



Annual Report 2024

IRISH ADVOCACY NETWORK

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IRISH ADVOCACY NETWORK: AN OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

To be an island wide, independent, peer-run, peer-led organisation that empowers people experiencing mental health challenges to improve the quality of their lives through advocacy support, training, and development.

Values

Where everyone experiencing mental health challenges feels empowered to create their own futures.

Vision/Commitment

- Person centred
- Respect
- Empathy
- Support
- Non-judgemental
- Authentic

Speak Up, Reach Out...
and take back control of your life...

You're never alone on this journey...

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

The Irish Advocacy Network CLG.
Annual General Meeting
Held via Zoom 27th November 2024
Chairperson's Address

Reflection on the Year

This past year has prompted reflection on progress and challenges to the organisation. We end the year extremely proud to say that thanks to the tireless efforts of our team, partners, and supporters, we have made significant strides in achieving our mission of supporting the voice of those in need. Notable over 2024 was the application of co-production and co-facilitation methodologies to enhance the delivery of training and learning programmes in partnership with organisations and stake-holder groups. The desire and foresight shared between IAN, partner organisations and stakeholder groups to develop and nurture practices and environments where the focal point was empowerment for service users was palpable. Activities carried out in collaboration with partner organisations and stakeholder groups is evidenced in our Training and Development report near the end of the Annual Report.

Equally, even though over 2024 we encountered hurdles to provide consistency in service delivery we managed to achieve continuous coverage for the provision of peer advocacy services. Evidence of the extent and breadth of our peer advocacy deliverables is presented in the Examples of Peer Advocacy Cases section of our 2024 Annual Report. This bears testament to the commitment and resourcefulness of management and staff.

Despite the ongoing challenges in our sector with funding limitations and pressures on capacity we have remained resilient, adaptable, and committed to provide a high quality, consistent peer advocacy service across the island.

Financial Stewardship

I would like to briefly acknowledge our prudent financial management over the past year. We remain in a stable financial position, and our resources have been allocated responsibly to ensure maximum impact.

We are grateful to our funding partners, the HSE. Their trust and support have enabled us to continue our work and plan for a sustainable future.

People at the Heart

Our staff and board members are the backbone of our organization. To each of you: thank you.

- To our **team**: Your professionalism and passion do not go unnoticed. You embody the values we stand for.
- To my fellow **Board members**: Thank you for your governance, wisdom, and the many hours you dedicate behind the scenes.
- To our **funders, partner organisations and stakeholder groups**: Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and for the shared learning. This includes EVE, Cairdre, HSE and Dublin City University.
- To our **advocacy clients, participants of our Learning and Development programmes and co-facilitators**: Thank you for your commitment, courage to share with each other your personal experiences, wisdom and constructive feedback.

Looking Ahead

While we can be proud of what we've achieved, there is more to do. The needs of our community continue to grow and evolve. Looking to the coming year we will consider:

- **Seeking opportunities to expand on co-production measures in collaboration with partner organisations and stakeholder groups**
- **Develop an improved system to enhance efficiency and reporting of our peer advocacy activities**
- **Deepening our engagement with the community and strengthening our advocacy efforts.**

We are committed to continuous improvement and working in collaboration with others to deliver lasting outcomes.

Closing

In closing, I want to thank you once again—for your belief in our mission, your contribution to our work, and your presence here today.

Together, we are not just making a difference. We are building a more inclusive and connected future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "C. Stapleton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Stapleton Chairperson - IAN CLG 27th November 2024.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

It is in recognizing the continued support and commitment of Peer Advocacy in Mental Health staff, stakeholders and collaborators and the Board of Directors that I am able to welcome you to our Annual Report for 2024. Each year presents unique challenges to service delivery and the continuance of a quality product. IAN continues to make strenuous efforts to overcome any obstacles it is faced with in meeting its key objectives to provide peer advocacy services in person and through remote service provision prioritizing approved centers and residencies across the country. Our peer advocacy services extend into forensic mental health services, community where capacity allows and the Women's Dochas Center, Mountjoy Prison.

In 2024, IAN provided a very valuable service totaling 11,946 peer advocacy engagements in the Republic of Ireland and 3,703 engagements in Belfast Trust, Northern Ireland. Given the challenges associated with IAN's limited resources, specifically capacity to meet demands on our peer advocacy services, a total of 15,649 engagements represents excellent value for money. IAN, its staff and Board of Directors continue to influence national and local mental health planning and delivery of services, helping raise awareness of mental health issues in the community, progressing the recovery ethos and values, working closely with key stakeholders.

