

**2009-
2010**

**Irish Association of Social Workers
Annual Report**



IASW

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

Table of Contents

Presidents Report – Ineke Durville	3
Conference & Seminars – Ita Long	5
Office Report – Danielle McGoldrick	5
Membership – Gavin Mulhall	6
INFO Newsletter – Aoife McCormack	7
Continuous Professional Development – Frank Browne	7
Communications – Frank Browne & Declan Coogan	7
Honorary Treasurer – Donal O'Malley	7
Health & Social Care Professional Council – Monica Egan	8
The Irish Social Worker – Monica Egan	8
The National Social Work Qualification Board – Marie Therese Mulholland	9
Social Workers in Ageing (SIGA) – John Brennan	9
Social Workers in Primary Care – Mary McNutt	10
Social Workers in Children & Families – Paul McCarthy	11
Social Workers in Disability – Caitriona Whitty	12
Social Workers in Child & Adolescent Mental Health – Sinead Freeley	13
Southern Region – Frank O'Driscoll	14
Social Workers in Foster Care – Mary Flanagan	14
Council of Irish Adoption Agencies – Sheila Gallagher	15
Social Workers in Adult Mental Health – Damien Nolan	16
Principal Medical Social Workers Group – Loretta Reilly	16

Executive & Council Members 2009 - 2010

Executive

President	Ineke Durville
Hon. Secretary	Vacant
Hon. Treasurer	Donal O'Malley
Communications	Declan Coogan & Frank Browne
C.P.D	Frank Browne
Website & I.T	Miriam Mooney
Conferences and Seminars	Ita Long
International Affairs	Liam Curran
Membership	Gavin Mulhall
'INFO' Editor	Aoife McCormack
Executive Member	Billie Anne Johnson

Special Interest & Associate Group Representatives

Ageing (SIGA)	Patricia B Daly
Children & Families	Kirsten Byrne
Child/Adolescent Psychiatry (SW in CAMHS)	Sarah Houston
Journal Editor	Monica Egan
Social Workers in Disability (SWID)	Emer Ingoldsby
Principles in Medical Social Work Hospitals	Loretta Reilly
Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)	Frank Browne
Primary Care	Mary McNutt
Council of Irish Adoption Agencies	Sheila Gallagher / Eileen Conway
Foster Care	Ciara Mahoney

Regional Representatives

Eastern	Pat Waldron
Southern	Frank O'Driscoll / Terry Bradshaw

Other Representatives

Children's Rights Alliance	Kirsten Byrne
International Committee Chair & IFSW	John Brennan
NSWQB representatives	Monica Egan / Marie Therese Mulholland

Presidents Report

Ineke Durville

The past year has been a very busy year for the IASW. The upcoming registration of the social work profession has been an important issue and the IASW organised a number of workshops in different areas of the country in conjunction with Ginny Hanrahan, CEO of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council (H&SCPC). At these seminars, Ginny Hanrahan outlined the details of the upcoming registration and Frank Browne presented the IASW Continuous Professional Development (CPD) policy. These seminars were very well attended and I would like to thank Ginny and Frank for their excellent presentations. Frank has continued his role as CPD co-ordinator and his knowledge of the policy has been very valuable and I would like to thank him for all his hard work.

The introduction of the CPD policy at last year's conference, which emphasises the need for social work line-management supervision, has highlighted the fact that a relatively large number of social workers do not have a social work line manager and have difficulty accessing supervision. The IASW decided to contact members who may be interested in offering their services as a supervisor for private supervision/consultation and designed a set of guidelines both for members looking for supervision and for members looking to provide same. The IASW will collate a list of supervisors and this will shortly be up on the website for members to access.

Last year's annual report highlighted the organisation of the website and database as one of the important issues to be addressed during this year and I am happy to state that this has now mostly been resolved, mainly thanks to Danielle McGoldrick our office manager. Danielle has now been with us for over a year and has continued to be a very important part of the Association. I am sure that all members that have contacted the office will be well aware of her contribution; her prompt response to queries and helpful manner in dealing with other issues.

The work of the office has been on-going and we have dealt with a large number of queries from members, non-members and the public. The website has been reorganised by Danielle and now has a members-only area, which will hopefully become a very useful resource to the members. Thanks to Monica Egan, we have again produced two issues of the journal and I wish to thank Monica for all her support and her hard work on the journals. Aoife McGrath, the editor of info, has kept us on our toes and made sure that info has gone out regularly to keep the members informed on relevant issues. Aoife will be standing down from the executive this year and I would like to thank her for all her contributions to the IASW over the last few years and wish her all the best for the future and I am sure we will see her at further conferences.

