

Connect Service Report

2011 - 2014

connect

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Connect Telephone Counselling & Support

Connect Service Report 2011 - 2014



connect



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Introduction by the Chair

This report represents a significant summary and analysis of the important work of the Connect Professional Telephone Counselling & Support Service over the last 4 years. Connect has since its formation in 2006 played a key role in supporting the most vulnerable in Ireland and beyond who have experienced abuse in institutions and also abuse in families and communities.

As an out of hours service Connect is unique as professional counsellors are available to support and counsel people on an anonymous and ongoing basis. We are aware that many who avail of the service are isolated due to the abuse they suffered, the locations they live in and not being able to avail of other face to face services. Connect provides a safe and non judgmental professional service at times when all other services are not readily available.

The commitment of the board and staff members to respond to crucial incidences by extending the service at short notice following the release of reports and media events related to abuse is testimony to the flexible and compassionate service provision offered by Connect.

Connect constantly operates to the highest professional and governance standards and ensures excellence in service through the employment of professional staff who are highly trained and experienced in this specialist provision.

Connect's links to statutory and non statutory agencies, including our key funder, the HSE, ensures staff can communicate all other services available to callers.

As Chairperson I would like to pay tribute to Connect's manager and staff who are the key to the ongoing success of the service, which is evident through the numbers of callers who continue to avail of this service.

Along with fellow board members we pay tribute and remember our friend and tireless advocate Christine Buckley who played such a central role for many years in Connect.



Patricia Carey
Chairperson, Board of Connect

Board Members



Patricia Carey
(Chair)



Breda Lawless
(Secretary)



Michael Cowap



Mairead Quigley



Michael Waters



Andrew Brennan



Gerry Kelly



Oliver Burke



Tribute to Christine Buckley

On Tuesday 11th March Christine Buckley died after a long illness. Christine was a board member of the Connect Service since it was established in 2004 under the name, NOVA Helpline (National Office for the Victims of Abuse). During her time on the Connect Board, a position she held with vigour until her death, Christine was a strong advocate for 'her people'. She had an unfailing energy and fought for justice and fairness. Having had the experience of institutions Christine spoke often of the importance of counselling for those who needed to talk. Not only did she believe in the importance of speaking about experiences, in order to come to terms with abuse, but she also believed in the importance of a freely available, night time, professionally staffed service. When the Murphy & Ryan Reports were published Christine's public profile as a survivor meant that, along with other colleagues in the Aislinn Centre and

other survivor support groups, she was receiving calls from those distressed into the night. Christine was a key force in demanding the out of hours telephone support service which began as the NOVA Helpline and was re-named Connect in 2012.

While Christine had been unwell at various times over the past number of years she was a regular attendee and contributor at Connect Board meetings. She was in attendance at the November Board meeting prior to her death. At that time the Service was looking forward to a new year and making plans to support in particular the Magdelene Laundry survivors, a group of institutional survivors that Christine had strongly lobbied for. The Board were shocked and saddened to hear of Christine's passing and want in this report to pay tribute to her commitment and passion for the work of Connect.



Summary report by the Service Manager

In February 2011 Connect launched its last Service Report which covered the period from 2006-2010. This report reflected the fact that there had been a steady growth in demand for Connect in this period. Total calls received from 2006 - 2010 were 31,835. In the last four years this growth in demand has steadily increased with the service receiving an average of 10,000 calls annually. These calls are from people who are seeking support and a place to begin speaking of neglect and abuse in childhood. Given the anonymous, confidential and professional nature of the service callers feel understood, safe and listened to. Sadly, the positive experience on the Connect line, has very often not been available to our callers in childhood.

Since 2011 the Connect Service has responded to our callers need for support when in crisis or when triggered by media attention to issues of abuse and neglect. The Service has continued to review how service is delivered in an attempt to best support our client group. There have been improvements to how we gather statistical information while at all times maintaining total

confidentiality for our callers. The capacity of the service to respond quickly to the need for a service extension continues to be one of its key strengths. In all in the period from 2011 to 2014 the service extended approximately 30 times. In addition despite pressure on funding the Connect Service has always prioritised the extension of Service during Christmas and New Year, opening the service every night including Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. The ability of the service to extend at short notice and to provide extended service during the Christmas Holiday period is in part due to improvements in how we deliver service but most importantly due to the commitment and dedication of the small team of professional counsellors and psychotherapists who work in the service.