Similar to last year IAN has experienced a significant number of calls from the community. While these calls are answered, recorded and responded to, it is necessary to establish how peer advocacy can directly address the needs of individuals living and working in the community who experience challenges to their mental health through robust data collection and analyses.

The reality remains that we are unable to allot the warranted attention to community calls given capacity and our rationale to prioritize individuals who are receiving institutional care. However, Peer Advocacy continues to be available to every person who requests our support, even in circumstances where we have limited and restrained capacity.

The implementation of the remote services facilitated through disseminated iPads remains invaluable as a complimentary and contingency tool of communication and support to advocacy clients by providing a weekly peer advocacy service in mental health acute units, long stay units and limited community residences. We remain grateful to the staff in these facilities for their ongoing support in enabling access to service users to provide remote, and face-to-face peer advocacy services.

We acknowledge those who have engaged positively with us with particular thanks going to Michael Ryan, Head of Mental Health Engagement Office, the Area Mental Health TEAMS, Staff in all the facilities around Ireland and Belfast, Assistant Director of Mental Health, Belfast Trust, Marty Daly, Service User Representative Belfast Trust, Resettlement Team, Unscheduled Care Team, Belfast Home Treatment Team, and all the Statutory and Voluntary Organizations for their leadership in promoting a partnership approach to collaborative working arrangements. You will find a list of some partner organizations who have collaborated with us over 2024 in our training and Development Report. Going forward we will continue to build on delivering a high-quality service, establishing a consistent presence of support to people with mental health problems across the island.

Finally, I want to again thank PAMH's Board of Directors, all PAMH's Staff, members and the many people who work with PAMH throughout the year for their commitment and dedication to providing Peer Advocacy people in vulnerable circumstances and look forward to working with all relevant persons, organisations and groups going forward.

Stay safe and well.



Jim Walsh,
Acting CEO
Irish Advocacy Network

OUR SERVICES IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

CHO1 Donegal, Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan, Cavan/Monaghan

Total Clients 664

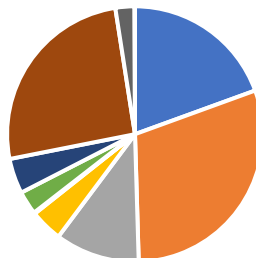
Acute Unit, Cavan	Weekly
Acute Unit, St Columba's, Sligo	Weekly
Blackwater House	Weekly
Lisardan Lodge	Weekly
Benbulbin Lodge	Weekly
Castlecourt House	Weekly
Linden House	Weekly
Letterkenny DOP	Weekly

Male	Female	Total
299	365	664

Service Provided

Intro	Advocacy LE	Advocacy Info	Advocacy Support	Community Advocacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advocacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
355	549	195	75	3	54	81	468	44	1	0

Service Provided



- Intro
- Advocacy LE
- Advocacy Info
- Advocacy Support
- Community Advocacy
- Telephone Advocacy
- Video Advocacy
- Face to Face
- Info Act
- Trib Sup
- Trib Att

CHO2 Galway, Mayo and Roscommon

Total Clients 923

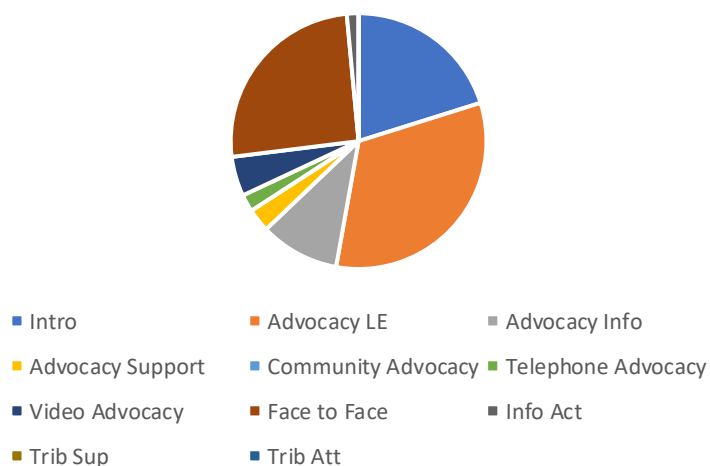
Acute Mental Health Unit, Galway	Weekly
Acute Mental Health Unit, Castlebar	Weekly
Acute Mental Health Unit, Roscommon	Weekly
An Coillin	Weekly
Teach Aisling	Weekly
Galway, Woodview, Merlin Park	As Requested
Mayo, St Anne's Unit	As Requested
Mayo, Swinford Day Centre	As Requested