Ita Long has continued her responsibility for training and she has been very 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 very important contribution and input into all activities during the year. Because of her commitment, the IASW has been able to increase the number of events greatly.

The special interest groups (SIGs) have been busy this year. A number of the SIGs' did highlight difficulties that had arisen for their client groups and these issues have been brought to the attention of the relevant people, including the media. The contribution of the SIGs has been invaluable to the working of the IASW and the executive would like to thank them for their contribution and hard work.

The IASW has continued to have a high profile, thanks to Declan Coogan and Frank Browne. Declan was the communications coordinator until he took a sabbatical last September and Frank Browne very adequately took over the function while Declan was away. They both need our congratulations for their input. It has meant that the IASW continued to be able to respond promptly to any issues that arose and needed highlighting through press releases and letters.

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 a number of official meetings and are part of a professional's forum set up by the HSE to look at training needs for the various professional bodies as well as the advisory group hosted by HIQA to draft new national standards for residential and foster care services. The IASW has also sent in a separate submission to the draft document brought out by HIQA.

I would like to thank all the members of the executive: Declan, Gavin, Aoife, Frank, Ita, Donal and Billy Anne Johnston. Billie Anne was a new member of executive, she has to travel from Donegal to come to executive meetings; it has been very helpful to have executive members from a different part of the country and I wish to thank her for her commitment and contribution.

Gavin Mulhall continued in his role of membership secretary and has been very actively involved developing a membership strategy and he initiated the provision of a handbook for members and special interest groups. Gavin is standing down from executive this year and I wish to thank him for his contribution to the Association and wish him the best for the future and I am sure he will keep in touch. Donal O'Malley is the IASW treasurer and together with Danielle he ensures that we keep our spending under control. As you can see from the account statement, the IASW is doing well financially and I wish to thank Donal for his contribution and attention to detail. The Treasurer has a very important role in any organisation.

The coming year will bring a lot of new challenges. The cutbacks in public services will affect our client groups and has not improved working conditions for social workers in their various settings partly due to the loss of posts and lack of back-up resources. It will be important that we stand together as a profession and it is good to see that the IASW membership has increased again this year. This should give us a stronger voice.

I hope that today's conference with the title and theme; "Reclaiming Social Work" and the subsequent discussions will provide the executive with some direction for the coming year. Keep us informed of any concerns in your area of work and we will be happy to highlight issues on behalf of members or any special interest group.

Conference and Seminars

Ita Long

We are pleased to be able to report that it has been a busy year on the Conference and Seminar front. Individual Special Interest Groups will report on their own events which were held during the year and which combined with those organised by the Executive makes for an impressive programme for continuing professional development. We would like to be able to continue to build on this. Any members which an interest in training and continuing professional development would be welcome to participate in the planning of events and should contact Danielle with their details.

Last year's Annual Conference was entitled 'Social Justice: The Challenge to Social Work Practice'. The day consisted of a number of addresses in the morning and workshop in the afternoon. The Conference was addressed by Dr. M. Manning, Director, Human Rights Commission; Norah Gibbon, Barnados and Anna Lee, Tallaght Partnership. The speaker's messages were well received by delegates. The event was sold out.

Following on from the Conference Shane Butler from the Social Work Department in Trinity College facilitated two workshops on 'Promoting the Welfare of Children of Problem Drinkers'. Mary Cullen and Margaret Beaumont facilitated two, two day workshops on 'Attachment: From Theory to Practice'. All of these events were oversubscribed to and we will look at running them again during the coming year.

Professor Sue White from Lancaster University facilitated a one day conference on 'Examining Current Approaches to Social Work Practice' in October 2009. Ineke Durville and Paul McCarthy also spoke at this conference.

IASW also facilitated six seminars on Registration and CPD in venues around the country as well as in Dublin. As you can see it has been a very busy year but very worthwhile. All these events have been well supported by social workers which is indicative of the need for such events. I would like to acknowledge and thank Ineke for her input and support for all these events and Danielle for promoting events and for looking after the bookings for events as well as booking of venues.

Office Report

Danielle McGoldrick

There have been many changes in the office since the AGM in 2009, by far the biggest achievement, was the installation of the new 'access' database system, which now contains all of the information in relation to our members. This was a mammoth task involving, the cleansing of data, culling membership files, updating member's personal details, implementing the new direct debit payment system, updating the payments, etc.

The website has been revamped, and now features a newly updated 'Members Area', which includes copies of ALL editions of The Irish Social Worker, as well as 'INFO' Newsletter. Rhoda McManus of Adoption Loss (www.adoptionloss.ie) kindly offered her services, and scanned all of the journals, allowing us to provide this service to our members.

