



**INCLUSION IRELAND**









National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability

# Annual Report 2019





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# CEO Message



Since joining Inclusion Ireland as CEO in July 2019, I have been proud to lead an organisation with a reputation for such high-quality policy and advocacy work. I can see first-hand that the reputation has been well-earned, and I'd like to extend my thanks to our staff, and of course, our Board of Directors. It has been an extremely busy and challenging period for Inclusion Ireland, as I'm sure it has been for all of you, as we continued our work to empower people with Intellectual Disabilities and their families to come out of the shadows and become real influencers, to bring about significant reform in social justice, human rights and make an impact for systemic change in Ireland.

A key part of our work has been the development of our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, which began in 2019 and was completed this year 2020. This plan, which was produced in consultation with our membership, will help us to convert your lived experience, your views and ideas into practical actions which can make a genuine, sustained and long-term difference. Membership consultation at last year's AGM surfaced a very clear view that people with intellectual disabilities and their families want to see a more grass roots connected organisation. An organisation that is a real conduit and gives opportunities for voice captivation and a catalyst for the building of an empowered movement of people. Our new strategic plan will play the role of a bridge builder to that place of an empowered movement of people with Intellectual Disabilities and their family members. We have set the agenda with a number of research reports this year - projects which were led by people with intellectual disabilities.

'19 Stories of Social Inclusion' told the stories and lived experiences of people with Intellectual Disabilities, and the good lives that people have when supported in line with 'New Directions' and 'a Time to Move on From Congregated Settings'. This report was featured at the National Disability Authority National conference in Croke Park and has been used to influence HSE policy to further move toward supporting people with disabilities and their choice to live in community settings.

We partnered with the Technological University of Dublin (TUD) to support a research project into

short school days – where some children with disabilities were prevented from attending school full time. This report had a big impact in the media. The Government also took action and are making new rules on short school days.

In December, over 100 people attended a conference about housing for people with disabilities. Advocates from Cork, Limerick, Dublin and Roscommon gave great presentations on their experience of housing. I was delighted to launch Inclusion Ireland's policy position paper on housing following the conference.

Of course, 2019 was an election year, with Local and European Elections taking place in May. Inclusion Ireland wrote a manifesto (a list of important issues) for people with disabilities in each election.

We also shared our easy-read guide to voting.

We hosted a European Election hustling event in the Mansion House, Dublin that was broadcast on Facebook Live. Our work in the political sphere continues, and we regularly engage with politicians from all political parties to advocate and inform them of the important issues.

I'd like to thank everyone for your input, as we look back on a great year for Inclusion Ireland, and I look forward to working with you in the coming weeks, months, and years ahead to build a dynamic movement that makes a real difference in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

*Enda Egan*

# Chairperson Message



Dear Members, I am very happy to present to you this report on the work Inclusion Ireland has been doing in 2019.

In July, we welcomed Enda Egan as our new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Sarah Lennon who was Acting CEO, moved on to a CEO role in another organisation and I would like to thank her and all of the staff and Board of Directors for supporting the transition of our new CEO Enda Egan. Enda was previously CEO of Offaly Centre for Independent Living and The Carers Association.

I would also like to thank the staff for their ongoing efforts in improving how we involve people with intellectual disabilities in actively designing and participating in research, workshops and conferences and uphold the values of Inclusion Ireland every day. This annual report is an opportunity to share those highlights with members and give you a better idea of the full range of issues that Inclusion Ireland has focussed on this year.

As an organisation, we would like to be able to do more, reach more people, host more events and have more impact. Despite the pressure of a cut in our funding this year and a reduced number of staff as a result, the extra efforts of the staff and Board has ensured that Inclusion Ireland has continued to shine a light on the areas of concern for our members and also showcase the way forward through initiatives such as the 19 Stories of Social Inclusion.

Our Board of Directors are volunteers and have given up a lot of time for meetings to make sure that Inclusion Ireland is run well and I would like to thank them for their commitment. The Board has a lot of rules and regulations to follow and we have started to look more closely at how we work as a Board and what areas we need to improve on. We also looked at what skills we needed to have on the Board to make it better and how we can support new Directors.

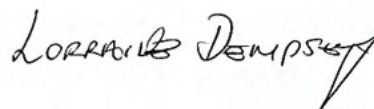
A big piece of work for the Board this year was starting to develop our new Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 and recruiting a new Chief Executive Officer. We also worked hard at having inclusive Board meetings, by using plain English and Easy to Read reports and communicating clearly with each other. This has benefited all of our Directors, but is an area that can always be improved on to meet the changing needs

of all of our Directors. I would like to express my thanks to our Board Support Staff who are essential in supporting our Directors with intellectual disabilities to fulfil their role, participate effectively at meetings and support the Chairperson in their role leading an Inclusive Board.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities provides the framework to promote, protect and ensure the rights of all people with disabilities and promotes equal rights in all areas of life. Inclusion Ireland continues to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities are active participants in how these rights become a reality.