Male	Female	Total
502	421	923

Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
435	705	217	64	0	47	108	550	32	0	0

Service Provided



CHO3 Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary/East Limerick

Total Clients 281

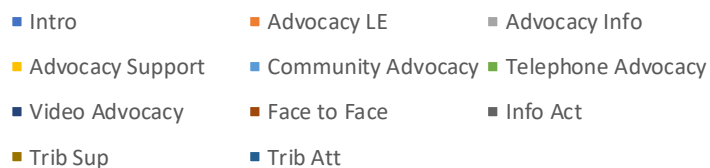
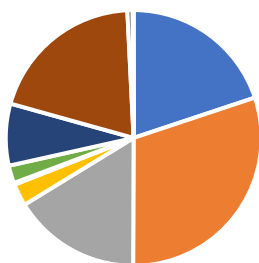
Acute Mental Health Unit, Ennis	Weekly
5B Acute Mental Health Unit, Limerick	Weekly
Ferndale	Fortnightly
Cappahard Lodge	As Requested

Male	Female	Total
148	133	281

Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
178	270	145	25	2	20	70	178	6	1	0

Service Provided



CHO4 Kerry, North Cork, North Lee, South Lee, West Cork

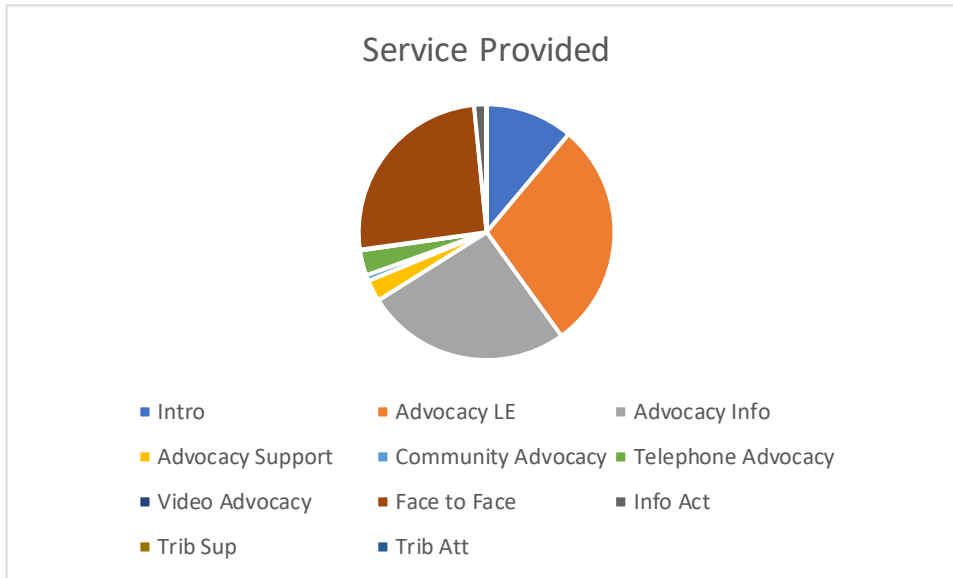
Total Clients 1298

South Lee Mental Health Unit	Weekly
St Michael's Unit	Weekly
Carraig Mor	Weekly
Centre for Mental Health and Recovery	Weekly
Owenacurra	Fortnightly
St Catherine's	Fortnightly
Norwood Day Centre	As Requested
Carrickabric	As Requested
Blackwater Day Centre	As Requested
Duhallow Day Centre	As Requested
Gougannebarra House	As Requested
Millfield House	As Requested
Solas Nua	As Requested
Cois Alla	As Requested
Sliabh Mis	Weekly
Deer Lodge	Weekly
Fiachra Unit	As Requested
Writers Grove	As Requested
Fertha View	As Requested
Cork, Centre for Mental Health and Recovery, Bantry Acute Unit	As Requested
Cork, Glenmalure House, Blackrock	As Requested
Cork, Rehab Care Bantry	As Requested
Cork, St Stephen's Acute	As Requested
Cork, St Stephen's Long Stay	As Requested
Cork, Valley View Day Centre	As Requested
Kerry, Teach Mhuire, Rathmore	As Requested