We are always aware of how difficult it can be to pick up the phone, in particular for the first time, to speak to someone about troubling thoughts and memories. We hope that those who really need to take this step will do so in the confidence of respect and understanding on the other side of the line.

Introduction to Service Report

Background to the Connect Service

Following the historic apology by the Taoiseach to survivors of institutional abuse in 1999, one of the key demands of survivor groups was that a professional phone based counselling service and helpline be established. The need for a specialist phone based service was also identified in a HSE NCS Report in 2001 and further highlighted in a client evaluation, the Sencs Report in 2003.

The HSE NCS in conjunction with a former Assistant Chief Executive of the HSE (then the Health Board) came together with the support organisations and negotiated with the Department of Health & Children to fund a professional phone based service.

It was proposed that a professionally staffed phone based counselling and helpline service be put in place. Following a period operating within NOVA from 2004, in 2006 funding to develop a specific and independent service came on-stream in October 2006 and NOVA Helpline was set up as a non-statutory agency and registered as a Company Limited. In 2008 the service was re-named CONNECT.

What the Service Provides

The overall objective of Connect is to provide an out of hours telephone counselling and support service for adults who were abused in childhood. The service supports adults who experienced abuse whether in an institutional setting, the family home or within the community generally. The service also supports family members, partners and relatives of people who have suffered abuse. Abuse is defined by Connect as any experience of physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect and trauma.

Connect provides a free and direct access option for people who may not use other services or perhaps for people who are on a wait list for other services. In addition, Connect responds to abuse related media events.

Service Provision & Reach

Connect is available Wednesday to Sunday, 6pm to 10pm, 52 weeks of the year including, on a continuous basis, Christmas and the New Year Holiday period. Experienced and fully qualified counsellors/

psychotherapists answer all calls. The service aims to provide an immediate response to calls. The service is confidential and free to callers. Callers do not have to give their full name and caller number identification is blocked. Service is available to callers from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK.

Telephone Support & Telephone Counselling

All callers who phone Connect have a choice around the kind of service they wish to avail of in consultation with the telephone counsellor.

Callers use the service in different ways. Callers can interact with the service on an 'as needs' basis. Some call only once while others may call more regularly. The needs of regular support callers are assessed and callers are provided with a choice to interact with an allocated counsellor if they wish. From a service viewpoint this means that the counsellor can be more effective in assisting the caller as they have background knowledge of the needs of that caller. From the caller's perspective, it eliminates the need to repeat his or her story and allows for continuity in their dialogue with the counsellor.

Supportive counselling can provide those already attending face to face counselling with additional support when services are closed or when their counsellor is on leave. Sometimes those attending face to face counselling will use the service when they become overwhelmed by their problems. A supportive holding response is offered in these circumstances. Callers not engaged in face to face counselling, where relevant, are encouraged to access face to face counselling.

Governance & Stakeholders

As is required by companies limited by guarantee, Connect has in excess of the required seven company members drawn from support organisations and counselling services and board members. The members of the company at time of report publication are: Carmel McDonnell Byrne, Anne Marie Kennedy, Oliver Burke, Michael Waters, Fiona Ward, Breda Lawless, Gerry Kelly, Mairead Quigley, Patricia Carey.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors presently (2015) is as follows:

Andrew Brennan

Breda Lawless

Gerard Kelly

Mairead Quigley

Michael Cowap

Michael Waters

Oliver Burke

Patricia Carey

Human Resources

The service is staffed by five part time professional counsellors/ psychotherapists who are accredited with the Irish Council for Psychotherapy, Irish Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy and the Psychological Society of Ireland who all work on a shift basis. There is also a part time Office Administrator and a part time Service Manager. At times of high demand, locum staff are contracted in to assist the Connect Counsellors.

Funding

Connect is funded by the HSE. Funding is on an annual basis through Section 39 of the Health Act 2004 and forms part of a Service Level Agreement with the HSE. The service is audited annually and pay scales are in line with the HSE NCS pay scales.

