

**2014-
2015**

**Irish Association of Social Workers
Annual Report**

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Representing Social Work in Ireland since 1971
A Member of the International Federation of Social Workers

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Board & Council Members 2014 - 2015

List of Board Members:

	Chair – Donal O’Malley Treasurer – Aisling Coffey Terry Madden Terry Bradshaw Joe McCarthy	Vice Chair - Frank Browne Secretary – Billie Anne Johnston Paula Donohoe Trish Mylan Clodagh Donnelly
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Special Interest, Affiliate & Associate Group Representatives:

	Ageing (SIGA)	Bernadette Casey
	Children & Families	Aoife Bairead & Maria McGloughlin
	Child/Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)	Nicola Byrne
	Southern Region	Zoe Linnane
	Social Workers in Disability (SWID)	Emer Hastrup
	Social Workers in Probation	David Williamson
	Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)	Mary G Killion
	Primary Care	Mary McNutt
	Retired Members	Pat Waldron
	Foster Care	Cahal McHale
	New Social Workers	Peter Duncan & Aoife Breathnach
	The Irish Social Worker Editor (Temporary) The Council of Irish Adoption Agencies Head Medical Social Workers International Committee	Frank Browne Cathal Clifford Amanda Casey John Brennan

Board Reports

Chair Report

Donal O'Malley

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Board & Council, to present to you the annual report for 2014-2015 on the activities of your professional body, the Irish Association of Social Workers. I wish to thank this year's Board who have worked tirelessly on behalf of all the members of our Association. This year's Board has developed a 3 year strategy for the Association that it is hoped will be implemented by successive Boards. This will give a greater focus to the work of the Association and enable us to make substantive progress in a number of key areas. Although, over the last 12 months many members of the Board choose to focus on some of these priorities, so progress has already begun!

My report will give a brief outline of some of the activities that the Board and Council members undertook over the last 12 months.

Meetings with Tusla & HSE Management: Over the course of the last 12 months, the Association has been able to secure meetings with members of both Tusla and HSE management in order to highlight issue of concern to members in various areas of social work practice. These meetings have enabled a greater understanding of the social work role amongst HSE management and have allowed social workers to contribute to the ongoing development of policies and procedures within the new Child & Family Agency, Tusla.

Workforce Development: The Association has made a number of representations to the recent Workforce Planning Workshops on behalf of social workers and has raised a number of issues that concern the development of the social work profession within the HSE, including the need for financial support for social workers taking on further training, the enhancement of management structures and the development of senior practitioner posts.

CORU: The social work registration process has continued to evolve over the last 12 months, with the launching of the Fitness to Practice process at the end of last year and the implementation of CORU's new CPD policy just a few weeks ago. In our meetings with CORU, the Association has highlighted the concerns of our members and we have maintained a communication pathway with our regulating body that has allowed us to ensure that members' are supported and informed about developments.

Fitness to Practice Legal Expenses Cover: Following on from the launching of CORU's complaint process, one of the priorities of this Board has been to put in place a legal expenses policy for members of the Association that will ensure that should a member's practice be called into question they will be afforded the necessary legal supports. This policy has been negotiated with the help of the Professional Bodies Alliance of Ireland and will be unveiled at today's AGM.

Continuous Professional Development: CPD training continues to be a core part of the Association's business, offering social workers good quality training opportunities in a vast array of areas of interest to social work practitioners and managers. This will become increasingly more important over the coming years as CORU has implemented its CPD policy for social workers and the two year audit cycle began this month. The Association's CPD Officer Cliona Murphy has designed a comprehensive training programme that will be essential to all social workers looking to maintain their registration.

Professional Bodies Alliance of Ireland: The IASW continues to have regular meetings with the other professional bodies that are or are due to be registered by CORU. The PBAI deals with issues that are common to all the professions and with prior agreement of all membership bodies. The PBAI currently chaired by Ineke Durville has recently secured support from the Dept of Health to develop a strategy to enhance the representation of Health and Social Care professionals at all levels of health care policy and implementation.

Promotion of Social Work & Social Work Awards

This Board has worked hard to promote the role of social work and highlight the positive difference that social work can make in the lives of people through its engagement with the media, alliances with other organisations and also in our dealings with public representatives and State agencies. This year we launched the National Social Work Awards, with the winners in the four categories, unveiled at a ceremony last night. I would like to thank Paula Donohoe, Trish

Mylan and of course our CPD Officer Clíona Murphy and Danielle McGoldrick for making our vision into a reality. Their hard work has meant that excellence in social work practice has been brought to nationwide awareness.

Meetings with members of the Oireachtas: During the last 12 months, various delegations from Council and the SIGs in Older Persons, Mental Health, Disability, Children & Families and Primary Care met with members of the Cabinet as well as members of the opposition in the Oireachtas and representatives from the Seanad. These groups highlighted issues of concern for social workers in their specific areas of work as well as bringing to attention of public representatives our unique experience from the frontline.

Campaigns; Homeless

Throughout the year, the Association, on behalf of its members, has highlighted various issues through the media with regards to housing and homelessness. This has been effective in raising awareness of issues that were impacting on this vulnerable group. The new Board will be building an alliance with various homeless organisations to make our work more effective in this area.

Direct Provision

Over the last number of years the Association has called for an end to the Direct Provision system and we have lent our voice to a number of campaigns on this issue, including it being the focus of our celebration of World Social Work Day this year in UCD. Maeve Forman and Muireann Ni Raghallaigh's research gained media attention and also formed part of a submission to the Dept of Justice working group on the issue.

Marriage Equality

Following on from the motion in support of full equality for LGBT people that was tabled at the 2008 AGM, the Board decided to lend it's voice to the call for a Yes vote in the recent referendum on marriage equality that was ratified by the Irish people.

Dublin 2018

The Association, under the direction of the International Committee, is pleased to have been part of the successful bid to bring the 2018 Joint World Conference Social Work, Education and Social Development to Dublin. Work begins in earnest to prepare for this event that will place Ireland at the center of social work internationally in just a few years' time!

My thanks again, on behalf of all members of our Association, to all the members of the Board and Council and to Clíona and Danielle in particular. Without the hard work of some many dedicated individuals we would not have such a vibrant professional body that continues to go from strength to strength.

Company Secretary

Billie Anne Johnston

The Company Secretary is responsible for the efficient administration of a company, particularly with regard to ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and for ensuring that decisions of the Board of Directors are implemented. Despite the name, the role is not a clerical or secretarial role one in the usual sense. The company secretary ensures that an organization complies with relevant legislation and regulation, and keeps board members informed of their legal responsibilities.

Company secretary is the company named representative on legal documents, and it is their responsibility to ensure that the company and its directors operate within the law.

The main roles of the Secretary are:

- In consultation with the Chair agree and circulate the agenda for Board and all relevant committee meetings
- Ensure effective communication with members occurs.
- Check minutes with chair and circulate
-

Act as Company Secretary

A number of routine tasks have also been completed with the assistance of the Office Manager including dealing with routine queries. The role of Honorary Secretary within the IASW work load is easily manageable due to the hard work of the Office Manager.

Treasurer

Aisling Coffey

The role of the Treasurer is to provide financial governance over the Associations activities and advise the board of the financial implications of new ventures.

In this role I have been reviewing costs, seeking savings and prioritising giving members the best possible value for money.

The Chair, CPD Officer, Office Manager and I developed financial guidelines relating to event funding in order to ensure consistency and fairness across all funding applications.

The End of Year for 2014 have been audited by John Meade and will be presented and adopted at the AGM on 5th June 2015.

Membership Officer

Aisling Coffey

Company Secretary, Billie-Anne Johnson and I developed a membership strategy at the beginning of this Board's term. In line with that strategy, I updated promotional material advertising the role of the IASW, the benefits of membership and heightening awareness among social workers of their duties under professional registration. I also sought an update of the membership section of the IASW website to reflect current membership benefits.