Other work included assisting Ita and Ineke in the co-ordination of the several CPD events, training seminars, workshops, etc. that were organised by the association in 2009/2010.

In October of 2009, I also participated in a three day training course "Finance for Non Financial Managers". I found the course extremely informative, and this training has enabled me to implement some simple but effective financial reporting and accounting systems into the office.

My other priorities in 2009/2010 included:

- Re-organisation of the office space & purchasing new office equipment/furniture
- Co-Ordination of the in-house filing systems
- Formatting IASW documents/publications
- Preparing mail-shots to the members, including IASW 'welcome packs'.
- Preparing for Executive & Council Meetings i.e. preparing minutes, agenda, circulating correspondence, etc.
- Cataloguing the Library
- Preparing Accounts and Financial Statement, etc..

I'd 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.

Membership Report 2010

Gavin Mulhall

This year is my second membership officer has allowed the time to examine more substantive issues regarding membership of the association. The main initiatives implemented this year have been:

1. Consultation with membership regarding adding Group Legal Protection Scheme – the membership was consulted via email with an overwhelmingly positive response to the proposal. 130/776 members responded to the consultation.
2. FAQ Document – produced to answer member's questions about the IASW, and how it operates. While the Constitution provides a comprehensive guide to the workings of the Association, the FAQ document sets out to answer questions about the Association in a concise, "plain English" manner. This is now included in the Welcoming Pack and available on the website.
3. Follow-up system from non-members attending IASW events – At the suggestion of the Office Manager, a brief template email was devised to send on to non-member Social Workers who attend IASW seminar or training events, encouraging them to join the IASW.
4. Eileen McGowan Scholarship – a number of members expressed interest in applying for the IFSW Eileen McGowan Scholarship and it was with great please that the Association could support these applications.
5. Preliminary Work on IASW Volunteer Policy – the IASW is an Association run almost entirely with volunteers, and it is good practice for an organisation to have a policy around this which outlines the expectations and benefits for those wishing to volunteer their time to the Association. With the assistance of the Office Manager, some initial work has begun on this.
6. Job Description for Executive Posts – with a view to more effectively is advertising and recruiting members to join Executive, current Exec members have been asked to do a brief job description detailing the work involved in their post.
7. "Handbook" for All Positions in the IASW – the document is a series of handouts which describes all the roles and responsibilities for the various positions within the IASW – including the President, Executive Members, Council Members, SIG Chairs and Secretaries. This document is based entirely on the Constitution and General Rules, and is an attempt to pull together a clear working guide for members taking on positions. The document is still incomplete but I'm committed to completing it.

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

While 2009 saw our membership database up and running again, proposed use of this to organise membership by Special Interest/Area of Work ran into difficulty as many members do not complete this information on their applications. We have asked members again to complete this in their applications with the hope that the database will become more useful in the future.

Also in conjunction with Exec and the Office Manager there has been some suggestions and input regarding the website with a view to making it more accessible and useful to the membership.

At present we have approximately 850 members, consistent with 2009 levels.

'INFO' Newsletter

Aoife McCormack

I have acted in the role INFO Editor for the IASW for the previous two years, and while I have deeply enjoyed being within the hub of Social Work information sharing, for personal reasons I will not be continuing in the post for the next term. However I would strongly encourage members of the IASW to put their name forward for this position. Why? This is firstly a feasible position for Social Workers from any geographical location due to much of the work being through internet exchange. Furthermore this position is a manageable in terms of demand and insightful in that allows one to gain further knowledge with regard to Social Work both on the national and international stage. As INFO editor you will be required to be tuned into Social Work activities, political and media issues, as you act as the primary communication link for all Social Workers Nationally. In my post I have become aware of the significant level of growth in terms of professional Social Work activity in the last year. As the IASW continues to generate professional growth in policy initiatives and training I too believe that as INFO editor is a post that requires a dynamic person to explore the potential for development with regard to information sharing and the members INFO newsletter. I thank the IASW Executive and members for the election and the opportunity to hold this post.

Continuous Professional Development CPD

Frank Browne

This was a busy year for IASW in terms of promoting our CPD policy and folder which we launched at last year's AGM. IASW is most grateful to the HSE for CPD funding, which allowed us to fund the CPD folder for all members and host a series of presentations around the country. Ineke, Ita, myself and Ginny Hanrahan CEO of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council travelled the country, Ginny outlined what registration will involve, why it is important and the probable costs, Ineke and myself presented why IASW had developed our CPD policy and how we hoped our policy would set an attainable standard for members in terms of their professional development. IASW has focused on the need for all social workers to have access to supervision from a suitably qualified social worker and is advising and supporting members who have not access to supervision how they might address this with their employers. IASW has developed a supervisor's guidance document and has put in place a supervisors list for those members who require supervision. For further information contact the IASW Office

Communications

Frank Browne & Declan Coogan

Throughout the year IASW has attempted to address issues that are of relevance to social workers. IASW has made a number of press releases and undertaken interviews with the media regarding issues such as the Murphy Report, Social Welfare cuts in the last budget and in responding to criticism of children's social work services, by highlighting the reality of the sharp fall in social work posts.

