

**2010-
2011**

**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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Executive & Council Members 2010 - 2011

IASW Executive:

President	Ineke Durville
Honorary Treasurer	Dónal O'Malley
Honorary Secretary	Sarah McGarrigle
Office Manager	Danielle McGoldrick
Conference & Events	Ita Long
Continuous Professional Development	Frank Browne
Membership Officer	Billie Anne Johnston
PR & Communications	Declan Coogan
Executive Member	Jason Watson & Terry Bradshaw
N.S.W.Q.B Representatives (Until March 2011)	Frank Browne & Marie Therese Mulholland

Special Interest & Associate Group Representatives:

Adoption (CIAA)	Eileen Conway
Ageing (SIGA)	John Brennan
Children & Families	Paul McCarthy
Child/Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)	Sarah Houston
IASW Journal Editor	Monica Egan
Social Workers in Disability (SWID)	Emer Ingoldsby
Principles in Medical Social Work Hospitals	Loretta Reilly
Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)	Damien Nolan
Primary Care	Deirdre Jacob
Council of Irish Adoption Agencies	Sheila Gallagher / Eileen Conway
Foster Care	Ciara Mahoney
New Social Workers	Kerry Cuskelly
Social Workers in Probation	David Williamson

Regional Representatives:

Eastern	Pat Waldron
Southern	Frank O'Driscoll / Terry Bradshaw

Other Representatives:

International Affairs Committee	John Brennan
CORU Representative	Monica Egan
IMPACT Representative	Dónal O'Malley

Executive Reports:

Presidents Report

Ineke Durville

I am pleased to present the annual report of the Irish Association of Social Workers, which outlines the various activities of the IASW executive and the special interest groups during the year.

One of the major developments this year was the long expected start of the registration of the allied health and social care professionals with the appointment of the Social Work Registration Board by the Minister for Health, in September 2010. The Social Work Registration Board together with the Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU) prepared the necessary documentation to facilitate this and at the end of March 2011 CORU took over the responsibility for the recognition of social work qualifications, a function that was held by the National Social Work Qualification Board (NSWQB) and signed off on the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers. The NSWQB ceased to exist at that time and I would like to use this opportunity to thank all the staff of the NSWQB for their support of the IASW over the years. The Director of the NSWQB, Eilis Walsh, retired at the same time and I would like to thank Eilis for her contribution to social work as Director of the NSWQB and prior to that as president of the IASW and through her involvement with the International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) and wish her all the best in her retirement.

In anticipation of the introduction of Statutory Registration and the need for the IASW to be able to stand over the practice of the members and to put a framework in place that promotes continuous learning, the IASW launched their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) policy and folder in April 2009. The policy sets a standard in terms of CPD and required members to reach 100 CPD points over a two year period and record these in the CPD log. The IASW will then audit the CPD log for all members and issue them with a certificate acknowledging their achievement. This process has now commenced and a number of certificates have been sent out. Frank Browne has continued his role as CPD co-ordinator on the executive and his knowledge of the policy, the on-going reviews of courses looking to be awarded CPD points and his input into the audit have been very valuable and I would like to thank him for all his hard work. At the time of the launch of the policy in April 2009, the executive committed to reviewing the policy after the first two years and we are hoping to commence this review in September 2011.

The work of the office has been on-going and it continues to be very busy. We have dealt with an increasing number of queries from members, non-members and the public and thanks to Danielle McGoldrick, our office manager, the increased volume has been dealt with very efficiently. The office has been transformed into an organised, streamlined and spacious work environment and is pleasant to spend time in.

Thanks to Monica Egan, the Association has produced two journals and I would like to thank Monica for all her support and her hard work on the journal, which is a valuable service to the members. Saragh McGarrigle joined the executive at the last AGM and took on the responsibility for the info newsletter. The executive decided to review the format of info and Saragh proposed to introduce the e-bulletin format with links to various web links and the executive agreed to introduce this model. I would like to thank Saragh for all her input into info and ensuring that the information about the various activities of the Association is sent to the members.

Ita Long has continued her responsibility for training and she has been involved with the organisation of the various seminars, workshops and other events which have been organised during the year, including today's conference. I would like to thank her for her contribution to training over the year.

The special interest groups (SIGs) are continuing to be a very valuable link with the wider membership and provide a forum for social workers practising in that area of specialism to share experiences and raise issues. A number of SIGs held very successful conferences and seminars and the feedback from these events has been very positive. The contribution of the SIGs has been very valuable for the workings of the Association and the executive would like to thank them for their contribution and hard work. Some of the members of the executive live in different parts of the country, which has been very helpful in maintaining links outside Dublin. One of the new members of executive, Terry Bradshaw, has provided a very useful link with the Southern Region SIG.

Terry has been a very active member of the southern region SIG and I would like to thank him for his commitment.

The IASW has continued to have a high profile thanks to Declan Coogan, communication co-ordinator. It has meant that the IASW was able to respond promptly to any issue that arose and needed highlighting through press releases and letters and Declan needs to be congratulated for his input.

During the year, the executive supported and produced a number of submissions to government departments, the HSE and other relevant organisations. The IASW was invited to official meetings and are part of some of the forums set up by the HSE to progress a variety of government policies.

Donal O'Malley continues in his role as treasurer and together with Danielle he ensures that we keep our spending under control. The finances of the Association are healthy and I wish to thank Donal for his contribution and his attention to detail. The treasurer has a very important role in any organisation. Billie Anne Johnston took on the role of membership secretary and has been very active in this role. She developed a number of membership hand-outs with Danielle and has given a number of presentations on the IASW and the membership benefits. The membership of the IASW has continued to grow this year, the number of training events has increased greatly and the imminent start of statutory registration has put further pressure on the Association.

The executive has had to consider the consequences of these changes and have come to the following conclusions: The need for additional administrative support to deal with the training programme and the need to get advice on whether the legal status of the Association was adequate to deal with the changes ahead. The Administrative support is provided through funding from the HSE to support the CPD training programme and Aoibheann O'Sullivan has been with us off and on since January during very busy times. The advice in relation to the legal status was to look at becoming a limited company. The Association will be presenting a motion to that effect at the AGM. Jason Watson has taken on the responsibility to progress the legal structure of the Association and I would like to thank him for his contribution to date.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Danielle, the members of executive and council as well as all the members for their support during the year. Unfortunately, the cutbacks in public services will continue to affect our client groups as well as the working conditions for social workers, due to lack of staff and resources and it will be important that the Association has a strong and cohesive voice.

Honorary Treasurer

Dónal O'Malley

Due to the continued growth in the number of people joining the Association, this year saw another increase in the total amount of subscriptions received. The other significant source of income was the Continuous Professional Development funding from the HSE which has allowed us to fund more CPD days at a lower cost to members and non-members as well as offsetting against the administrative costs of running these CPD events.

As with last year, the drive to lower costs continued, the most significant of which was the reduction in the printing expenses. Due to these measures the Association continues to operate a surplus, which means that as per last year, the Association can still absorb half the cost of the Legal Protection Cover.

Last year we aimed to continue to build on the successes of the recent years and I believe we have achieved that through the above mentioned measures as well as putting new, easier mechanisms in place to allow Special Interest Groups to apply to the Association for funding for CPD events. The CPD funding provides SIGs with an ideal opportunity to provide quality training at a reasonable cost and I would encourage all SIGs to avail of this facility.

I would like to thank Danielle for her continued hard work in maintaining the operation of the Association on a day-to-day basis. My thanks also to Ineke and the other members of the Executive for their advice and guidance throughout the year.

Honorary Secretary

Saragh McGarrigle

2010 saw the IASW Newsletter transition from a print based publication to an electronic format. This change brought a number of advantages, the first being a significant cost saving! It also means that the newsletter can be developed in a more interactive manner with numerous links guiding the reader back to the IASW website or to other news sources. Between 2010 and 2011, four newsletters were emailed to all members. The plan going forward is for the newsletter to have seasonal editions, with members receiving a copy via email four times per year.

The newsletter provides an excellent opportunity for all the members to be kept abreast of the work being carried out at both executive and council level in the organisation. It also provides updates on conferences and seminars, as well as providing links to media reports and press releases concerned with social work. The newsletter allows an opportunity for all members to be kept up to date with each of the Special Interest Groups and their current areas of activity. It is hoped to further develop the newsletter over the coming year and any feedback or suggestions from members is most welcome.

The role of honorary secretary within the IASW requires minimum work due to the hard work of office manager Danielle, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her support in the last year.

Office Report

Danielle McGoldrick

There have been many changes in the office since the AGM in 2011, by far the biggest achievement, was the reorganization of the office space, the co-ordination of the in-house filing system, and the archiving of all of the associations historical documents/files. This was a mammoth task and I could not have completed the work without Ineke's helping hand.

The library has been catalogued, and a list of all of the books available from the office, can be downloaded from the website.