I have used my time as Board member to articulate the benefits of IASW membership and promote the Association at every possible social work forum and networking event.

There has been a modest increase in membership from 903 members in August 2014 to 956 in April 2015.

As treasurer and membership officer, I was keen to ensure that members received the best value for money and oversaw a commitment to ensuring that members always receive a 50% reduction on attendance rates at IASW CPD events.

Other key work undertaken as a Board member included representing my profession to Minister Kathleen Lynch and to HSE management.

Membership and indeed the ongoing success of the IASW has no doubt been maintained by the hard work of my colleagues within the IASW office, Danielle McGoldrick and Cliona Murphy, as well as my colleagues on the Board and within Council. I would like to thank all of these individuals for their ongoing commitment and dedication in the pursuit of promoting our profession and improving the functioning of our association.

THE IASW IS RUN BY MEMBERS FOR MEMBERS

Get involved, keep informed, receive support and influence the future of Social Work in Ireland.

**SOCIAL WORK IS YOUR PROFESSION
JOIN THE IASW - WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER**

The Social Work Registration Board, CORU

Clodagh Donnelly

Donal O'Malley, Chairperson IASW and Clodagh Donnelly, board member, met with Ginny Hanrahan, Chief Executive CORU, John Conroy Communications Officer and Orla Barry CPD officer on 11th February 2015. The issues discussed at the CORU meeting were the upcoming Continuous Professional Development audit, Fitness to Practice and their link to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

The following is a summary of essential points made by the CORU representatives;

Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers.

All social workers should know the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics and understand that the 23 'duties' listed on page 4 are the regulations governing their practice. Any issue in relation to practice will be judged as to whether or not there was a breach of the Code.

Continuous Professional Development

CORU representatives expressed their satisfaction with IASW for its commitment to providing continuous professional development events for social workers. Their comments about all aspects of the IASW CPD provision were positive. Reflective practice is essential for achieving a high professional standard. Continuous Professional Development is mandatory for social workers, it is also self-directed and should be linked to reflective practice. Reflection and evaluation of each CPD event or activity by the social worker is required for meeting the standards set for a CPD audit. Failure to meet CPD standards is a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics and could result in a complaint by the registrar to the Council of a breach of the Code. Competence in Professional Practice (Section 23 page 11) outlines the requirements for keeping professional knowledge and skills up to date.

Fitness to Practice

All complaints are judged in relation to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics and the Code is legally enforceable. Social Workers should keep reading the Code.

Existing complaints made to Dept. of Health before the 31st December

CORU will only deal with complaints made after the 31st December 2014.

Level of proof regarding a complaint.

The level of proof is beyond reasonable doubt.

Mediation

If a complaint is deemed suitable for mediation there is an option to resolve a complaint this way with the agreement of both parties.

Support

Legal support is recommended for a Fitness to Practice Enquiry. The CORU committee will have a legal person sitting with them but he or she is only there to provide legal supervision of the committee in relation to fair procedures.

General Discussion

Because of the nature of social work, it was considered that social workers are more likely to be the subject of vexatious complaints. Therefore, recording accurately and concisely is very important. If an issue or record of work done is not recorded, the work does not exist. Consequently, the social worker is in a very vulnerable position if there is a Fitness to Practice complaint. It is essential to keep case files up to date.

Social workers should seek the support of their employer. For example, if they are allocated too many cases they should report this to their manager in writing. If nothing changes, they should keep on reporting it. A manager has to adhere to the Code of Ethics and could be subject to a Fitness to Practice complaint. Therefore he or she must report concerns to the senior management.

Suggested Reading

The CORU publication "What if a complaint is made about me", outlines in detail the procedures about a Fitness to Practice complaint but states

"Do not make a decision to act (or not) based on the information contained in the booklet alone. Seek further advice if you need it"

CORU website: *Framework for Registration Boards Continuing Professional Development Standard and Requirements (2013)*

Office Report

Danielle McGoldrick

The months following the last AGM were extremely busy in the office, as I prepared to go on maternity leave in mid-July. Sharon Melvin was recruited from Eden Recruitment to cover my leave. During my leave I worked one day per week, supervising Sharon and assisting with membership issues. Sharon was extremely hardworking and I really felt that the office was in safe hands during Sharon's time in the office. I would like to thank Sharon, whole heartily for her dedication and commitment to the association.

I returned from maternity leave towards the end of February, since this time the majority of my work has focused on; membership issues, preparing the 2014 end of year accounts, website development and updates, project managing the Strategic Plan process, preparing for the Social Work Awards, Conference & AGM, dealing with the action items leading out from the Board & Council meetings, and assisting with the production of the spring journal.

Professional Development Coordinator

Cliona Murphy

Since the last AGM

- A total of 26 CPD events have been held including conferences, training, information seminars and workshops
- A number of interdisciplinary events were held, planned and co-ordinated with CPD officers from other Health and Social Care Professions
- The majority of events were held in Dublin (more than half of the membership is Dublin-based). Events were also held in Athlone, Galway and Cork

In addition to the **events** outlined above, **support** was provided to members to run CPD events themselves. This support took the form of financial and administrative support including promotion of events through e-mail, Facebook, the IASW newsletter and www.iasw.ie.

Promotion of the work and profile of the Association was progressed by populating the website with news about the IASW and its work. This took the form of submissions on proposed policy and legislation, examples of advocacy work taken on behalf of the members and service users, IASW in the media, and presentations from relevant events. Supports for social workers were developed through the expansion of the *reports* and *policy and legislation* sections of the website. A newsletter is compiled and circulated to the membership. The CPD section of the website has been restructured and is updated on a regular basis.

Representing the views of social workers on matters of social policy and practice and **advocating for the interests of social work clients** are two key objectives of the Association. With this in mind, a number of submissions were collated on the basis of member and Board views. The IASW also represented social work and service user views in submissions made as members of coalitions of interest such as the Children's Rights Alliance. Submissions can be downloaded from the resources section of www.iasw.ie

A key element of the role has been to **provide information and advice** to social workers in relation to registration, continuing professional development and the *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers*. Seminars on this topic have been provided nationwide and with the launch of CORU's audit cycle on 31st May 2015, will continue to be in high demand. These fora have provided an opportunity to **hear the views of members** and non-members alike,

to discuss the issues arising and to **explore options as to how best to represent member concerns**. Key concerns include difficulties accessing good quality supervision, the impact of the contexts within which social workers work on their capacity to adhere to the Code, whether the SWRB will provide advice and guidance in relation to conflicts within and about the Code and the risk of complaints of professional misconduct as well as the role of employers with regard to supporting registrants engage in CPD. Seminars on *Fitness to Practice* have also been provided

Special Interest Group (SIG), Affiliate & Associate Group Reports

Foster Care SIG

Cahal McHale

Chairperson:	Cahal McHale (Donegal)
Secretary:	Karen Hope (Mayo)
Treasurer:	Yvonne Power (Waterford)

The Social Workers in Foster Care (SWIFC) Special Interest Group of the IASW aims to provide its members with a forum where Social Workers, in the area of Foster Care, can express relevant professional perspectives and advocate on behalf of children in Foster Care.

As in previous years, due to financial cutbacks in the Health Service Executive and subsequently the Child and Family Agency (CFA), the SWIFC committee meetings have been conducted by phone conference given the wide geographic spread of the membership. While this has not been as effective as meeting in person, it has facilitated the continued existence of the group. Meetings have also been scheduled around Irish Foster Carer Association national conferences or events when possible.

