

TOWARDS HEALING

A Catholic Church response to Institutional/Clerical/Religious abuse

TOWARDS HEALING

Counselling and Support Services

Annual Report for 2020

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Contact Details for Towards Healing

Towards Healing is a free and confidential Helpline and a Counselling Referral Service. During 2020, it provided other services, including:

- Friendly Call
- Advocacy
- Structured Telephone Counselling

The Service is accessible through:

- Freephone (Ireland) 1800 303 416
- Freephone (UK & Northern Ireland) 0800 096 3315
- www.towardshealing.ie
- Mobile number for texting purposes for our hearing-impaired service users only: 085-8022859

Helpline Opening Hours are:

- Monday – Thursday 11am – 8.00pm
- Friday 11am – 6.00pm

Outside of these hours, callers may leave a message on the answering machine and they will be contacted the following day or, in the case of calls left late on a Friday or on a Saturday or Sunday, will be called back on the following Monday.

CHY NO 20741 20082574, Registered No 431457, Towards Healing PO Box 5654, Dundrum, Dublin 14

Chairperson's Report

It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report in which we are presenting the activities, achievements and performance of Towards Healing during 2020.

2020 was the tenth year of Towards Healing and marked 25 years of outreach and support by the Catholic Church in Ireland to survivors of clerical, religious and institutional abuse provided by Towards Healing and its predecessor Faoiseamh.

2020 was also a year of challenge and change for Towards Healing and indeed for the whole world. During 2020 Towards Healing continued its work of support and healing through the telephone helpline and the provision of individual counselling but 2020 will be remembered as a very significant year in all our lives due to the arrival of the corona virus pandemic and the impact and effects of the restrictions.

This report details the various services and supports offered to clients of Towards Healing during 2020. Despite the challenges and restrictions during the year, Towards Healing supported 715 clients during 2020 which brings the total number of clients who have benefited from the support of Towards Healing and Faoiseamh since 1996 to almost 7,000 (6,934). An important point to note is that in the course of 2020, 147 new clients contacted the service. While this is a decrease on previous years, it shows that despite the very significant outreach by the Catholic Church in Ireland for 25 years, there are still survivors of abuse coming forward for the first time.

As has been noted in the Annual Reports of the last few years, the number of clients supported each year and the number of new clients registering has decreased and consequently the number of telephone calls handled and counselling sessions provided have all been decreasing over the last few years.

The work of Towards Healing is made possible through the support and funding of the sponsoring bodies who finance the entire operation of Towards Healing. During 2020, €1,130,000 was provided by AMRI and IEC, bringing the funding received by Towards Healing from the Catholic Church in Ireland since 2011 to over €21 million. When one takes account of the €22 million in funding provided to Faoiseamh by the Religious and Dioceses between 1997 and 2010, then over €43 million has been dedicated to this important outreach.

During 2020 there were 15 staff employed by Towards Healing, most in part-time roles. With the introduction of the COVID-19 restrictions, the staff rose to the challenge of working from home and the external counsellors provided the counselling online when necessary. The role of the staff in the work of Towards Healing is significant and is greatly appreciated. In particular, I acknowledge the contribution of Dr Melissa Darmody, Breda Flood, Stephen Quinn and Martin Devine, all of whom finished with Towards Healing during 2020. I would like to recognise the work of Joan Freeman who was Manager of Towards Healing from August 2020 and continued in that role until June of this year.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment and contribution of all the Directors, past and present, who give of their time and expertise so freely and generously to Towards Healing. The board is committed to ensuring that Towards Healing will achieve its mission of enabling survivors of institutional, clerical and religious childhood abuse to recover, heal and rebuild their lives in the most effective and efficient way possible.

Richard Purcell OCSO

October 2021

Our Work in 2020 – Client Registrations

1. Clients during 2020

In the course of 2020 Towards Healing supported 715 clients, which brings the total number of clients who have benefited from the support of Towards Healing and Faoiseamh since 1996 to almost 7,000 (6,934). The numbers during 2020 represent a decrease of 27% on the client numbers of the two previous years when there were, 979 and 975 clients supported respectively.

Most clients live in Ireland while approximately 5% live abroad. During 2020, Towards Healing supported clients living in Ireland as well as in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Spain and USA.

The table below shows the total number of clients supported each year since 2011:

<i>Year</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
<i>Clients</i>	1,195	1,680	1,513	1,424	1,732	1,300	858	979	975	715

2. New Client Registrations

During 2020 147 new clients contacted the service, which represents a 28% decrease from 2019 when there were 205 new clients, but shows that despite the very significant outreach by the Catholic Church in Ireland for over 20 years there are still survivors of abuse coming forward for the first time.