Organisation Chart

Company members x 9

Board of Directors

Independent Chair

Survivors x 4

Others x 3

Service Manager (.5 whole time equivalent - WTE)

Counsellors (2.57 WTE) and Admin (.5 WTE)

Service Developments 2011 – 2014

The Board availed of a facilitated discussion day at the end of June 2011 and a number of objectives were outlined including a review of the Service and the establishment of closer links to Survivor Groups and other agencies. The two year period from early 2011 to the end of 2012 was a period of review and transition for the Connect Service. There was a change not only in Service Management but also in Board Membership and an overall Clinical Review in the Service which was undertaken in consultation with senior clinical directors from outside services.

During the period 2011 to 2012 the Connect service built close working relationships with a number of organisations that support the same client group. Collaboration has continued to be a high priority for the Service. Close working relationships continue to be a priority with all survivor support groups. In addition the service has a collaborative working relationship with ICAP (Immigrant Counselling & Psychotherapy, London and Birmingham). Connect and icap sought to increase awareness of the two services in Ireland and Britain.

The service continued to develop close working relationships throughout 2013 with various support groups and professional services. Meetings which were facilitated included a meeting with the National Office for Suicide Prevention which resulted in the Connect Service being listed as a key service in the NOSP office Directory of Services. Connect details are now on the NOSP website. The NOSP office was interested in the out of hours professional aspect of Connect and the fact that Connect signposts to other

services yet provides skilled clinicians to work with people who are high risk to suicide. In addition the Connect staff availed of refresher ASSIST Training.

The close working relationship which has been developed with the NCS continues to grow. Additionally the service in 2013 became part of the Counselling in Primary Care response to clients who may need in between face to face counselling support. A formal clinical protocol was adopted by the NCS and Connect in 2013. The Connect Service was also represented in 2013 at the Console Conference and the Men's Sheds Annual Event. The service also aimed to reach more isolated communities by utilising local radio and local media to raise awareness about the service.

In 2014 the Service further developed clinical protocols and implemented tighter models of support for callers to the service prioritising signposting and research into sourcing additional supports for callers. A model of 3/6/12 call support contracts was undertaken by counsellors following a successful trial over the previous 12-18 months. In addition, the service was central to supporting those affected by the revelations following the reports about the Tuam Babies extending service to seven nights a week for a period of six weeks.

Call Logging System

In late 2012 a new call logging system was piloted by the service. The system continues to observe strict confidentiality boundaries for our callers with the only information gathered covering gender, age, location, abuse type, referral pathway, supports being received and any mental

health diagnosis. Understandably this information is only sought if and when it seems appropriate. At all times our priority is to support the caller who very often is in a high state of distress.

Branding

In late 2012 the Connect Service addressed a branding issue that has proved to be confusing for our service users. The Service adopted the tagline, Telephone Counselling & Support which the board felt more clearly described the work of the service.

Governance Code

In 2012 the Board of Directors, along with the Manager, reviewed the service in the light of the Charity Governance Code. This review indicated that the charity is in line with best practice around all aspects of its work.

Funding Challenges

Like many other NGO's, since 2011, the service has had funding cuts. In total the service has had funding reduced by a total of 8% compared to funding levels in 2010. Despite this the Service continued to provide service for the core 20 hours weekly whilst also extending service when the need arose.

Service Extensions

A key strength of the Connect Service is the ability to extend service, often at short notice, to respond to the publication of abuse related reports or television programmes featuring investigative pieces relevant to our client group. In total the service has extended approximately 30 times in the period 2011 – 2014. A review of some of these extensions is given below. Not only does this review give an indication of the flexibility of the service but also the wide range of abuse related issues which the Connect Counsellors have supported callers with.

2011

In June 2011 RTE broadcast a *Would You Believe* programme outlining abuse in a Children's Home in Co Wicklow. The Cloyne Report was published in July 2011 and the line was extended up to 2am for five days. In addition the service was extended on three further occasions to support people affected by three programmes broadcast on TG4 and RTE. In July also *The Forgotten Maggies*, a film dramatically looking at the Magdalene Laundries was broadcast and once again the service extended.

From the period August 2011 up to the end of the year there were several more programmes broadcast including a programme on Fr Brendan Smyth (August) and a further Prime Time Investigation Report on psychiatric institutions, *Behind the Walls* (September).