The website has been updated, and now features a "Get Ready for Registration", "Social Work Qualifications" and "Support/Submissions/Policies section".

Donal, Ita and I developed guidelines for the Special Interest Groups on Financial Management and Event Planning

Once again the whole area of membership takes up a huge amount of time, tasks this year included;

- Culling lapsed membership application forms and creating a database of lapsed members
- Destroying files
- Developing a Membership Benefits flyer, and posting it to all of the HSE Health Clinics nation-wide, and to the NGO's who employ Social Workers
- Preparing new member 'Welcome Packs'.
- Contacting members with incorrect personal details
- Approving membership applications
- Preparing the four quarter direct debit runs and following up with members who have unsuccessful payments
- Contacting members who fail to renew membership

Following my financial training in 2010, I now prepare quarterly financial reports for Donal and Ineke to review. Other work includes, payroll, end of year payroll, preparing documentation for the Revenue Commissioners. Our accountants, Meade Casey proposed that we close three of our account's, the association now operates three bank accounts, which makes management of the finance a lot easier.

In 2010 we submitted two CPD reports to the HSE including information on income, expenditure, evaluation feedback, number of participants, etc. In addition, Ineke and I prepared a proposal to the HSE to secure further funding for the development of CPD in 2011-2013.

The editor of the Irish Social Work Journal, Monica Egan published two journals in 2010, and one in 2011, she plans to publish another two in 2011. My role in this process includes calling for articles, contacting the authors, proofing the journal and preparing the mailing of the journals to the members and journal subscribers.

Since April 2010 Ineke and Ita have successfully run ten CPD events. My involvement in this has included such tasks as:

- Liaising with the venue
- Contacting Speakers re: fees, equipment requirements, preparation of handouts, etc.
- Design and distribution of flyers and booking forms
- Dealing with booking enquiries, processing payments and confirming bookings via email
- Preparing participant packs
- Manning the registration desk
- Collating evaluation forms
- Invoicing Speakers
- Uploading Presentations / Handouts etc. onto the website

2010-2011 thus far has been extremely busy, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of Executive for all of their assistance and co-operation, and particularly Ineke, without her dedication, patience, and support, my job would be much more difficult.

Conferences and Events

Ita Long

The following is list of conferences and seminars that were organised by the executive over the past twelve months:

- Annual Conference 2010: "Reclaiming Social Work"
- Workshop: "Drug-Using Parents; Issues and Dilemmas"
- Seminar in Sligo: "Getting Ready for Registration"
- Workshop: "Providing an Accessible & Appropriate Service to LGB People"
- Conference: "Attachment & Development Across the Life Course and Implications for Practice"
- Seminar: "Promoting the Welfare of Children of Problem Drinkers"
- Conference: IFSW Europe Project – The Financial Crisis Workshop
- Seminar: "The Application of the Marte Meo Method in Identifying Early Signals of Attachment & Relationship Issues"
- Seminar: "Learning from a Model of Attachment"
- Seminar: "Fitness to Practice & Social Work: Lessons from International Experience" and "CORU: Update on Registration & Related Issues"
- Annual Conference 2011: "Social Work Practice in Difficult Times: Why Equality is Better for Everyone"

Along with the above training events individual Special Interest Groups have organised conferences and Continuing Professional Development events which were open to all social workers and social work students. For the past two years IASW, along with the professional associations of other allied health professionals, has been in receipt of funding from the HSE to facilitate on-going training and development for all social workers. All training events are open to all social workers and students. We acknowledge the generous funding from the HSE which has enabled the executive and SIGs to provide such a varied training programme. Over the past year the HSE asked that the professional bodies facilitate multi-disciplinary training as a condition attached to the funding.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Ineke and Danielle for all the time and effort that they have put into the organising of the various events over the past year.

We welcome feedback from participants on all the events we organise as well as ideas for future events. We would also welcome hearing from any members who would like to be involved in the organising of conferences and seminars. Please leave your name with Danielle at: office@iasw.ie

Continuous Professional Development [CPD]

Frank Browne

One of the key roles that IASW plays is to promote CPD. Social work is both a rewarding and a challenging job. Social Workers work with vulnerable adults and children with a wide variety of needs from the relatively straight forward to the very complex. CPD ensures that social workers keep up to date with the required knowledge and skills to do the job well and both supervision and professional development planning are key elements in CPD.

IASW has prioritised the organisation of CPD events during the last year. Fortunately funding from the HSE has allowed IASW to subsidise CPD events both for those organised by IASW and the special interest groups within IASW.

It is now two years since IASW launched its CPD Folder and members who have achieved the required CPD points recorded in their CPD logs can now have these certified by IASW. To date a number of social workers have done so.

IASW will continue to prioritise CPD and IASW is keen to work closely with the special interest groups to ensure that both the most relevant training is organised and where possible funding is made available so as to allow CPD events to be affordable for all members.

Statutory registration has now begun and IASW aims to work in partnership with both the Registration Board and CORU to ensure that CPD remains at the top of their agenda. IASW is keen to play a lead role in setting the CPD standard agenda, to date CORU has commented favorable on the IASW CPD policy.

Communications

Declan Coogan

The Roscommon Child Care Case Report, the replacement of the NSWQB by the Social Workers Registration Board at CORU, the Code of Professional Conduct and fees proposed by CORU, the General Election campaign and the appointment of a Minister for Children with full Cabinet rights and responsibilities marked significant developments for the IASW and for social work in Ireland.

Our last AGM took place on the 23rd of April 2010. Shortly after that, many were shocked by the discovery of the murder of Daniel McAnaspie. As part of the response of the Irish Association of Social Workers to this, I worked on a number of press releases in relation social workers views on the needs of children in care to have the highest standards of care and the need for the allocation of a social worker to every single child in care. I also spoke to researchers at Today FM & RTÉ, leading to me being interviewed on *The Last Word* and Ineke being interviewed on *Morning Ireland* in May 2010.

Following an article written by Carol Coulter in *The Irish Times*, Paul McCarthy (Children & Families SIG) and I drafted a response on behalf of members of the IASW. This letter to the editor was sent to the Irish Times after consultation with members of The Children and Families Special Interest Group and with Ineke. Although this letter has not been published, it was circulated to all members of the Association.

Towards the end of May, Ineke, I and some other members of the IASW were in discussions with RTÉ in relation to social workers involvement with special reports on radio and television concerning the child protection system. This led to Ineke and a social worker speaking on the *This Week* programme on RTÉ Radio One on Sunday the 30th of May 2010.

In July 2010, HIQA published reports into the fostering Service of the HSE on the inspection of foster care in 3 Dublin areas. In response to this, I issued a press release on behalf of the Association welcoming the findings of the reports which highlighted HSE failures to provide adequate and safe care of children by not allocating a social worker to every child in care. The IASW press release also drew attention to the fact that the HIQA reports identified good practice and included the views of children and foster carers. These service users stated that where cases were allocated there was evidence of good practice and the allocated social workers “were committed and dedicated professionals, who worked in complex and stressful situations but held as their main concern the welfare of the children on their case load”.

In the wake of the release of HSE figures in October 2010 detailing the numbers of people living on the streets, Ineke spoke with the Irish Times and was quoted directly in the report, representing the views of the Association. Over 800 hundred people were homeless in 2009, with over 200 of these being children under the age of 12 years of age. Following constructive comments about social workers by a *Focus Ireland* representative on a *Newstalk* radio programme, the Executive supported proposals to explore links with *Focus Ireland* to support the rights of young people leaving care. Donal represented the Association at a *Focus Ireland* conference in March 2011.

Following an invitation from *The Equality and Rights Alliance* in October 2010, Ineke and/or I have represented the IASW at constructive and positive meetings in Dublin of *The Equality and Rights Alliance* (ERA). This is an alliance of 145 civil rights groups and NGOs with the aim of protecting and strengthening human rights and equality. Among those involved are representatives from organisations working with one parent families, people living with disabilities, mental health organisations, the *Penal/Prison Reform Trust*, and the *Irish Council for Civil Liberties* among others. This group developed and promoted a charter or roadmap for equality and human rights in Ireland. The IASW had an input into the development of this roadmap document. Further information about the ERA is available at www.eracampaign.org and the Roadmap document is available at <http://www.eracampaign.org/uploads/ERA%20Roadmap%202011.pdf>

Following the release of the Report on the Roscommon Child Care Case in November 2010, Ineke ably represented the perspective of the Association. Ineke also had on-going contacts with a variety of social workers in different parts of the country. I would like to thank Ineke for taking an active and lead role in responding to this Report. Prior to this and in liaison with social workers in disability, we issued a press release in relation to the SWLD conference: “Value for money – at what cost?”

Members of the Children and Families Special Interest Group are working on a public awareness campaign and press releases in relation to developments within the HSE and child protection and family support services. An article was published by the SIG in the most recent edition of the *Irish Social Worker Journal*. Further initiatives are planned for later this year.