The table below shows the total number of new clients registering with the service each year since 2011:

<i>Year</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
<i>Clients</i>	383	389	426	343	313	230	199	239	205	147

3. Re-registrations

A reregistering client is one who had commenced their therapy but decided not to proceed with it. Some who exit therapy early feel the need to return, due to a particular event in their lives, and these are able to do so under the service's Clinical Policy and Model of Care. In the course of 2020, 112 clients re-registered with Towards Healing, which represents a 27% decrease from 2019 when 154 clients re-registered.

The table below shows the total number of clients re-registering with the service each year since 2011:

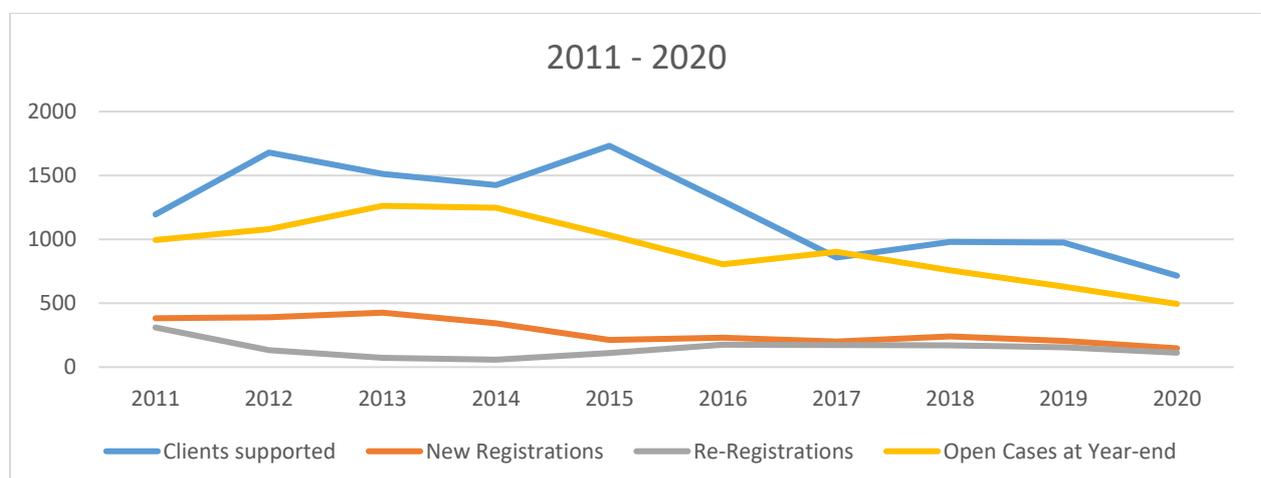
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Clients	310	132	72	58	109	176	172	169	154	112

4. Active Clients at the end of 2020

The number of active clients or 'open cases' has generally been decreasing annually since 2013. At the end of 2020, there were 494 clients currently in receipt of counselling and/or support from Towards Healing. This represents a decrease of 136 or 21.5% compared with the same time the previous year.

The table below shows the total number of open cases at the end of each year since 2011:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Clients	994	1,079	1,262	1,246	1,032	806	903	758	630	494



Counselling

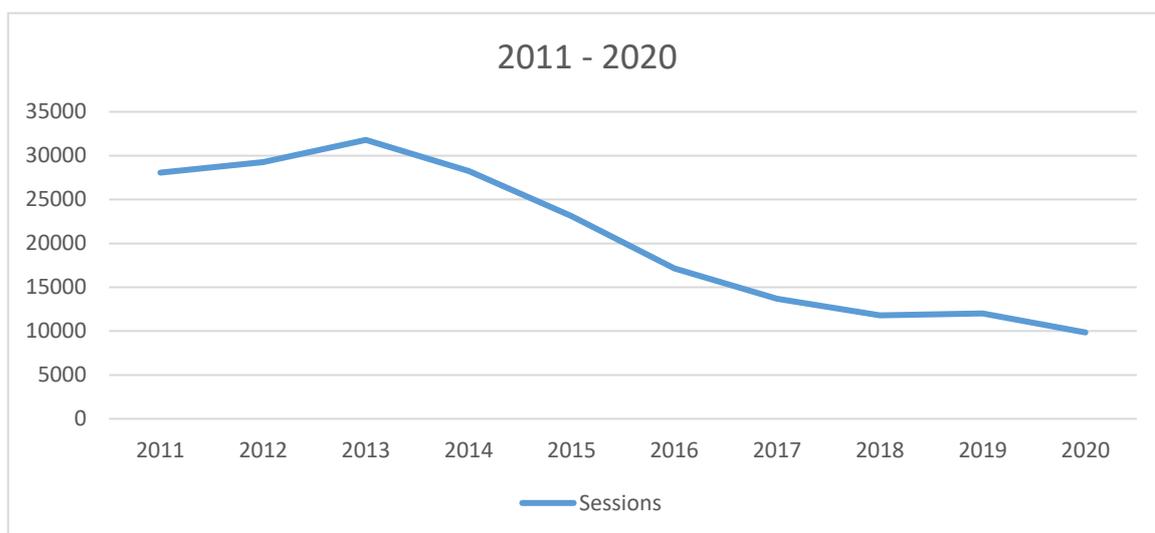
1. Counselling Sessions

Counselling is provided by external counsellors who are located in geographical proximity to clients. A small number of clients regularly receive counselling via telephone or video conferencing. Some deaf clients receive support via text message or attend regular counselling facilitated by a sign language interpreter.