Honorary Treasurer

Donal O'Malley

The moderate increase in the number of membership subscriptions received in 2009 has placed the Association on a reasonably secure financial footing, despite the prevailing economic situation.

This, coupled with a drive to lower our overheads, has meant that the Association has been able to absorb half the cost of the new legal protection policy for 2010.

As office manager, Danielle McGoldrick has been instrumental in overseeing the day-to-day fiscal management of the Association and has streamlined a number of processes including the receipt of subscriptions and the maintaining of the accounts.

Having the Continuous Professional Development training fund from the HSE has enabled the Association to aid its Special Interest Groups in providing training for members and non-members alike. In 2010 we will be continue to encourage SIGs to avail of these monies to ensure that social workers have the opportunity to avail of ongoing professional development. We hope to enable this by making it easier for SIGs to apply for and receive financial support from the Association.

I would like to thank Miriam Mooney, the previous treasurer of the Association, for her guidance and expertise which has proven invaluable to me in taking on this role. My thanks also to Danielle and Ineke.

Health & Social Care Professional Council

Monica Egan

New lay members of the Council were appointed by the Minister for Health and Children following the completion of the Council's first term of office in March 2009. An issue arose in relation to the appointment of the professional nominees. The Minister could not appoint the professional nominees to the Council, as the legislation did not permit this method of appointment after the first appointment. This has resulted in the Act having to return to Primary legislation. There are six nominees awaiting the outcome of the primary legislation.

Plans for the setting up of two registration boards, social workers and physiotherapists, have not come to fruition. It was decided to delay the physiotherapy board due to the issues with primary legislation but to continue with the planning for the social worker registration board. Nominees for the board were submitted to the Minister but the Minister has not yet made the appointments. The registration board therefore could not be set up. In light of this the Board of the National Social Work Qualifications Board has had its term extended.

New staff appointments were made. Ms Mary Griffin was appointed as Head of Registration and Education and Ms Sinead Boyle was appointed as Head of Legal Affairs. Ms Gail Ferguson was appointed as Office Manager. Following their appointment, the Fitness to Practice Committee and the Education Committee members have been doing a lot of preparatory work which will be ready for registration boards when they are appointed. A lot of work has also been done in relation to the strategic plan for the Council.

The Chairperson, Margaret Hayes completed her term of office in February 2010 and has been replaced by Tom Jordan.

The Council continued to share office accommodation through 2009 with the National Social Work Qualifications Board staff in Baggot Street. The Council has been actively looking for alternative accommodation.

Ginny Hanrahan, CEO of the HSCPC, has been continuing to meet with members of the professions. She has attended a number of meetings hosted by IASW throughout the country. She also attended some meetings held by IMPACT.

The Health and Social Care Professionals Council has adopted CORU as its trade name for the public after a lengthy process of consultation. The name has come from care, council and regulation. The new website uses that name and can be accessed using www.coru.ie.

The Irish Social Worker

Monica Egan

Two editions of the Irish Social Worker were published in 2009, one in summer and one in autumn. Most of the articles were based on presentations to the previous year's annual conference which was entitled 'Resolving Ethical Dilemmas'. Using presentations which speakers adapt for publication has proved a very positive way of obtaining articles. However I would ask people who are doing research or writing up case studies to please send us articles. We are delighted to receive new findings, new thoughts and new ideas.

National Social Work Qualifications Board

Marie Therese Mulholland

A registration for Social Workers will in due course happen under the auspices of the HSCPC. Until a register is open and established the recognised qualification for Social Work is the NQSW. The NQSW will continue to be awarded by NSWQB. As you may be aware the current board comes to an end in May 2010. To bridge the possible gap a new NSWQ board will be appointed

Special Interest Group on Ageing (SIGA)

Chairperson: John Brennan

Secretary: Kristen Murphy

SIGA AGM 2009; John Brennan remained on as honory Chairperson. Kristen Murphy was elected honorary Secretary:

Meetings; The Special Interest Group met monthly over the past year in the Royal Hospital Donnybrook. The meetings have been well-attended and generally lively affairs. We have welcomed social workers employed in an ever-widening circle of agencies and hope that this trend continues.

Representation; Patricia Daly took over from Anette O'Callaghan as the SIGA representative on the IASW Council.