The Service also made literature available at the Dublin Theatre Festival that year as there were two plays featuring institutional abuse. At the end of 2011 the Raphoe Diocesan Report publication took place and the Connect Service, as in the instance of the Cloyne Report, liaised closely with the HSE Helpdesk to support anyone affected by the publication

2012

January 2012 - Screening of 'The Magdalene Sisters', TV3 (Connect Details displayed at end).

March 2012 Connect details were released in the HSE Press Release following the Vatican Report

May 2012 BBC Documentary –Fr. B. Smyth/ CardinalBrady
Connect details were displayed after PrimeTime Programme focusing on the content of the BBC Programme focusing on survivors of Fr. B.Smyth. The line was extended up to 12 midnight.

September 2012, Audit Reports (7 Reports)
Release of Connect details to media.

October 2012, Audit of Safeguarding Arrangements in the Catholic Church in Ireland – Report
Connect Service circulated a press release announcing its details in order to those affected by the release of the Audit Report.

2013

TV3 – The Magdalene Sisters Film, 17th February
Line extended to 2 am following broadcast of the film.

Lighthouse Cinema, showing of *Mea Culpa*, February/March 2013
Leaflet drop in cinema nightly during showing of the film.

Magdelene Laundries McAleese Report & Taoiseach's apology, February 2013
Line opened on two additional nights, Tuesdays 5th and 19th February up to midnight. Connect counsellors attended with women from Magdelene Survivors Together at the release of the report to provide emotional support.

Publication of 7 Diocesan Audits, April 2013 (Clogher, Killalla, Elfin, Galway, Ferns, Waterford)
Connect number circulated through media announcing opening hours. Included on RTE news bulletin.

Bethany Homes, RTE 1, Primetime Report, May 2013
Connect details sent to RTE, displayed on webpages and Aertel. Line opened Tuesday, 9.30 to 11.30pm.

Magdelene Laundries Compensation Announcement, June 2013
Connect details circulated through media. Line extended to 12 midnight.

Service Extension, October 2013
Connect received a request from RTE to be available to callers after the broadcast of the programme, 'The Disappeared', given the issue of children being taken into care following the disappearance of family members and the break up of families. Service opened from 11pm up to 12.30pm

2014

In January of 2014 the Northern Ireland Inquiry into Child Abuse commenced. And at the end of January the Connect service responded by extending the service after the Louise O'Keefe ruling in connection with child abuse in state run schools. In March the Connect line was displayed after the airing of the RTE Programme, *The Legion* and once again service as extended.

Over the months of April and May of this year the Connect service was extended and made available to people distressed by the passing of our much esteemed Board member, Christine Buckley. On the night of Christine's passing we opened the line until 1am after the airing of the 'Dear Daughter' documentary film. In addition we extended service until 11pm on Friday 11th after Christine's months mind and from 2.30pm to 8.30pm on the day of the Aislinn Centre Tribute to Christine in May.

The Mother & Baby Home Inquiry

The Service opened seven nights a week from 6-10pm in response to a HSE request after the announcement of the Mother & Baby Homes Inquiry in June and July of 2014.

Service Demand

The Connect Service is open 20 hours weekly, 6-10pm, Wednesday through to Sunday. On average the Connect Counselling Team answer up to 21/24 calls nightly with the majority of callers phoning in from Ireland and smaller numbers calling from Northern Ireland and the UK.

Table 1: Calls to the service 2013/2014

Year	Calls into Service during opening hours	Unanswered Calls	Answered calls	Calls into Service when line closed	Total Calls into Service	Individual Callers receiving service
2013	7,453	1,179	6,274	2,779	10,232	391
2014	6,062	986	5,276	2,792	9,054	470

Year on year the demand for service has increased in Connect. Since 2011 the clinical team in Connect have worked to develop more effective sign posting methods to better support our caller group. We have noticed over the years that a large proportion of callers to the Connect service, due to severe abuse, trauma and neglect, have exhausted services elsewhere and very often are without day to day supports and experience total isolation. The team work closely with callers in this category to support them to access day time support within their community as well as supporting them to avail of face to face counsellor or psychiatric care if this is appropriate.