Following the positive response by IASW members to an earlier IASW campaign to email TDs about the Child Care Amendment Bill, we sought members’ suggestions for questions for general election canvassers and candidates during the campaign. In the wake of members’ suggestions, we drafted and sent an email to all members with a list of concerns and questions that social workers could put to anyone seeking their vote in the general election.

On the 25th of February 2011, CORU closed the public consultation process in relation to the social work code of professional conduct. This and the announcement of the fees for registration proved to be a burning issue for social workers. The IASW has made representations to CORU and we issued a press release welcoming registration but challenging the high cost of fees. This issue will be considered further later in the report.

A continuing and welcome development over the last year was the issuing by email to all members of all press releases and letters to the papers sent out on behalf of the Association. They are also placed promptly on the website. This seems to be a positive practice leading to many members contacting Danielle and me by email and phone stating their appreciation and support for the Association’s proactive and responsive engagement with the media. I would like to thank Ineke, Danielle and members of the Executive for their support and prompt response to requests for advice in relation to public comment on behalf of the IASW.

Other members of the Executive have taken the initiative in developing parallel aspects of the communications theme – the new electronic format and design for the IASW Newsletter and the social work student information campaign. I fully support and welcome these developments led by Sarah and Billie Anne.

Forthcoming highlights for both the Association as a whole and for the Communications aspect of the IASW include the 40th anniversary of the Association and the Annual Conference. Members have been consulted in relation to which themes or messages we would like to communicate to the public and to all social workers about social work in Ireland today.

I welcome any suggestions concerning how to position the Association in relation to any issues concerning social workers over the next few months. It seems to be most helpful when members of the Association work closely with the relevant special interest group to draw up a draft press release then contact me and we can then work together on developing a press release for issuing on behalf of the Association.

Membership Report 2011

Billie Anne Johnson

The main initiatives implemented this year have been:

1. Vision for Recovery subgroup on Recovery, this meeting is held on a monthly basis dealing with the concept of recovery orientated practice within the mental health services. It is hoped that a document will be published this year.
2. IASW Sligo Seminar on registration and highlighting the benefits of the association to social workers in the Sligo/Leitrim and Donegal area.
3. Flier has been devised outlining the benefits of the association. This has been given to all universities. There are discussions with the HSE to forward this flier unto all social workers working with the HSE.
4. Contact with all universities, discussing benefits of the association. Proceeded to do talks in Trinity and UCD, outlining the role of members and highlighting the benefits of the association.
5. Working alongside new Special interest group. 'New Social Workers'

A number of routine tasks have also been completed with the assistance of the Office Manager including dealing with routine queries, updating membership, payment details and the scheduling of the Direct Debit run for the year.

At present we have 962 members. 94 members did not renew their membership in 2011, however, we recruited 152 new members between May & December of 2010, and 154 members have joined association so far in 2011.

National Social Work Qualifications Board

Marie Therese Mulholland

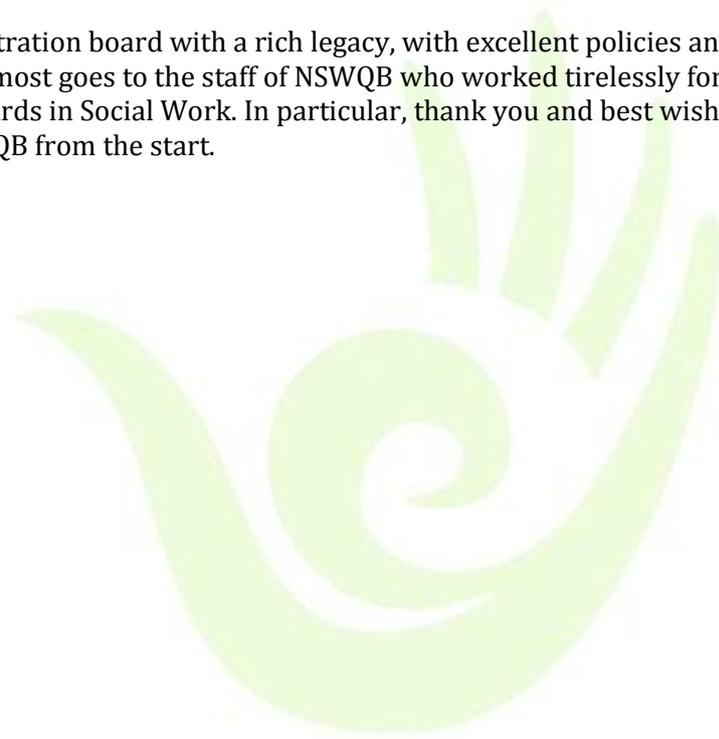
It is with mixed feelings that I submit the final report of NSWQB to the IASW annual report. Sadness as it is the final report, NSWQB was dissolved in March 2011; and excitement as registration is here. Many of the functions of NSWQB will be absorbed into the social work registration board which has been appointed by CORU (the new name of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council).

At this time, it is worth acknowledging the major contribution that the work of NSWQB has made to the profession of Social Work since its beginnings in 1997. NSWQB's functions were set out in S.I. No.97 of 1997. The NSWQB's functions, broadly speaking, included the awarding of the national qualification in Social Work (NQS). They advised government, and statutory and non-statutory bodies in relation to social work training, recognition and standards. The organisation worked with the universities in relation to the development, content and validation of courses. Another important function was provided by the recognition and maintenance of standards in relation to non-national qualifications. We have all benefitted from the high

standard research NSWQB produced. This has focused on profiling and developing the profession. It has led to many useful and invaluable initiatives including to name a few ‘The Induction Framework’, ‘National Framework for Social Work Placement’, ‘Crossing Borders Resource Pack’ and of course the invaluable ‘Social Work Posts in Ireland’ series.

It was fitting that as NSWQB was coming to an end they co-hosted with NUIG the First National Social Work Education Conference last February. The conference brought together stakeholders from all areas and levels of the profession to reflect on achievements and on areas of development. The conference was a great success and was an example of excellent work carried out by NSWQB. It has untiringly upheld standards and promoted the profession through very changing times. There has been an expansion of training courses and a significant increase in the social work workforce of people with qualifications obtained outside of the state.

NSWQB has left the registration board with a rich legacy, with excellent policies and practices and invaluable experience. Great credit most goes to the staff of NSWQB who worked tirelessly for the maintenance and promotion of high standards in Social Work. In particular, thank you and best wishes to Eilis Walsh who has been at the helm of NSWQB from the start.



IASWU

Special Interest & Associate Group Reports:

Council of Irish Adoption Agencies

2010 / 11 Chairperson: Sheila Gallagher
Secretary: Margaret Comaskey

The Council of Irish Adoption Agencies is an umbrella body incorporating all adoption agencies, both voluntary and statutory, in the Republic of Ireland. Council members meet a number of times each year to consider, address and advocate on the basis of 'best practice', in all aspects of adoption. While it is the agencies themselves who are members of the CIAA, it is a requirement that adoption agencies designate a social work professional to represent their individual adoption agency at Council or Executive meetings.

Council members have contributed to the Adoption Act 2010 by seeking the support of Senators, TD'S and the Minister on our submissions on the Bill. In Dec 2009, Members of Council presented their submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee. The Adoption Act 2010 came into effect on November 2010. The Adoption Act is welcomed in that it ratifies the Hague Convention but there has been much disappointment that the legislation has not offered any legal basis for the provision of information and tracing and post adoption services. Council hopes that legislation will be forthcoming to address this shortly.

- Since June 2010 Council has a website. The website has facilitated Council in being more accessible and having a public profile.
- Council has continued to develop close working relationship with the Irish Association of Social Workers over the last two years. This has included releasing joint press statements on the Adoption Bill, seeking advice from the organisation on professional issues and seeking their support in relation to future adoption legislation.
- June 2010: Joint submission with IASW to the Humans Rights Commissioner in relation to the lack of legislation on information and tracing.
- CIAA host workshops which are open to all adoption agencies to attend, training is focused on promoting best practice and coherency in social work adoption practice.
- In 2010-2011 the following training events were held, CPD certificates were available to all who attended:

March 2010 Birth parent Counselling Subgroup: Issues in Domestic Adoption
June 2010 Workshop on Evidenced Based Report Writing
February and November 2010 : Attachment training with Holly Van Gulden
March 2011 Research finding from Origins Service, Barnardo's

The Irish Social Worker Journal

2010 / 11 Editor: Monica Egan

Two editions were published in 2010. One edition has been published in early 2011 with plans to have a student edition and an edition celebrating the 40th anniversary of IASW.

Calls for articles have been sent out regularly from Danielle in the office. So far the response has been such that we have been able to fill the journal. However as always, we need more.

During the year some books were sent to the office for review and I was really pleased that some people came forward and reviewed them. This was something that was a feature of the journal in the past but had ceased in the last few years so I am pleased to see it coming back as part of the journal.