Male	Female	Total
668	627	1295

Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
472	1232	1106	116	32	135	5	1089	64	2	1



CHO5 South Tipperary, Carlow/Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford

Total Clients 1106

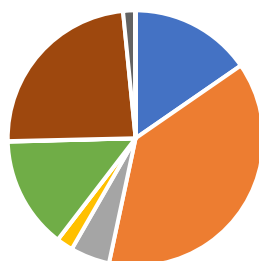
DOP Kilkenny	Weekly
DOP Waterford	Weekly
Heywood Lodge	Fortnightly
Grangemore	Fortnightly
St Aidan's	Fortnightly
Greenbanks Hostel	As Requested
Kincora Hostel	Monthly
Lismore Hostel	Monthly
Glenville Crisis House	Monthly
An Tearmann	Monthly
Millview	Monthly
Wexford, Maryville, New Ross	As Requested

Male	Female	Total
475	631	1106

Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
439	1084	142	60	0	404	2	679	44	1	0

Service Provided



- Intro
- Advocacy LE
- Advocacy Info
- Advocacy Support
- Community Advocacy
- Telephone Advocacy
- Video Advocacy
- Face to Face
- Info Act
- Trib Sup
- Trib Att

CHO7 / CHO9 HSE Dublin Region

Facilities:

Frequency

St Vincent's University Hospital	Weekly
St James' Hospital	Weekly
Connolly Hospital	Weekly
St Vincent's Hospital, Fairview	Weekly
Phoenix Care Centre	Weekly
Mater Hospital	Weekly
St John of God's	Weekly
Tallaght Hospital	Weekly
Ashlin Centre, Beaumont	Weekly
St Patrick's Mental Health Service	Weekly
Bloomfield Hospital	Weekly
Cherrymount Community House	Weekly
San Remo Community House	As Requested
Elizabeth Court Community House	As Requested
Kildare, Lakeview Unit, Naas General Hospital	As Requested

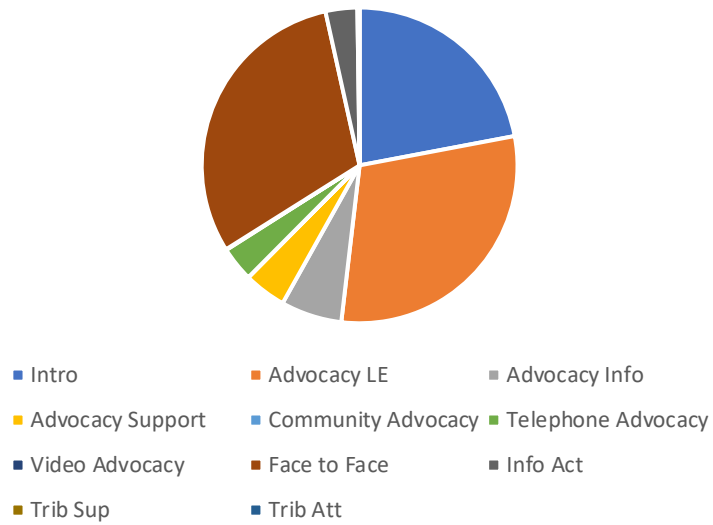
Total Clients 3378

Male	Female	Total
1785	1593	3378

Type of Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
2077	2814	590	408	2	334	7	2872	307	21	0

Service Provided



CHO6 Wicklow Region

Wicklow, Newcastle Hospital

Weekly

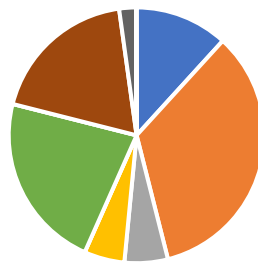
Total Clients 553

Male	Female	Total
366	187	553

Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
161	469	75	70	0	305	0	258	29	1	0

Service Provided



- Intro
- Advocacy LE
- Advocacy Info
- Advocacy Support
- Community Advocacy
- Telephone Advocacy
- Video Advocacy
- Face to Face
- Info Act
- Trib Sup
- Trib Att

CHO8 Laois/Offaly, Longford/Westmeath, Louth and Meath

Laois, Department of Psychiatry Portlaoise General hospital
Laois, Maryborough Centre, Portlaoise
Louth, Ardee
Louth, Drogheda Department of Psychiatry, Crosslanes, Drogheda
Mullingar, Westmeath, Cluain Lir
Mullingar, Westmeath, St Loman's Hospital, Admission Unit & St Edna's Unit
Offaly