Of note is that while the number of calls received by the service decreased by 11% the number of individuals receiving support increased by 20%. In addition the number of lost calls decreased. This can perhaps be explained if we can assume that callers were answered the first time they phoned in and therefore did not need to phone back. In addition the signposting of callers into other appropriate services and the delivery of focused support calls has meant that there are fewer long time callers to the service. From a service delivery perspective this means that there is less waiting time for callers and in particular for new callers who may be seeking support for the first time in relation to an abusive history.

The Connect Service is always concerned about callers who do not manage to get through to a counsellor on the first attempt. Despite funding cuts the service has an average call answer rate of 84%. Of concern also is the high number of callers who phone the service when it is closed. This figure has increased from 22% of all calls in 2013 to 30% of calls in 2014.

Profile of Callers – gender, age and geographical location

Due to the confidential and sensitive nature of the service callers are not required to disclose any information that they are not comfortable with. Therefore, complete profile data on all calls is not available. In 2012 a new call logging system was installed in the Connect Service. Following a twelve month trial period this system was adopted fully. The figures below represent statistical data for the period 2013 – 2014 and is based on representative information available rather than on all calls. This data does give a useful picture of patterns and trends in service usage.

Gender of Callers

Callers continue to be predominantly female although men are almost as likely as women to experience abuse. Connect continues to reach out to all adults who have had an experience of abuse as children and has attempted to raise awareness amongst men, in particular, over the past four years about the availability of the service, through local radio interviews.

Table 2

Year	% Female	% Male	Transgender	Calls into Service when line closed	Total Calls into Service	Individual Callers receiving service
2013	64%	35.5%	0.5%	2,779	10,232	391
2014	66%	32%	2%	2,792	9,054	470

Of note is the fact that between 2006 and 2010 the percentage of male callers increased from 16% to 40%. In the period 2013 to 2014 that percentage has decreased to 32%. In part the increase in female callers however can also be accounted for because of the attention to female gender specific issues such as the Magdalene Laundries and the Mother & Baby Homes more recently as well as high profile familial abuse cases where the victims have waived anonymity to speak of their experiences.

Table 3

Age	% 2013	% 2014	June/July 2014 *
Age not specified	20%	14%	16%
18-30	6%	9%	7%
31-50	42%	40.5%	33.5%
51-60	15%	21%	24%
60 plus	17%	15.5%	18.5%

Age of Callers

The majority of callers to the Connect Service are aged under 50 years of age, on average more than 50%, which points to recent experiences of abuse. (See notes on abuse type to follow).

There was an increase in callers aged over 50 between 2013 and 2014 from 32% to 36.5% with a peak of 42.5% during the six weeks extension in June and July with the Mother and Baby Home revelations.

Profile by county of callers

While bearing in mind that all callers to the Connect Service remain anonymous the counsellors do ask, if appropriate, what county the caller is phoning from. A representative breakdown is given below of information provided by callers.

Table 2

County	2013	2014
Cavan/Monaghan	2%	2%
Cork	8%	11%
Dublin	28%	32%
Galway	7%	10%
Kildare	4%	2%
Laois	2%	1%
Limerick	3%	3%
Sligo	2%	.5%
Tipperary	3%	4%
UK/Northern Ireland	4%	3%
Unknown	11%	3%
Westmeath	4%	3%
Wicklow	3%	2%
Remaining counties including Carlow, Clare, Donegal, Kerry, Kilkenny, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Waterford, Wexford.	1-2%	1-2%

Referral Pathway

Callers find Connect as a part of their support network in a variety of ways.

Table 2

Referred From:	2013	2014
Unknown	40%	8%
1 in 4	1%	1%
Aware	1%	-
Console	-	1%
Exhibition	1%	-
GP	6%	4%
Garda Siochana	-	1%

Table 2 continued

Referred From:	2013	2014
HSE	5%	3%
ICAP	1%	1%
Internet	8%	7%
Media/Newspaper/TV*	-	18%
NCS	24%	24%
Other	-	4%
Private Counsellor	3%	3%
Psychiatrist	2%	2%
Samaritans	11%	20%
Survivor support group	1%	2%
Towards Healing	-	2%

*A new field for Media/TV/Newspaper was included in the call logging system in 2014 following a review of statistics.

The geographical reach of the service which continues to expand is mirrored by increasing referral pathways noticed by the counselling staff. Callers report hearing about the service in a variety of ways with a notable increase in callers being referred by other services in particular The Samaritans with a 9% increase from 11% to 20% between 2013 and 2014. The NCS use of Connect for callers on wait lists is consistent at 24%.