In the course of 2020, Towards Healing provided 9,848 counselling sessions to both primary survivors of abuse and to family members. This figure represents an 18% decrease on the previous year in which Towards Healing provided 12,018 counselling sessions but is consistent with the reduction in clients and is also due to the effects and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic

The table below shows the total number of counselling sessions provided each year since 2011:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sessions	28,079	29,261	31,797	28,245	23,112	17,138	13,700	11,787	12,018	9,848



Since 2011 Towards Healing has provided 204,985 sessions of individual counselling, which when added to the 259,030 sessions provided by Faoiseamh bring the total number of counselling sessions provided between 1997 and 2020 to 464,015.

2. Clients availing of Counselling

During 2020, 633 clients availed of the counselling provided by Towards Healing, a 17% reduction on the previous year when 762 clients were in receipt of counselling.

Of the 633 clients in receipt of counselling during 2020, 543 (86%) were primary survivors of abuse while 90 (14%) were family members of those abused. However almost 92% of the counselling sessions provided were with survivors.

3. Counselling and the COVID-19 Pandemic

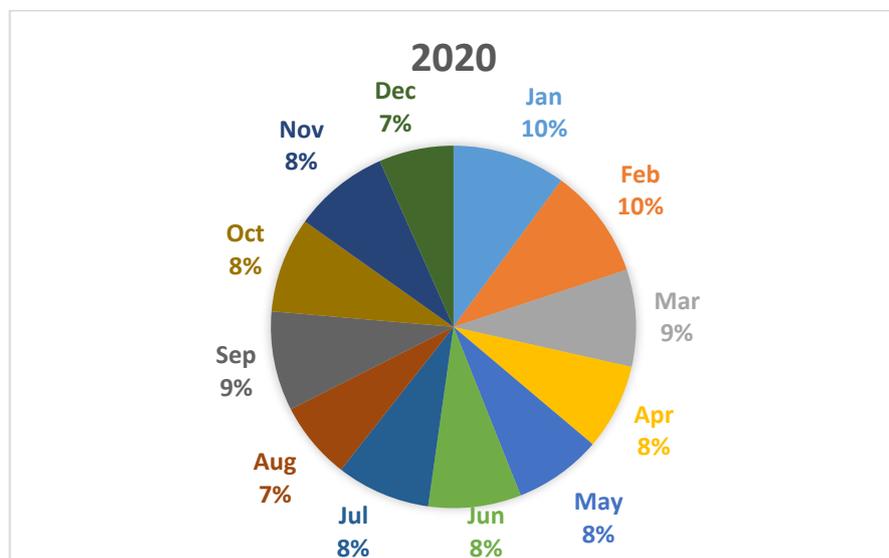
The COVID-19 Pandemic, which began in March 2020 and has continued since, has affected Towards Healing and the service it provides. Following directives for people to work from home, the offices of Towards Healing closed from mid-March until June with staff working from home and case managers operating the telephone helpline remotely. During this initial lockdown all counselling moved online, though about 20% of clients opted to suspend their sessions at that time.

Since June 2020, counselling has returned to in person, although some clients sought to continue with online sessions.

4. Monthly Breakdown of Counselling Sessions

The table below shows the number of counselling sessions provided each month during 2020:

Month	Sessions
Jan	989
Feb	970
Mar	852
Apr	755
May	767
Jun	810
Jul	821
Aug	683
Sep	874
Oct	838
Nov	838
Dec	651