The Group held its AGM on 28th August 2014 in Waterford Institute of Technology during a break in the proceedings of the European Foster Care Conference, where a number of new members from the Waterford area joining the group.

SWIFC members who attended the Irish Foster Care Association National Conference in Enfield last November took the opportunity to convene a lunch time meeting at which significant progress in setting objectives was made. A further face to face committee meeting took place in Athlone in February, and a number of themes in relation to the challenges facing foster care emerged. These included:

- The Impact of static resources in a climate of increasing demand for placements has resulted in practices which increase the potential for mismatched placements simply because the “selected” placement is the only one available. Such practices are very short sighted since they expose children and foster families to increased risk of disruption and distress.
- The need to seek clarity from the CFA in relation to the status of any strategic plan to address placement shortages and to establish the rationale for the current interface with the private sector in providing placements.
- A Recognition of the benefits emerging from National Protocols and Procedures while acknowledging situations where these may sometimes conflict with the importance of exercising sound clinical judgement.
- Concerns that have been expressed in respect of the manner in which the CFA sometimes manage sensitive, though crucial carer relationship issues, given the central importance of the relationship between social workers and foster carers,
- The suggestion that some procedural developments in recent years could have implications for the nature of the professional relationship Social Workers have with foster cares and these need further exploration.
- The importance of our links as a professional body with the Irish Foster Care Association and the need to continue to seek ways by which such links might be strengthened,
- Indications of a need for a more inclusive model of service delivery in the area of Kinship care where it is suggested that a critical appraisal of current practice should inform future developments in this area.
- Some analysis that is also called for in consideration of the benefits and drawbacks of moves towards Centralization.

- The recognition that deployment of the Technology of database storage within agencies has resulted in significant benefits to information management but may also have professional and ethical implication for social work practice.
- Awareness that standardisation of policies, procedures and protocol within fostering and children in care services is in progress. However the application of these processes to actual practice across the country seems very varied.
- The existence of a strong sense of increasing marginalisation of Fostering Services within the Children and Family Agency with members expressing concern regarding the position and voice of fostering within Agency structures. It is believed that fostering is becoming more isolated as a result of significant changes that are being implemented in the absence of any consultation with managers or experienced practitioners in the field.

The SWIFC committee have been working on developing a discussion paper to reflect the position and direction of foster care in Ireland. Although progress towards this objective has been slow, attention has more recently focused on identifying some of the positive developments as well as current difficulties.

Earlier in the year, some focused discussion on progressing the production of the paper took place and a strategy was proposed. A follow-up face to face meeting was arranged for Athlone, (selected as a central geographic location to avoid any one person having too far to travel). It has now been agreed that SWIFC would fund, from its own limited resources, the expenses of someone to undertake the preparation of the paper. Its content would be determined by information gathered by the group and a coordinator from the committee would volunteer to support and focus the project.

Attendance of a SWIFC representative at Council meetings had been an ongoing difficulty last year and the group had been looking for one of its members, within reasonable reach of the Capital to volunteer to take on this role. In the absence of a volunteer the Chairperson, who resides in Donegal, has made the journey to fulfil this function. It is still hoped however that someone more convenient to the Capital may be available to take on this role as this may also offer greater opportunities for the group to be represented at other evening events or relevant meetings which arise at short notice from time to time. Any offers from current or new SWIFC members would be greatly welcomed.

During the year the content of the SWIFC Webpage was amended with the relevant updated information and forwarded to the IASW office for inclusion in the site in due course.

HSE & TUSLA funding and support for Training opportunities for Social Workers still remains an area of concern, though IASW efforts to increase the availability of training events around the country has been very welcome. Giving the apparent reduction of austerity measures it would be hoped that support for a greater availability of a wide range of professional training opportunities may improve.

Southern Region SIG

Zoe Linnane

Chairperson: Zoe Linnane

Vice Chairperson: Mary T Kenny

Co-Secretary: Catherine Barrett and Henrietta O' Meara

Meetings

A number of meetings were held by the Southern Branch in late 2014 and early 2015. An AGM was held on the 17th of March. The Board will be meeting at regular interval the next board meeting will be held on the 28th of May. It is hope that a set of dates will be established for committee meetings in the near future.

CPD Information

On the 6th of March 2015 IASW Professional Development Co-ordinator Cliona Murphy attended an event in Cork. Cliona spoke about registration and the imminent changes in CPD requirements for social workers. This offered a

good opportunity for Social Worker from many different services to ask questions about how the upcoming introduction of CDP will impact on how they work.

AGM

The Southern Branch AGM was held on the 17th of April, there was an excellent attendance and there was representation from Child Protection Cork and Waterford, Disability Services, UCC, Spring Board, Probation and Student Social Workers.

The Rotation of the chair position and the secretary position was discussed. Nominations were put forward and a closed ballot took place. A new board, which is detailed above, was elected. I would like to thank the previous board members for their hard work and commitment to the ISAW Southern Branch. I would also like welcome the new board members who hope to continue the work of the previous board members.

The AGM was an opportunity to reflect on the direction of the Southern Branch, to identify Special Interest Groups and to consider how this group can best support Social Workers in the South. A key area of interest at the AGM was developing training and CDP opportunities in the Southern Region.

E-Mail address

The following email address iaswsouthernbranch@gmail.com has been established, with the view of opening the lines of communication for Social Workers wishing to contact the Southern Branch Board and Committee Members. The Southern Branch would also like to extend this to others who may wish to make contact with us.

The new board are looking forward to the year ahead and we hope that the Southern Branch will continue to grow and develop and most significant support social worker in the South.

Newly Qualified SIG

Peter Duncan & Aoife Breathnach

Chairperson:	Aoife Breathnach	Peer Consultation Facilitators: Claire McNamara, &
Secretary:	Peter Duncan	Róisín Meaney
Treasurer:	Karen Quinn	General Committee Member: Denise Miley

Overview of the Newly Qualified Social Workers Special Interest Group:

This IASW Special Interest Group includes Newly Qualified Social Workers up to three years post qualified and undergraduate and postgraduate Social Work Students. This Special Interest group invites all individuals beginning their career in Social Work a forum to them on their transition from the academic studies to professional employment.

Key Benefits of this Special Interest Group Include:

- Members are awarded the opportunity to Continuous Professional Development,
- Meet other fellow Newly Qualified Social Workers and build on professional links
- Raise issue affecting Newly Qualified Social Workers and individuals using the Social Work service.

Committee:

This is the 4th of this IASW Special Interest Group. In 2014, the Annual AGM was held in two parts. In June 2014, three members were elected; this included Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. In September 2015, three additional members were elected as General Committee Members and Co-Facilitators. This was favored as it was recognised that this is an often an unpredictable time for newly qualified social workers and students, as they may be completing their Social Work Qualifications and also seeking employment. This approach was taken to allow individuals time to revisit their interest in autumn as the new Committee formed and setting out annual objectives.

This year the Special Interest Group Committee consists of 6 core members, this includes four professionally qualified Social Workers and two student Social Workers. This has enriched the mission of the Special Interest Group to continue the links between the professional and academic realm of Social Work Profession.

Committee Members regularly meet to discuss relevant issues pertaining to the Special Interest Group this includes any issues raised by its members and the organising of its main objective regarding Peer Consultation.

Peer Consultation:

The Newly Qualified Social Workers Special Interest Group is proud to provide this support to Social Workers and is growing in popularity. This year 23 individual's expressed interest in Peer Consultation this year and two evening groups formed.

It's objective is to support new social workers in linking theory to practice, continuous professional development.

It includes 6-8 Monthly (1hr 30min) Sessions members read and discuss articles of choice and also the exploration case scenarios

Website:

The foundation of the Newly Qualified Social Workers Website has continued to be an important aspect of the Special Interest Group in reaching out to the target group. This year an agreement has been reached to merge this website as part of the Core IASW Website. It is aimed that this will allow a joint up approach for members to view content. It is encouraged that all Newly Qualified Social Workers register on the website on newsocialworkers.com.