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 – community social work posts; the effects of the severe and continuing reduction in many services; the inconsistencies and inequities within the health and social care systems amongst others, however, one of the biggest changes in the history of the care system in Ireland occurred in October 2009 when the Nursing Home Support Scheme came into being.

It would be fair to say that the Nursing Home Support Scheme was launched while still a work in progress. The scheme is highly complex and often daunting for applicants. Many issues have arisen in the months since the introduction date, not least amongst these, the slowness in processing applications. On the positive side, applicants have more choice and pay according to their means.

The Health Information and Quality Authority's (HIQA) *National Quality Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland* now has an inspection process in place.

With the country's financial circumstances in such a bad way, the HSE continued their cutbacks in home care grants, home help and other community based services for older persons. Despite a small amount of extra funding for home care packages toward the end of the year, these cutbacks are now widespread and they are having a serious negative effect on older persons and their carers.

Advocacy continued as a topic this year with the introduction of the HSE's National Advocacy Programme in residential care units. This programme involves the provision of volunteers as part-time independent advocates in these units. Members of SIGA with direct experience of this proposal raised concerns about the role of social worker as an advocate for the user of services and the interface between social work and independent advocate. Concern was also raised about the nature of many complex cases that come social work's way and ability of voluntary part-time workers to engage appropriately.

The Draft Scheme of Mental Capacity Bill (2008) of which we have heard little since last year may be moving towards the Bill stage (as the title suggests, it is merely a 'scheme' now). This will be a welcome development if it is true.

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; The sub-group on 'assessment' continued to work on a draft assessment document during the year. A sub-group on 'advocacy and social work' prepared a 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, there are no community social work services for adults and vacant posts remain unfilled in other areas. This latter situation puts further pressure on what remaining social workers there are.

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

Social Workers in Primary Care

2009 / 10 Committee Members

Chairperson: Mary Mc Nutt
Vice Chairperson: Deirdre Jacob
Secretary: Aisling Coffey
Training Officer: Conor Fitzpatrick

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 services needs. Social Workers have a pivotal role in the development of Primary Care Teams (PCTs) and as core team members.

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 group's key goals was to make links with as many Social Workers working in the area of Primary Care as possible and to raise awareness of the SIG. Currently the SIG is in contact with 62 Social Workers working in Primary Care settings through its email database.

Current situation:

At the end of 2009 there were 222 Primary Care Teams (PCTs) and 69 Social Workers (including Team Leaders) in posts allocated to primary Care in the Republic of Ireland. The SIG is aware of PCTs without Social Work input as well as colleagues who are covering a number of PCTs.

Anecdotal information would 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 is a major concern for the SIG, as the lack of structure may result in some Social Workers not having access to adequate professional supervision and management, resulting in high levels of occupational stress and professional isolation.

A further concern of the PCSW SIG is the 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 PTCs 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.

Working Groups:

PCSW SIG has recently established two sub-groups:

- 1) Assessment Tools PCSW.
- 2) Role of the Primary Care Social Worker.

Plans for 2010:

- 1) Continue to meet on a monthly basis in a rotating venue.
- 2) Develop the PCSW SIG protocol.
- 3) Establish a Working Group of PCSW Team Leaders.
- 4) Survey the SIG members in relation to identifying areas for education and training.
- 5) Hold our first AGM in October 2010.

Special Interest Group of Children and Families

Chairperson: Paul McCarthy

Secretary: Mieke Ryan and Fiona Power

Children and Families SIG AGM January 2010; Kirsten Byrne stepped down as chairperson after two years. Paul McCarthy was elected as chairperson for 2010. The role of secretary has been empty for a number of years. Mieke Ryan and Fiona Power were elected joint secretary for the coming year.

Meetings; The Special Interest Group met every six weeks over the past year in various venues. In recent months the regular venue for meetings is the IASW office, St Andrews Resource Centre. The meetings have been attended by a small committed group of members. Other members continue to have close contact with the SIG via email.

Representation at Council; Kirsten Byrne represented the SIG at IASW Council meetings throughout the 2009.

Issues for the Children and Families SIG in the past year; Roscommon Incest Case, The Monageer Report, The Ryan Report, Dublin Diocesan Report, Report of the HSE Task Force, Children's Rights Bill and referendum, the Care of Unaccompanied Minors in the state, HSE plans for standardization, Barry Andrews Town Hall meeting, National Social Work Panel, HIQA Reports on Fostering, Residential and Special Care, General Media attention on Social Work, HSE's Annual report on Children and Families, Appointment of National Director of Children and Families in HSE.