The Vision of Inclusion Ireland has not changed over the years and this shows that there is still significant work to do to ensure that people with an intellectual disability can live and participate in the community with equal rights as citizens, and live the life of their choice to their fullest potential.

I look forward to the second year of my term as Chairperson and ensuring that Inclusion Ireland is in a better position to reach further into the community, increase members participation in events and policy development, provide information and support to those that seek it and continue to influence our Public Representatives to have a greater positive impact on the lives of people with an intellectual disability.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lorraine Dempsey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the last letter.

Lorraine Dempsey  
Chairperson  
Inclusion Ireland

# Keeping Members Informed



## Enquiries

In 2019, 1337 people contacted us for information and support.

Enquiries came from family members, people with intellectual disabilities and professionals.



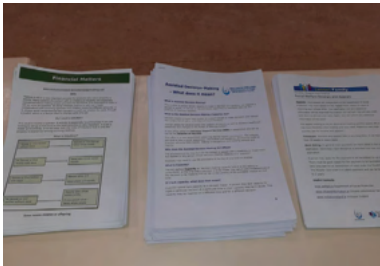
## Common questions asked were:

- Therapy services
- Assessments of Needs
- New Directions
- Assisted Decision Making
- Residential supports
- Education



## Information meetings, Consultations & Seminars

In 2019, 1100 people attended an Inclusion Ireland event.



Attendees included people with intellectual disabilities, family members and supporters and professionals.

We spoke about things like:

- New Directions
- Advocacy
- Local Elections
- Financial supports
- Public Sector Duty
- Assisted Decision Making
- Residential supports
- Short school days in schools
- Community inclusion

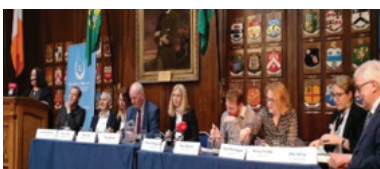


We hosted events and attended expos in Dublin, Wexford, Kildare, Westmeath, Sligo, Offaly, Tipperary, Laois and Kilkenny.



We had two events on Facebook Live

- European election event
- Education (Admissions to Schools) Act viewed by 1400 people





A Midlands Conversation Group met monthly to discuss human rights, advocacy and work on the Public Sector Duty.



## 19 Stories of Social Inclusion

The '19 Stories of Social Inclusion' was a research project between Inclusion Ireland and the School of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin.



The research team included people with lived experience of intellectual disability.



The 19 Stories showed, through videos and posters, that it is possible for anyone with a disability to live ordinary lives in the community with the right support.



The research was launched at Trinity College Dublin by Kevin Kilbane, former international soccer player, on 8th May to a packed audience.



In Tullamore on 29 May, Molly Buckley, human rights activist launched the research at the Darmagh Community Centre where over 70 people were in attendance.



Inclusion Ireland presented the findings at the conference of the National Disability Authority National who funded the research.



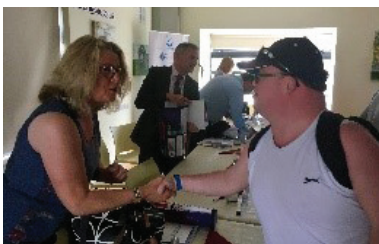
This report has been used to influence HSE policy to further move toward supporting people with disabilities and their choice to live in community settings.



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta  
an Duine agus Comhionannas  
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission



GUIDE TO VOTING



## Housing Conference

Over 100 people attended a conference about housing for people with disabilities in December.

The self-advocacy committee of Inclusion Ireland organised this conference with support from Inclusion Ireland and funding from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission IHREC.

Advocates from Cork, Limerick, Dublin and Roscommon gave great presentations on their experience of housing.

There was good group discussions and feedback.

Enda Egan CEO, launched the Inclusion Ireland position paper on housing.

There was also an easy to read version of this position paper and an easy to read fact sheet about different housing choices.

## Elections 2019

In 2019, Ireland held local and European Elections.

Inclusion Ireland wrote a manifesto (which is a list of important issues) for people with disabilities in each election. We also shared our easy-read guide to voting.

We hosted a European Election hustling event in the Mansion House, Dublin that was broadcast on Facebook Live.

We held local election hustling events in Cork, Sligo and Tullamore.

# Supporting rights



## Participation in Decision-Making

The HSE wants people with disabilities to be more involved in planning and making decisions about services.

In 2019 Inclusion Ireland worked with the HSE in Sligo to design a survey of disability services.

We want to find out what opportunities there are for people with disabilities to be more involved in planning and making decisions.

We ran advocacy workshops with people with intellectual disabilities in Sligo.

We used a lot of drama and we tested many ideas for good training.

We are writing a book about the exercises we used in this training.

We plan to use this book to train staff in disability services so that they can do more advocacy training.