Annual SIG Conference 2013 – 2014: "Social media: the new arena for social workers"

This conference focused on the truly new arena for Social Workers of Social Media. It looked at some of the exciting and successful online projects currently in place in supporting adults, children and families and how social workers can support them. This conference also focused on the new opportunities along with the ethical dilemmas that have emerged for practitioners.

Its speaker's included:

- o Gloria Kirwan, Lecturer Trinity College Dublin (Key Note Speaker)
- o Ciara Joyce, Silver Cloud
- o Ian Power, Spunout.ie
- o Emily Lynch, webwise.ie

Annual Conference 2014 – 2015:

This year's theme will focus on topical issue of Continuous Professionals Development. Committee Members are currently planning and preparing for this event. This event is due to take place in the 25th June 2015.

Any Newly Qualified Social Workers and Students are welcome to attend and encouraged to join this Special Interest Group.

Adult Mental Health SIG

Mary G Killion

Chairperson: Mary G Killion

Temporary Secretary: Frank Browne

I took on the role of Chairperson of the SWAMH SIG group in September 2014 – and there were six other new members at the time. Currently the social workers in mental health are geographically well represented on the committee with members from Sligo/Leitrim, Waterford, Cork, Limerick/Clare, Galway/Roscommon, Louth/Meath and Dublin. Four new members joined the committee at our AGM increasing our geographical representation.

In July of last year I was invited to join a meeting the IASW had arranged with Minister Kathleen Lynch. Present were Donal O Malley (IASW President) Nicola Byrne (Chair of CAMHS SIG) and Frank Browne. While welcoming the additional resources in MH services and additional social work posts, we raised a number of service issues with her that were particularly impacting on social workers work i.e. homelessness, service users remaining in hospital due to lack of nursing home places, the limited number of beds available to CAMHS, the role of social workers in developing

family psycho-education and the limited funding for training for social workers. It was from this meeting that we agreed it would be useful to invite the Minister to a conference around the role of Social Workers in Mental Health which would promote and highlight what we have to offer. Minister Lynch did attend the 1st National Joint Social Work in AMHS and CAMHS conference (titled: Social Workers Providing Life Span Solutions in Mental Health'). The aim of this conference was to reflect that CAMHS and AMHS are now operating under the same health care directorate – and the role social workers can play in ensuring that services are delivered in a seamless and family friendly way to service users. Our aim is to promote the systemic nature of social work practice and what we have to offer in enhancing service integration. Dr Margo Wrigley National Lead on Clinical Programme within Mental Health Services also spoke at this conference. It is hope that Gloria Kirwan's (TCD) keynote speech had the effect of increasing Dr Wrigley and Minister Lynch's understanding of Social Workers contribution and potential within mental health services.

On leaving the conference Minister Lynch agreed to a further meeting to discuss allocation of funding for Social Work Training as well as an academic/practice post to be located between the HSE and third level educational institution that provides for the professional training of social workers. Date of meeting to be agreed.

On Nov 21st last our CPD event was titled Recovery Orientated Solutions for Housing. At this conference we heard from Claire Feeny (with Housing Agency) Project Manager for the National Housing Strategy – who emphasised the Local Authorities' role and responsibility in providing housing for people with disabilities. We also heard from Michael Ryan and Pdraig Collins the national directors of Advance Recovery Ireland which has been established to oversee and support the implementation of recovery oriented practice – and the active involvement of service users in service delivery. John Cowman (Social Worker in AMHS Dublin) – along with colleagues from Focus Ireland highlighted the historical context to accommodation provision for people with mental illness – and shared their proposal to develop tenancy sustainment initiatives in the Tallaght Area. Finally Sean Megahey Service Manager from HAIL Housing Association outlined the services provided by HAIL - who have specialised in developing housing initiatives and tenancy support services for people with mental illness.

Social Workers were not represented on the expert group reviewing the 2001 Mental Health Act – despite a number of requests to the Minister to be involved. Consequently we are preparing a response to the expert group's findings. Equally a submission in relation to the review of Vision for Change will need to be developed.

We have been invited to contribute to the development of the Vulnerable Adult Policy – particularly in relation to the proposed recruitment of additional social workers to implement the Safe Guarding Vulnerable Adults policy. Frank Browne represented SWAMH in that working group. To date the group have made recommendations about job specifications for these new social work posts and recommendations about the content of training for these new staff.

Laura Thompson will be our representative on the National Advisory Group for ARI – as she has substantial experience from her involvement in one of the Pilot Sites (South Tipperary/Limerick) for implementing the recovery model. This working group is just been established and have not met to date.

Aideen McDonnell represented SWAMH on the Children First Committee for Mental Health Services. The focus of this group to date has been in relation to the role of Designated Officers who will liaise with TUSLA in relation to Child Protection referrals from Mental Health Services. There is an understanding that once designated officer per CHO is unlikely to meet the requirements of the need for liaison with TUSLA. A policy is currently been developed around the management of child protection referrals within adult mental health services. Although Aideen is stepping down from the SWAMH committee due to work commitments she has kindly agree to keep us informed about developments with this policy.

It is agreed that the secretary of SWAMH will be elected at our meeting on June 19th.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services SIG

Nicola Byrne

This group meets 3 times per year and we hold one of these meetings outside of the greater Dublin area in order to facilitate attendance nationally.

This year the meetings were:

- Monday 26th May 2014. Venue: Tullamore
- Monday 10th November. Venue: Lucena, Rathgar, Dublin 6
- Monday 2nd February 2015. Venue: St Patrick's Hospital, Dublin 8

CPD/Training:

At each meeting we allocate time to learning and development in areas of special interest to Social Workers in CAMHS. We had some very interesting presentations this year and we are very grateful for the high standard of training that is delivered to our group. Special thanks this year to Shari McDaid, Donal O'Malley & Grainne Muldoon.

The areas covered were:

- **Mental Health Reform, Recovery and Service User Involvement, Shari McDaid, Director of Mental Health Reform.** *This presentation and the conversation that followed opened up a space to encourage consideration of the needs of CAMHS service users in the reform agenda. (Monday 26th May 2014)*
- **Improving Links & Communication with our Professional Body, Donal O'Malley, Chairperson IASW,** *(Monday 10th November 2014)*
- **The Impact of Sexual Violence on Young People, Awareness, Education and Opportunities. Grainne Muldoon, Social Worker CAMHS (Longford/Westmeath).** *This presentation looked at the issues associated with young people and the impact of sexual violence upon their mental health. New problems emerging through use of social media were also discussed. As part of this she suggested that the IASW might look at developing a policy on social media similar to other professions. (Monday 2nd February 2015)*

Main CAMHS SIG Issues

Both at the meetings and in interim communications, there are many current key themes.

Issues covered in our meetings include:

- **Supporting new developments:** Recently there has been increases in amount of staff recruited into CAMHS. This influx of staff has been mostly at PQSW level and we aim to support these staff in networking, information and induction.
- **Identifying and supporting governance gaps:** in light of the recruitment and development of CAMHS there are arising gaps in appropriate governance for social workers in CAMHS. This is particularly an issue since the additional requirements due to registration with CORU.
- **Communication with and support from IASW:** We work to enhance communication between our professional body and social workers in CAMHS. This is done via meetings and regular email communications.
- **The National Clinical Programmes:** We work to inform and encourage access of social workers in CAMHS to the relevant training and delivery of these new programmes.
- **CORU:** Supporting staff through updating them on CORU developments and members learn from each other about their experiences and interaction with CORU.
- **Audit:** We update members on research and audits in CAMHS (including the annual November national CAMHS audit).
- **Relationships with key agencies:** Examples of areas covered this year include the interface and communication with the new Child & Family Agency (Tusla).
- **National developments in CAMHS:** The CAMHS Service Improvement Group was established in autumn 2014. Nicola is a member of this group and has communicated and updated members on the developments. As part of this process a draft version of the document was circulated and feedback delivered by Nicola to the group in Feb 2015.
- **National Social Work Managers Group:** Information from that group is provided and all CAMHS Principals were invited to their meetings in Portlaoise.
- **Recruitment Optimisation Group (Mental Health)** Nicola updates on work that this group is doing.
- **Funding for Training:** As a body we have requested for parity with our multi-disciplinary team colleagues. The allocation/provision of a training budget especially in light of CPD/CORU.