Perpetrators of Abuse

Callers report experiencing abuse during periods of institutional care, in family settings and in community settings.

Table 6

Location of Abuse	2013	2014
Institutional	21%	20%
Familial	57%	62%
Community	35%	35%

Connect has noted the high number of callers who report experiences of abuse in the family home. Many callers experience abuse in multiple settings, for example in the family and community or family and institution. In addition many callers speak of experiences of abuse as children and current experiences of abuse within relationships in particular. At times of attention to issues relating to institutional abuse the service does experience peaks in caller demand from people who spent time in institutions or their family members.

Our callers and our Counsellors

Telephone use in services has traditionally been associated with supporting people in crisis situations, for instance callers who are suicidal. Many services who offer telephone psychological support are staffed by volunteers. One of the unique aspects of the Connect Service is the fact that all calls are answered by fully trained and accredited counselors and psychotherapists. All clinical staff have extensive experience working with trauma and are experienced in seeing clients in services and face to face settings. The adaptation of training to work on the telephone is one which is supported by Connect with ongoing review of policies and procedures, as well as discussion around best therapeutic practice.

The Connect Counsellors are a small, dedicated team, some of whom have been with the service since its infancy. We are always very aware of the impact of childhood trauma on our callers while at the same time always mindful not to assume we know what anyone's experience has been. All our callers' stories are unique and we endeavour to respect that.

Included here are some of the thoughts and reflections of our counselling team:

"Working for Connect for the last 5 years has changed my perspective on the value of the core conditions learned during counselling training. Active listening without further intervention is what is often needed in order to help our clients. Telephone counselling offers our clients the opportunity to have that initial call with someone that they cannot see and experience the shame that they often speak about. When I have asked our clients how it has been to talk this evening they have often commended on how much easier it is for them on the telephone as "you cannot see me and I cannot see you". It's a great privilege to be part of that first step. "

"I have developed a much deeper respect for the importance of callers telling their stories. It helps at some level in the integration of the trauma and can open up the possibility of a person moving beyond it. It is a privilege to be part of a service that offers callers who, for many different reasons, have difficulties in establishing relationships. The telephone offers them the opportunity of developing these skills in a very safe and unthreatening way...."

"I was trying to put myself in the shoes of our clients and it occurred to me that we are in many ways, like a 'home remedy,' something that you can find in your home that will help alleviate some problem. The main thing is you don't have to go to somewhere else or jump through hoops to get it. The service is readily accessible

with no need to go see someone and make an appointment and fill in a form etc. For many of our clients their home is a protective space, and of course this can be a lonely place as well. I have felt this in the client at times. It also seems empowering, as some of our clients have not been able to make that leap into face to face counselling. It's nice to be able to get access to support from home and make home a place of support."

Callers to the Connect Service – An Evaluation

The Connect Service underwent an Evaluation in 2009. In 2015 the Connect Service will undertake a Service Evaluation which will determine the strategic plan for the period 2016 – 2018. The Service is committed to ongoing review and development in response to caller needs and societal developments. In any service evaluation the voice of people using the service is core to development and will inform any change that may be required to service delivery. Towards the end of 2014 the Connect Counsellors did a brief survey of callers and gathered the following comments to give some indication of their impressions of the service.

'I find it very support to be able to talk to someone even for a few minutes as it can help me notice when I am caught in a particularly negative train of thought. A call can help me free myself from this...'

'I use the service when I am feeling overwhelmed. One advantage is that it is so available and immediate. One disadvantage of the phone is sometimes it does not seem real as there is no visual connection.'

'Connect has provided me with a listening ear when there is nobody else around and gives me a place to share my thoughts with someone other than my family.'

'The people that I speak to in Connect help me through the tough times and are easy to talk to.'

'The telephone contact means I don't have to worry about meeting you. Sometimes though that makes me sad that I will never get to see you.'

'I would not be alive if it weren't for the service.'

Concluding Comment

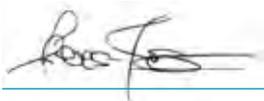
The compilation of this report has included a summary of the Connect Service inception as well as a commentary on developments during the period 2011 – 2014. While there are statistics included which give an overall picture of the numbers, gender, age profile and abuse type, statistics cannot convey adequately the trauma, distress and courage of the people who call the Connect Service.

