TOWARDS HEALING

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 – 2030

April 2026

Company Registered Number: 431457

Charity Number: 20741 / 20082574

INTRODUCTION

Towards Healing is a non-governmental, charitable organisation whose purpose is to support survivors of institutional, clerical, and religious abuse, and their family members, who were abused on the island of Ireland as children within the Catholic Church.

Towards Healing was established in 2011 as the successor to *Faoiseamh* which had been founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1996. It is a company limited by guarantee and is funded by the members of Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (AMRI) and the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference (IEC).

In 2020, Towards Healing developed its first strategic plan which articulated the vision, mission, and values of Towards Healing as follows:

The strategy identified 4 key strategic themes and related objectives to guide the work of Towards Healing from 2020 to 2025. These key strategic themes were:

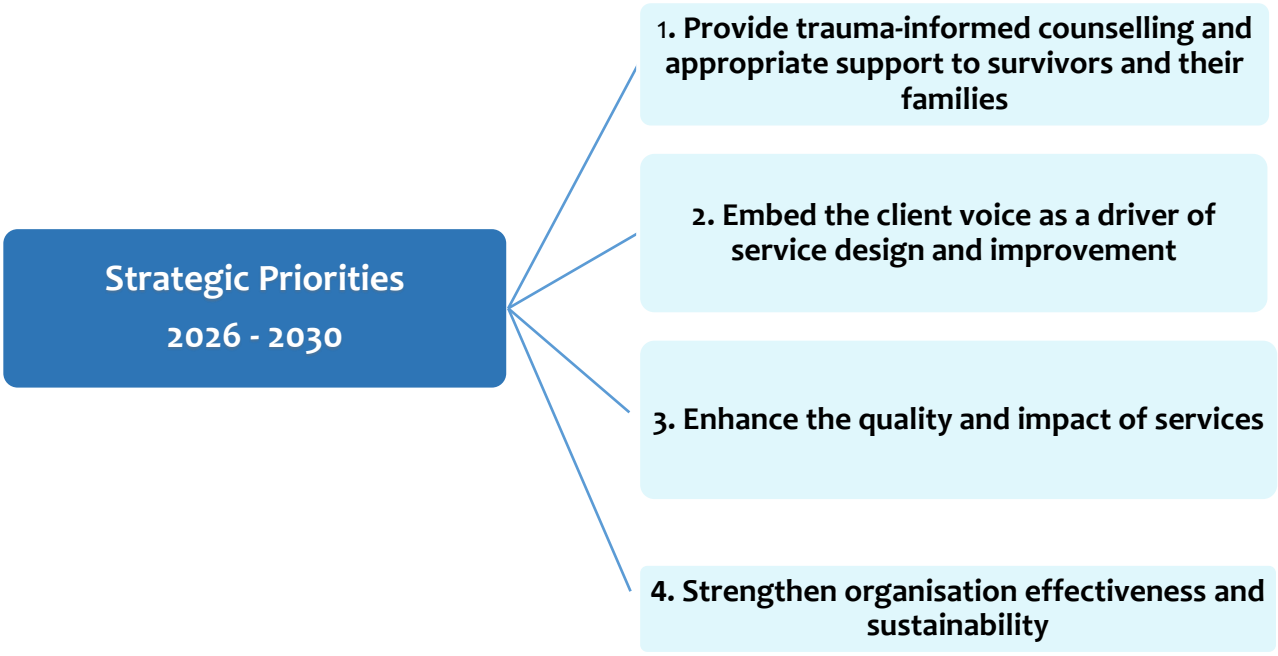
I. Strengthen our approach to counselling and support provision for clients.
II. Enhance quality of services.
III. Enhance good governance and regulatory compliance.
IV. Establish effective leadership, management, and staffing structures.

A review of this strategy in 2025 indicated that the majority of the objectives have been achieved over the past five years. The review also highlighted that the Vision, Mission, and Values continue to be fundamental to Towards Healing and will inform the strategy for the next five years. Thus, the mission for Towards Healing is to:

> *enable survivors of Catholic institutional, clerical, and religious childhood abuse to heal and rebuild their lives by providing professional counselling and other appropriate supports to them and to their family members.*

TOWARDS HEALING'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2026 – 2030

In order to achieve our mission, Towards Healing's strategy for 2026 – 2030 is based on four core strategic priorities as outlined in the following section.



Values

While the strategic priorities that follow describe **what** Towards Healing proposes to do in the next five years, Towards Healing wishes to affirm the values that will inform and influence **how** we will operate.

Compassion

Compassion for survivors; recognising that they have been deeply harmed by their experiences of abuse and that the resulting impact may cause long-lasting trauma and suffering which may permeate all aspects of their lives.

Empowerment

Supporting survivors and empowering them to reclaim and rebuild their lives.

Hope

Hope that survivors will benefit from Towards Healing's services, will heal, and live the fullest possible lives.