- **Sustaining the CAMHS SIG:** This year we looked at ways to ensure the group's relevance and sustainability.

Key actions this year

Meeting with Minister Lynch: On 15th July 2014 key representatives from IASW met with Minister Kathleen Lynch and discussed issues that were of importance to social workers in mental health (further information on this is on the IASW website). Nicola attended this meeting on behalf of the group. As part of this meeting she agreed to come to talk to us at our first national joint conference with SWAMH that we organised on April 16th 2015 in Harold's Cross.

New Staff Information and Training Programme: David Hughes designed and delivered a workshop for social workers who are new to CAMHS in 2014. This was a great success and those that attended have asked that this be made available to all social workers new to CAMHS in the future.

IASW Council representation: Declan Coogan and Nicola Byrne represent our group at Council.

Children's Mental Health Coalition: Paul Longmore represents our SIG at this group. Sarah Houston support's him in maintaining this role. Their dedication and support to this group is valued and greatly appreciated.

Member Support: The committee responds to regular queries and opportunities for input on behalf of the wider group.

CAMHS SIG Committee

A number of long serving committee members have had to resign from the committee due to work commitments (Lisa Clarke, Roberta Mulligan and David Hughes). I want to thank them and welcome our new committee members.

I want to thank Sharon Galligan especially for her work and commitment as Secretary for the year. I also want to express my gratitude to the staff at the various venues for facilitating our meetings.

February 2014 –February 2015 Committee: Nicola Byrne (Chairperson), Sharon Galligan (Secretary), Declan Coogan, Roberta Mulligan, Lisa Clarke, Sarah Houston, Bernadine Hanratty, Fiona Coyle, David Hughes, Paul Longmore, Sonja Neiland.

New Committee elected February 2015: Nicola Byrne (Chairperson), Sonja Neiland (Secretary), Sharon Galligan, Bernadine Hanratty, Declan Coogan, Eoin Barry, Fiona Coyle, Mark James, Olivia Fagan, Sharon Galligan, Paul Longmore, Sarah Houston, Sheila McKenna.

On behalf of the committee I would also like to thank those who gave presentations and the social workers who attended our national meetings.

Child & Family SIG

Maria McGloughlin

Currently there are no active members in Children and Families SIG – this is despite holding a successful conference on the 6th of February 'Child Welfare & Protection; Separating the Inseparable' which incorporated the AGM. Meetings have been held with Dr. James Reilly and Senator Jillian Van Turnout. I attended the launch of the Hands Up for Children Campaign on behalf of the IASW.

Primary Care SIG

Mary McNutt

Chairperson: Mary McNutt

Vice Chair: Ray Parkinson

Secretary: Barbara McDonough

Training Officer: Martina McGovern

Non-Executive Officers: Sharon Flood & Clare Lynch

The Primary Care Social Work Special Interest Group (PCSW SIG) provides a forum and leadership in the promotion of Social Work within Primary Care, acknowledging that Primary Care is the appropriate setting for 90-95% of the population's health and social service's needs. Social Workers in primary care across Ireland have to date demonstrated their pivotal role in the development of Primary Care Teams (PCTs), as core team members and through their involvement and support of the joint HSE & Combat Poverty community participation initiative.

Origins of the PCSW SIG: Commencing in August 2008, a number of Social Workers working in Primary Care in Dublin and Wicklow began meeting to discuss practice issues and to avail of peer support. In September 2009, this group was recognized as a SIG by the IASW. The PCSW SIG held its inaugural meeting on 1st October 2009 and one of the group's key goals was to make links with as many Social Workers working in the area of Primary Care as possible and to raise awareness of the SIG. Currently the SIG is in contact with 78 Social Workers working in Primary Care settings through its email database.

Objectives of the PCSW SIG:

- To provide members with a network to discuss, explore and exchange ideas on matters affecting their practice as well as providing peer support.
- To advocate for structures that support professional standards and objectives in the development of the Social Work profession within Primary Care.
- To identify and organize Continuing Professional Development training and education appropriate to Primary Care.
- To produce position papers, submissions and responses to issues affecting marginalized communities, as identified, both by those communities and by members of the SIG.

Plans for SIG in 2014 / 2015 include:

- 1) To continue to provide a forum and place of support for all PCSWs in Ireland.
- 2) To continue to bring to the fore, issues and policies which directly impact on the health and wellbeing of service users, the community, and the role of PCSWs as 'generalist social workers' within the context of both PCTs and of community based social work.
- 3) To provide for the diverse education and training needs of PCSWs.
- 4) To publish a paper on the added value of Social Work in Primary Care. This has been sent on draft form as a business case to relevant personnel in IMPACT, IASW and Health Service Executive
- 5) To hold a themed AGM in September 2015.-The focus will be "The Added Value of Primary Care Social Work Service"
- 6) To continue to support the role of primary care social workers as uniquely placed to engage in community development aspects of prevention and health promotion within the context of community development principles and with the support of our community work colleagues.
- 7) To organise a meeting with HSE National Director of Primary Care Services John Hennessey to discuss plans for PCSW going forward.
- 8) To set up a structure for regional group meetings and training events to ensure all PCSWs can avail of SIG supports and opportunities.

Meetings dates for 2015:

- 26th March 2015
- 25th June 2015
- 27th November 2015

Venues, times and agendas will be confirmed nearer to the meeting time. All Social Workers working in the HSE

Primary Care Services are welcome to attend.

This year the AGM and Conference will be on "The Added Value of Primary Care Social Work Service" —date and venue to be confirmed. For further information contact mary.mcnutt@hse.ie.

Contact:

Contact with the PCSW SIG Committee can be made via the IASW Office.

Older Persons SIG

John Brennan

The SIGA revived last year after what was a relatively fallow period. Meetings are now held every second month in the Primary Care Centre, Mark's Lane, Dublin 2. Thanks are due to Cathy Carrie and the HSE for facilitating this.

Meetings were very well attended.

During the year, we held a very successful one-day seminar on practice issues in Wynn's Hotel. Speaker were: Clódagh O'Sullivan, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Addiction and Mental Health, Gemma Byrne, Occupational Therapist, Anne O'Loughlin, Principal Social Worker and Bernadette Casey, Senior Caseworker for the Protection of Older People

John Brennan participated in an IASW Meeting with Minister Kathleen Lynch.

Eileen O'Callaghan from SAGE attended a SIGA meeting as did Marita O'Brien from Age Action. As a result there is on-going follow-up with both agencies.

Given the serious concerns in the past months over the bed crisis in acute hospitals and the lack of home support services, SIGA has joined with AGE Action and the Alzheimer's Society to undertake research amongst social workers working with older persons. The SIGA is also liaising with the HMSW SIG about the issue. This research, led by Sarah Donnelly, UCD and member of SIGA, aims to highlight issues behind the headline figures shown in waiting lists, etc. At the time of writing, it is proposed to circulate a questionnaire to all social workers working with older people using Survey Monkey.