It has been evident over the past four years that there are a large number of callers who have experienced the most awful of sexual and physical assaults as children. In addition, the stories of neglect and cruelty the counsellors hear on a nightly basis indicate more recent abuse as well as historical abuse given that very often experiences of abuse in childhood can be a thread that runs throughout a lifetime in adult relationships.

The telephone provides a conduit through which, the first time caller in particular, can begin to put experiences into words in a way that feels safe. The confidentiality and anonymity of the service gives the caller a sense of safety and control. In addition, the fact that the person who answers the call is a professionally trained, counsellor or psychotherapist gives an added sense of safety.

The Connect Service is aware of the large number of callers to the service who have little or no support outside services like Connect. Very often callers speak of isolation, difficulties maintaining relationships and a frustration at not being understood. We hope that the Connect Service can help those who contact us not to feel so alone.

For the future, the service is looking forward in anticipation to the Service Evaluation at the end of 2015. In addition we are keenly aware of the work of the Mother & Baby Home Commission of Inquiry which will affect many of our callers. In the 20 hours weekly that the Service is open we will be available to any adult who has experienced childhood abuse and trauma and will endeavour to extend when the need arises.



Theresa Merrigan
Service Manager, Connect

NOVA HELPLINE
t/a CONNECT, The National Adults Counselling Service
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure Account)
Year Ended 31 December 2011

		General Funds 2011	General Funds 2011	Total Funds 2011	Total Funds 2010
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Incoming Resources					
Grants - Health Services		390,000	-	390,000	404,673
Donation Income		11,000	-	11,000	2,250
Other Income - interest earned (gross)		2,725	-	2,725	1,899
Total Incoming Resources		403,725	-	403,725	408,822
Resources Expended					
Administration Expenses		(372,539)	-	(372,539)	(411,908)
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources for Year	4	31,186	-	31,186	(3,086)
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		184,666	-	184,666	187,752
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		215,852	-	215,852	187,752

The income and expenditure in the year arose solely from the continuing activities of the company. The company has no recognised gains and losses other than as disclosed above.

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 9 MAY 2012
ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS

Fiona Ward

Fiona Ward

Finbar Marsden

Finbar Marsden

NOVA HELPLINE
 t/a CONNECT, The National Adults Counselling Service
 Balance Sheet
 As at 31 December 2011

		2011	2010
	Notes	€	€
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	6	4,837	11,899
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	7	3,654	19,128
Cash at bank and in hand		234,569	211,436
		238,223	230,564
CREDITORS (Amounts falling due within one year)			
	8	27,208	57,797
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		211,015	172,767
NET ASSETS			
		215,852	184,666
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
General funds		215,852	184,666
Balance at end of year		215,852	184,666

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 9 MAY 2012
 ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS

Fiona Ward

Fiona Ward

Finbar Marsden

Finbar Marsden

NOVA HELPLINE
t/a CONNECT, The National Adults Counselling Service
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure Account)
Year Ended 31 December 2012

		General Funds 2012	General Funds 2012	Total Funds 2012	Total Funds 2012
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Incoming Resources					
Grants - Health Services		368,550	-	368,550	390,000
Donation Income		8,000	-	8,000	11,000
Other Income - interest earned (gross)		3,639	-	3,639	2,725
Total Incoming Resources		380,189	-	380,189	403,725
Resources Expended					
Administration Expenses		(382,277)	-	(2,088)	(372,539)
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources for Year	4	(2,088)	-	(2,088)	31,186
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		215,852	-	215,852	184,666
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		213,764	-	213,764	215,852

The income and expenditure in the year arose solely from the continuing activities of the company. The company has no recognised gains and losses other than as disclosed above.