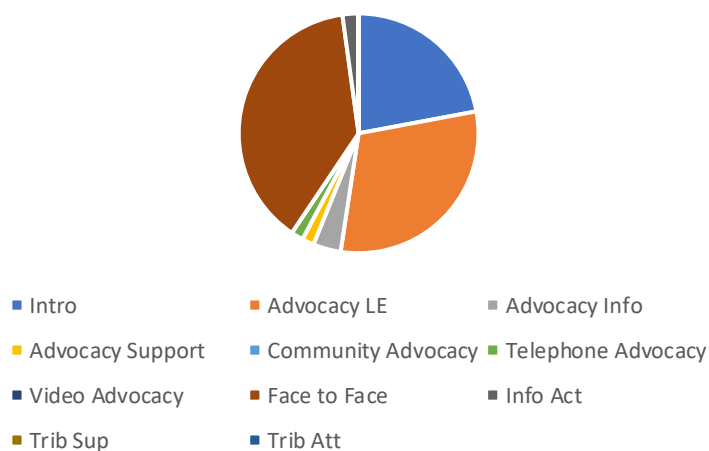
Total Clients 1184

Male	Female	Total
716	468	1184

Services Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
601	827	102	44	0	45	0	1047	57	2	0

Service Provided



NATIONAL FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE STATS

Facility	Frequency
Central Mental Hospital	Daily
Portrane forensics	Daily

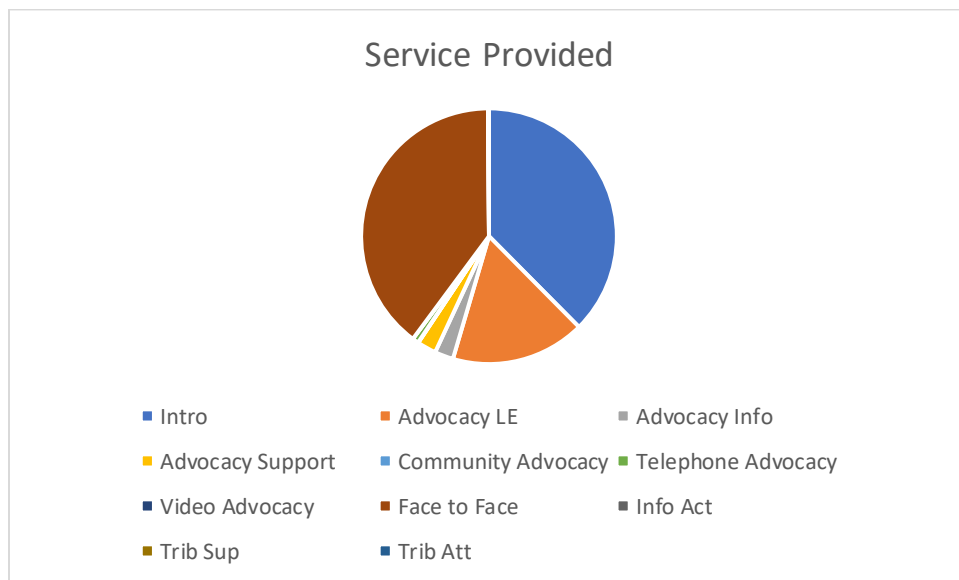
Total Clients 2355

National Forensic Services

Male	Female	Total
2070	285	2355

Services Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
2099	949	132	135	2	44	0	2221	1	1	3



DOCHAS CENTRE SERVICE STATS

Facilities:

Mountjoy prison
North Circular Road Dublin

Frequency

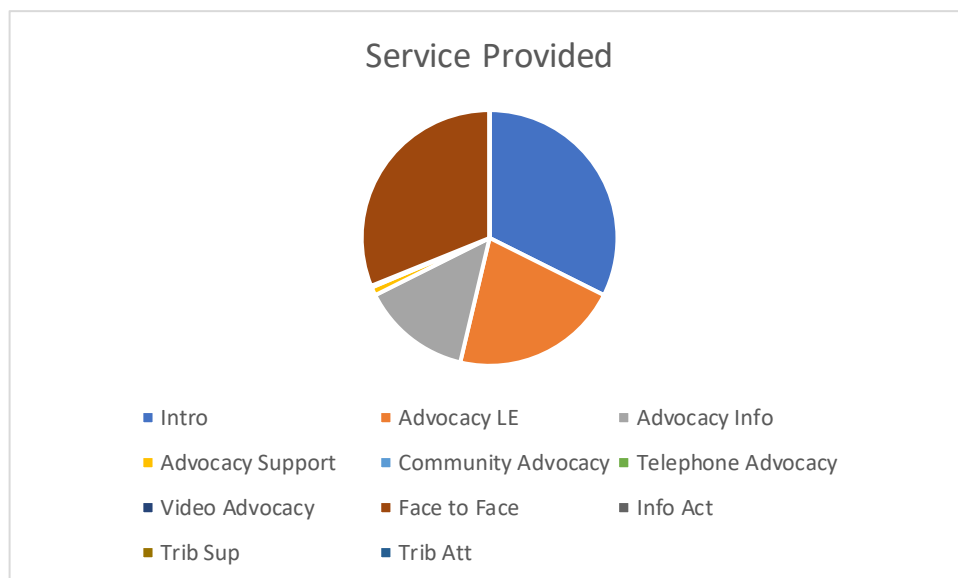
Weekly

Total Clients 2355

Female	Total
307	307

Services Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
307	202	132	10	2	0	0	295	0	0	0



TOTAL STATS FOR IAN IN REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Total Clients

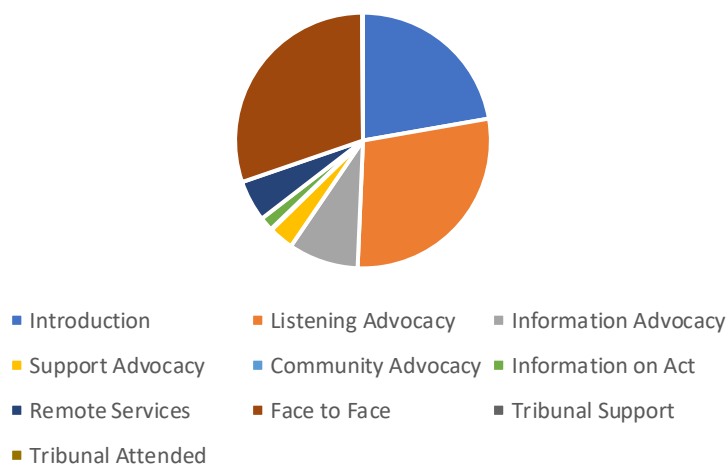
Male	Female	Total
7029	4917	11946

Totals for Services Provided

Introduction	Listening Advocacy	Information Advocacy	Support Advocacy	Community Advocacy
7124	9101	2836	1007	43

Information on Act	Remote Services	Face to Face	Tribunal Support	Tribunal Attended
555	1661	9657	30	4

Service Provided



IRISH ADVOCACY NETWORK IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Belfast Trust

This is the Annual Report for the year January to December 2024, for the Irish Advocacy Network, Peer Advocacy Services in the Belfast Trust. The Peer Advocacy services operate Trust wide within the Mental Health Directorate, providing access to Peer Advocacy services by a team of four peer advocates, to Services Users in the Greater Belfast area 5 days per week.

Service Provided

The peer advocacy services which are delivered within the Belfast Trust area include:

- Acute In-patient wards (5 wards) in Belfast City Hospital's Acute Mental Health Inpatient Centre (AMHIC)
- Clients involved with the Community Mental Health Teams in the community
- Clients involved in Home Treatment Team services
- Clients who have been resettled into the community from the CRU (Continuing-care Rehabilitation Unit) in Knockbracken Healthcare Park, and other wards under the direction of the Resettlement Team & Rehabilitation Team, and Unscheduled Care Team