John Brennan represented SIGA on the *National Clinical Programme for Older People* (NCPOP) and on the Advisory Group on the preparation of a *Single Assessment Tool* (SAT) for carers to be implemented with the SAT for older persons. Bernadette Casey represented SIGA on the NCPOP Education Subgroup working on the *Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment Draft*

The SIGA is also represented on the IASW Cross SIG Working Group responding to the unilateral introduction by the HSE of its safeguarding policy for vulnerable adults. This policy sets up single teams for all vulnerable adults regardless of age. There are concerns across all relevant SIGs about this situation.

For SIGA, the Caseworkers for the Protection of Older Persons will be no more. The level of skills and expertise in supporting older persons will be diluted and the caseloads are likely to increase. This is entirely regrettable.

The SIGA page on the IASW website is being used more regularly to share information, etc., on issues of relevance.

I am stepping down as Chair of SIGA after a number of years in the post. I want to thank everyone I worked with in SIGA and elsewhere during my tenure. It was a privilege and a great learning opportunity. I wish my successor (who will be chosen at the SIGA AGM in April) all the best in taking on the role. I will stay involved in the SIG.

Probation SIG

David Williamson

The Probation SIG has had a challenging year in 2014-5, faced with the reality that registration with CORU is not a requirement for employment as a Probation Officer, notwithstanding that in the 2014 Annual Report of the Probation Service it states that "Our work is primarily based on social work values" p.6 and that "drawing on their social work training, our officers engage with offenders to support desistance and reduce reoffending."

The Service remains a high demand option for student placements and it was heartening to see two members of the Probation Service shortlisted in the practice teacher of the year category in the inaugural Social Work Awards. We had a very successful event in November supported by IASW with Christine Scott –Hayward of California State University looking at the impact of post release supervision and parole and hope to build on this into 2015-16.

We have called a meeting on Friday 12th June at 1pm. The purpose of this meeting is to elect new chair and secretary. The SIG plan to start a monthly lunch-time journal club from July. The planning with regard this will also be part of the meeting in June.

Disability SIG

Emer Haastруп

2014/2015 has been a busy but productive year for SWID. Our Annual Conference on the 17th October 2014 was a great success and very well attended. The theme of the conference "Vulnerable People – Striving Towards a National Approach to Safeguarding" was a topic that many social workers struggle with both in terms of the lack of any kind of consultation in the development of this policy and the questions arising out of the Draft Policy Document that had been circulated. Cognizant of the fact that a national policy document on Vulnerable adults was to be passed at the end of 2014, the conference focus was to give as much information about this document and where social work 'fit' as part of the roll out. Early last Summer on learning that a Working group had been meeting in the HSE to draft a new policy, SWID were active in seeking representation and made contact with the Chair only to learn it had completed its work. We then linked with the Social Care Directorate seeking to get a speaker for our conference. This wasn't possible but from our own ranks Collette Daly stepped up to the task and gave us an excellent presentation from the social workers perspective. Other presentations that were covered on the day included Marie Therese Mulholland on her full time role as designated officer in her service. CEO of HIQA Phelim Quinn on Safeguarding Children and Adults. There was wide discussion on all the areas and one of the outcomes was to recommend liaising urgently with other SIGS to address the lack of social work involvement at policy formation thus ensure we have a voice

Our next conference will be held in **the Aisling Hotel on the 9th October 2015**. A working title has yet to be developed but the main issues to be covered include 1) Progressing Disability Services for Children – A Critique from the coalface. 2) Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – specifically the roll out impact on social workers 3) Caseload Management for Social Workers in disability.

In January of this year, the SWID committee had the opportunity to welcome the Chairperson of IASW Donal O'Malley and Treasurer Aisling Coffey to our committee meeting. We discussed the many areas impacting at present, particularly PDS and the Safeguarding Policy rollout. We also discussed general housekeeping issues which we believe needs some further discussion. It was a very useful meeting making connections and generating much needed dialogue.

Meeting with Minister Kathleen Lynch

In December 2014 IASW met with Minister Kathleen Lynch. Representatives of SIG's including SWID attended. The main agenda items included PDS and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. The forum offered us the opportunity to raise our concerns in these areas and seek to have representation on consultation forums in the future.

A meeting with the Social Care Directorate Programme Manager followed to pursue the above in further detail and some progress has being made.

Two Members of SWID have met the National Safeguarding roll out Committee Chaired by Pascal Moynihan and have been active on the cross SIG working group formed by IASW

UN Review on Ireland's Child Rights Record

SWID have made a submission to the Children's Rights Alliance for the UN review that will take place in Jan'16. We have highlighted the lack of equity in the ECCE (Early Child Care and Education) free preschool year. There is ad hoc provision for Children who have high care needs across the country with no scheme to support them attending preschool. The lack of consistent SNA provision in schools is one example of inequity. Some children receive no support while others get reduced hours but there is no standardization. This is inequitable and needs addressing especially if the Department of Health moves to create two free preschool years which will add to the inequality

Pediatric Clinical Programme SWID made recommendations regarding disability aspects within this Programme.

New Committee - In December 2014 a new Committee was elected and we are delighted to have new committee members with fresh ideas and bundles of energy. We would like to say a very warm welcome to these new members and also to extend our thanks to those who have left the committee. Throughout the year we are contacted by colleagues seeking information or direction and we hope we have been of some help. We have held three committee meetings since the New Year and are due to have our fourth on the 19th June 2015. We welcome any new social workers in disability who would be interested in joining us at any of our meetings!

Practitioner Research Group

Sarah Donnelly

- The Practitioner Research Special Interest Group was established in September 2014. Meetings are held from 6-7.15pm on the last Monday of each month in Trinity College Dublin. The Dublin meetings are coordinated by Cliona Murphy, IASW CPD Officer, Erna O'Connor, Lecturer in Social Work TCD and Sarah Donnelly, Lecturer in Social Work UCD who is also acting as interim chairperson. Aideen McDonnell is acting as interim secretary for the group.
- The group was set up to support social workers to contribute to development of professional knowledge base, to develop new skills and to meet CPD requirements of registration. To achieve this, the group will support social workers to disseminate research and evaluation work through publication, poster presentations, conference papers, etc. through provision of training opportunities, facilitating peer support, brokering access to resources (mentors, useful articles, tools, information, etc.) and other supports identified. The group also aims to support social workers with no research skills & knowledge who wish to engage in research in their workplace.
- The first SIG Practitioner Research Group will be held in Galway on 27th May and this initiative will be coordinated by Caroline Mc Gregor and Declan Coogan, NUI Galway with support from Cliona Murphy, CPD Officer. Discussions have also been held in relation to establishing a group in Cork in conjunction with UCC and a National Strategy for practitioner research will be discussed at the North/South Educators Forum, Queens University Belfast in October 2015.
- Dublin meetings have generally been well attended with a core group of members and others who dip in and out depending on events/seminars taking place.
- The SIG webpage on the IASW has been populated with useful resources and links for practitioner researchers.
- Presentations to date at the SIG meeting have included:
'Journey to Publication' Eavan Brady, PhD Student, TCD.
'Constructivist Grounded Theory' Erna O'Connor, Lecturer in Social Work, TCD.
- A Writers Workshop was held on Tuesday 24th March in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin 2 which was facilitated by Prof Jim Campbell, Chair of Social Work, UCD and Assistant Editor of the British Journal of Social Work.
- Funding has been awarded from the Disciplinary Network Funding which was secured through Dr Caramel Halton, UCC and Cliona Murphy, IASW CPD Officer. This funding will be used to set up a Research Mentor webpage to facilitate a mentoring programme where academics and practitioner researchers can upload profiles detailing their area of research interest and seek partners/support in the research work they are carrying out. We anticipate this initiative will be ready to go 'live' in June 2015 and an official launch will be organised to mark this event (details to be confirmed).
- A number of practitioner researchers presented posters and/or oral presentations at the 3rd Annual HSE Health and Social Care Professionals Research Conference which was held on 16th April 2015 in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, TCD Dublin. We feel this was a huge success as in previous years, there were no social work presentations/representation at this conference and we hope this will act as a firm building block to heightening and promoting the profile of social work research in Ireland.
- The Practitioner Research Special Interest Group will also be coordinating a research symposium as one of the parallel sessions at the IASW Annual Conference and AGM on 5th June 2015. It is anticipated that this initiative will encourage and offer a platform to practitioner researchers from across the country to present either a poster or oral presentation of research which they are currently involved in.