1.CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TRAUMA-INFORMED COUNSELLING AND APPROPRIATE SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

To achieve this priority, we will:

a) Embed Towards Healing's 'Model of Care' for clients across the organisation and ensure it informs the practice of our Affiliate Counsellors.
b) Ensure that the 'Model of Care' leverages best practice from research and evidence-based interventions.
c) Strengthen clinical governance and appropriate monitoring of the client journey.
d) Review models of group support, increase provision, and develop an evaluation process for groupwork delivered.

How shall we know we have advanced this priority:

I. The 'Model of Care' will guide the clinical work of Towards Healing across its services and be updated in the light of new research and evidence of best practice.
II. Towards Healing will produce clear evidence that our interventions lead to improved outcomes for clients by further developing client feedback mechanisms.
III. The numbers of clients participating in group work will increase.

2. EMBED THE CLIENT VOICE AS A DRIVER OF SERVICE DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT

To achieve this priority, we will:

a) Actively seek, hear, and foster the voices, views and experiences of clients.
b) Provide multiple trauma-informed ways for survivors to give feedback including the use of peer consultative groups.
c) Improve accessibility of client feedback with regard to literacy, language, and technological barriers.
d) Identify and report on how clients' feedback has informed change in our services.

How shall we know we have advanced this priority:

I. Towards Healing will develop multiple trauma-informed ways for survivors to give feedback, focused primarily on evaluating the outcomes for clients.
II. A framework for clients to contribute to the development of services will be developed.
III. The number of service improvements directly linked to survivor feedback will be identified in the annual report.

3. ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND IMPACT OF SERVICES

To achieve this priority, we will:

a) Employ appropriately qualified, experienced staff and Affiliate Counsellors and support appropriate review and ongoing training opportunities.
b) Ensure staffing resources are deployed in a flexible manner to respond to client needs within available funding and capacity.
c) Improve the robustness of our evaluation systems, in order to assess the tangible benefits of counselling services for clients and identify areas for improvement.

How shall we know we have advanced this priority:

I. All staff and Affiliate Counsellors will be appropriately qualified in line with Towards Healing's recruitment and employment policies.
II. An annual CPD programme for staff will be set in place.
III. Training opportunities will be provided for Affiliate Counsellors aligned to Towards Healing's 'Model of Care' and best practice in trauma-informed care.
IV. A robust evaluation system will be in place linked to clear clinical governance and quality assurance processes.

4. STRENGTGHEN ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

To achieve this priority, we will:

a) Produce an annual impact report combining evidence of outcomes and clients' lived experience of services.
b) Use impact evidence to inform funding discussions in order to ensure sustainable, multi-annual funding for ongoing service planning, in line with our strategic objectives.
c) Engage in regular reviews of the staffing structure and capacity to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose having regard to leadership and management, effective client referral, and support throughout the client journey.
d) Support the smooth succession, recruitment and induction of new Board members, and maintain a balance of skills, expertise and experience on the Board.

How shall we know we have advanced this priority:

I. The Board and funders will report confidence in understanding the impact of Towards Healing's services for clients.
II. Our resources will be allocated within our funding capacity to maximise impact and efficiency by aligning resources with strategic objectives.
III. The Board will review the membership of the Board and develop a succession plan.

ENABLERS OF SUCCESS

In order to deliver on the Strategy from 2026 to 2030 the following enablers have been identified:

Financial Resources

It is crucial for Towards Healing to establish a financially sustainable organisation capable of funding our essential supports and services. Towards Healing is totally dependent on its sponsoring bodies to provide funding for the services on which its clients depend. While the funders have been and remain very supportive, Towards Healing recognises that resources are finite. It is therefore incumbent on the Board and management to demonstrate that services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner providing positive outcomes for clients.

Capability Building and Technological Infrastructure

Towards Healing needs to develop greater capability in relation to service quality assurance in order to ensure that counselling is delivered in accordance with the 'Model of Care' and that clients receive the required level and type of support.

It is critical we have appropriate technological systems and data for analysing where Towards Healing delivers greatest impact, innovation, and good outcomes for clients. We will strive to optimise IT systems to develop a comprehensive reporting framework tailored to the implementation of our strategy, allowing us to support decision-making, communication, and demonstrate impact.

People and Culture

The main feature of Towards Healing's culture is its focus on positive outcomes for clients embedded in our values of compassion, empowerment, and hope. Our staff and Affiliate Counsellors are committed to our mission and have significant expertise in their fields. We collectively strive to create a positive and supportive work environment that ensures our team have the necessary skills, resources, and capacity to contribute to and collaborate with the work of Towards Healing. This will involve fostering a work environment where our values are not only stated but deeply embedded in the behaviours, attitudes, and practices of Towards Healing staff and Affiliate Counsellors.

There is also a need to cultivate behaviours in the organisation that are consistent with its status as a registered charity which is entirely funded by its sponsoring bodies. Chief among these is a sense of accountability. This includes (a) individual and collective accountability on the part of staff to the Director of Services in respect of the performance of their roles, (b) the accountability of the Director of Services to the Board for provision of quality, cost effective services delivered in accordance with high standards of clinical governance, and (c) accountability of the Board to the Members for its stewardship of the organisation.