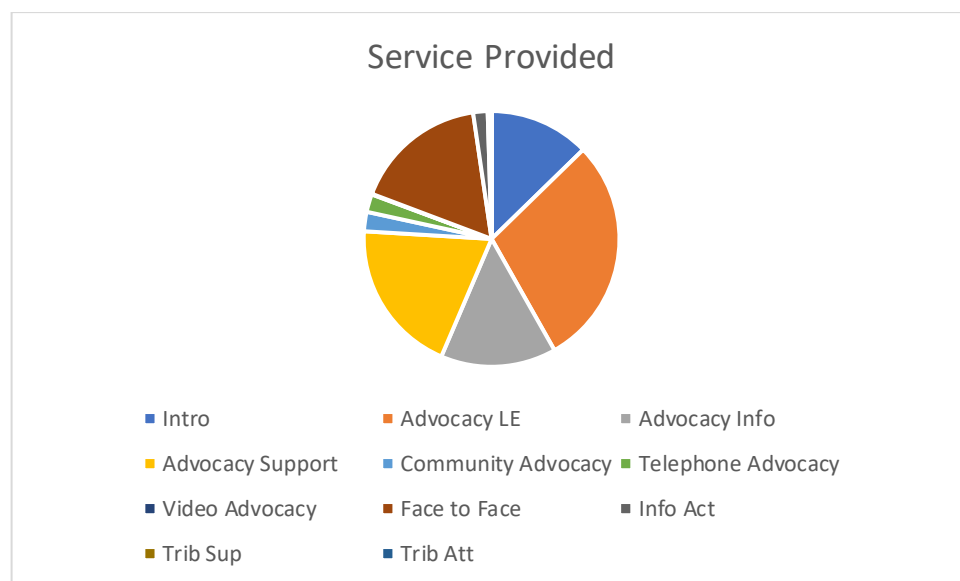
IRISH ADVOCACY NETWORK IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Number of Clients 3703

Male	Female	Total
2242	1461	3703

Service Provided

Intro	Advo- cacy LE	Advo- cacy Info	Advo- cacy Support	Commu- nity Advo- cacy	Telephone Advocacy	Video Advo- cacy	Face to Face	Info Act	Trib Sup	Trib Att
1111	2545	1278	1707	214	197	7	1481	160	42	1



EXAMPLES OF OUR PEER ADVOCACY CASES

Issue:

The individual told the advocate that they had issues with the food on offer and wanted support from the advocate to resolve the issues.

Action:

The advocate explained to the individual that they could meet with their key working nurse and inform them of their food issues. The individual declined and asked the advocate to speak with their key nurse. The advocate explained to the individual's key working nurse the issues the individual has with food and advised them of the changes that the individual requested to address their issues.

Outcome:

The requested changes were made resulting in no food issues for the individual.

Issue:

The individual told the advocate that they needed some specific sensory equipment and asked the advocate if they could get them from the Activities nurse.

Action:

The advocate met with the activities nurse and informed them that the individual asking for some specific sensory equipment.

Outcome:

The individual got the requested sensory equipment.

Issue:

Client complained that had no freedom and is not allowed off the unit. The client is a long-term resident within the unit. Client prone to negativity in general and was very down about the situation. He stated that there was no point him even asking for leave to go out. Client expressed that he does not like the unit. Client only seen by consultant every 3 months.

Action:

Explained to client that if he had a think about all his issues and wrote it down, I would see if it was possible to speak with his key nurse and give her the list. Client quickly made a list of all his issues and as his key nurse was on unit that day we had a meeting with her.

Outcome:

Normally issues such as leave must go through Consultant but client not due to meet consultant for 6 weeks. Key nurse promised she would raise all his requests in meantime. She advised she would focus on the most important 2/3 requests as therefore more chance of them being granted.

On Advocate return visit 2 weeks later, client had been given leave to go for walks and weekly leave to go up the nearby town. Client much happier with outcome and was in much better form and was delighted he had been able to do some shopping.

Examples of our Peer Advocacy Cases (cont'd)

Issue:
Service user unhappy with clothes being washed with other residents soiled clothes
Action:
Peer advocate supported and listened to service user
Outcome:
Service user was happy to follow up with staff to request washing her own clothes.

Issue:
A client asked if I knew anything about Shine Support Groups beginning in their area.
Action:
I told the client I didn't but that I would follow up. Subsequently I sent an email to Shine inquiring about the support groups.
Outcome:
The following day I received an email with information about the support groups starting up next month. I forwarded this to the CNM2 to pass on to the client who had inquired, in-case the client is discharged by the time I am back on the unit next week.

Issue:
A client explained that someone sharing a room with her who had a bed near the window had just been discharged and she asked if I could help her to get that bed instead of her one in the centre of the room.
Action:
I talked to the patient about asking her key nurse about the request and I also asked the nurse therapist who I deal with on a regular basis if she could have some influence on this.
Outcome:
When the nurse therapist went to enquire it turns out the patient had just been moved to the bed near the window, so she was pleased and said to thank the peer advocate (even though it appeared to have been done already).

Examples of our Peer Advocacy Cases (cont'd)

Issue:

A client was wondering about his medication and believed he was being administered medication that is not licensed in this state.