Future/Upcoming Events

- AGM and Election of Officers: The group plans to hold its AGM and have a formal election of officer's end of August/September-details to be confirmed. The SIG Practitioner Research Group also hopes to organise its first Practitioner Research Conference for autumn 2015.
- In the coming month, Aidan Cooney, Social Worker in Adult Mental Health Services, Meath hopes to launch a **making research count group** for social workers in Louth/Meath area. As a graduate of King's College London, Aidan has previously liaised with the making research count group which is run in London and he plans on replicating this initiative amongst practitioners in Louth/Meath area.

Associate Group; the Irish Social Worker Journal

Frank Browne

Following the retirement of Monica Egan as the last Editor of the "Irish Social Worker" journal. The IASW Board decided to take time to prepare for the recruitment of a new Editor, in an open and transparent manner. An interim editorial committee was established in October 2014, members included Gloria Kirwan, Sarah McGarrigle and Frank Browne.

The mandate of the committee was to complete the tasks below. I am happy to report that the committee have completed or in the final stages of completing all these tasks.

- review the existing journal guidelines and develop more comprehensive guidelines that would assist authors and provide more consistency in the standard and format of articles submitted
- survey and report IASW members opinion of the Journal in relation to the strengths of the journal, suggestions to improve the Journal and seek their views on promoting the Journal and Irish social work research via Lenus the HSE open access search engine
- prior to the recruitment of a new permanent editor, aim to publish two editions of the Irish Social Worker Journal
- make recommendations to the IASW Board regarding the criteria and recruitment process for a new editor
- made recommendations to the Board for the development and terms of reference for a permanent IASW Journal committee

Associate Group; International Affairs Committee

John Brennan

IASW International Affairs Committee (IAC) Annual Report 2014-15

Committee members: Anna Deneher, Ineke Durville, Maria Swan, Kerry Cuskelly, Donal O'Malley, John Brennan (Chairperson)

1. Joint Global Social Work, Education and Social Development Conference 2018

Members of the IAC of the Association, in cooperation with UCD, TCD, UCC, the EAPN Ireland and MCI, the professional conference organiser, have been working to finalise the conference contract with the three global organisations, IFSW, IASSW and ICSW. The conference will be a major and exciting social work event. It will be held in the RDS and it is expected to attract over 2000 delegates from across the world.

The IFSW President, Ruth Stark and the IFSW Secretary General, Rory Truell were in Dublin in March to discuss the 2018 conference bid and other international social work matters.

2. The next joint Global Social Work, Education and Social Development Conference

In the meantime, this conference will be held in Soeul, South Korea in June 2016. The theme is '**Promoting the Dignity and Worth of People**'. The 2016 conference website is: - www.swsd2016.org

3. IFSW-Europe European Region Conference 2015, 6-9 September, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Three workshop papers were sent to the conference organisers from IASW members. These have been accepted. The conference website is on <http://www.ifsweurope2015.org> the conference theme is '**Celebrating the achievements of Social Work Partnerships in Europe**'.

4. World Social Work Day 2015

As is now customary, the global IFSW celebrated social work across the world on the 17th March of each year. In Ireland we successfully celebrated the event on the 20th March. The celebration was jointly hosted in UCD by the Association and the School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice, UCD. This year's theme was '*Promoting the Dignity and Worth of People*'. The event was opened by Senator Jillian van Turnhout. The topics were *Direct Provision: The Role of Social Work*. The speakers were Dr Colletta Dalikeni (DIT Dundalk) and Dr Muireann Ní Rhaghallaigh (UCD) and *Gender Based Violence: The Role of Social Work*. The speakers were Dr. Stephaine Holt (TCD) and Mary Kate Barry (Tusla).

5. NEW GLOBAL DEFINITION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

A new definition of social work was adopted by the IFSW at its global meeting in Melbourne in July 2014:-

"Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing."

6. The IFSW and the EU Social Platform (SP)

Anna Deneher and John Brennan continued as members of the IFSW-Europe SP team created in 2014. SP is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Consisting of 45 pan-European networks of NGOs (including the IFSW), SP campaigns to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives. The SP generates a great deal of material relating to social policy matters in the EU under the following topic headings:- Human Rights, Social Inclusion, Social Justice, Employment, Social and Health Services and Civil Dialogue. The IFSW team has a member in Brussels and she attends many of the meetings of that group. Currently the team is examining ways to respond effectively to the issues raised and mass of information/data generated. The issues include TTIP & TiSA, Social Impact Investing and the Equality Directive: Further info on Social Platform at: <http://www.socialplatform.org>

7. EU ENS4Care Project

On behalf of IFSW-Europe, John Brennan is participating in **ENS4Care** (www.ens4care.eu), a 2-year EU funded project (2013-15) to engage social and health care practitioners in collaboratively addressing challenges arising from the ageing population. The project aims to develop a set of ehealth guidelines for health and social care professionals. The IFSW is one of 24 European partners in the project that includes representatives from civil society, academia, social and health care professionals, researchers, regulators, trade unions and industry. The eHealth guidance will put up-to-date information at the fingertips of service users, carers and those professionals supporting them. During the past year, there were two one-day meetings - in Dublin and Brussels - to discuss these matters. Recently, final draft guidelines were circulated by the IASW office or comments, etc. However, there was no feedback!

8. IASW-EAPN Ireland Collaboration

During the year we held a meeting with Robin Hanan of the EAPN Ireland to discuss possible ways to collaborate on social policy matters. At the time of writing, this process is on-going. The EAPN's involvement in the 2018 conference is a very welcome addition to the group of conference hosts. It will also give us an opportunity to strengthen ties.

9. Korean Social Work Association Visit to IASW

In May 2015, Donal O'Malley led the IASW's welcome to a group of visiting social workers from a regional Association in South Korea. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by both Associations pledging to work together on issues of mutual interest.

Finally, on behalf of the IAC, I would like to thank Cliona Murphy and Danielle McGoldrick very much for their invaluable support during the past year and always!

Affiliated Group; Head Medical Social Workers Group

Amanda Casey

Chairperson: Anne Marie Jones, Temple Street CUH, and Kieran Buckley, St Vincent's Hospital (retired Feb 2015)

Secretary: Anne O'Loughlin National Rehabilitation Hospital

This group meets on a bimonthly basis in St James Hospital with 1 extended meeting per year being held outside Dublin. Membership is open to HMSWS from all hospitals and hospices nationally. The purpose of the group is to provide a forum for the development and implementation of best standards among medical social workers in Ireland. The group also functions to set and uphold national standards for health related social work in Ireland, to lobby on issues relating to our client group and as a support to its members in their work.