I would like to thank all the contributors during the year for their hard work in putting articles together. It is not easy when people are already busy with work etc. IASW and I really appreciate the work they have done.

Thanks too to Danielle for her support and endless patience.

Principal Medical Social Workers Group

2010 / 11 Chairperson: Kieran Buckley
 Secretary: Loretto Reilly

The Principal Medical Social Worker Group provides a forum for Principal Medical Social Workers to discuss issues and developments in social work relevant to the Hospital setting. It also provides an opportunity to address continuing professional development and training issues required in this social work setting and the connections with colleagues in community care.

The Chairperson for the Group is Kieran Buckley from St. Vincent's Hospital, Siobhan Nunn is Secretary and is Principal Social Worker in St. James's Hospital. The Group met bi-monthly in 2010 and was attended by members nationwide.

Loretto Reilly continued to represent the Group on the IASW Council. New members, John Brennan, who was appointed Principal Social Worker in the Mater Hospital and Siobhan Nunn, Principal social Worker, St. James's Hospital, have joined the group. Angela Keane retired from St James and the group wishes her well in her new life.

Issues of concern: The Medical Social Workers continued to address the issues for the hospitals affected following the introduction of the Nursing Home support scheme in October 2009.

The Chairperson of the Group wrote to the Department of Health in relation to individual resident complaints in Nursing homes. This action was taken as no body currently responsible for dealing with complaints. The Chairperson on behalf of the Group also linked in with Directorates responsible for addressing issues in respiratory illness, AMU and stroke etc.

In 2011 the Group will continue to address issues arising in these challenging times.

Mary Heffernan, our esteemed colleague who had retired after many years as Head Medical Social Worker in Crumlin Children's Hospital in 2009, sadly died in July 2010. Mary's contribution to social work and her warmth and support to colleagues is missed. Mostly we'll miss Mary's wit and good humour which never failed to brighten the day'

New Social Workers

2010/2011 Chairperson: Kerry Cuskelly
 Secretary: Beth McGettrick
 University Liaison: Lorraine Phillips
 Committee Members: Niamh O' Rourke, Conor Boksberger

Introduction:

Our Mission is to provide a forum of support for new social workers in Ireland to provide a high quality service to clients and to promote the connection between academia and practice through reflective practice. We define new social workers as student social workers in a graduate or undergraduate programme and professionally qualified social workers who have been qualified in the last 2 years.

Origins of the New Social Workers SIG:

The process of setting up the group began after the 2010 IASW conference. The group was officially recognised by the association in 2011. One reason for setting up of the group was that student social workers felt a strong disconnect between their experiences on placement and in the classroom. One Masters class voiced the opinion that their first placement challenged the values and ideas they were taught. The IASW conference on the 23rd of April 2010 "Reclaiming Social Work" brought up the issue of the need to strengthen the relationship between the academic setting of social work and the practice setting. This conference also brought up many current issues for social work, including a lack of professional cohesion, empowerment, and support. The core members felt that it was important that these macro issues, which are common to all social workers, as opposed to issues occurring in specialised areas in social work, should be addressed and acknowledged more. It is also important that new social workers have a platform from which to illustrate the positive contribution

they can make to the profession of social work both in terms of educating the general public and other more experienced social workers.

Why should people join?

To be a responsible social worker, engaged in activism at the macro level, to get support in their time as a new social worker, to be able to have a voice on issues that directly pertain to them, to help bring about awareness and change to improve the experiences of new social workers and of clients, to promote pride in social work, to gain valuable experience in being a professional, to connect theory and practice in their studies and work, to promote reflexive and reflective practice and the development of professional social work.

Initial Objectives of the New Social Workers SIG:

1. To provide support for new social workers in their learning and transition from being a student social worker to a professionally qualified social worker.
2. To empower new social workers to help their voices be heard and help them share their valuable opinions and knowledge.
3. To bring about awareness and change for issues that affects new social workers.
4. To help strengthen the relationship between social work in academic settings and in practice settings.
5. Look at supervision for new social workers (both on placement and when working). Who gives supervision? What is examined in supervision sessions? How much supervision is received?
6. Provide an online forum for sharing and learning for new social workers.
7. Examine how universities could improve in preparing students for social work practice.
8. Look into options for support groups, lectures, and other ways of helping new social workers provide a quality service.

Current Situation:

The group has launched a website for NSW members. It can be found at www.newsocialworkers.com. A link can also be found on the NSW SIG page in the IASW website. It is intended to be a way for members to communicate with each other in relation to social work practice, discussions on linking theory to practice, examining social work values and ethics and how these transcend into actual practice, issues affecting students on placement and issues affecting social workers new to social work practice. The website is still in its initial stages and will change in accordance with the needs and suggestions of the NSW members. The group is currently actively recruiting members for general membership.

Representation at council:

Representation at council is being rotated among Kerry Cuskelly, Beth McGettrick and Lorraine Phillips.

Plans for 2011:

The plans for 2011 are:

- The recruitment of members to the group.
- Making contact with social work students through social work departments in universities around Ireland in order to educate them about the IASW and the NSW SIG in order to mobilise social work students to becoming active members of the profession.
- Having peer support/peer supervision meetings where student social workers and newly qualified social workers can have a safe, informal forum in which to discuss issues pertinent to their practice.
- Organising a seminar on an issue pertinent to members e.g. supervision, the role of social justice in social work, critical consciousness of social workers.
- Holding regular committee meetings.
- Developing the NSW website to meet the needs of its members.

Social Workers Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

2010 / 11 Chairperson: Damien Nolan

Secretary: Anne Duffin

The Committee:

- As planned, the committee of SWAMH met on 6 occasions. Between those meetings, some members of the committee met separately to work on particular tasks for SWAMH.
- In the summer of 2010 two members of the committee, together with the President of IASW, had a planned meeting with the National Assistant Director of Mental Health Services to share the view of SWAMH regarding particular issues of importance including: the necessary availability of social work supervision towards ensuring the capacity of our discipline to operate to the highest professional standard in the field of adult mental health, and the consequent need to have a line management structure in place in each mental health social work service that will be resourced to be able to provide such supervision; the particular issues commonly dealt with by multidisciplinary mental health care teams that SWAMH would consider that social work can and should take the lead role in processing; the significance of the Team Co-ordinator role within the Community Mental Health Team (as proposed in 'A Vision for Change'), and the importance of having this role available to be performed by suitably qualified and experienced social workers as well as members of other disciplines.
- In November 2010 SWAMH submitted a report on behalf of IASW to the Independent Monitoring Group for 'A Vision for Change' on its assessment of progress in the implementation of this mental health policy.
- In the past 12 months a member of the SWAMH committee, acting as a representative of IASW, has become a member of the National 'Vision for Change' Working Group; and another mental health social worker connected to SWAMH has become the IASW representative of the National 'Mental Health Recovery' Working Group.
- Within the past year the SWAMH committee has also assisted a representative of the Mental Health Commission to conduct a survey evaluating the impact of regulatory standards on mental health services in Ireland.
- Also within the past year, Frank Browne of the SWAMH committee, together with Professor Wes Shera (of the faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto, Canada), contributed an article to the Irish Social Worker journal titled 'Mental Health Reform in Ireland: Social Workers' Perceptions of Progress.'

Continuous Professional Development Programmes:

- SWAMH provided a CPD day programme on November 26th 2010 in St Patrick's University Hospital, Dublin 8, which had as its theme the subject of 'Working effectively with Carers' and at which three sets of speakers presented. Nora Mannion (Principal Social Worker) and Mary Kelleher (Senior Social Worker), both of the 'Cluain Mhuire' Mental Health Service in Co Dublin, presentation was on working effectively with the carers of service users with Borderline Personality Disorder. Patrick Egan (Principal Social Worker) and Kevin Madigan (Clinical Research Fellow), both of DETECT, an early psychosis intervention team operating in Co Dublin, spoke on the subject of effective intervention with carers of those experiencing psychosis for the first time; and Pauline Gill (Principal Social Worker) and Donal O'Malley (Senior Social Worker), both of the Central Mental Hospital, delivered a presentation on the subject of 'working with carers who are victims' and on the subject of 'assessment tools for use in assessing carer needs.'
- SWAMH provided a CPD day programme on the same date as its AGM, March 25th 2011, this event also took place in St Patrick's University Hospital. There were two CPD presentations: Bernadette Casey and Kristen Murphy (HSE Senior Social Workers practising in the field of Protection of Older Persons) gave a presentation entitled 'What is Elder Abuse? How to Respond?' and then Bridget Harney (Senior Occupational Therapist with PROTECT, an early intervention service for persons with psychosis based in Co Wicklow) gave a presentation entitled 'The Mental Health Recovery Star – Measuring, Mapping and Supporting the Recovery Process.'

Social Workers in CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)

Feb 2011 to Feb 2012 Committee Members:

Chairperson: Sheila Mc Kenna

Secretary: Mary Mc Namara

Committee: David Hughes, Declan Coogan, Sinéad Freeley, Sarah Houston, Paul Longmore, Eleanor Kelly, Roberta Mulligan, Andree Carthy

My role as chairperson was acknowledged by everyone at the AGM and in stepping down from my role as chairperson I was thanked by members of the committee. I would like to say thanks to everyone on the committee and to the wider group for their gratitude.

Meetings:

Since the last AGM of the IASW, our special interest group in CAMHS has had three regular meetings of the national group, 24th May 2010 in Cork, 15th Nov '10 in Lucena CAMHS Rathgar & 7th Feb 2011 in Mater CAMHS James Joyce St. We would like to thank David Hughes, Mary McNamara and Paul Longmore for facilitating the clinical practice workshops in May '10, Nov '10 & Feb 2011.

April 2010, IASW AGM & Conference:

- Motions were proposed by SW's in CAMHS. See IASW Annual Report 2009/2010. 2011 motions to be proposed at the IASW AGM in May 2011.
- In Cork at the national meeting on 24th May: Margo Fenton, Therapeutic Social Worker, Cork University Maternity Hospital and Ella Lovett, Senior Clinical Psychologist will present on the Infant Mental Health Approach using a case study and drawing on the theoretical framework.

At the November national meeting presentation:

Commission to Enquire into Child Abuse Report; A Social Work Perspective by Mary Fennessy, Head of Social Work Department, Lucena Clinic.

- At the recent national meeting on 7th Feb, Sinead Crowley & Andree Carthy - The Space Programme Meetings with IMPACT.
- Sheila has committed a lot of time attending meetings with Impact and feeding back the content of these meetings to the national group meetings.

CAMHS Advisory Group:

Sarah Houston has been representing the interests of the SIG on a multidisciplinary group chaired by Brendan Doody. The group has been meeting monthly since July 2009 to discuss and inform HSE practices regarding audit, activity and outcome measures, key performance indicators and best practice guidelines in CAMHS in Ireland.

HSE National Audit:

In November 2010 the CAMHS services within the HSE Linndara CAMHS and Limerick CAMHS carried out a national audit.

CAPA (The choice & partnership approach):

In October 2010, Linndara CAMHS HSE & Limerick CAMHS HSE attended CAPA training in the Aisling hotel. There is a follow up training day planned for 17th June 2011. Google CAPA to view the website.

Children's Mental Health Coalition:

Our S.I.G. has agreed to sign up to the children's mental health coalition (see: www.childrensmentalhealth.ie for details). Julie Ann Lyons will represent us at the next meeting of the coalition in Dublin on 14th February 2011.

NSWQB update:

Paul Longmore was nominated to represent the group on the NSWQB panel of assessors. Thanks to Paul for representing our special interest group. The NSWQB panel was subsequently disbanded but Paul's nomination has been accepted onto the newly formed CORU panel which will fulfill a very similar function.

CORU:

Paul Longmore will represent the group under the CORU functions. We are delighted to hear Paul will be involved with CORU and will be able to represent our view there.

Committee and Priorities for 2011:

I would like to thank the Committee members, especially Declan Coogan, Sheila McKenna, Mary McNamara, Eleanor Kelly, Sarah Houston, Paul Longmore & David Hughes for all their commitment, time and very hard work. I would like to congratulate Sheila McKenna elected as chairperson of SW's in CAMHS sig. I would like to welcome Roberta Mulligan and Andree Carthy to the committee. On behalf of the committee I would also like to thank the social workers who attended our national meetings. We were delighted to see Declan (Coogan) at our recent SIG meeting on 7th February & to thank Declan for all his hard work representing our group in his role as PRO. The priorities of the CAMHS committee for the coming year are very similar to the past years. Please feel free to contact any member of the committee at any time regarding any queries or info about our role as SW's in CAMHS.

- The next meeting for SW in CAMHS will take place on Monday 16th May 2011. Time: 11am – 3.30pm.
Venue: Galway (venue details will be emailed to members nearer the time)

Meetings in Nov 2011 & Feb 2012:

- Mon 7th Nov in Lucena CAMHS Rathgar
- Mon 6th Feb 2012 in Mater CAMHS James Joyce Street

Report Submitted by Sinéad Freeley (2010-2011 Chair)

Social Workers in Disabilities – SWID

2010 / 11 Chairperson: Caitriona Whitty
Secretary: Anne O' Loughlin
Treasurer: Ann Byrne

The National SWID committee met approximately every 6/8 weeks in the past year. The meetings were mainly held in KARE Services, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare.

It has been a busy year for SWID with involvement in a number of areas.

Following the IASW AGM IN 2010 where SWID's motion regarding the IASW drafting a policy on the recording/collection of confidential client information was adopted, a working group was set up by IASW to develop same. SWID was represented on this group. Great strides has been made in this area with clarification sought from the Data Protection Commission who upheld the Social Work view in relation to the protection of confidential information which should only be shared on a need to know basis.

During the past year SWID was represented at the HIQA Launch of the draft National Standards for Safer Better Health Care in Sept 2010 and also contributed to their consultation document. There is a SWID rep on the National Rehabilitation Strategy Group and on the Council on Stroke.

SWID participated in a focus group organised by the National Disability Authority in regards to a consultation process that would inform their policies on key issues such as Independent living and what helps or hinders people in participating in the everyday life of the community.

Over the past year, SWID has been developing links with the Universities. In November 2010 following a request from Trinity College, 2 SWID members provided lectures to Social Work students looking at contemporary issues in the areas of Age and Disability. In February 2011, UCD invited SWID to give an input into the UCD curriculum Review.

SWID committee has a representative on the IMPACT Social Work Vocational group. Ruth Robinson's involvement has kept us abreast of matters regarding the Croke Park agreement as well as other significant Union issues in the past year.

The Annual Conference/AGM of SWID took place in October 2010. The Conference was titled 'Value for Money – At what cost?' Given the current financial climate, the presentations at the conference created a forum for lively discussion and debate.

The main speakers were; Brendan Broderick who spoke on the issues involved in 'Value for Money' Group. Brendan is the C.E.O Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary and also a Member of the 'Value for Money' Working Group. Frieda Finlay, Chairperson of Inclusion Ireland gave a presentation titled Views of Inclusion: Ireland on the current provision Of Services for Service User Users'.

Sarah Donnelly gave us food for thought in her presentation titled 'An Exploration of Care Planning meetings with Vulnerable patients.... Observations and Practical Implications'. The conference ended with Philie Sheehan's presentation 'Do parents of children with an Intellectual Disability identify with a grief process as a valid way of describing their experience of having a child with a disability'. This presentation reflected on the importance of the role of Social Worker in the area of Disability.

On April 1st 2011 SWID held its annual seminar titled 'Rights and Wrongs - Safeguarding Vulnerable Clients And The Issue of Capacity'. There was a very large attendance at this seminar and the feedback from participants was excellent. Dr. Mary Keys, a Law Lecturer in UCG and a background in Social Work gave an engaging presentation on the issues regarding capacity.

This presentation raised a lot of issues and discussion points for Social Workers. Theresa McDonagh, Social Work Team Leader in Disabilities gave an outline of the policy in operation in the HSE Wexford LHO area regarding 'Managing Allegations of Abuse of Vulnerable Clients including persons with Disability, Mental Health and Older Persons'. The other contributors to the conference were Dr. Mary Allen, Lecturer in UCD who presented a paper on Domestic Violence and Bernie Gibbons the Project Leader of 'The CASPIR Project' set up by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in the North. The project is set to develop an e-resource relating to the Safeguarding and protection of adults and it is hoped that this resource will be of use to Social Work practitioners on the whole island.

The feedback of participants at the Seminar was that the topics were highly important and of great value to Social Workers working in this area.

SWID is now calling on members for topics for our Conference in October.

Social Workers in Foster Care

2010 / 11 Assistant Secretary: Cahal McHale

The Social Workers in Foster Care Special Interest Group of the IASW(SWIFC) is a professional body which aims to provide its members with a forum which will offer Social Workers in the area of Foster Care a professional platform to express relevant professional perspectives and to advocate on behalf of children in Foster Care.

Following a number of presentations from SWIFC members the 2010 AGM took place in University College Dublin on 22nd April. While there have been no face to face meetings of the SWIFC group or the committee since the last AGM, the Committee have had five teleconferences during the year and have shared information on a wide range of topics which have been reflected in the minutes of these meetings and circulated to all members. The committee have been finding it increasingly difficult to make time, even for participating in teleconferences but nevertheless the importance of maintaining active participation within the group is acknowledged.

The Health Service Executive carried out a National Audit in Foster Care at the end of 2009 and the details from this audit were compiled in a report which provides valuable data and is directly relevant to Social Workers working in this area. Following a number of discussions on some of the findings of the audit by the SWIFC committee it had been agreed that a secondary analysis of this data would be very helpful in determining practice around the country. It is still planned to pursue this in the coming months.