Achievements in the past year

- Ongoing media responses by the SIG on issues including: the Ryan Report, The Monageer Report, report into Service Users Perceptions, HIQA, Children in Care, Roscommon Incest Case, Children's Rights, letter to news broadcasters re misrepresentation of Shane Dunphy in the media as a Social Worker.
- Merger and strengthening of subgroups within the SIG.
- Appearance by Ineke Durville and Gavin Mulhall on Questions and Answers.
- Declan Coogan speaking on radio (The Last Word) regarding the Roscommon Incest Case.
- Correspondence from Pavee Point welcoming our information that negative stereotyping of Travellers by Shane Dunphy was not supported by Social Workers or IASW.
- Meeting with Carl O'Brien (Irish time journalist)

- Conference on standardization of Children and Families Social Work processes and assessment held in September 2009 in the Aisling Hotel.
- Children and Families Workshop at 2009 Annual Conference/AGM.
- Attendance at Children's Rights Alliance AGM – building links and finding common ground.
- Meeting with Barry Andrews to discuss wide range of policy issues affecting Social Work.
- Meeting with Jan Sullivan (Labor) to discuss policy issues affecting Social Work.
- Meeting with Alan Shatter (FG) to discuss broad policy issues including Ficare policy.
- Meeting with PA Consultants re: "Strategic Review of the Delivery and Management of Child Protection Services" – association able to highlight crucial role of supervision in Social Work.
- Position Paper completed in conjunction Ineke Durville in response to recommendations of Ryan Report and submitted to Department of Children and Youth Affairs.
- Linked with Noel Baker from Examiner who is interested in covering Social Work stories.
- Networking with GLEN re: Child Centered Family Reform.

Priorities for 2010

- HSE Standardisation plans.
- Children's rights referendum/Constitutional Change.
- Role and Powers of Social Workers (e.g. Barr Judgment, Investigation of child Sexual Abuse)
- Positive image and Accurate Information about social work for the public, other professions and the media.
- PA Consulting report and plans for restructuring Social Work.
- Hearing the Voices of Children OMYCA Consultations. Meeting with Phil Garland as a priority for the SIG.
- HIQA Inspections and the need for dialogue with HIQA.
- Children coming into care due to Parents being detained prior to deportation.
- Special Care Placement and the lack of these. Social Workers holding Risk.
- Outsourcing of Social Work roles.

Social Workers in Disabilities – SWID

Caitriona Whitty

The National SWID committee meets once a month throughout the year. The meetings are presently held in KARE Services, Kitcullen, Co. Kildare.

The Eastern Regional Group of SWID currently meets on a 3 monthly basis in Cheeverstown. Unfortunately due to travel restrictions in the past year, other regional SWID groups have had difficulties convening such meetings.

During the past year SWID made submissions to such documents as the Mental Capacity Bill, The Disability Act, The Ryan Report, and to The Assessment of Need Consultation Process. One of our members has inputted to the IASW response to the Draft Early Intervention Standards. SWID is currently involved in providing a submission regarding H.I.Q.A's 'draft National Quality Standards for Registered and/or Inspected Services for Children and Young People'.

SWID committee has representation on the IMPACT Social Work Vocational group, IASW as well as in Inclusion Ireland.

On 6th March 2009 SWID organized a One Day Seminar on Assessment of Need – 0 – 5 years. This highlighted Social Workers need for evidence based tools in the Assessment of Need process.

The Annual Conference/AGM of SWID took place in October 2009 with a large attendance of approximately 80 persons involving existing and new members. The Conference was entitled 'Evidence based Tools for Social Workers in Disability – A Practical Approach'.

Discussions at Conference highlighted the need for more engagement and involvement by the Universities in the emerging issues and challenges facing social workers at the coalface. An example being the Assessment of Need process where social workers are being asked to account for their recommendations with evidence based tool.

The feedback of participants at the Conference was that it was very timely and of great value to Social Workers working in this area.

Since our membership has expanded to include Physical and Sensory disabilities as well as Intellectual we are meeting new social workers which has increased numbers and provided a welcome pool of ideas and experience and a chance to increased networking in geographical areas.

We would hope to build on this and try and identify key areas where we might establish sub-groups to work together on issues/responses/submissions as they arise. Already a number of people have raised issues regarding the client population in the Mild level of functioning, who need Support around Independence Skills, Accommodation, Relationships and Finances.

A motion was put forward by SWID to the IASW AGM 2009. The motion requested the adoption of the recommended standards of good practice developed by SWID for social workers undertaking assessments of Need (Disability Act' 05 for Children 0-5 years age range). This comprised the following – The Social Work Roles, The Framework for Assessment and the accompanying Guidance document. This motion was approved and the documents will be available on the website.