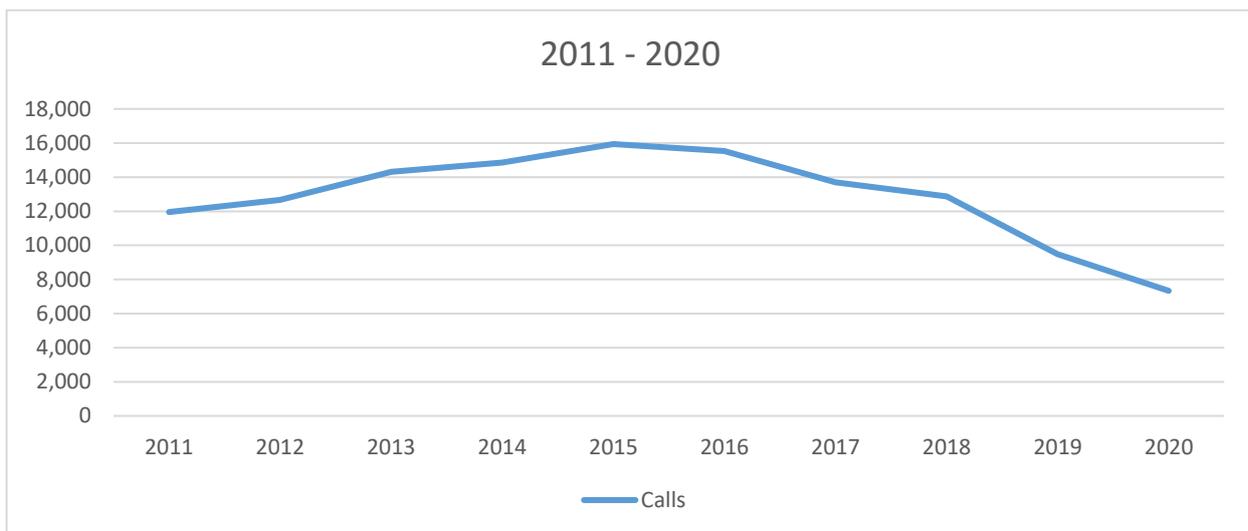
Telephone Helpline, Workshops, Group Work & Training

Telephone Helpline

The first point of contact between clients and Towards Healing is usually the telephone helpline. Throughout 2020 the helpline was open for 35 hours each week and handled 7,335 calls – over 2,150 (22%) fewer calls than the 9,490 handled during 2019. Calls handled include calls received, messages left on the out-of-hours answer service and calls made to clients by the helpline staff.

This table shows the total number of telephone calls handled annually since 2011:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Calls	11,954	12,656	14,319	14,862	15,937	15,523	13,694	12,876	9,490	7,335



As well as assessing and registering clients for referral to counselling, the case managers provide in the moment therapeutic support to clients who may need some extra support e.g. when the regular therapist is on holiday or otherwise unavailable.

Structured Telephone Counselling

This service was introduced to facilitate clients who may find it difficult to travel for face to face counselling, those who are more comfortable with the protection the telephone can provide when talking about very sensitive issues, or those clients who live overseas and would like to talk to a therapist in Ireland about their experience of harm

as a child in Ireland. Clients have a specific appointment each week for 50 minutes just as they would with a face-to-face therapist.

Friendly Call

Case managers continue to provide the Friendly Call Service when they make pre-arranged regular calls to clients who may be particularly isolated, lonely or just in need of a friendly voice.

Training for Therapists

Towards Healing facilitated one training day for therapists during 2020.

Psycho-Educational Groups & Practical Workshops for Clients

In addition to the telephone helpline and individual counselling sessions, Towards Healing also facilitated psycho-educational group work and practical workshops. However, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions, it was not possible to offer these in 2020 with the exception of the Trauma Recovery Programme, which had begun in October 2019, concluded in Jan 2020, and had 11 participants.

Restorative Justice Programme

Towards Healing developed a Restorative Justice Programme that provides for a structured way to prepare and support users who have requested communication with the various Congregations and Dioceses. These meetings can take several forms, ranging from Towards Healing being involved in a long process of assisting in the development and preparation for meetings to simply being required to act as a support person.

Since 2012, over 70 clients have requested assistance in their communication with the Church authorities. The numbers availing of the Restorative Justice Programme declined in recent years with just three new clients joining in 2019. Due to the reduced numbers and the COVID-19 restrictions, it was not possible to run the programme in 2020.

Acting Clinical Director's Report

2020 was a year of change and transition for Towards Healing on a number of fronts. Mr Michael Lyons, CEO, retired in November 2019 and replaced by acting CEO, Mr Stephen Quinn who in turn handed over the reins to Ms Joan Freeman in August 2020. Further change came when Dr Melissa Darmody left the organisation in February 2020 when I was requested to take over her role on a temporary basis. This has been a challenging task indeed, as Melissa was held in very high esteem by her colleagues and had introduced many clinical initiatives during her 11 years in the organisation. Ms Breda Flood, Corporate and Finance Officer, also moved on in April 2020, she too is greatly missed for her extensive knowledge of all areas of the organisation. On behalf of myself and the staff of Towards Healing, I would like to wish our former colleagues well in their new endeavours.

Our Workshops and Groups for clients such as the Trauma Recovery Programme, Parent Coaching and Restorative Justice Services, as well as our bi-annual trauma training for therapists, were suspended until the clinical review was completed and decisions made about the future of the service.

Our Advocacy Service also ended with the retirement of Advocacy Officer, Martin Devine, in October 2020. Again, we wish Martin well in his retirement.

