of areas of education and development are targeted. Each child has his/her own Individual Programme Plan developed by the Team in consultation with parents. Areas of intervention include self-help and personal care skills, motor skills, cognitive skills, speech, language and communication, play skills, interpersonal skills, community skills and environmental awareness

#### **The 'Sonas' School**

Clearly, parents wished to see a defined input from the Department of Education & Science and sought to have individual programmes for their children addressed by way of home-based programmes in the absence of an appropriate educational input from the Statutory Authorities.

Two major developments by the Department of Education & Science, which have had implications for the education of pre-school children within the Cork area were:

1. The establishment in 1998 of the CABAS project on a five-year pilot basis in Cork City, which offers children a 1:1 staff pupil ratio.
2. The Department of Education & Science's White Paper on Early childhood Education "Ready to Learn". This paper made clear recommendations on the future of pre-school education for children with special needs including those with autism.

With these factors in mind we sought at the outset to involve the Department of Education & Science in the project and met with the Department of Education in May 2001 to further develop our proposals. Following this meeting we set out our proposals in writing whereby we envisaged the need for two specialist facilities i.e. the Carrigaline facility to provide for children in the East of the City and one in the West of the City in the near future. The Brothers of Charity kindly agreed to act as Patron and class sizes and pupil teacher ratios would be in line with the recommendations of the Task Force on Autism. The curriculum would be evident in each child's Educational Plan, which would replace the IPP system.

In May 2002 sanction was received for the establishment of an infant school for children with ASD at Carrigaline. Class sizes and pupil teacher ratios were sanctioned in line with current Department policy i.e. base levels of 1 teacher and 2 Special Needs Assistants per class of up to six pupils.

The interim Board of Management and the Parents Association have now been formed and we are finalising the recruitment of the Principal and other Teachers and Special Needs Assistants in the next two months. We are committed to easing the transition for the children and their families in getting to know the new staff under the Team Leader, Gillian Darrer's expert guidance.

A special appreciation is due to all the staff who have worked with the children from the beginning to advance their development and this is indeed manifested in the very high regard parents hold for the individual staff members.

The 'Sonas' Project has been a huge success and we are now working with the Department of Education & Science in planning for needs of those children who, due to geographical distance, cannot be facilitated in Carrigaline, and those children in Kerry who require enhanced services.