SWID is in the process of convening a one day Seminar in March 2010. This Seminar will centre on 2 areas of interests for Social Workers in Disability.

Christy Lynch CEO of KARE will deliver a presentation on a 'Present and Future Residential Options for Persons with Disabilities' and Phil Mortell Social Work Consultant will provide a presentation on 'Data Collection and Protection in areas relating to Social Workers (casework recording, report writing etc)'

SWID are actively planning their Conference and AGM which will take place in October this year. SWID are open to any suggestions for topics/areas of interest for this.

The following is the membership of the SWID committee for 2009/10:

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

Chairperson: Sinead Freeley,

Secretary: Mary Mc Namara,

Committee: Sheila Mc Kenna, David Hugues, Sarah Houston, Eleanor Kelly, Paul Longmore

President elect: Sheila Mc Kenna

Meetings:

Since the last AGM of the IASW, our special interest group in CAMHS has had three regular meetings of the national group, 11th May '09 in Galway, 9th Nov'09 in Mater CAMHS James Joyce Street & 8th Feb '10 in Mater CAMHS James Joyce St. We would like to thank Eleanor Kelly, John Sharry and Sarah Houston for facilitating the clinical practice workshops in May'09, Nov'09 & Feb 2010.

- In October 2009, Sarah Houston became the new representative for the IASW.
- April 2009, IASW AGM & Conference.
- Motions were proposed by SW's in CAMHS. See IASW Annual Report 2008/2009. 2010 motions to be proposed at the IASW AGM on Fri 23/04/09.

- In May Galway CAMHS facilitated the presentation by John Fitzmaurice who informed us about Jigsaw a pilot service developed by Headstrong in consultation with the HSE and Mental Health Ireland. It is community bases system of care that supports young people aged 15-26 to achieve better mental health and well being.
- At the November national meeting John Sharry Principal Social Worker in Mater CAMHS presented on the subject of integrating research into practice using the Parents Plus Program. He described the use of control studies as well as ongoing feedback from clients which can be used to adapt practice to improve outcomes.
- At the recent February national meeting, Sarah Houston (SW in Lucena CAMHS) & Lisa Scott (OT Lucena CAMHS) gave a very innovative presentation on therapeutic group work called 'Child Out' – A Collaborative Approach to Managing Difficult Emotions.

- The final draft of Section 25 Mental Health Act – Guidelines for the admission of a child was discussed at the Nov'09 national meeting. This document is available from Sinead Freeley: sinead.freeley@hse.ie

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 2009 the CAMHS services within the HSE carried out a national audit.

Southern Region.

Frank O'Driscoll

This was a busy year for the Southern Region Branch, the highlight being the hosting of the biennial Social Work Conference in UCC on 23-10-09. This was held jointly with UCC and HSE. The title of the Conference was **Keeping Children Safe: Critical Times, Critical Issues**. This was the second such Conference and attracted a large attendance and also a fair amount of media coverage.

A number of Continual Professional Development (CPD) workshops were also held;

-  25/5/09 "Fit between Family Therapy and Social Unit"
 -  8/2/10 "Children's Rights in Post Separation Conflict Situations"
 -  25/2/10 "Using Group work in Practice, in learning and teaching social work; an empowerment based approach"
 -  1/3/10 "Irish Father's Parenting Experiences with their Disabled Child"
 -  23/3/10 to mark World Social Work Day a Seminar was held regarding the "Rights of the Child"
- Other areas looked at the monthly branch meetings included Supervision and also the issue of proportionate responsibility for Social Workers i.e. Social Workers carrying responsibility proportionate to their authority.

Social Workers in Foster Care

Mary Flanagan

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.

SWIFC held its 2009 AGM on 15th July at the Belfield Campus, UCD.

Reports from the Secretary and the Treasurer were followed by an open forum, at which issues of children's rights, and the proposed Constitutional Referendum on the rights of the child, were discussed.

The role of SWIFC in informing policy and the importance of a professional voice to inform legislation, and the media were among the issues explored.

The election of officers for 2009/2010 also took place. The meeting expressed appreciation at the attendance of Ineke Durville, IASW President.

Over the past year SWIFC engaged in a number of significant activities. These included a meeting with the Minister of State for Children, Mr. Barry Andrews. The meeting addressed the implications of a proposed Constitutional Amendment on Children's Rights and the nature of the current judicial process in meeting the best interests of children; the high numbers of children in care who do not have an allocated social worker; the growing high level of trauma in the current population of children in care and the lack of suitable

venues and other resources for appropriate support and supervision of access arrangements for children in care with their birth families.

Arising from this meeting, the Group compiled a number of case examples from current social work practice, of situations where children's interests and rights are compromised within the judicial process.