Impact of COVID-19

The need for a scaled down service was added to by the arrival of COVID-19 and our first lockdown in March 2020. At the time, none of us could have predicted the long-term impact of the pandemic. Towards Healing staff worked incredibly hard to ensure minimal disruption to services. Staff, at this time, did not have remote access to our computer system, Salesforce. A small number of more senior staff with remote access would update the system at the end of each day. While this worked reasonably well, it soon became clear that there would be further, longer lasting lockdowns and so each staff member was given remote access to the system and provided with a mobile phone. Despite occasional IT glitches, this has proven to be an efficient method of continuing the service.

In order to avoid staff feeling isolated at home, a daily 'coffee break' call is made by senior staff to maintain a sense of camaraderie. Case Managers also contact senior staff with any complex queries on a regular basis. Monthly team meetings and Group Supervision continue albeit via Zoom.

Providing Therapy during Lockdown

With regard to the provision of face-to-face therapy during lockdown, we wrote to all our therapists informing them of government guidelines and asking them to be aware of the guidelines of their particular professional accrediting body. We recommended that therapists offer telephone or online counselling if their clients were comfortable with these methods of delivery. Understandably, some therapists and clients were nervous about the changes. There were concerns about confidentiality with software such as Zoom, and privacy was an issue for clients trying to engage in therapy in their own homes, which they often shared with others.

After some investigation of cases where clients had initially engaged with face-to-face therapy but had later disengaged, we discovered that 54 clients decided to cease the face to face or telephone counselling. These cases were subsequently closed with the proviso that clients could contact the Helpline again, if needed, when normality returns. Some clients chose to receive Friendly Calls from our Case Managers as lockdown caused isolation and triggered feelings of being back in an institution with no freedom.

For those clients receiving telephone counselling, a number of therapists reported that clients found a full session on a mobile phone too intense/uncomfortable. In such cases, we sanctioned half hour calls, with every second call being input as a whole session.

Collaboration with Other Organisations

In May 2019, Towards Healing worked in partnership with various agencies that interface with our service users to organise a conference in Trinity College Dublin entitled *Facing the Future Together*. This marked the 20th anniversary of former Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern's apology to survivors and was a collaboration between the following survivor groups and agencies: Towards Healing, Right of Place, Christine Buckley Education Centre, Barnardos, One in Four, Caranua and the HSE – National

Counselling Service. The conference was a great success and led to the launch in October 2020 of a comprehensive report containing contributions from academics, individual survivors and their families, survivor groups and the other agencies listed above. The purpose of the report was to highlight the Five Asks identified as essential to survivors as we face the future together and was distributed to all interested parties, stakeholders and members of the Oireachtas.

- Enhanced medical card for survivors and support with housing
- Continuation of free easily accessible counselling services for survivors and their family members
- Provision of advocacy supports for survivors in the long-term, including accessing public services, linkage with support services, homelessness and addiction supports
- All medical, and public service staff working in a customer-facing role should receive trauma-informed practice training on how to identify survivors and the different approaches to the support that this may require
- Identification of supports needed by survivors based outside Ireland

This was a wonderful opportunity for organisations that provide services to adult survivors of abuse to work collaboratively on issues of mutual interest.

Patricia Keohane

Acting Clinical Director

Child Protection Report

Context of the Child Protection Officer Role

The Children's First Act (2015) was enacted on December 11, 2017 and on May 25th, 2018, implementation of the General Data Protection Regulator (GDPR) occurred. As reported in previous years, the Child Protection form on our Service Management system was updated in December 2017 (for the Children's First Act 2015) and again in March/April 2018 to assist with the compliance of the EU, GDPR legislations.

Towards Healing's panel of therapists, worldwide have accepted these changes and completed the Keeping Safe Form on the Client Management System. This ensures that any delicate information about the client's abuse details stays safe and confidential.

Covid 19 has changed how many of Towards Healing therapists are working with their clients. Many are working with their clients through Zoom and for many this was a huge change from working face to face.

For clients registering with Towards Healing for the first time, working with the Therapist on Zoom and working on completing the Keep Safe Form took great courage.

Therapists have informed Towards Healing that some clients are very vulnerable and a little reluctant to allow their abuse be reported to the authorities, as this may be their first time to report their abuse openly.

Often what encourages the client is the fact that their reporting may actually help protect a child now from suffering abuse by the perpetrator. They have also said that it has helped them to move forward in their lives.

Towards Healing now report directly to TUSLA in Southern Ireland through the TUSLA portal and Gateways in Northern Ireland online.

Towards Healing will continue to work with our clients, in a gentle yet professional way, to report their childhood abuse and to help them in the healing process.

