

INCLUSION IRELAND

National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability

Looking back on 2016



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1. Welcome



Paddy Connolly (Inclusion Ireland CEO)

My name is Paddy Connolly and I am the CEO of Inclusion Ireland.

This is the second year of the Easy to Read Annual Report.

It is important that we continue to make our work as accessible as possible for people.

It has been a busy year for us as you will see from the report.

This year we developed an Equality & Human Rights Statement which sets out the how we will use the values of dignity, autonomy, social justice, democracy and inclusion to work towards the full equality of people with intellectual disabilities.

We also set out our strategic plan with three goals and they are:

1. Laws and policies in Ireland make sure that people with disabilities are treated equally.
2. People with disabilities live and take part in their community.
3. People with disabilities are told about and can access their rights.

We have also opened offices in Co Cork, Co Sligo, Co Offaly and will continue to try to represent issues that affect people from all parts of the country.

I'd like to thank the staff of Inclusion Ireland for all of their hard work throughout the year and the Board for their support in 2016.

Kathryn O'Shea (Chairperson)



As the current Chairperson of the Board of Inclusion Ireland I am delighted to introduce you to our annual report from 2016

Paddy Connolly and his team have been very active over the past year working on behalf of people with disabilities and their families to help improve their lives across all areas.

Inclusion Ireland has been involved with various government departments to make sure that the voice of the person with a disability is heard and represented in new laws and policies that are being written up.

The experience of families raising children with disabilities and supporting their adult family members in their daily lives is very important to Inclusion Ireland.

A lot of work has gone in to trying to reach these families and hear their stories and represent their views to those people in power.

Inclusion Ireland has hosted several conferences during 2016 to explore how personal budgets might operate and what supported independent living might look like.

People with disabilities have also hosted several workshops on issues that really interest and affect them like employment and training.

People living with disabilities in Ireland today have a lot of obstacles to overcome in order to live a good life and I am proud to be involved with an organisation like Inclusion Ireland as it puts the person with a disability at the centre of all its work.

2. Community Engagement

Connect Family Network Survey

Our Connect Family Network works with families across Ireland.



We did a survey and 73 local disability support groups filled it out. Those groups represent over 5,000 people.



People in family support groups said that access to health services was the most important thing.

Family members said a lack of support was the biggest issue.



Many family support group members said they did not know about the laws and policies that affect the lives of people with a disability and their families.



Families asked us for support and in particular

- A webpage,
- Email updates and
- Accessible training



Connect Family Network Events

We had 12 information meetings for families in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Kildare, Laois, Mayo, Tipperary and Westmeath.

At the meetings, we told families about law and policy.

Family members also told us and each other about the issues in their area.



Connect Family Network Online

We continued to work on the Connect Family Network webpage and information leaflets with new and up to date information for families.

We have a Connect Family Network Google map.



That map has information and contact details for over 100 local and national family support groups.



Connect Family Network Submissions

We made 7 policy submissions on Education, Women's Strategy and Personal Budgets among others.



Family Forums

We work with some families in 10 of the big residential centres.

We provide information on the government policy to move people with disabilities from big residential centres to smaller houses in the community



We also deliver training to these families on important information and skills such as Assisted Decision-Making and advocacy.



We have written fact sheets for families about the policy of people moving from large residential places to the community.



Working Group 3

Working Group 3 was set up as part of a HSE's programme about making HSE services better.



This programme is called Transforming Lives programme.



The group was made up of people with disabilities, family members, service providers and members from the HSE.

Their job was to come up with a plan for effective participation in decision making for people with disabilities and families.



The plan is about supporting people to be more involved in decisions that are important in their lives.

There was a public consultation in 2016 about the plan to see what people thought.



Plain English, videos, a survey and focus groups were used and Inclusion Ireland's Self Advocacy subcommittee took part in a focus group.

The plan will be published in 2017.



Self Advocacy Conference

In December, our Self Advocacy Sub Committee had a conference called "Education After 18- What Happens?"

Over 60 self advocates came to hear about the options available in education.



12 Speakers gave their experiences of further education and higher education for people with intellectual disabilities.

Making a Will

We have a project for people with intellectual disabilities who want to make a will.



The solicitors work for free so there is no charge involved.



We work with by the Public Interest Law Alliance, and a law company called Mason, Hayes and Curran and the legal team from LinkedIn to make the project work.



10 people took part last year to make a will which carries out their wishes.

Self Advocacy training



We had Self Advocacy training.

16 people took part that live in HSE Cregg services in Sligo.



10 people took part that live in Aras Attracta in Swinford.

We used drama in the training so that people could practice talking about their feelings, making choices, and speaking up for themselves in a group.



Staff members in Áras Attracta and Cregg services also had training about how to support self-advocacy.



We also gave support to families of the people who are living in Cregg and Aras Attracta in how to advocate for their family member.



We asked the HSE questions for families and worked to improve communication with families and residents.

3. Campaigns & Policy

Personal Budgets Campaign



We are working on a Personal Budgets Campaign.

A Personal Budget is a way for a person to make a choice about what service and support they want.

We did many different things on this campaign



Personal Budgets Seminar

We had a seminar on Personal Budgets in May.

Around 200 people went to the seminar.