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 22 APRIL 2013
ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS


Patricia Carey


Gerry Kelly

NOVA HELPLINE
 t/a CONNECT, The National Adults Counselling Service
 Balance Sheet
 As at 31 December 2012

		2012	2011
	Notes	€	€
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	6	8,427	4,837
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	7	2,597	3,654
Cash at bank and in hand		227,413	234,569
		230,010	238,223
CREDITORS (Amounts falling due within one year)			
	8	24,673	27,208
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		205,337	211,015
NET ASSETS			
		213,764	215,852
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
General funds		213,764	215,852
Balance at end of year		213,764	215,852

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 22 APRIL 2013
 ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS



Patricia Carey



Gerry Kelly

NOVA HELPLINE

t/a CONNECT, Professional Telephone Counselling and Support

Statement of Financial Activities

(including Income and Expenditure Account)

Year Ended 31 December 2013

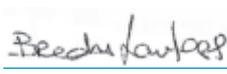
		General Funds 2013	General Funds 2013	Total Funds 2013	Total Funds 2013
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Income resources from generated funds					
-Voluntary Income					
Grants - Health Services Executive		368,684	-	368,684	368,550
Donations		4,230	-	4,230	8,000
- Investment Income					
Interest earned (gross)		1,886	-	1,886	3,639
Total Incoming Resources		374,800	-	374,800	380,189
Resources Expended					
Staff Costs		(222,873)	-	(222,873)	(205,337)
Depreciation of Fixed Assets		(2,967)	-	(2,967)	(1,878)
Operational Costs		(147,484)	-	(147,484)	(175,062)
Total Resources Expended		(373,324)	-	(373,324)	(382,277)
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources for Year	4	1,476	-	1,476	(2,088)
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		213,764	-	213,764	215,852
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		215,240	-	215,240	213,764

The income and expenditure in the year arose solely from the continuing activities of the company. The company has no recognised gains and losses other than as disclosed above.

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 5 JUNE 2014 ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS



Patricia Carey



Breda Lawless

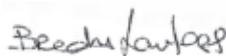
NOVA HELPLINE
 t/a CONNECT, Professional Telephone Counselling and Support
 Balance Sheet
 As at 31 December 2013

		2013	2012
	Notes	€	€
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	6	12,322	8,427
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	7	935	2,597
Cash at bank and in hand		229,184	227,413
		230,119	230,010
CREDITORS (Amounts falling due within one year)			
	8	27,201	24,673
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		202,918	205,337
NET ASSETS			
		215,240	213,764
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
General funds		215,240	213,764
Balance at end of year		215,240	213,764

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 5 JUNE 2014
 ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS



Patricia Carey



Breda Lawless

NOVA HELPLINE

t/a CONNECT, Professional Telephone Counselling and Support

Statement of Financial Activities

(including Income and Expenditure Account)

Year Ended 31 December 2014

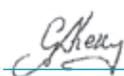
		General Funds 2014	General Funds 2014	Total Funds 2014	Total Funds 2014
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Income resources from generated funds					
-Voluntary Income					
Grants - Health Services Executive		366,102	-	366,102	368,684
Donations		-	-	-	4,230
- Investment Income					
Interest earned (gross)		1,531	-	1,531	1,886
Total Incoming Resources		367,633	-	367,633	374,800
Resources Expended					
Staff Costs		(208,037)	-	(208,037)	(222,873)
Depreciation of Fixed Assets		(4,202)	-	(4,202)	(2,967)
Operational Costs		(147,815)	-	(147,815)	(147,484)
Total Resources Expended		(360,054)	-	(360,054)	(373,324)
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources for Year	4	7,580	-	7,580	1,476v
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		215,240	-	215,240	213,764
Total Funds brought forward at beginning of year		222,820	-	222,820	215,240

The income and expenditure in the year arose solely from the continuing activities of the company. The company has no recognised gains and losses other than as disclosed above.

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS ON 15 May 2015 ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTORS



Patricia Carey



Gerry Kelly

Connect personnel

Members of the company NOVA helpline

Annmarie Kennedy
Breda Lawless
Carmel McDonnell Byrne
Fiona Ward
Geraldine Burke
Gerard Kelly
Mairead Quigley
Michael Waters
Oliver Burke
Patricia Carey

Board members

Andrew Brennan
Breda Lawless
Gerard Kelly
Mairead Quigley
Michael Cowap
Michael Waters
Oliver Burke
Patricia Carey

Accountants

FFA Chartered Accountants, 25 Suffolk Street, Dublin 2.

Solicitors

McCann Fitzgerald, Riverside One, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2.

Registered Office:

Connect, 25 Suffolk Street, Dublin 2.
Company Registration No.: 391684
Charity Registration No.: CHY 16047