Children's First Act 2015

To ensure appropriate child protection and to be in compliance with updated national legislation i.e. The Children's First Act (2015) together with the National Board for Safeguarding Children's document Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016), Towards Healing's Keeping Safe Policy has been updated. This legislation focuses on ensuring that children in Ireland remain safe from sexual, physical, emotional harm and neglect. Sharing information regarding harm to a child will become the responsibility of the mandated person; counsellors, psychotherapists and psychologists are among those listed in the legislation as mandated persons. In practical terms, this will mean that all neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse will be reported to the civil authorities. This will include past and current harm.

Towards Healing will continue to refer clients to therapists for 12 sessions initially, during which time any child protection issues and the new requirements can be explored with the client. For information regarding the Children's First Act (2015) please see: Children First Act 2015 (irishstatutebook.ie)

Towards Healing staff are available to therapists and clients to assist with any concerns they may have. Towards Healing reported 68 cases of Child Abuse to TUSLA in 2020.

I would like to thank the Board of Towards Healing, therapists, clients and colleagues for their dedication throughout 2020. Towards Healing works within the Guidelines of the Children First Policy, ensuring that Child Protection is always a priority. This involves working with the network of agencies with responsibility for Child Protection.

Towards Healing has an excellent working relationship with all our partners and I would like to express my thanks to those officials with whom I came into contact. Our shared objective is to ensure that relevant information on child abuse is dealt with appropriately, so that effective action can be taken in a timely manner to protect children.

Maggie O'Neill

Child Protection Officer

Advocacy Service Report

Advocacy Service

The advocacy service supports clients who wish to engage with both statutory and voluntary agencies. In many instances, clients do not have the confidence to make direct contact with the personnel in these agencies. Furthermore, they may have had an unpleasant experience previously and therefore may be reluctant to do so again. In addition, these clients may not be able to articulate their issues in a brief and precise manner when they do finally decide to call these agencies.

Despite all the links available for these agencies, many clients find it quite difficult to navigate their way through the system and find the relevant person who can assist them to resolve their issues. The advocacy service always encourages clients to take the lead responsibility for their own needs, and we only interface directly with these agencies when the client is unable or unsuccessful in advocating for themselves.

Referral Process

The Case Managers and therapists initially refer clients to the service. These referrals' are then followed up with a clarification call with the client, followed by an initial needs assessment.

Needs Assessment

During this process clients are advised of the range and limitations of services i.e. no legal advice and no access to funding. The clients are involved in the decision making process and their needs are prioritised e.g. housing, access to the Health Services etc.

Interface with Statutory and Voluntary Agencies

After the client completes the consent and/or permission to share forms, the service engages with the relevant agencies and an implementation plan with a realistic timeframe is put in place. The service is in regular contact with the clients during all stages of the process and they are fully briefed on any developments that have happened in the interim. The process is reviewed afterwards to assess the effectiveness of the process.

Activity

The following is a summary of the activity of the advocacy service during 2020.

Number of existing Clients referred	5
Number of contacts with these clients	25
Number of new clients referred	0
Total number of contacts with clients	25

The issue of housing dominated the activity and accounted for 80% of the workload. The thoughts of becoming homeless during Covid 19 is particularly stressful for our clients and we have been making every effort to assist and reassure them, whilst interfacing with the various housing agencies and local authorities to ensure that their concerns are fully understood.

To their credit, these agencies have been very helpful, but as long as there is uncertainty about their future housing, these anxieties will remain.

Martin Devine

Advocacy Service Manager

Evaluation of the Counselling and Support Services of Towards Healing

Towards Healing is committed to reviewing and evaluating its work and services, in order to assess the quality, effectiveness and outcomes of its services, and to provide transparency for funders and other key stakeholders. To adhere to this commitment, in September 2020 Towards Healing commissioned an evaluation of its counselling and ancillary support services from 2018 - 2020 by an independent researcher/consultant. It was anticipated that the findings of the evaluation would be used to guide the future strategy of Towards Healing and to agree the level of service with funders and/or other stakeholders for the next two years.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

1. Document the model of service delivery to include the client journey and analyse the outcomes and outputs of the individual counselling, helpline counselling and advocacy services.
2. Appraise the effectiveness of the clinical management processes and procedures, including clinical oversight of outsourced counsellors, their experience, recruitment and training
3. Evaluate the impact of the services for survivors of institutional, clerical or religious abuse in line with the mission of Towards Healing
4. Identify potential barriers/blockages/challenges that might impede the work of the service
5. Highlight the good practice and lessons learned from the service and compare to best practice elsewhere
6. Evaluate the efficiency of the services and how they optimise the use of limited resources

Dr. Finian Fallon undertook the research and evaluation from September to December 2020 that included

- Quantitative analysis of data on Salesforce and qualitative analysis of a sample of cases
- Consultation with clinical personnel, support staff, outsourced counsellors and key stakeholders
- Consultation with clients
- Analysis of relevant documentation available within Towards Healing with regard to operation of the service
- Review of relevant secondary data

Financial Report

Annual Budget for 2020

Following the expiration of the Memorandum of Understanding, which had been in place for 2018 and 2019, no new funding agreement was confirmed. However, the Sponsoring Bodies (AMRI and IEC) contributed a similar level of funding in 2020 as during the two previous years.