During the last 12 months the group has been very active in a number of pertinent issues including:

- Roll out and implementation of the amended medical social work competencies document nationally
- Advocating for and development of a pilot project with Focus Ireland and DCC/HSE to provide a hospital in reach service for patients who are homeless. This was in response to the pulling of a dedicated CWO for the acute and mental health hospitals and an evidence based service need. We continue to meet with reps from social inclusion, mental health and the DCC to monitor the effectiveness of this post. We have also been actively involved in the development of a national protocol for the integrated discharge planning for patients who require either emergency or longer term supported accommodation.
- We have reviewed the terms of reference for membership of the group and election of chairperson/secretary in response to the requests for membership of the group by social workers in senior posts with management responsibilities (in the absence of a principal)
- We continue to be represented on various clinical programmes and have been invited to contribute to a number of national Models of Care including Rehabilitation, Neurology, Paediatrics and Neonatology and Acute Medicine
- The impact of scarce resources and the aging demographic nationally continues to impact on the work of medical social workers and we have been actively involved in lobbying at local and national level for the provision of integrated care for older persons in line with Government policy to support people in their own homes.
- We held our biannual Conference in October 2014 in Ballinasloe. The 2 day meeting was very well attended and provided an excellent opportunity to network and identify strategic themes for the group to address in the coming years. The meetings guest speakers focused on the use of "lean management" approaches in health related social work as well as working to identify opportunities to undertake and encourage research within our departments.

We have had a number of changes within the group in the last year. Kieran Buckley SVUH, Anne Lennon Our Lady of Lourdes, Mathew Farrelly St Francis Hospice and Sheila Lawlor Galway UH have retired from their posts. New members to the group include Donal Gill Beacon Hospital, Eileen O'Brien Cappagh Hospital, Imelda Morris Clontarf Orthopaedic Hospital, Mary McMahon Galway UH, Niamh Finucane St Francis Hospice and Olive Craig Naas Hospital.

A number of key priorities have been identified by the group to be progressed in the coming 12 months including engagement with the universities regarding research, training and placements, liaison with CORU regarding Fitness to Practice requirements for Managers, protocols for family meetings, and review of caseload management practices nationally.

Affiliated Group; Council of Irish Adoption Agencies (CIAA)

Cathal Clifford

The present members of the Executive of CIAA are:

Chairperson: Hazel Douglas

Vice Chairperson: Sandra Merrity

Secretary: Ann Shanahan (Acting)

Treasurer: Cathal Clifford

Other Executive Members: Mary Farrell, Julie Ann Barry
Kathleen Brosnan and Julie Kerins.

The period 2013-2014 continued to be a challenging time in which considerable change occurred across the spectrum of adoption at a national level and within the CIAA.

Membership of Council

Council representatives are now voted onto council by 8 regional and 10 accredited agencies. All are members of the CIAA and ARC Adoption Agency has indicated their wish to join. A significant development is that CIAA will pay the travelling expenses of one representative from each agency to attend meetings.

Council Meetings

Primarily it is social work professional adoption practitioners who represent their adoption agencies at CIAA. Our members are all social work practitioners working in the areas of information and tracing, domestic and international adoption.

CIAA members meet three times a year to consider, address and advocate on the basis of best practice in all aspects of adoption. An Executive Committee elected by members meets quarterly to organise, oversee and carry out the agreed plans of CIAA. CIAA aims to encourage through research, provision of relevant adoption information and continuous professional development workshops all members to operate to the highest professional standards

Training and CPD

The Adoption Authority of Ireland is now taking on a regulatory role and had introduced a programme of very successful information and training days. These included training on medical issues with their Medical Advisor John Burke, and days for Inter-country and Domestic Adoption and Information and Tracing which included the launch of the very comprehensive guidelines for Domestic Adoption.

A central responsibility of CIAA is sharing information on best practice, making representation to the AAI on issues of concern and providing relevant training for all its members for which there was no charge. The latter coupled with expenses for one member attending being paid for by CIAA is significantly important given the introduction of CPD points from the beginning of January 2015 as a requirement of continuing registration. Over the previous year CIAA had held a number of their own very successful training days on Data Protection, Focused Solution Post Adoption Support Group and Complexity and Matching in Adoption Assessments. The last event which had been run by BAAF in Northern Ireland had been extremely useful and we had been provided with a wealth of very valuable assessment material and tools. The number of Social workers who are now attending CIAA training events has increased with 25 attending on Focused Solution Post Adoption Support Groups. Continuing training for social workers in the areas of attachment, information and tracing and surrogacy among others continues to be important.

Patricia Carey, CEO for the Adoption Authority, attended a training session facilitated by Ruth Kelly on 'Exploring ways of helping Adoptive Parents share difficult information or when there is no information at all.' We continue to look forward to forging a good working relationship with Patricia and the AAI and to be able to share matters of concern with her in the future.

During the year a subgroup had been working on a leaflet for birth mothers who had placed more than one child for adoption which will be published shortly and be available on our website.

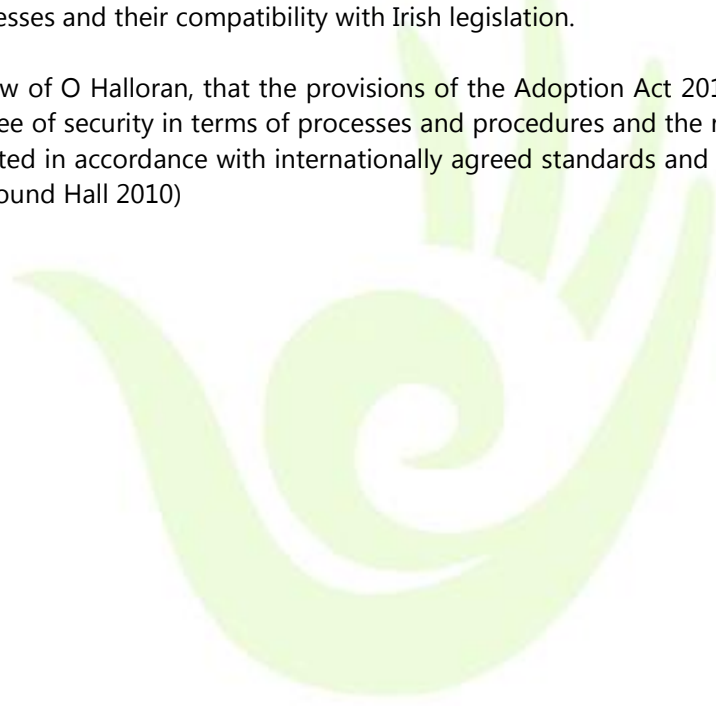
With the reduction in the numbers of children coming forward for inter-country adoption following the full implementation of The Hague Convention, and greater demand within Tusla for other child centered services, there is always a concern that social workers could be diverted away from the provision of adoption services. On the contrary more Social Work posts will be required to meet challenges posed when the new act is implemented.

Council of Irish Adoption Agencies' statement in relation to adoption

Council regards adoption as a service for children and that the interests of the child in adoption should remain as the first and paramount consideration. We believe, as social work practitioners, that adoption legislation should respond in an equitable and comprehensive way to the needs and rights of all parties to adoption, adopted persons, birth/natural parents/relatives and adoptive parents.

There is still an urgent need for legislation in relation to information and tracing for adopted people and birth/ natural parents. Whilst the Adoption Act 2010 has not addressed this need in any detail or been more specific in relation to post adoption needs and services, we consider that the ratification of the Hague Convention and the Adoption Act 2010 allows for more transparency in adoption practice, ensuring that those children who are placed for adoption, internationally and domestically are eligible to be placed for adoption and that all appropriate consents are given. We continue to welcome the Adoption Authority's investigations and their work in reviewing a number of different countries adoption processes and their compatibility with Irish legislation.

Council supports the view of O Halloran, that the provisions of the Adoption Act 2010, will ensure that Irish adopters will have 'a greater degree of security in terms of processes and procedures and the reassurance of knowing that their adoption will be conducted in accordance with internationally agreed standards and safeguard' (xi, Adoption Law and Practice, K O Halloran, Round Hall 2010)



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