Given the high level of deficit in respect of relative foster care assessments in some areas of the country a concerted effort has been made throughout the HSE to address this problem and the group have examined different models of assessment including that developed by Mary Meyler in Dublin. It is also proposed to link up with the Fostering Network in Northern Ireland who have carried out research in this area and it is intended to consider how their approach may be applicable within this jurisdiction.

Tentative links had been made between SWIFC and the Children and Families SIG during the year. It is acknowledged that there are many areas of common interest between the two groups and it is hoped in the coming year to strengthen connections between the groups.

During the year a number of discussions took place about the Adoption Bill which came into law in November with the enactment of the Adoption Act 2010. While there would appear to be few variations within the Act that have an immediate impact for Children in Care, it is expected that a constitutional amendment on the rights of the child, which has been promised by the new government, may create possibilities as to how the provisions of the Act might be applied to Children in Care in the future.

The limitations on resourcing levels in the HSE Foster Care Recruitment Services in many parts of the country, continue to present a challenge to Social Workers. Discussions within the SWIFC Group have indicated that despite increased numbers of people in the community making enquiries about becoming foster carers, HSE Fostering Teams in many areas have been unable to make timely responses. However the independent sector has in place much more robust response measurers and therefore Social Workers within that sector are in a position to continue to expand their service.

In November last, the Irish Foster Care Association hosted its National Conference in Westport which was hailed as a major success. A number of SWIFC members assisted with its arrangements and also delivered workshops. SWIFC used the opportunity to host a stand to promote the Group and encourage Social Workers with an interest in the area to join. A number of new members have signed up following this conference.

Standardised business processes within the HSE are being rolled out throughout the country and concerns have been expressed within SWIFC that the quest for procedural conformity should not be at the expense of diminishing the good clinical practises currently pursued in some areas. It is felt that this SIG could make an important contribution to developments at a national level if we can continue to find ways to let the voice of professionals working in the field be heard. It is in this endeavour that future efforts will need to be focused over the coming year.

Social Workers in Primary Care

2010 / 11 Chairperson: Deirdre Jacob
Secretary: Patrice Reilly

Introduction:

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.

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.

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 groups 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 85 Social Workers working in Primary Care settings through its email database.

Current situation:

At the end of 2010 there were 222 Primary Care Teams (PCTs) and 85 Social Workers (including Team Leaders) in posts allocated to primary Care in the Republic of Ireland who are in regular contact with the SIG. The SIG is increasingly aware of PCTs without Social Work input as well as colleagues who are covering a number of PCTs establishing them as 'network services' and not as core team members. The Primary Care Strategy (2001) which clearly indicates the intention of the HSE to place social workers as core team members remains the priority document for the roll-out of that initiative. However, anecdotal information continues to indicate that there is a lack of uniformity across the Local Health Offices in the provision of coherent structures for the supervision and management of Social Workers within Primary Care. This remains a major concern for the SIG, as the lack of structure has resulted in some Social Workers not having access to adequate professional supervision and appropriate lines of 'social work' management forcing some primary care social workers to seek new positions in more 'established and supported' social work roles. A further concern of the PCSW SIG is the on-going assignment of Primary Care Social Workers to non-Primary Care roles, including: Elder abuse Casework, due to the non-filling of posts Adult Care facilities Children & Families Social Work Services: to fostering assessments on a temporary basis as a result of the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Reports (2009) and to the Duty Social Work Service.

As a result, Social Work services within the Primary Care setting are being depleted before they can be established. Furthermore, the HSE Service Plan (2010) states "the assignment of social workers to PCTs and HSCNs provides additional resources in relation to meeting the HSE's statutory obligations on child protection matters; the primary role of these social workers is to ensure that these critical organizational priorities are met" (page 19), undermining the role of Primary Care Social Workers within communities and as core PCT members. This is an on-going concern for the SIG and one which will continue to be to the fore as long as PCSW's position remains 'unsupported' at the highest level of HSE policy-making.

In 2010 the SIG established two working groups:

The first developed a primary care social work assessment of need tool which is currently available to all PCSW's in the republic of Ireland.

The second, developed a document to be presented to the IASW Executive as to 'The role of the Primary Care Social Worker'.

Working Groups 2011:

PCSW SIG has recently established a research sub-group which will liaise with UCD in the development of the first Irish academic research to identify the activities of Primary Care Social Workers in their unique Irish context.

Plans for 2011:

To continue to provide a forum and place of support for all PCSW's in Ireland.

To continue to bring to the fore, issues and policies which directly impact on the role of PCSW's as 'generalist social workers' within the context of both PCT's and of community based social work.

To provide for the diverse education and training needs of PCSW's.

To aim to hold a themed AGM in 2011 to highlight the findings of the UCD research.

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 with the communities in which they work, through appropriate training and support from our community work colleagues.

Social Workers in Probation

2010 / 11 Chairperson: David Williamson
 Secretary: Saragh McGarrigle

The new SIG for Probation Officers was established in March 2011. The Probation Service is a major employer of Social Workers on a national basis and has also committed significant resources to supporting unqualified staff to attain the NQSW through a modular programme with UCD. The introduction of registration and the IMPACT branch goal of setting the NQSW as a baseline qualification has helped foster a renewed interest in developing the profession within the field of Criminal Justice.

The SIG, chaired by David Williamson and with Sarah McGarrigle as Secretary has now formally met once and has sought to have a motion put before the IASW AGM on setting the NQSW as the base qualification for Probation Officers. We will be looking to support the development of CPD programmes and points for staff within Probation and to playing an active part within the IASW.

Special Interest Group on Ageing (SIGA)

2010 / 11 Chairperson: John Brennan
 Secretary: Kristen Murphy

SIGA AGM 2010:

John Brennan remained on as Honorary Chairperson. Kristen Murphy remained on as Honorary Secretary.

Representation:

Patricia Daly and Denise O'Brien retired during the year. We wish them both well and many thanks for all their input to the group over the years.

Issues of concern addressed by members of the SIGA during the year. Most, if not all of the issues raised in last year's report continued to spring up as agenda items during the year –the 'Fair deal' process; advocacy, mediation, the effects of the severe and continuing reduction in many services; the inconsistencies and inequities within the health and social care systems amongst others.

IASW had representation on a number of committees set up by the HSE during the year – a Home Care Package Task Group and a Working Group to draft a standardised assessment tool (SAT) for older person who apply for formal care. The work of these two groups continues into 2011. One fundamental change that the Task Group has initiated is the dropping of the financial assessment for packages (including the necessity to have a medical card). There is no legal mandate for demanding any financial information. Most HSE areas appear to be adhering to this ruling, however there have been reports of demands being made on older people to complete financial assessment or have a medical card. A new Community Services Bill is currently being drafted to address the issues of assessment entitlements and charging for community services.

IASW was also represented through the SIGA on the HSE's Elderly Care Programme chaired by Prof Diarmuid O'Shea from St Vincent's University Hospital.

With the country's financial circumstances in such a bad way, the HSE continued their cutbacks to home care packages, home help and other community based services for older persons. There are widespread waiting lists across the country.

There has been no word on the Draft Scheme of Mental Capacity Bill (2008).

Rumour has it that there is no money to implement some of its sections, for example the guardianship item, and that this has been the stumbling block to-date.

Despite their introduction a number of years ago, the Elder Abuse Senior Caseworker posts have not advanced in any consistent way and many remain without appropriate line management structures. This situation has created difficulties for the Caseworkers in developing the service.

Projects:

A sub-group on 'mediation and social work' prepared a draft policy paper for IASW.

Community based social work services:

Community social work posts were established in more health board areas during the year. However, as with many other services, the process appeared to be ad-hoc and the SIGA is concerned that structures, such as line management, have not been established in any consistent manner.

In many areas, community-based social workers are involved in fostering assessments alongside working with adults who have been referred. In some other areas, the primary care social workers have been re-assigned to child protection work. In the first instance, the situation dilutes what is still a minimal social work service to adults. In the second, more seriously, the situation flies in the face of the policy to develop multi-disciplinary primary care teams.

Meetings:

The Special Interest Group met monthly over the past year in the Royal Hospital Donnybrook. The meetings have been less well-attended than previous years, but generally they have been lively and very useful sessions. The small turnout is a pity given the need for solidarity at this critical time for public services in Ireland.

The whole area of service provision for the care of older people is undergoing rapid transformation and considerable cutbacks which are impacting heavily on the ability of social workers to provide and source realistic community or alternative supports for both the older person and their carers. Increasingly social workers have to bear the brunt of these service changes in engaging with clients and their families and it is important that social workers support each other in coping with a rapidly changing landscape which limits the potential for realistic and practical interventions.

SIGA provides both professional peer support through the meetings by way of exchange of both service information and coping strategies for problematic situations. At the same time SIGA provides a forum where both policy and professional issues can be addressed, processed and represented within the IASW / wider policy and HSE fora.