Income Received during 2020

Income received during 2020 was €1,130,015 made up as follows: -

IEC	€ 300,000
AMRI	€ 830,000
Other	€ <u>15</u>
Total	€ 1,130,015

Audit 2020

The Statement of Financial Accounts at December 31st. 2020 is appended to the Annual Report.

The financial statements for 2020 have been prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, using the financial reporting framework of the Companies Act 2014, FRS 102 and the Charities SORP (FRS102). Financial reporting in line with SORP is considered best practice for charities in Ireland.

The audit of the 2020 financial statements was undertaken by Ms Aedin Morkan of Mazars Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm, Harcourt Centre, Dublin 2.

CCSS Limited – Financial Information for Year Ending 31st December 2020

Income & Expenditure Account Extract	
12 months ended 31/12/2020	
	€
Incoming Resources	
Grants from Funders (AMRI & IEC)	1,130,000
Donations Received	0
Other Income	<u>15</u>
Total Incoming Resources	<u>1,130,015</u>
Resources Expended - Ongoing Expenditure	
Direct Counselling Costs	1,050,937
Administration Expenses	<u>267,858</u>
Sub-Total Resources Expended - Ongoing Expenditure	1,318,795
Depreciation	6,744
Net Outgoing Resources for the Period	<u>1,325,539</u>
Operating Loss	195,524
Balance Sheet Extract	
12 months ended 31/12/2020	
	€
Fixed Assets	
Leasehold Improvements & Office Equipment	7,072
Current assets	
Debtors	13,059
Cash at bank and in hand	37,745
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	
Operating Creditors	(225,511)
Accumulated Net Funds (2011-2020)	<u>(167,635)</u>

Feedback from Clients

Complaints against the Service

While complaints about the service over the years are few – in particular when taken in the context of approximately 6,780 clients, supported by both Faoiseamh (1996 – 2010) and Towards Healing (2011 – to date). It is the policy of the service to have each complaint examined, and to ensure that any conclusions and recommendations are addressed fully, towards ensuring that the service fully meets the needs and expectations of its clients, in as effective a manner as possible. The Towards Healing Complaints Policy is available on the website <https://towardshealing.ie/>.

Feedback from clients

Towards Healing receives feedback from its clients, inter alia, as a basis to assess the quality of the service, based on the personal experiences of clients, and in particular, the outcomes of the therapy or Group work which they have received.

Board of Directors 2020

Ms Marian Shanley – Chairperson (January – June) (resigned 4 June 2020)
Marian is a Solicitor by profession, acted as legal adviser to the Ferns Inquiry, and was a Commissioner on the Commission for Inquiry into Child Abuse (The Ryan Commission). She was also a member of the Law Reform Commission from 2002 - 2012.

Ms. Maureen Browne (resigned 28 May 2020)
Maureen Browne is a health analyst, journalist and communications consultant. She is a former National Communications Director with the HSE. She is a Trustee of the world-famous Worth Library, was appointed by the Government to the Second Commission on the Status of Women, is a short story writer and co-author of *Cleared for Disaster*, the critically acclaimed story of Ireland's most horrific and mysterious air disasters.

Mr. Michael Duffy (resigned 28 May 2020)
Michael Duffy was Chief Executive of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) from May 2004 until September 2020. Prior to the RDS, Mr Duffy was Chief Executive of Bord Bia, the Irish Food Board, from its establishment in 1994 to promote and develop markets for the Irish food and drinks sectors. Michael also worked in senior positions in the public sector with IDA Ireland, gaining extensive experience in the attraction of inward investment in the electronics, food, and other manufacturing sectors. Mr Duffy also worked with Courtaulds plc, as a Research Physicist in their Central Research Laboratories in Coventry, England and as the Technical Manager of their major plant in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.

Most Rev. John Fleming D.D (resigned 28 May 2020)
Most Rev. John Fleming was ordained as Bishop of Killala on April 7th. 2002. He is a Member of the Standing Committee, a member of the Episcopal Commission for Planning Communications and Resources, member of the Council for Governance, and Member of the Council for Finance and General Purposes.