Disability advocates and parents of young people with disabilities talked about having a personal budget.

Personal Budgets Taskforce



The Government set up a group called a Taskforce to look at Personal Budgets in August.

Our CEO, Paddy Connolly, is a member of the Taskforce.

We made a submission on our idea of what should happen. We spoke with disability advocates, parents of people with disabilities, and other organisations.



Tools for Independent Living Seminar

Inclusion Ireland organised a seminar on independent, supported living in September.



International expert, Prof Errol Cocks talked about how Personal Budgets can help people to live independent, supported lives.



Molly O’Keeffe from Possibilities Plus talked about how a personal budget is helping her sister Fran to live an ordinary life in her community.

Assisted Decision-Making

Inclusion Ireland continues to campaign for the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act.



We spoke at many events including a HSE summit on older people.

We are represented on the working group set up by Minister Simon Harris to work on parts of the Act.

We worked with the Department of Justice on an Easy-to-Read guide to the law.



Research

Research is about finding answers to questions.

We do research to find out the best ways of supporting people with disabilities and their families.

We work with researchers from all over Ireland.



**TRINITY
COLLEGE
DUBLIN**

Research on Complex Support Needs

We worked with researchers from Trinity College Dublin.

This research was about what helps people with complex needs to live in the community.

The research was published in December.

The Irish Research Council funded this work.



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Research on siblings

We worked with researchers from University College Cork about people who provide support to a brother or sister with a disability.

The National Disability Authority funded this work and it was published in December.



Research on disability spending

We wanted to find out more about how disability services are funded across the country.

We looked at whether there is a better way of funding disability services.



We looked at whether people with disabilities to have choice and control about the services they want.

Pauline Conroy and Maire Meagher wrote a report for Inclusion Ireland.

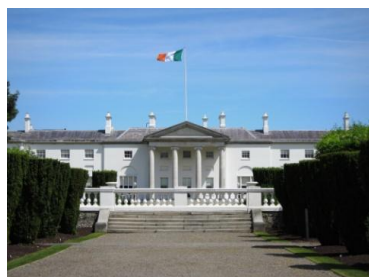
This report will be available this year



Changing Places Campaign

Inclusion Ireland set up the Changing Places Working Group in 2004 looking for fully accessible toilets to public places in Ireland.

A new Changing Places toilet facility was opened in Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) in Terminal 1.



There are now fully accessible Changing Places facilities in Áras an Uachtaráin, Trinity College Dublin and the Lime Tree Theatre in Limerick.

General Election



We covered the General Election with a webpage and a guide to the things we wanted.

We also had an Easy-to-Read Guide to Voting.



We also made a Briefing Note for people running for the Dáil.

We looked at all the Election Manifestos of the main political parties – Fine Gael, Fianna Fail, Labour Party, Sinn Fein, The Green Party and Renua Ireland.



We also looked at what the political parties were promising under the areas of Education, Advocacy, Therapies, Cost of Disability, Employment, Personal Budgets, Congregated Settings and Reform.



When the Government published its Programme for Government called 'A Programme for a Partnership Government' in May, we put compared to our asks in our Manifesto.

Budget 2017



We published 'Budget 2017 - Things to Look Out For' information graphics before Budget Day in October.

We looked at 2 things

- 'A Budget for Equality & Human Rights'
- 'A Budget for Children'.



'A Budget for Equality & Human Rights' looked at equality proofing of budgets, community supports and Cost of Disability'

'A Budget for Children' looked at medical cards, waiting times and speech & language therapy.



When Budget 2017 came out we gave our verdict using a traffic light system – green for delivered; amber for partially delivered; red for not delivered.

In total, we gave the Budget two green lights, two amber lights and six red lights.

We were disappointed that Budget 2017 has failed to deliver all the promises that had been made by government.



Submissions

We made seven submissions to various Government departments and other organisations.

Read the submissions [at this link](#).

These submissions were on the things we thought about laws and policies.

We ask our members and self-advocates for their ideas when we write submissions.



During the year, we made submissions to

- Minister Simon Harris and Minister Finian McGrath on Personal Budgets
- The National Women's Council of Ireland on women's rights.
- The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) on Special Needs Assistants.
- The Department of Social Protection 'Make Work Pay' their pre-budget forum and their new strategy.
- The Department of Tourism on Changing Places.





Communications Round-up

We had a very good year on social media and we now have more than 7,000 followers on Facebook and more than 6,000 followers on Twitter.



We had many visitors to our website during the year and the most popular areas were Capacity; About Us; Advocacy and our Publications.



We had a good year in the media and contributed towards 28 articles in national newspaper / website articles, and did interviews on 20 national and 18 regional/local radio programmes.



We made six appearances on national television.

Our email newsletter continued to grow and now has over a thousand followers.

4. Acknowledgements & Partners



Thank you to our members, self-advocacy groups and parent and family groups who we worked with during the year.

Inclusion Ireland receives funding from: Health Service Executive (HSE), Citizens Information Board (CIB), Pobal: Dormant Account Fund, Pobal: Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) and Inclusion Ireland membership.



Inclusion Ireland accounts:

All members have received a copy of the annual audited accounts. The accounts are available to anyone who wishes to have a copy, please contact us to request one.

We have collaborated with or partnered with the following in 2016





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