Action:

We asked a nurse if he can speak with a hospital pharmacist about the medication.

Outcome:

This client's medication was changed after speaking with the hospital pharmacist. He was happy with that.

IRISH ADVOCACY NETWORK: TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Over 2024 the Irish Advocacy Network collaborated with several partner organisations to deliver a number of learning and development programmes. As with the previous year, where possible and appropriate IAN delivered L&D programmes through co-facilitation. This would involve identifying and supporting service users from the host partner organisation to co-deliver the relevant L&D programme alongside IAN's Training and Development Officer. We are happy to report that IAN continued to achieve high levels of participant satisfaction through feedback and evaluations of each programme, compliments and gratitude from each partner organisation that collaborated with us from the recruitment and delivery of each L&D programmes. Over 2024 a notable trend emerged toward capacity building programmes indicating a desire for organisations and groups to develop services, practices and environments that facilitate, encourage and enable their respective service user, client groups to take the lead in the design and running of activities.

In addition to our commitment to work in a collaborative manner, we continue to be involved in and engage with partner organisations with a number of projects relevant to our core business.

The activities presented below represent L&D activities co-delivered by IAN in collaboration with partner organisations. We have also included our involvement in a number of projects and a breakdown of IAN staff training delivered over 2024.

Training and Development Activities Report 2024

Table 1. Learning programmes. Personal and Professional Development

Subject	Description	Location and dates	Number of sessions and participants
Self-Advocacy Learning Programme	Self-advocacy and personal development. Co-facilitated alongside a peer recovery college facilitator.	Brook House, Waterford. January - March	10 sessions including certificate award ceremony and co-facilitator, trainer for trainer sessions. = 18 participants

Co-production developing a user-led initiative programme across EVE sites.	3 phase programme involving EVE managers, staff and participants/members of EVE.	EVE facilities	March-May = 50 participants
User-led initiative Programme	Co-design and co-delivery of the user-led initiative programme for EVE. Seven Session Process.	Across EVE sites, Dublin, Maynooth, Kildare	Sept-Nov. approx. = 65 participants.
Capacity building for co-production within EVE	Self-advocacy and co-facilitation skills as part of the user-led initiative programme for EVE. 7 session process	EVE Larine, Maynooth Sept-Nov	Sept-Nov. approx. = 10 participants.
Personal Development and Capacity Building programme.	Capacity building to maintain and enhance service user feedback and engagement in design and delivery of local mental health services.	The Studio, St Lukes Hospital, Clonmel.	November – December. = 10 participants.
Advocacy programme for Women from Ethnic Minority backgrounds.	Cairdre (Women's Health Fund, DOH)	Cairdre offices, Dublin 1.	October - November =10 participants

Staff Training 2024

<i>National Standards for Adult Safeguarding</i> HSELand
<i>Recognising and responding to the impacts of domestic abuse on women.</i> Online, delivered by Womens' Aid.
<i>Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 & the Decision Support Service.</i> Online, delivered by the Decision Support Service.
Briefing session – Safeguarding and update on GDPR policy and practices
Three-day staff training/information/engagement event <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PAMH structures and enhancing advocacy practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of PAMH organisational structure • Revisiting Reflective practice for advocacy 2. Personal Safety and Breakaway skills 3. Staff engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and input into Strategic plan • PAMH communications workshop • Q & A

All staff are up to date with their safeguarding and children first training.

Membership and Project engagement with partner organisations

- IGNITE - Patient Public Involvement project hosted by Dublin City University
- PSI-STAR - an all-Ireland, cross-disciplinary PhD psychosis research training programme involving a network of people with a wide range of expertise and interest in psychosis.
- Oversight committee – reviewing incidences pursuant to restrictive practice and ward environment, Aloysius ward, Mater hospital
- Independent Living Movement Ireland emotional and mental distress working group. Building a representative response to the review of the Mental Health Act

Miscellaneous Training/information sessions/presentations

- Academic and peer group supervision provided to Peer Support in mental health students, Dublin City University. Semester 2, January – April; semester 1, September – December
- Authorised Officer. Session as part of the Authorised Officer training programme, HSE from an Expert by Experience perspective. Cherry Orchard hospital, Ballyfermot, Dublin.

We will continue to pursue opportunities to co-design and co-deliver training in collaboration with relevant partner, stakeholder groups and organisations, and professional bodies.



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