With registration pending it is even more important for us as IASW members to keep abreast of all professional developments in our field and SIGA provides this space on a monthly basis. We therefore encourage both management and staff to promote attendance at the monthly SIGA meeting on the basis that it will support our members' best practice in the field, while offering easy access to an important peer support mechanism and network.

Finally:

Many thanks to the Royal Hospital Donnybrook for once again facilitating our meetings and to Carmel, Social Work Secretary in the hospital for her continued administrative support.

Special Interest Group of Children and Families

2010 / 11

Chairperson:

Paul McCarthy

Secretary:

Mieke Ryan and Fiona Power

Introduction:

The Children and Families Special Interest Group has continued to meet approximately every 4 to 6 weeks over the past year in various venues, but in the main at the IASW offices at St. Andrews Resource Centre. Currently this Special Interest Group is, in the main, made up of Social Workers from the Dublin region, however it is hoped that over the coming year that further regional subgroups can be formed as part of the Special Interest Group's hopes to broaden the membership of the Special Interest Group and therefore the scope of this group in terms of representing a wider and inclusive representative voice for Social Workers working in the area of Children and Family services. This is something which the Special Interest Group believes is vitally important in enabling the voices of frontline practitioners to be heard at a time of great change and new beginnings for Children and Family services in Ireland.

The Children and Families Special Interest Group of the IASW aims to provide its members with a network and forum to explore, discuss and exchange ideas and information on relevant professional perspectives and other issues affecting their practice, as well as providing a peer support network for members. The SIG also aims to be a voice for Social Workers in Children and Family services and also, importantly, to advocate on behalf of service users.

'Call for Change'

As part of the IASW's 'Challenges for Social Work Practice' series of events in relation to CPD, the Children and Families SIG presented a half-day seminar in September 2009 which addressed some of the challenges facing Social Workers in relation to HSE's planned introduction of the Standardised Business Process model in Children and Family services, and explored some of the issues in relation to the value of assessment procedures and tools in social work practice. Professor Sue White (now based in the Institute of Applied Social Studies at the University of Birmingham), a member of the 2009 UK Social Work Task Force and more recently one of three expert advisors to the Munro Report on Child Protection, gave the keynote address at this seminar. The SIG also presented a well-received Workshop on the Standardised Business Process model at last year's IASW AGM.

Members of the SIG had, and subsequently continued to exhaust all available avenues of consultation with the HSE and government in relation to the development and introduction of the Standardised Business Process model both locally and nationally. This included members having taken part in the HSE's own consultation process; members having addressed the then Minister for Children, Barry Andrews, at a Town Hall meeting and also the SIG having separately met with the then Minister to discuss the issue; and members having submitted lengthy and detailed submissions to the HSE in relation to the issue. However, following the HSE's announcement that the model was to go ahead and having exhausted all available avenues of consultation without any success, members of the SIG, having noted that neither their submissions, views or concerns in general had been actively considered in the process, tabled a motion at the 2010 IASW AGM calling on the IASW to oppose the introduction of the Standardised Business Process model. This motion was passed unanimously by the AGM. Subsequently the SIG met with the then HSE Assistant National Director of Children and Family Services, Phil Garland, and advised him of the IASW's position in this regard.

Following on from this the SIG formed a subgroup with the goal of developing a 'Call for Change' discussion document in response. This process involved the SIG sending out a call for Social Workers in Children and Family services to submit their views and ideas on what they would like to see for the future development of practice in this area. Having compiled these submissions, the subgroup then began the process of collating these into the final discussion document. This process has been ongoing for most of the past year, however it is now in its final stages and the final document will be published by the IASW and launched at a forthcoming seminar, being organised by the SIG, in early July 2011.

This seminar will address the issue of Social Worker's responses to the HSE's introduction of the Standardised Business Process model and will also seek to look at alternative models which would meet the needs of the HSE, good Social Work practice and most importantly, the needs of service users, in a more progressive, holistic and evidence-based manner, taking account of evidence-based research and best-practice in this area. The date

and details of this seminar, which will also include the holding of the SIG's AGM immediately after the seminar, will be circulated in the coming weeks.

The 'Call for Change' document does not purport to be a definitive response but rather the vehicle through which a process of consultation with Social Workers nationally can begin, out of which the coherent and experienced voices of Social Workers will be heard in the national debate on this and other issues affecting our profession. It is hoped that part of this process will involve the SIG researching, discussing and developing alternatives to the current system in place in Children and Family services, alternatives which can then be presented to the HSE and government as realistic and achievable opportunities for positive change in Children and Family services. A summarised version of the main 'Call for Change' discussion document was recently published in the Spring edition of the IASW's Irish Social Worker journal.

Other developments:

While it must be said that the 'Call for Change' process and related tasks have taken up the vast majority of the SIG's time over the past year, there have been other notable developments. The SIG also two other motions, which were both passed at last year's IASW AGM. The first of these called on the IASW to draw attention to the inequities in the provision of care and aftercare services to separated young people, and the second called on the IASW to meet with the HSE's Assistant National Director for Children and Family Services to request that the IASW be represented on any future taskforce, committee or otherwise involved in any initiatives to do with Children and Family services, including the reconfiguration of children and family services.

As noted, the IASW did subsequently meet with the then AND of Children and Family Services, Phil Garland, and Mr. Garland welcomed this request and indicated his openness to this request. More recently the IASW, including representation from the SIG, met with the new recently appointed HSE National Director for Children and Family Services, Gordon Jeyes. Again the issues of consultation with the IASW and the inclusion of IASW representatives on consultative bodies in relation to Children and Family services were brought up and again Mr. Jeyes also indicated his openness to facilitate this request. It is to be hoped that this openness will now be translated into tangible consultation with the IASW.

Over the past year the SIG contributed to IASW media press releases and responses on issues such as CORU and Professional Registration, the issue of the state's mandatory responsibility to provide Aftercare services to young people leaving the care system, the Roscommon Report, the need for all children-in-care and children at risk to have an allocated Social Worker, the publication of a number of HIQA Inspection Reports, the death of a young person in care, the need for appropriate fit-for-purpose accommodation for the Out of Hours services and the issue of a national Out of Hours service, the Ombudsman for Children's Annual Report, the planned Referendum of the Rights of the Child, the National Quality Standards for Residential & Foster Care Services for Children, and the regulation of the Guardian ad Litem service. The SIG will continue to strive to be active on this front in the coming year, with the added aim of increasing a positive wider awareness and understanding of the role of Social Workers in Children and Family services.

One of the newer aims of the SIG has been to develop links with other agencies and bodies who share a common interest in Children and Family services and to this end it has begun a planned programme of meeting with such agencies and bodies, which will continue in the coming year, by meeting recently with the Children's Rights Alliance, which was a very positive experience and has opened an important link for the SIG. The SIG also hopes to develop links with IMPACT in the coming year in relation to the many and varied issues which will be impacting on Social Workers and Social Work practice in Children and Family services with the wide-ranging changes and restructuring which are due to come on stream.

Priorities for the coming year:

Time is precious in the often hectic and busy lives of Children and Family Social Workers and as noted, the 'Call for Change' work has taken up a lot of the time of the SIG over the past year. However, as this process nears an end, it is hoped that the forthcoming AGM of the SIG – to be held in July in conjunction with the launch of the 'Call for Change' document – will be an opportunity to welcome some fresh faces and ideas to the SIG and with them new ideas and areas to work on. In particular the SIG would like to return to working on professional practice issues for Social Workers in Children and Family services. For example, previously the SIG had been divided into smaller subgroups and one of these subgroups, The Professional Practice and Structural

Challenges group worked on a developing a document in relation to issues relating to Access for Children-in-Care. The SIG welcomes ideas on any areas of practice which members would like to work on, and of course we also welcome the new members to help to do this work.

The recent responses and reactions to the proposed €350 CORU registration fee for Social Workers and the wider issues of concern around registration and its implications have been very encouraging. The overwhelming response has led to the setting up of a Facebook page, 'Social Workers Unite to Win' (www.facebook.com/people/SocialWorkers-Unite-To-Win/100002283186790). This Facebook page, which was set up on 25th March last already had over 350 members within one month of going live and was instrumental, through its series of petitions from Student Social Workers, in forcing a rethink, on CORU's behalf, in relation to the proposed registration fee. The campaigning efforts of the group deserve great credit and should also serve as an example of what can be achieved when we come together to speak as one voice. In addition, we welcome the establishment of the New Social Workers Special Interest Group, which hosts its own impressive website (www.newsocialworkers.com).

The coming months and years will be characterised by a period of unprecedented change in Children and Family services, with the HSE's introduction of the Standard Business Process model and its related National Childcare Information System and the government's announcement that Children and Family services will be taken out of the HSE and placed within the newly established Ministry for Children and Young People, to which the first Cabinet Minister for Children, former Social Worker Frances Fitzgerald, has been appointed, and also the forthcoming referendum on Children's rights. A time of great change is also a time of great opportunity and the Children and Families SIG hopes to help give Children and Family Social Workers a voice in this.