Most Rev. Fintan Monahan (resigned 28 May 2020)
Born in Tullamore, Co. Offaly in January 1967 & moved to An Cheathrú Rua, Co. na Gaillimhe in 1979. Ordained in Carraroe in 1991 after studying Science and Theology in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. Ministered in An Tulach, Baile na hAbhann from 1992-1993 & taught in St. Jarlath's College Tuam from 1993 until 2005. Diocesan Secretary, Tuam from 2005-2016 and Chaplain to St. Jarlath's during that period. Consecrated bishop of Killaloe on September 25th. 2016.

Sr. Noreen Shankey (resigned 28 May 2020)
Noreen Shankey is a St. Louis Sister. She has a background in Education, Clinical Psychology and Spirituality. She has worked as a teacher, a counsellor and as a chaplain at 3rd. level. She has held various leadership roles in her order. She was formerly on the Executive Board of CORI and was Regional Leader for St. Louis in Ireland.

Fr. John Hughes O.S.A (resigned 28 May 2020)
John Hughes OSA is a member of the Irish Augustinian Province. Presently based in Dublin as parish priest of the parish of Ballyboden, he has served in a variety of ministries: formation, counselling and, for eight years, as Vicar for Clergy in the Archdiocese of Dublin. Ordained in 1975, he graduated from the Institute of Psychology at the Gregorian University in 1977.

Fr. Richard Purcell OCSO – Chairperson (June – December) (appointed 28 May 2020)

Richard Purcell is a Cistercian monk and Abbot of Mount Melleray Abbey, Co Waterford. A native of Dublin, he entered Mount St Joseph Abbey, Roscrea in 1997 after studying Music, French and Italian at UCD. He was ordained in 2005 after having studied Philosophy at Maynooth and Theology at Oxford. For several years, Fr Richard was on the staff of Cistercian College, Roscrea. He was elected Abbot of Mount St Joseph Abbey in 2009 and was subsequently elected Abbot of Mount Melleray Abbey in 2017.

Ms. Anne Carpenter (appointed 28 May 2020)

Anne Carpenter has a background in social science and education, a graduate of UCD and University of Ulster. She is a professionally qualified social worker and psychotherapist. While working with the SEHB she helped develop the Regional Sexual Abuse Unit. Anne worked for a number of years in higher education at IT Carlow where she established the Student Services and Teaching and Learning departments. She has also conducted research on the student experience, travelling community and child sexual abuse. She recently completed a study on the mental health of migrant women. Anne currently works part-time with Spirasi as a psychotherapist, with victims of trauma and torture.

Ms. Joan Freeman (appointed 28 May 2020; resigned 15 July 2020)

Joan Freeman is a psychologist and mental health activist. She holds a degree and MA in psychology. She is the founder of Pieta House, the suicide intervention charity established in 2006. Joan served as a Senator from 2016 to 2020. In June 2018, Freeman received the Trailblazer Award from the Women's Executive Network, Ireland. In 2019, Trinity College Dublin awarded her with an honorary doctorate.

Fr. Hugh Lagan SMA (appointed 28 May 2020)

Hugh Lagan is a priest with the Society of African Missions and a registered Clinical Psychologist. He has held various ministry appointments in East and Southern Africa, including pastoral, formation, clinical, education and safeguarding responsibilities. He has led workshops internationally on psychological and spiritual well-being, positive mental health, trauma and resilience.

Sr. Cait O'Dwyer RSM (appointed 28 May 2020)

Cait O'Dwyer is presently serving her second term as a member of the Congregational Leadership Team of the Sisters of Mercy. While based in Dublin, she has particular responsibility for the US Region and the Kenyan Province. Previously she has worked at the Institute of Psychology, Gregorian University, Rome, St Luke's Centre, Manchester and St Patrick's College, Maynooth. She holds an M.Soc.Sc. from University College Dublin and a Ph.D. in Psychology from the Gregorian University.

Most Rev. Michael Router DD (appointed 28 May 2020)

Bishop Michael is a native of Virginia in Co. Cavan. He was ordained as a priest in 1989. He served at various times as a curate, parish priest, secondary school teacher and director of Adult Faith Formation and Pastoral Development in his native diocese of Kilmore. On the 7th May, 2019, Pope Francis appointed him Auxiliary Bishop of Armagh and he was ordained in St. Patrick's Cathedral on the 21st July 2019. Bishop Michael is also Chairman of the Council for Healthcare; Vice President of Accord Catholic Marriage Care Service CLG; Liaison Bishop with the Irish Bishops' Drugs Initiative and a member of the Irish Inter-Church Committee.

Ms. Anne Confrey (appointed 9 October 2020)

Anne Confrey is a retired Solicitor having worked in private practice latterly in the area of institutional defence litigation and mediation. She has a keen interest in supporting and developing child protection and safeguarding initiatives and works with a number of charitable organizations in a voluntary capacity.

Ms. Joan Freeman resigned from the Board of Directors in July 2020 to take up the position of Manager in succession to Stephen Quinn.

Staff of Towards Healing and Organisational Arrangements 2020