## The Public Sector Duty

In Sligo we supported people with intellectual disabilities to give training on the Public Sector Duty.

They showed people how to meet a manager and check a public service.

They told people about the services that Sligo County Council provide.

We made a plan to work with local authorities in Sligo and Offaly to check how easy it is for people with intellectual disabilities to use their services.

This work will be completed in 2020.



## Accessible 'how to complain' website

People with an intellectual disability may have difficulty accessing public services.



People with an intellectual disability may have difficulty making a complaint when a service or product is not satisfactory.

or

when they want to challenge a decision about a service or support, they need.



Inclusion Ireland has developed a website on how to make a complaint about a public service. The website address is [www.HowtoComplain.ie](http://www.HowtoComplain.ie)



The work on the website was carried out in partnership with students from Trinity College Dublin and in consultation with Inclusion Ireland members, all of whom gave their time for free.



The website is fully accessible, and the information is in easy to read format.

The How to Complain website will help people with an intellectual disability fully access public services.



The How to Complain website will help public services identify problems and improve how they meet the needs of people with intellectual disability access. This will go fully live in 2020.

# Influencing change



## Policy advocacy - submissions

Inclusion Ireland tried to change law and policy to make sure people with disabilities have the right supports to live in the community. We did this by:

- Writing to government departments. This is called making a submission
- Involving people with disabilities in submissions
- Talking to government and members of the opposition parties.

Inclusion Ireland made 26 policy submissions throughout 2019.

These submissions included:

### 1. A Submission to the Department of Justice and Equality on the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) Mid-Term Review

In this submission we commented on the progress of the strategy so far, and ways it could be improved and updated.

### 2. Submission on Cost of Disability Research to Indecon

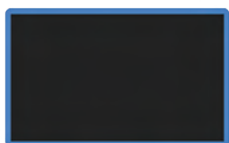
In this submission we commented on the survey Indecon was proposing to send out. We said it needed to be improved and made more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities.

### 3. Pre-Budget Submission

We sent in our annual pre-budget submissions. It talks about education, social protection, health, housing, employment and participation. To help us we had meetings with people with disabilities and a survey.

### 4. Submission to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Skills on the use of Reduced Timetables in Schools

We sent in a submission to the Oireachtas Committee on how children with disabilities were being discriminated against in schools by being put on a reduced timetable.





## Policy Advocacy - research

Inclusion Ireland completed the 19 Stories of Social Inclusion research in 2019.

The research demonstrated the good lives that people have when supported in line with 'New Directions' and 'a Time to Move on From Congregated Settings'.

The research wrote a report which we shared with the HSE and other policy makers.



We recorded some of the stories on video and poster. They are all on our website [www.inclusionireland.ie](http://www.inclusionireland.ie)



The research was funded by the National Disability Authority and we presented it at their annual conference.



### Short school days

In 2019, Technological University Dublin and Inclusion Ireland did research on children with a disability and their experience of school.

We wrote a report about this research. The report said children with disabilities were in many cases not allowed to go to school full time.





This made the children feel sad and upset. Their parents were also very sad about the child not being able to attend.



Many parents had to give up their job. This left the family very short of money which lasted a long time.



We launched the report in the IHREC and it had a big impact in the media. The Government also took action and are making new rules on short school days.



The research had an advisory group. Three members of the group and the research team had lived experience of intellectual disability.

# Governance



Governance is about how an organisation is run.

Good governance is running an organisation well.

Inclusion Ireland made sure it was run well in 2019.



In 2019, there were 12 people on the board of directors.

3 members of the board had lived experience of intellectual disability.



The Finance and Governance Committee makes sure that Inclusion Ireland manages and spends its funding in the proper way and is in line with laws saying how charities should be run.



## **Inclusion Ireland Accounts**

All Inclusion Ireland members receive a copy of the 2019 accounts.

The accounts say where we got money and how we spent it.



There is an easy-to-read summary of the accounts for members.



Inclusion Ireland's audited accounts for 2019 are available on our website [www.inclusionireland.ie](http://www.inclusionireland.ie)

# Statistics



In 2019, Inclusion Ireland had 182 individual members and 42 group members.



1100 people attended an Inclusion Ireland public meeting in places such as in Dublin, Wexford, Kildare, Westmeath, Sligo, Offaly, Tipperary, Laois and Kilkenny.



At the end of 2019 we had 13000 followers on Facebook.



At the end of 2019 we had 9000 followers on Twitter



We made 26 policy submissions throughout the year.



We produced three reports on housing, short school days and stories of social inclusion.

# Acknowledgements and partners



Thank you to all of our members, self-advocacy groups and parent and family groups that we worked with in 2019.



## **Inclusion Ireland received funding from:**

The Health Service Executive, The Government Scheme to Support National Organisations, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and membership fees.

## **We partnered with the following in 2019**



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin







## **Inclusion Ireland**

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