IASWU

Regional Reports:

Southern Branch

2010 / 11	Acting Chairperson:	Terry Bradshaw
	Secretary:	Pearl Doyle
	Representative to Council:	Frank O'Driscoll
	Committee Member:	Aoife McGrath

The Southern Branch of the IASW continued to forge close links with Social Work Department, University College Cork during the past year. Committee members attended information sessions regarding IASW for social work students on campus and these enjoyed good attendances.

Questionnaires were circulated to Social Workers within Southern Region regarding their preferences for topics to be included in upcoming CPD sessions. These questionnaires are currently under consideration regarding the selection of topics and speakers for these sessions.

Report from Eastern Region SIG

2010 / 11	Committee Member:	Pat Waldron
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As such this regional division no longer exists. I attend quarterly Council meetings, am available to SIGS in the Region. I was involved mainly with the Children & Families group over the past years, in particular in discussions on the earlier history of social work and child care within the Health Boards. I have recently been involved in locating retired social workers who are no longer members and drawing up lists. This was to link with forthcoming 40th Anniversary celebrations of the founding of IASW.

IASW

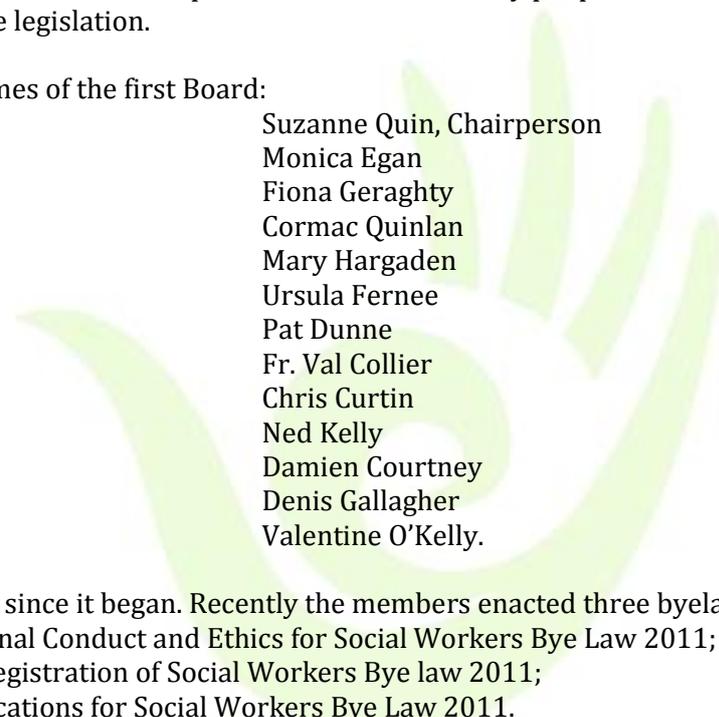
Other Representative's Reports:

CORU – the Health and Social Care Council and The Social Workers Registration Board

By: Monica Egan [Health and Social Care Council member and member of the Social Workers Registration Board]

For social workers, 2010 was the year we finally saw the appointment of the Social Workers Registration Board. For those of us who have been around long enough, it seemed it might never happen. In the autumn of 2010, the Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, announced the appointment of the people to the Registration Board. The Board is made up of social workers and lay people with the majority being lay people in line with the legislation.

The following are the names of the first Board:



Suzanne Quin, Chairperson
Monica Egan
Fiona Geraghty
Cormac Quinlan
Mary Hargaden
Ursula Fernee
Pat Dunne
Fr. Val Collier
Chris Curtin
Ned Kelly
Damien Courtney
Denis Gallagher
Valentine O'Kelly.

The Board has been busy since it began. Recently the members enacted three byelaws:

1. Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers Bye Law 2011;
2. Application for Registration of Social Workers Bye law 2011;
3. Approved Qualifications for Social Workers Bye Law 2011.

A lot of preparatory work went into these byelaws and all the members of the Board were actively involved in their development and realised the importance of these byelaws, particularly the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, for the social work profession.

The NSWQB had been the competent authority for the profession of social work and this function passed to the Social Workers Registration Board in March 2011 when the NSWQB was dissolved. It is planned to open the actual register for social workers at the end of May 2011. The students who graduate in the summer will be the first group to register.

The Council itself is waiting for legislation to be enacted which will allow the appointment of the nominees of the professions to the Council. Those who were appointed for four years have now come to the end of their term. The Council is hopeful that this issue will be sorted.

CORU moved to new offices and staff are now based in Sandyford. Some staff from the NSWQB have transferred to CORU and their experience will be very valuable for the Social Workers Registration Board.

The CORU website has a lot of information on it and is well worth having a look at if you need information about CORU or the Social Workers Registration Board. Ginny Hanrahan the CEO, has met with many groups of social workers throughout 2010 in order to prepare them for registration and to keep them informed of developments.

International Affairs Committee 2010-2011

2010 / 11 Chair: John Brennan
 Committee Members: Monica Egan, Ineke Durville

The International Committee continued its liaison with the International Federation of Social Workers European Region (IFSW-E). During the year, the Committee contributed to the work of IFSW-E. Members of the Committee: Ineke Durville, Monica Egan and John Brennan

World Social Work Action Day:

This was held on the 15th March this year. Because of work commitments, it was not possible to undertake any activity other than issuing a press release on the effects of the financial crisis on the users of social work services in Ireland.

The Financial Crisis:

The main work on the international front this year involved the IFSW-E project on the impact of the financial crisis on service users and social workers. An extensive questionnaire was completed by IASW and 17 other European countries. Two workshops were held in Dublin and Zagreb earlier this year. See the IFSW website www.ifsw.org. The work on this project continues.

IFSW-E Delegates Meeting:

Delegates from 25 countries across Europe, including Ireland, met in Brussels on the 8th-10th April for the annual IFSW European regional meeting.

The project was discussed at length by delegates. At the end of these discussions, a 9-point statement 'We don't pay for your crisis' was released highlighting the serious social consequences caused as a result of financial systems disregarding social responsibilities. This statement will go on to the IASW website and the IFSW European region website – www.ifsw.org/europe.

Social Platform:

The IFSW-E's contribution to the European Social Platform highlighted the role of social work as advocates for human rights. Social Platform is the largest alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe and particularly in the European Union (EU). It consists of 42 networks of NGOs. Social Platform campaigns to help ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect and that they respect fundamental rights, promote solidarity, and ultimately improve lives. The Social Platform website is at www.socialplatform.org.

IFSW-E Work Programme:

The European work programme for 2011-12 was agreed. This programme sets out the priorities for the IFSW-E region under the following headings – Human Rights, Social Policy, Professional Development and Organisational Development.

Project: Social Workers realising Human Rights:

Last year's IFSW-E project on Standards in Social Work Practice Meeting Human Rights remains a work in progress. It is available on the IFSW website www.ifsw.org

ENSACT Conference: Brussels:

Following the Delegates meeting, a joint ENSACT conference was held in Brussels. 700 delegates attended this conference: Social Action in Europe: Sustainable Social Development and Economic Challenges

What is ENSACT? It is the European Network for Social Action. ENSACT brings together social professionals, teachers, lecturers, social service providers, and associations to strengthen the quality of social policy throughout Europe.

Other items: Changes in the United Kingdom:

BASW UK is likely to be wound up as an entity in the near future. In its place, the four constituent member organisations of BASW – England Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will have their own bodies and there will be a new 'College of Social Work'. This raises possibilities for collaborative efforts by social work in Ireland and Northern Ireland that we should pursue given the challenges we face as a profession.

IFSW Global:

The IFSW Global President, Gary Bailey, will lead a meeting of the global Executive that is to take place in Dublin in June next. As it happens, the date coincides with the IASW 40th anniversary celebration on the 17th June.

Global Agenda:

The IFSW has been working with the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) to develop a Global Agenda so that the voice of social work will be heard with regard to global social development issues during the next decade.

Future IFSW Meetings:

The next European delegates meeting will be held in Armenia in 2012. The next global IFSW delegates meeting will be in Stockholm.

Future IFSW Conferences:

A joint global conference will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, from the 8th to July 2012. The title of this conference is – World Conference on Social Work and Social Development. The conference website is www.swsd-stockholm-2012.org

The next ENSACT joint European conference will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from the 23rd to 26th April 2013. These conferences provide an opportunity to network, understand social work from an international perspective and to promote and gain ideas about practice and learning. They are a meeting point for practitioners, policy makers, academics and students.

Human Rights:

There is now a joint IFSW-IASSW website on human rights. This excellent site is a guide to helping resolve ethical dilemmas that social workers meet in the course of their work and to stimulate ethical practice. The Human Rights website can be accessed via IFSW at www.ifsw.org

And finally:

Anyone interested in international affairs please contact John Brennan at: jpbrennan1@mac.com

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