SWIFC has drawn up a response to the Draft National Quality Standards for Residential and Foster Care, which aims to be constructive and informed.

The National Audit on Children in Care, recently completed by HIQA, is highly significant, and the Group is currently looking at the implications of these findings for practice and policy.

The 2010 AGM takes place on the 22nd April at 5pm in the Social Work Building in UCD, Belfield. It will be preceded by two research presentations on the topics of kinship care (Dr. Valerie O'Brien), and on court ordered access (Mr. Cahal McHale, SWTL).

SWIFC looks forward to continuing its role in 2010 as the voice of social workers working in foster care and its related areas, and to working closely with the IASW.

Council of Irish Adoption Agencies

Sheila Gallagher

This has been a busy year for the Council of Irish Adoption Agencies

Activities, Council meets three times every year and representatives from all registered adoption societies both HSE and Voluntary agencies are members of Council.

Our activities this year have included, campaigning on adoption issues, training events and the launch of our first publication.

Adoption Bill:

*Campaigning and highlighting issues in relation to the Adoption Bill 2009, such as lack of legislation in relation to information and tracing services and post adoption services. Council provided submissions to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Adoption Bill.

In December 2009, Joint press statement with the IASW in relation welcoming the recommendations by The Ombudsman for Children on the Adoption Bill 2009. *'CIAA and IASW both support wholeheartedly and without reservation all of the recommendations made by the Ombudsman and believe that if they were accepted that the Adoption Bill 2009 would be transformed into a more child centered legislative framework for the needs of children and families. We urge the Joint Committee for Health and Children to fully accept the recommendations made in this report when they are considering the issues which the Adoption Bill needs to address.'*

March 2010: Press statement with Adoption Rights Alliance, Natural Parents Network, Barnardos and Know My Own and CIAA in relation to the Adoption Bill. Available on IASW website.

December 2009: We were very honored to have Justice Catherine Mc Guinness, launch CIAA's first publication of 'An Ethical Framework for Adoption in Ireland' Choice Publishing. Copies from ciadoptionagencies@gmail.com (6 euro)

Workshops on the following issues were held during the year. These were CPD Approved.

1. Attachment issues in adoption
2. Issues in relation to Birth parents in adoption
3. Practice issues in information and tracing work
4. Issues in Intercountry Adoption

Meetings with Adoption Board representatives took place to consider practice and professional issues in relation to adoption services.

Social Workers Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

Damien Nolan

The Committee

It met on 6 occasions; members engaged in other activities outside these meetings these included: meeting John Moloney (Minister for Equality, Disability and Mental Health) to address the lack of standardization in patient charges in HSE Mental Health Service facilities, the importance of progressing the recommendation in 'A Vision for Change' that each Mental Health Catchment Area Management Team should comprise of a service user and heads of discipline for social work, psychology and occupational therapy, the matter of dressing in-patients of psychiatric units in night attire during daytime and the matter of some long-term mental health service users being provided with continuing nursing home placement when it would be appropriate that instead they should be provided with accommodation and care in residential settings more suited to their needs.–

The committee also sent the Minister a submission regarding the implementation of Vision for Change mental health policy and issues that should be of priority in the work of the new Director of Mental Health Services; these included: (i) the importance of the team coordinator role and our view that this position should be recruited for from within the relevant community mental health team and be open to all senior staff, regardless of discipline; (ii) the need to introduce a standard multidisciplinary assessment and care planning method, with the records of any involved discipline being maintained in a single patient chart (iii) the development of more home care/ assertive outreach teams in terms of avoiding or reducing repeat admission for hospital in-patient psychiatric treatment.

Continuous Professional Development Conferences

Included: 1. Last November Legal Matters by John Costello Solicitor. Dr Cate Hartigan and Mr. Kevin Brady presented on the 'Fair Deal', the statutory Nursing Homes Support Scheme, attendance was over 100 people.

2. SWAMH AGM 19th March; A presentation from staff of the Central Mental Hospital "Risk management in Mental Health Practice" and from the Dublin South West and East Coast services "The experiences of the Mental Health Authorised Officers Service"

Principal Medical Social Workers Group

Loretta Reilly

The P.M.S.W group meets on a regular basis and has a nationwide membership; the members are from both General and Specialist Hospitals.

The meetings provide a forum for discussion on issues that impact on hospital patient care.

In the past year a paper was prepared by members of the group on Medical Social Work and its contribution to patient care in the multidisciplinary team. Submissions were also made on a range of issues to relevant agencies and the HSE. A competency framework on "Social Work in a Medical Setting" was also developed by members of the group in 2005.

The Chairperson is Kieran Buckley St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin.