



Family  
Carers  
Ireland

No one should have to care alone



2023

Annual Report  
& Financial Statements





## ANNUAL REPORT 2023

**CONTENTS**

CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME .....	2
FAMILY CARING IN IRELAND - THE NUMBERS.....	3
CEO'S INTRODUCTION.....	4
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES.....	6
<b>IMPROVE CARERS' LIVES.....</b>	<b>8</b>
FAMILY CARER SUPPORTS.....	8
HOME CARE SERVICES .....	30
PUBLIC POLICY TOWARDS FAMILY CARERS .....	32
<b>HIGHLIGHT CARERS' CONTRIBUTION.....</b>	<b>40</b>
ENGAGING WITH FAMILY CARERS .....	40
SHINING A LIGHT ON THE REALITIES OF CARING IN IRELAND.....	42
MAKING PEOPLE AWARE OF FCI AND WHAT WE OFFER.....	46
<b>GROW SUSTAINABLY .....</b>	<b>55</b>
OPTIMISE RESOURCES .....	55
PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES.....	58
STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT.....	60
FUTURE PLANS .....	65
RISK MANAGEMENT .....	66
FINANCIAL REVIEW.....	67
STATEMENT ON RELEVANT AUDIT INFORMATION.....	69
DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT .....	70
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT .....	71
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES .....	73
BALANCE SHEET .....	74
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS .....	75
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.....	76
APPENDIX.....	91
REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS .....	93

# CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME



*Robert Anderson,*  
Chairperson

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the eighth annual report on the activities of Family Carers Ireland, a charity that has at its heart a community that embodies passion and positivity as part of its own caring ethos. In 2023, the organisation continued to respond to increased demand from family carers as many official supports continue to operate below pre-pandemic levels. During the year, the board approved a new Strategic Plan covering the period 2024-2028 and I believe that this leaves us well positioned to continue to deliver more and better supports and services for family carers, underpinned by our growing membership and strong balance sheet.

The board spent considerable effort during 2023 working on proposals to streamline the governance of the organisation and strengthen the voice of family carers at local and national level. In accordance with legislative requirements, these proposals were referred to the Charities Regulator for approval before being put to our membership. I hope that they will be presented to an Extraordinary General Meeting in the latter part of 2024 or early 2025.

As chairperson of the Research and Policy Sub-Committee of the board, I continue to be impressed by the range and quality of the organisation's work in this area. We launched a quarterly newsletter on carer-related policy news and developments during 2023. A significant highlight of the year was the Government's announcement, after a decade of active campaigning, that it would provide a contributory old age pension for long-term family carers and establish a national Family Carer Register to facilitate the roll-out of this very important initiative.

We completed two particularly important pieces of research during the year. The first related to the feasibility of a participation income for family carers as an alternative to the current benefit/assistance model of income support. The second explored lived experiences of carer harm and how best to combat its various manifestations. Our annual family carer research conference, held in person for the first time, reflected a wide range of research projects and a very active Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) programme for family carers.

As chairperson of the board, it falls to me to thank a number of parties who enable our work by funding us. I would like to begin by thanking all those who supported us with individual and corporate donations throughout the year. The monies raised are the key enabler of our innovation and campaigning activities. They also constitute the co-funding required for our core activities. The bulk of such activities is provided by grant funding from a variety of state agencies including, in particular, the HSE. There is no question that without access to such grants, we would be unable to deliver the range of services we currently offer.

I would also acknowledge the increasing levels of engagement across the political system and the public service on issues relating to family carers. It is good to see a growing acknowledgement that family carers are critical to realising the Sláintecare aspiration to sustaining individuals with complex chronic conditions in the community and solving the demographic challenge of sustainable long-term care over coming decades.

I want to thank the many individual family carers who have engaged with our activities and projects throughout the year and thereby affirmed their value and helped to inform and support their continuous development. If we are not relevant to individual carers, then the work set out in this report would be neither possible nor meaningful. I would also like to thank all our staff, and particularly our Executive Management Team, for their hard work and unfailing commitment to the organisation's mission.

And finally, everyone involved with FCI owes a very particular debt to our unpaid, volunteer directors who bear increasingly onerous responsibilities as a result of changes in company law and charity regulation. I want to thank them for their time and diligence throughout the year – I believe our board is effective and this contributes in turn to the effectiveness of the organisation as a whole.

In acknowledging the work of our directors, I would like to acknowledge five colleagues who retired from the board during 2023 – my predecessor Triona Fortune, who resigned because of work pressures; Johanne Powell, who retired having completed a full term of six continuous years on the board; and Peter Murphy, Veronica Baylon and Adrienne Clarke, who all retired on health grounds.



# FAMILY CARING IN IRELAND -THE NUMBERS

# 500,000\*

people in Ireland are family carers

(That is 1 in every 8 adults)

\*approx. figure

**61%**  
female

**39%**  
male

**57%**

juggle paid  
work with care  
(1 in 9)

**67,000**

young carers 10-17 yrs

- 1 in 3 young carers care for a parent
- 4 in 5 young carers care for someone with a medical condition and/or physical disability
- 4 in 5 young carers have been caring for 2 or more years

**€20 BILLION**

family carers save State p/yr.  
Equivalent to a 2nd HSE!

**129,702**

family carers  
receive the Carer's  
Support Grant

**95,848**

family carers receive  
Carer's Allowance

**€248**

max. rate Carer's  
Allowance

**3,911**

receive Carer's  
Benefit



# CEO'S INTRODUCTION



*John Dunne,*  
Chief Executive

What unites everyone in Family Carers Ireland is a commitment to ensure that no-one is left to care alone. In that context, 2023 was significant as the first full operational year of the first phase of the Carers' Guarantee. This was the culmination of a major change process and I would like to begin by acknowledging the willingness of many staff to collaborate. Whilst there were some teething difficulties, including wait times that occasionally exceeded our target limits, these will be addressed in 2024. Overall, we achieved our main objective of ensuring a core bundle of online supports were available to family carers regardless of where they lived in the country. After such a promising start, it was disappointing that a chaotic Health Estimates process as part of Budget 2024 meant that the full roll-out of the guarantee could not proceed in 2024.

Whilst the Carers' Guarantee will ensure family carers everywhere can access key supports by phone or video, there is still a real and important role for local in-person services and activities. Making these available on a consistent basis throughout the country is dependent on coherent funding for local facilities at Community Health Organisation (CHO) level. At present, such services are adequately funded in two CHOs, useful progress was made in another four CHOs and, at the time of writing, negotiations are still continuing with the remaining three CHOs for 2024.

The shift away from hospitals to caring for chronic conditions in the community means that more family carers require more specialised training in addition to basic courses such as Caring with Confidence, Patient Moving and Handling and First Aid. We were delighted that our partnership with the South East Technological University (SETU) secured €1 million in funding for the provision of education programmes and masterclass workshops on a wide range of topics of relevance to family carers.

The HSE uses the InterRAI assessment tool to assess individual care needs of older people. As part of the roll-out of this initiative, we were very happy to participate in the pilot of the InterRAI Carer Needs Assessment module in Community Healthcare West during 2023.

Whilst the initial roll-out will focus on Home Support Services, it will ultimately be used by Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (ICPOP) teams and across other care groups. The pilot encompassed five care groups (i.e. Older People, People with Dementia, Physical and Sensory Disability, Intellectual Disability and Adult Mental Health). Key findings of note included some concerns about the accessibility of the assessment form for family carers and unmet needs in areas such as emergency respite, residential respite, in-home respite, day care, physical and occupational therapy and assistance with personal care. The pilot demonstrated that self-assessment using the tool was not feasible. Whilst there are resource implications with a supported process, we continue to insist that, as a matter of principle, each family carer's needs must be assessed since the InterRAI model automatically deprioritises home support where a family carer is present.

The new Authorisation Scheme for home support delivery introduced in 2023 addressed a number of problems with the previous competitive tendering process but it was disappointing that the promised statutory regulation and enforcement of quality standards was not introduced at the same time. Furthermore, whilst the new arrangement provides improvements in the employment conditions of home care workers (HCWs), we do not believe that it does anywhere near enough to ensure the sustainability of the home support service in the medium term. We were particularly disappointed with the explicit strategy of paying less to contracted staff in precarious employment for working less attractive hours in order to sustain easier schedules for public service staff on premium pay rates.

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 was eventually commenced in April 2023. Whilst we have welcomed the intent of this legislation from the start, we remain concerned that some of its provisions enshrine the proposition – which we flatly reject – that caring is inherently ableist. We have also been approached about many new bureaucratic obstacles for families – and parents in particular – who are caring for adults with significant intellectual disability or brain injury. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, somewhat



unexpectedly, the main impact of the act in its first year of operation has been to add considerable delay and expense to the application process for a nursing home loan under the Fair Deal scheme.

We were pleased when, on 8th March 2023, the Government announced its intention to hold a referendum on gender equality as recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality and the Special Joint Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality including that "Article 41.2 of the Constitution should be deleted and replaced with language that is not gender specific and obliges the State to take reasonable measures to support care within the home and wider community". The arrangements for the referendum, including the wording of the proposed amendments, were eventually published on 7th December, with early polls showing a generally positive response from the electorate. However, for reasons including weak wording, poor communications and an inadequate timeframe, as well as a wider dissatisfaction with Government, the referendum was comprehensively defeated. It has, however, put family carers firmly in the spotlight and the widespread belief that the wording did not go far enough highlights public support for greater rights, recognition and respect for family carers and people with disabilities – issues that Family Carers Ireland will continue to fight for.

I would like to conclude with some heartfelt thanks. Firstly, thanks to the many individual family carers who assisted us throughout the year with feedback, ideas, suggestions, lobbying and media appearances. Our effectiveness in advocating for improvements in family carers' health, wellbeing and financial security are entirely built on such courage and generosity of spirit.

I would also like to thank all those who served on the board in the course of 2023 for their time and expertise. Just as with family carers, the directors of Irish charities are generally presumed upon and under-acknowledged for the onerous personal responsibilities they undertake in a voluntary capacity.

Last and by no means least, I acknowledge the whole-hearted co-operation and support of our staff who have shown steadfast initiative, flexibility and resilience throughout the year. The positive tone of this report would not have been possible without them.





# OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

## DIRECTORS' REPORT 2023

The directors present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of Family Carers Ireland (FCI) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

## CREATION OF FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

Family Carers Ireland is a national charity dedicated to supporting an estimated 500,000 family carers in Ireland. It came into existence on 1st January 2016 following the merger of The Carers Association and Caring for Carers.

## KEY OBJECTIVE

The key objective of the organisation is to benefit the community by supporting and promoting the health, wellbeing and quality of life of family carers and those for whom they care.

Our vision is an Ireland where family carers are properly recognised, supported and empowered. Our mission is to highlight the contribution of family carers to Irish society and to improve the lives of family carers throughout the country.

Family Carers Ireland's primary focus is on supporting the carer as an individual in their own right as well as a key contributor to the sustainability of our health system. As such, we strive to promote carer resilience by enabling all family carers to:

- Be confident in their individual carer roles;
- Establish and maintain a regular caring routine;
- Feel listened to, valued and not alone;
- Be able to access relevant training, advice and support;
- Be informed of their rights and entitlements;
- Meet and speak with their peers in a safe, relaxed environment;
- Take a break from a demanding and stressful caring role;
- Know where to seek additional support from the State and their community;
- Access emergency supports when needed.





# STRATEGIC PLAN

Family Carers Ireland developed a five-year strategic plan towards the end of 2018, which concluded in 2023. Focusing on Eight Key Result Areas (KRAs), the plan was developed under three specific areas of "Improving Carers' Lives," "Highlighting Carers' Contribution" and "Grow Sustainably".

Aiming to increase support for family carers and recognition of the valuable, often forgotten, role of family caring, a new strategic plan has been developed and was approved by the board in November 2023. This will be implemented from 2024 for a five-year period. (See page 65 - Future Plans)

IMPROVE CARERS' LIVES			HIGHLIGHT CARERS' CONTRIBUTION			GROW SUSTAINABLY		
KEY RESULT AREA	<b>1</b>	Family carer supports	KEY RESULT AREA	<b>4</b>	Engaging with family carers	KEY RESULT AREA	<b>7</b>	Optimise resources
KEY RESULT AREA	<b>2</b>	Home care services	KEY RESULT AREA	<b>5</b>	Shining a light on the realities of caring in Ireland	KEY RESULT AREA	<b>8</b>	Partnerships & Alliances
KEY RESULT AREA	<b>3</b>	Public policy towards family carers	KEY RESULT AREA	<b>6</b>	Making people aware of FCI and what we offer			



# IMPROVE CARERS' LIVES

## FAMILY CARER SUPPORTS

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Family carers value support from other carers who understand the ups and downs of caring and can help each other navigate the bureaucratic system. They also value the support of skilled staff who can assist them in accessing a wide range of potential resources and supports.

Family Carers Ireland provides support to more than 2,000 family carers every day and has a database of over 30,000 active users of its services.

Centre contacts with carers	5,303 inbound calls 8,018 outbound calls
Carers supported	5,517
Carers trained	1,248
Community Support Centres	13
Hours of regular respite	47,080
Hours of emergency respite	3,240
Virtual events hosted by Virtual Support Manager (VSM)	195
Attendees at virtual events	2,882
Top carer queries	Rights and Entitlements, Membership, Social Events, Support Groups, Respite/Home Help, Training, Counselling, Emergency Scheme
Activities posted on calendar of events	1,785
Information and awareness-raising sessions	264
Avg. no. of support group sessions each month	50
Avg. no. of attendees at support groups each month	400
Carer Needs Assessments (Initial Assessments/ Carers Outcome Star™)	5,183
Hours of counselling delivered	4,926
Welcome calls to new members	5,339
Rights and entitlements sessions	18
Members	10,727
Social media followers	45,842



Collectively the Community Supports team delivers a wide range of supports, activities and events including:

- Providing **one-to-one support** including wellbeing reviews and advocacy for family carers in need of additional support and guidance
- Providing **information and awareness-raising** sessions for family carers and community organisations
- Facilitating **support groups** and **peer-led support groups**
- Organising **social inclusion and wellbeing** activities and events
- Conducting **welcome calls** to new members
- Organising **National Carers Week** activities and events
- Hosting community **fundraisers** and supporting national fundraising campaigns
- Delivering a wide range of **education and training** programmes
- Supporting family carers to access **respite**
- Supporting **young carers** and their families.

on hand to provide the support they need to care safely, to make it less of a battle and to know they are not alone. To help us determine the best way for us to support a family carer, we conduct an initial assessment. Those presenting with higher indicators of need are transitioned to our Intensive Supports team, whereas those with fewer indicators will work with their local Community Support Manager.

Our staff offer a wellbeing review using the Carers Outcome Star™ to further explore the areas that are of most concern and co-create action plans with the carer to support them with their caring role. Younger carers can also avail of My Life Now™ which is an age-appropriate assessment.

The Carers Outcome Star™ is a motivational key work tool which aims to support carers in making positive changes in their lives and to develop a sustainable caring routine. It does this by providing a visual map of seven distinct areas of the carer's life on the seven points of the star (see Figure 1) – their health, their caring role, how they manage at home, the time that they have for themselves, how they feel, their finances and their work. These seven areas enable a collaborative conversation with the carer.

### CARERS OUTCOME STAR™

For most family carers, general supports are sufficient to meet occasional challenges that arise. However, at any time, approximately 15,000 family carers in Ireland find themselves mentally or physically drained and struggling to sustain their caring role. Family Carers Ireland provides a personalised holistic programme, based on the Carers Outcome Star™, to support those carers to make positive changes in their lives and, where possible, to establish a new sustainable caring routine.

Each of these seven areas are measured using a five-point scale to identify where the carer is situated in relation to that area of their life at that time and what steps they could take to make positive improvements and begin their journey of change.

The star is completed in collaboration with the carer and then repeated at review or completion stage. The difference between the two stars gives a picture of how things are changing for the carer.

Each family carer faces their own journey and we are

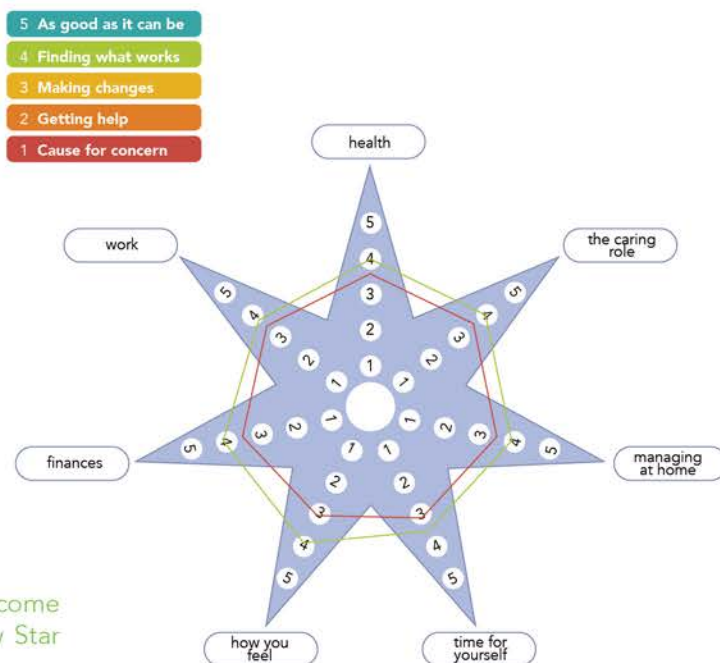







Figure 1: Carers Outcome Star™ - Initial and Review Star Reading



JOURNEY OF CHANGE STAGE	POSSIBLE APPROACHES AND ACTIONS THAT COULD BE AGREED
<p><b>CAUSE FOR CONCERN</b></p> 	<p>Carers and the people they care for may be at risk at this stage, with carers feeling unable to change things or not acknowledging that there is a problem. Goals and actions could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that they and the person they care for are safe and any immediate risks are addressed</li> <li>• Sorting out practical issues on their behalf</li> <li>• Building a relationship with them and encouraging them to acknowledge any risks and accept help.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GETTING HELP</b></p> 	<p>Carers at this stage are starting to open up to help, and may need reassurance that support can really make a difference. The focus may be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checking what support they have in place and linking them with available resources</li> <li>• Taking action on their behalf with their permission and building their confidence in that support and the potential for improvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>MAKING CHANGES</b></p> 	<p>Carers at this stage are trying new things but may lack confidence, so goals and actions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping them to plan what they are going to do, develop strategies and keep to them</li> <li>• Helping them to recognise and build on what is working for them and on a vision for a better and more sustainable life for them and the person they care for.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FINDING WHAT WORKS</b></p> 	<p>When carers reach this stage, the focus of keywork may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating improvements and helping the carer to reflect on how they have overcome barriers and how they can build on this</li> <li>• Encouraging them to build on support networks, and to make full use of the resources available to them when dealing with difficulties that arise.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AS GOOD AS IT CAN BE</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this stage, a carer is doing well and things are as good as they can be for now. This signals to the support services that they have done what is needed for now so the focus is on:</li> <li>• The carer keeping going and making use of the support and resources they have outside the carer support service</li> <li>• Ensuring that the carer knows how to get help in the future, if needed, as things change.</li> </ul>

In 2023, Community Support Managers conducted a total of 3,033 assessments with carers of all ages.



## INTENSIVE SUPPORTS

The team of four Intensive Information Officers (IIOs) process professional external referrals that FCI receives throughout the country. IIOs also receive internal referrals of family carers who have high burden score from the Community Supports team.

The IIO contacts the carer and completes an initial assessment to determine the carer burden score. They then refer the family carer to the appropriate Intensive Support Manager (ISM) who can best support their needs. Those scoring 17 or below out of a possible score of 30 are referred on to a Community Support Manager (CSM) while those scoring 18 or above are referred to the ISM. The IIO can also refer the family carer to FCI Home Care Services Team or Emergency Respite Service, if requested at Initial Assessment stage.

The team of seven Intensive Support Managers (ISMs) provide guidance and support to family carers who present with a high level of carer burden. Usually, the carer is providing a high level of support for the person they care for.

The ISM supports the carer by completing a wellbeing review using a tool called the Carers Outcome Star™ and works with the family carer where individual tailored support is provided over a 12-week period. Interventions include community-based service information, signposting to health professional services, respite, counselling, training, guidance on rights and entitlements and advocacy on behalf of the family carer. When appropriate, the team will attend meetings with the family carer including Meitheal case conferences, multidisciplinary meetings and social welfare appeals. The ISM will link in regularly with the family carer and work collaboratively towards achieving the goals set out in an action plan with a second star completed at the end of the 12 weeks.

The team consistently deliver information sessions to health professionals to encourage referrals, with 533 internal and 720 external referrals.

## REFERRALS

# 1,253

*"I wanted to give some feedback and share my own personal experience having had the superb support of the Support Manager over the last few difficult months. I'm 64 and was definitely stuck in my own rut... I needed to reboot, analyse and recharge myself. Boy oh boy, how lucky was I to have (ISM's name) on the other end of the phone for my transition from then until now? They listened to my story intently and asked questions of me that I never asked myself. She used words and profoundly helpful phrases that have stuck in my mind, and I use them daily and weekly to self-support. She prompted me to view things from a different perspective and to allow myself to say NO every now and then. Throughout my six follow up calls, she has given me life skills that have allowed me to start this next chapter of my life... I feel stronger and, more importantly, I feel equipped to face the long and lovely road ahead. Saying thank you seems insufficient really, but I sincerely mean it."*

*Family carer supported by Intensive Support Manager*





## COUNSELLING

Counselling can be a way to reset, to find ways to cope with stress and to empower family carers to develop strategies and acquire tools to stay well within their caring role.

Family Carers Ireland's National Counselling Service aims to support and enhance family carers' mental health and emotional wellbeing by providing a safe, non-judgemental therapeutic space for them to discuss and work through any problems or difficult feelings they are experiencing. The service also aims to empower family carers to develop strategies and acquire tools to stay well within their caring role. This service is led by the National Lead for Psychosocial Supports and delivered by a team of three part-time staff counsellors, a dedicated Information Officer, nine volunteer counsellors and a panel of 34 external counsellors.

In addition to providing one-to-one therapeutic counselling support to family carers in 2023, the service also developed two eLearning programmes, 'Recognising and Responding to Burnout' and 'Compassionate Caring,' which have been added to the suite of modules available on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).

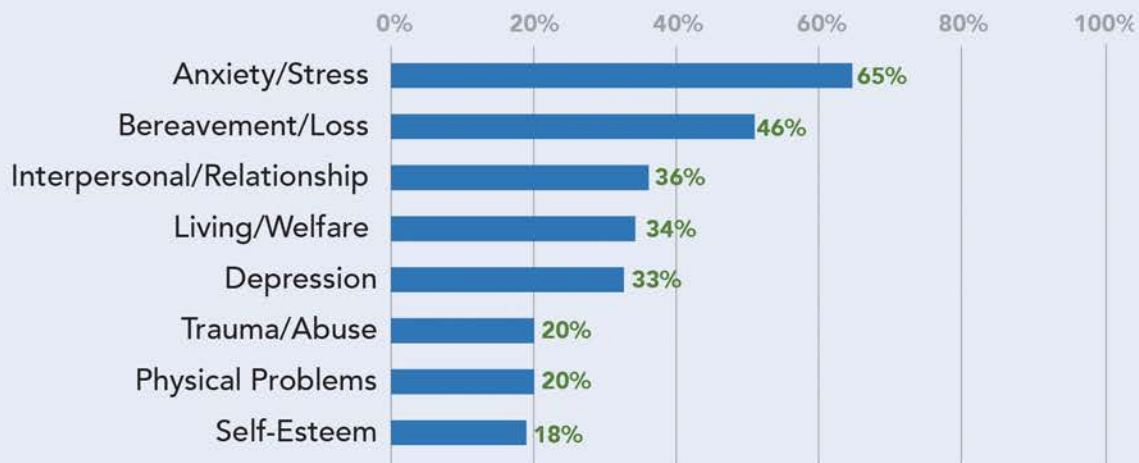
Family carers wishing to access the counselling service first speak to a Support Manager who works with them to explore and identify their strengths, concerns and needs. In 2023, the service received 433 referrals from Support Managers around the country. Across the year, FCI provided 4,926 hours of counselling to 496 family carers.

Due to unprecedented demand, it was necessary to pause new referrals to the service for four months in 2023, meaning these referrals were received over a period of eight months.

Once a referral is received in the counselling service, an intake appointment is booked with one of our staff counsellors. At the intake appointment, the carer provides some further details and discusses what has brought them to counselling and what they would like to achieve. The counsellor also explains how the service works and goes through the client counselling agreement. This process allows the service to link them with a suitable counsellor.

At the intake assessment, the main challenges, which led the person to seek counselling, are identified. The main challenges identified at intake in 2023 are outlined below.

### Identified Challenges at Assessment



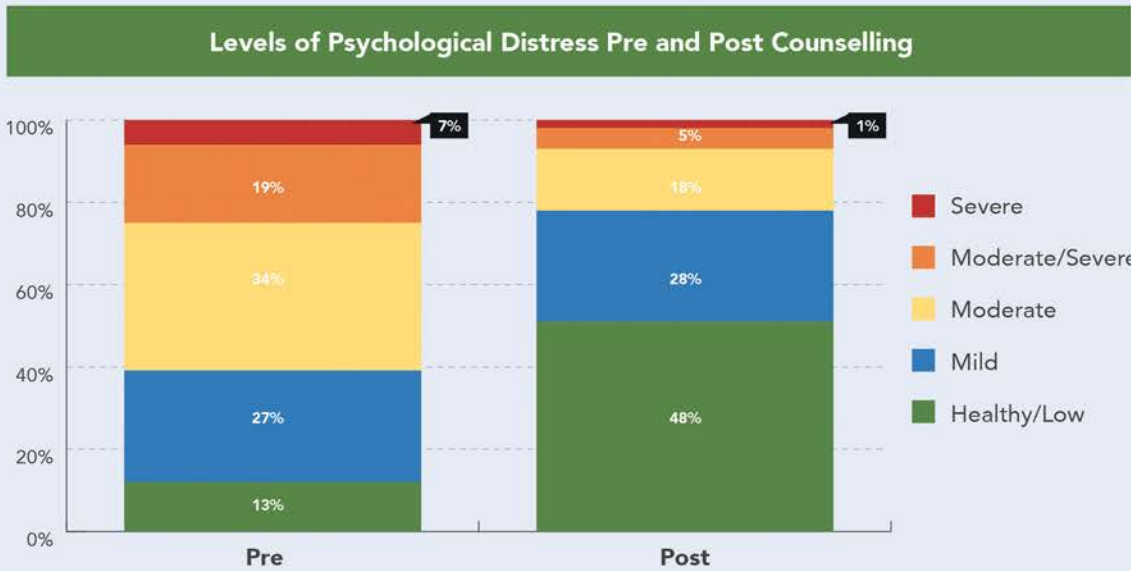
In counselling, carers are encouraged to talk about what it is that is troubling them and are listened to in a non-judgemental way. Just the process of telling their story in a safe and supportive environment may help a person to feel better. Sometimes gaining insight into behaviours and thought processes can help them to develop new skills and strategies. The aim is to give family carers the tools and insights to respond to the challenges they are facing.

One way that we measure the impact of counselling on those who engage with the service is using the CORE-OM (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation – Outcome Measure) questionnaire. This validated tool measures current levels of psychological distress. Family carers complete the questionnaire before they begin counselling, every four weeks during counselling and at the end of counselling.



The graph below illustrates the levels of distress measured by the CORE-OM before counselling began and after counselling had finished. Just 13% of carers had healthy or low levels of psychological distress prior to commencing counselling which increased to 48% of carers experiencing healthy or low levels of distress after the counselling intervention. Likewise, 26% of carers were experiencing moderate/severe

or severe levels of psychological distress prior to counselling commencing, which reduced to 6% after the counselling had finished. These scores illustrate the positive impact the counselling intervention had on the levels of psychological distress experienced by family carers.

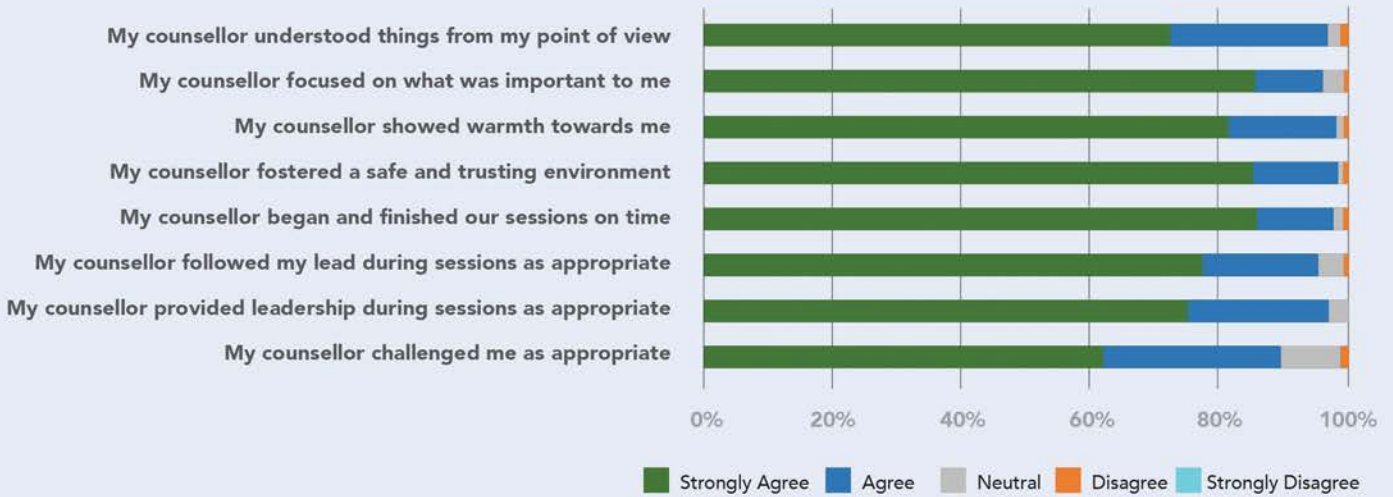




When counselling is finished, all family carers are invited to provide feedback on their experience with the service. In the questionnaire, they are asked to rate their experience of their working relationship with their

counsellors, the outcome and their satisfaction with the service. In 2023, we received feedback from 143 family carers who had accessed the service. The feedback received is illustrated in the tables below.

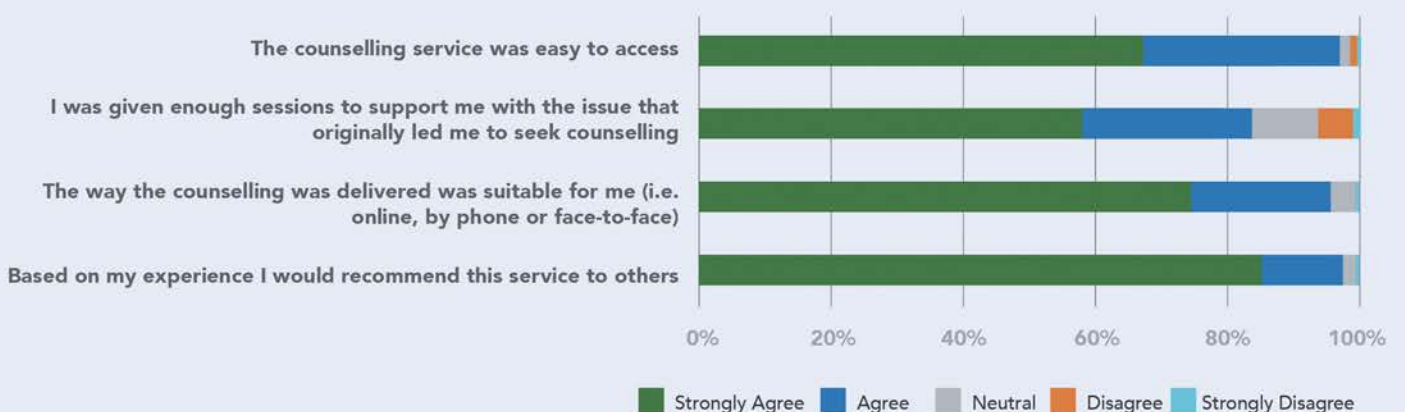
## WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR COUNSELLOR



## OUTCOME OF WORKING WITH YOUR COUNSELLOR



## SATISFACTION WITH THE COUNSELLING SERVICE





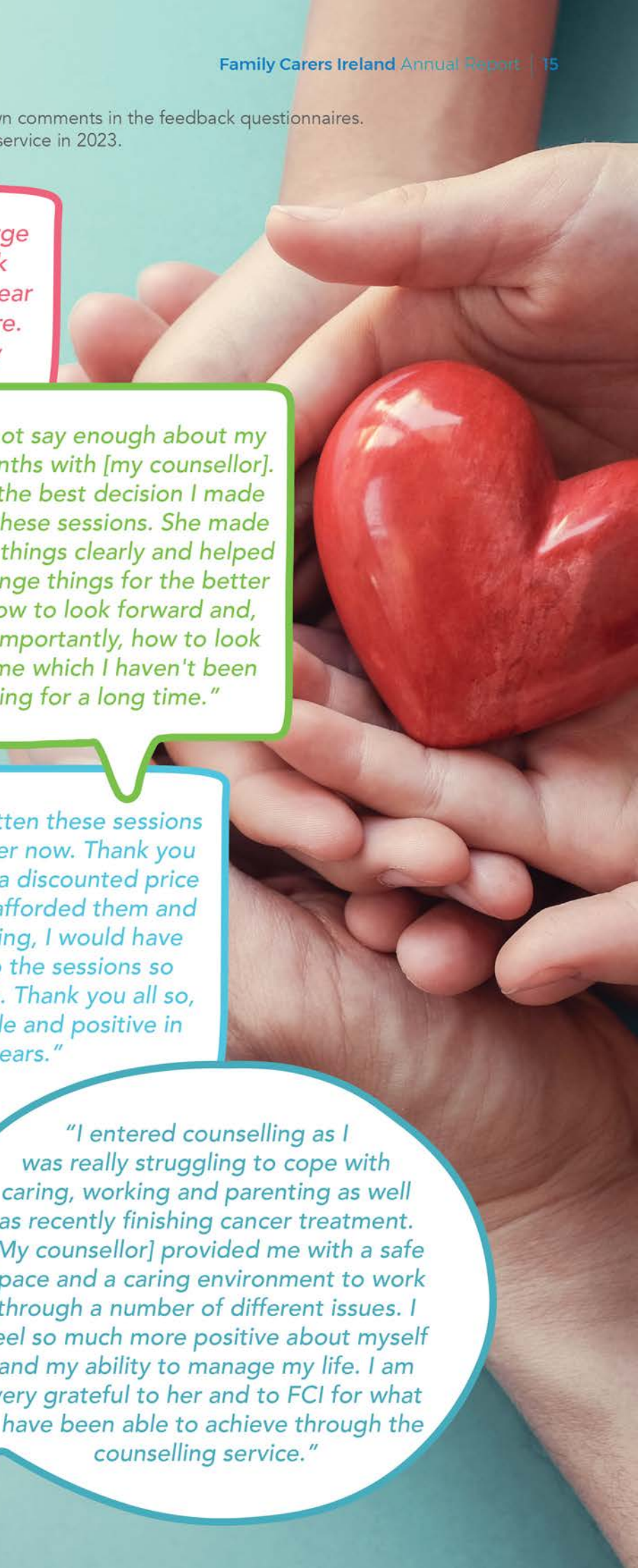
Clients are also given space to write their own comments in the feedback questionnaires. Below are some comments received on the service in 2023.

*"I honestly think I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. I look back on how I felt this time last year and I felt I couldn't cope anymore. [My counsellor] was absolutely fantastic."*

*"I cannot say enough about my few months with [my counsellor]. It was the best decision I made doing these sessions. She made me see things clearly and helped me change things for the better and how to look forward and, more importantly, how to look after me which I haven't been doing for a long time."*

*"I am eternally grateful to have gotten these sessions and I feel I can cope so much better now. Thank you so much for offering them at such a discounted price because honestly, I couldn't have afforded them and I was so exhausted at the beginning, I would have found it very difficult to travel to the sessions so online was just so much less stress. Thank you all so, so much. I haven't felt this capable and positive in probably about 4 - 5 years."*

*"I entered counselling as I was really struggling to cope with caring, working and parenting as well as recently finishing cancer treatment. [My counsellor] provided me with a safe space and a caring environment to work through a number of different issues. I feel so much more positive about myself and my ability to manage my life. I am very grateful to her and to FCI for what I have been able to achieve through the counselling service."*





## RESPIRE

Caring can be both isolating and demanding. It is vitally important that family carers have an opportunity to take a regular break from their caring role. Even an hour away to attend a support group, to visit a friend or family member or run errands can make all the difference in a carer's life.

In some situations, this may be facilitated by the wider family/support circle but it is not always an option. Unfortunately, respite provision is fragmented, inconsistent and subject to a postcode lottery whereby where a family carer lives determines the availability of services in their area. This means that respite is inaccessible to many people.

Family Carers Ireland provides specialised respite for family carers in parts of the country where it is funded to do so. In 2023, family carers availed of over 47,000 hours of in-home respite delivered by FCI.

## EMERGENCY RESPIRE

The National Emergency Respite Scheme provides support to family carers who find themselves with little or no help in an emergency or crisis (e.g. death or illness of a close relative, health crisis or hospitalisation, unexpected transitions, e.g. new employment or living arrangements). The Emergency Card Scheme allows family carers to put a plan in place, particularly for those first crucial hours, should something happen (e.g. an accident, sudden illness, etc.) that prevents a family carer from looking after the person they care for.

*"The emergency respite was fantastic, and the carers were exceptional. I am very grateful. I don't know what I would have done without it. FCI is a great service to have available for family carers."*

### Carer feedback

The scheme, which was first introduced in 2021, has proved very successful, with further investment by the HSE announced in December 2023. It aims to provide support to family carers who find themselves with little or no support in an emergency or crisis. Such emergency situations may be defined as, but not limited to:

- Actual or imminent carer burnout.
- Family crisis, e.g. death or illness of a close relative, rescheduled family events due to Covid-19 Pandemic, relief for family in end-of-life situations.
- Necessary medical appointments and hospital admissions.

- Crisis healthcare (physical, psychological, or emotional) including substance abuse and suicide stabilisation interventions.
- Unexpected care transitions, e.g. new employment or living arrangements.
- Other situations that on assessment are deemed to meet the criteria of an emergency event warranting the provision of respite support.

Respite care hours will vary for each case based on need and will be required to be delivered in a timely manner, responding safely and creatively to the emergency presenting and with the needs of both the family carer and the person who needs support always at the centre. Respite care under this scheme is not restricted by age or diagnosis, and whilst every effort will be made to meet the needs presenting, there is no absolute guarantee that even with external commissioning of services that the need can be met. In the current home care climate in Ireland, consideration is given to issues such as continuity of care, the availability of appropriately skilled health care workers and/or whether residential short stay support is appropriate in responding to individual cases.

In an emergency situation, emergency respite care workers do what is needed to support the person who needs care. This practical support may include personal care, light housework as agreed, meal preparation and cooking, shopping, lighting fires, making beds, changing linen and laundry. The worker is also expected to provide reassurance and support to the person they are caring for given the nature of the respite.

*"I am so grateful... the surgery went really well... (care recipient name) is happy in the nursing home... When I recover, I want to do a coffee morning for you as a fundraiser."*

### Carer undergoing surgery who was granted four weeks of respite

The scheme has allowed carers experiencing burnout the chance to recover and continue their caring role and provided support to those in very difficult situations including end-of-life and palliative care. When a carer is experiencing burnout, the scheme aims to allow time for a long-term plan to be put in place to prevent carer burnout from reoccurring, such as regular residential respite breaks or an increase in home support hours.

In July 2023, the scheme was paused due to a delay in approval for the next stage of funding. It resumed in August 2023, with FCI invoicing the HSE for emergency respite hours monthly and in December 2023, the HSE agreed to fund the scheme with an additional €600,00.

Throughout 2023, the scheme has expanded its



# EMERGENCY RESPITE 2023:

## 323

referrals were made to the scheme

## 179

referrals were facilitated (55%)

## 84

of the referrals facilitated were in CHO2 in the context of the InterRAI Carer Needs Assessment module pilot

## 3,240

home support emergency respite hours were delivered

## 154

weeks of residential emergency respite hours were delivered

## 104

cases of emergency respite were facilitated in cases of carer burnout.

database of HSE approved providers, with a total of 117 providers (including both residential and home care) signing our standard and agreement form. This has made the process more efficient when securing respite and helps in building good relationships with stakeholders.

In 2023, there was an increase in demand for emergency respite from the disability sector, especially from carers who are caring for children and young adults. As the scheme grows in popularity, there has also been an increase in referrals from professionals.

## EMERGENCY CARD SCHEME

Family Carers Ireland's Emergency Card Scheme was launched on 31st August 2020. It ensures that in the event of an accident where the carer is no longer in a position to provide care, the cared-for person will not be on their own at home; they will be safe and cared for.

The scheme can be broken down into four simple steps:

**Step 1.** The family carer completes an emergency care plan with or for their loved one outlining their care needs, likes, dislikes, medication requirements, etc.

**Step 2.** The family carer nominates two people who will step into their caring role in the event of an emergency and provides FCI with these details as part of their emergency care plan

**Step 3.** The completed plan is sent to FCI and the family carer receives their emergency card which they carry at all times. This includes a Freephone emergency helpline number.

**Step 4.** In the event of an emergency, and where a person's named emergency contacts are unavailable, FCI will determine the person's needs and either mobilise:

**1) A red response** (for a person who needs a high level of support), where a member of An Garda Síochána or the emergency services will visit the person and decide if the person requires transportation to the emergency department as a place of safety; or

**2) A green response** which will involve contacting the named volunteers in the plan to support the person until a home care package can be organised. During this emergency period, FCI may also provide in-home emergency respite or residential respite support as appropriate, under the terms of the service. This resource is dependent on the availability of staff.

In 2023, an additional 104 new carers joined the scheme, bringing the total membership to almost 600.

*"Thank you for your continued support and the peace of mind having the emergency care plan in place brings me."*

### Carer feedback

*"Knowing that this emergency plan was in place in the background for the last number of years was very reassuring."*

### Carer feedback



## NATIONAL FREEPHONE CARELINE

Our Freephone Careline (1800 24 07 24) continues to offer a friendly, informed, supportive and confidential service to family carers throughout Ireland. Staff offer a vital listening ear to those in need of support and/or information and signpost those in need of additional supports to the relevant part of the organisation such as their local Carer Supports team. They routinely offer guidance on rights and entitlements and information on everything from counselling, emergency care planning, respite and emergency respite to training and education programmes, peer support groups, membership and more.

Given a limit to the number of communications which could be dealt with by two members of staff, a plan to recruit volunteers for covering busy periods was born and an in-depth training programme for new volunteers was developed which included induction, effective call handling, customer service training and IT and CRM skills development.

Policies, processes and a brand-new volunteer handbook were also developed with support from colleagues in many other departments in order to provide new and future volunteers with a formal structure that they can draw on.

## COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CARELINE 2023



By December 2023, the Careline welcomed two new volunteers and plans are in place to increase this number in 2024.

Mindful that caring is often 24/7, Family Carers Ireland is happy to confirm that the Samaritans continues to provide out-of-hours support to anyone who contacts the Careline.

The Samaritans is the only charity in Ireland offering emotional support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to anyone who is in distress, lonely, struggling to cope or feeling suicidal. Family Carers Ireland is greatly appreciative of this additional support to family carers – it means we can offer a “listening ear” at all times.

Alongside the Samaritans, we would also like to thank Volunteer Ireland and Helplines Partnership who were key partners in supporting the Careline in 2023.



*Pictured are (left to right) Laura Heap, Careline Volunteer; Cassandra Heffernan, Careline Support Manager and Rosaleen Cribbon, Careline Volunteer.*



## SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS

Family Carers Ireland’s Young Carers Service offers support to children and young people aged 7 to 24 whose lives are in some way affected because they provide care, assistance or support to another family member in the home. In 2023, the Young Carers team supported over 500 young carers across the country.

Key supports delivered in 2023 included:

- Over 250 one-to-one sessions with young people
- Bi-monthly respite activity breaks for 50 young carers
- Counselling for over 50 young carers
- A mix of 10 in-person and online groups delivered weekly and monthly to over 300 young carers.

A key highlight of the year was Young Carers Action Day on March 15th which featured the launch of the Sharing the Caring: Young carers' experiences and access to supports in Ireland report by Family Carers Ireland and UCC. The findings were presented to the Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group on Family Carers at Leinster House.

The presentation was followed by a celebration event at the Ombudsman for Children’s office attended by the Ombudsman for Children, Dr Niall Muldoon. The event included lots of fun activities such as comic book making, a magic workshop, facepainting, music and so much more.

In 2023, we commenced the rollout of our Sibshops model. Sibshops are a space for the siblings of children with additional needs to come together for information and discussion activities mixed with fun games. In total, over 100 children participated in 14 Sibshops nationwide.



*Pictured outside Leinster House at the launch of the Sharing the Caring: Young carers' experiences and access to supports in Ireland are (left to right) young carers Liam Donoghue-Dunne, Amelia Browne and Sarah Buday.*

# Young Carers Action Day at the Ombudsman for Children’s office in Dublin





## LEARNING AND EDUCATION

Family carers often find themselves confronting situations and circumstances they have not had an opportunity to prepare for. Our training and mentoring programmes help participants to acquire new understanding and skills of relevance to their evolving caring role while also raising awareness of self-care.

In 2023, there was a significant rise in the number of training courses and workshops offered to family carers across Ireland. We increased our suite of programmes and introduced new courses that were warmly welcomed by family carers.

While all of our courses and workshops are designed to provide family carers with useful and interesting information and guidance, we are conscious that these are also safe social spaces for carers, whether held online or in-person.

We are keenly aware that training and education provided to family carers must be governed by our established practice of listening to family carers, to continue to hear and understand their needs before creating new courses/workshops.

Listed is a brief overview of courses and workshops delivered to family carers in 2023.

## Caring with Confidence

Our flagship programme has been designed to provide family carers with the rudimentary information and guidance they need – particularly those who are new to the caring role. Safety in the home, a brief on first aid and rights and entitlements are some of the modules covered through individual workshops over eight weeks.

We have worked with Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board and the Irish Times to create a pathway of education for family carers by linking Caring with Confidence with a L4 Introduction to Healthcare. This will allow family carers, who may have opted out of formal education, an opportunity to re-engage. Plans to pilot the new course are on target for spring 2024.

## Former Carers Workshop

We focused on creating a workshop for former family carers in 2023 which recognises the contribution of former carers, provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on their caring role and to think about what steps they would like to take next. Family carers often fail to recognise or value the skills and competencies that they have gained throughout their caring journey and this workshop provides them with a forum for exploring and confirming their vast knowledge and supporting their next steps.





Options such as continuing a caring role, paid or volunteering work, education and social engagement are covered in this workshop which also signposts to other organisations that may interest former carers. A successful pilot was delivered to a group of former carers in Mullingar in September 2023.

## Mental Health Workshop

This is a particularly valuable workshop for many as the impact of caring can take its toll on a family carer's mental health. Thanks to Anna de Siún, National Lead for Psychosocial Supports, who prepared the workshop, we now have an excellent mental health initiative in our repertoire of offerings for family carers to avail of. The workshop focuses on the five ways to wellbeing and provides useful suggestions explaining just how family carers can incorporate these in their daily lives. Fourteen workshops were delivered by Community Support Managers in 2023 to a total of 114 family carers.

## Parents Plus Special Needs (PPSN)

The Parents Plus Special Needs programme supports families who are parenting an adolescent or a child with an intellectual disability. The course was created to help parents to better manage challenges, improve their family's wellbeing and strengthen their links with other parents.

The three pillars of the course include:

- Supporting families
- Supporting children
- Parent self-care

Family Carers Ireland recognises the personal knowledge that family carers themselves contribute to this course. Parents with lived experience understand how the training can support others in a similar position to themselves. Courses delivered in 2023 supported:

1. Parents caring for a child with an intellectual disability and with autism aged 10 years and above (delivered in February)
2. Parents caring for a child with autism and associated intellectual disability of primary school age (delivered in April)
3. Parents caring for a child with a severe intellectual disability or complex care needs of all ages due to the severity of the diagnosis (delivered in April)
4. Parents caring for a teenager with an intellectual disability and autism (delivered in May)
5. Parents caring for a child with autism, dyspraxia, and dysgraphia of primary school age (delivered in September)
6. Parents caring for a child with a severe intellectual disability or complex care needs ID and complex needs of all ages (delivered in September)
7. Parents caring for a child with moderate autism and intellectual disability of all ages (delivered in September)

8. Parents caring for a child with a chronic heart defect, autism, intellectual disability and with sensory progressing conditions of primary school age (delivered in October)
9. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate ID and autism aged 10-15 years (delivered in October).

## Last Aid

Family Carers Ireland holds the licence to deliver the Last Aid workshop in Ireland. Its aim is to facilitate conversation about preparations for dying and death. Last Aid gently introduces participants to an educated approach for dealing with end-of-life care for loved ones and how they can prepare themselves with a view to reduce stress for everyone involved in this sad, but inevitable, part of our lives.

The workshop is based around four key modules through which we can share essential knowledge and insights of the reality of facing how we deal with dying:

1. Dying as a normal part of life
2. Planning Ahead
3. Relieving suffering
4. Final goodbyes

## Supporting Men Carers

According to the Census 2022, two in every five family carers are men. Research has shown that male carers are less likely to reach out for support throughout their time caring. The purpose of this workshop is to engage with them, provide an overview of the supports that Family Carers Ireland can provide to them and encourage a connection with the organisation.

In 2023, we refined our workshop and offered it out through Men's Sheds where we connected with several family carers. The format has proven to be very effective and includes examples (through recorded stories) of men carers that explains the support available from Family Carers Ireland and how this can improve the quality of their lives.



*Community Support Manager Peter Cox visiting the Mayfield Men's Shed in Cork in December*



## Access to Third Level Education

Thanks to the funding secured from the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and delivered by the South East Technological University (SETU), Family Carers Ireland is in the privileged position to offer a learning pathway and courses of specific interest to family carers across the country. Listed below are some of the courses that family carers availed off through this unique opportunity in 2023.

### Learning to Learn at Third Level (L6)

The journey to third level education is particularly challenging for some of our family carers who opted out of education mainly through the need to provide care in the home. Often carers want to re-engage with formal training but cannot find a way in.

We introduced the L6 certificate, 'Learning to Learn at Third Level,' to enable family carers to gently make the leap to third level education. The programme is designed to support learners to develop skills and confidence in preparing for education at third level. Students explore a range of different learning styles and are introduced to academic reading and writing techniques, strategies, planning, structuring, writing assignments and using academic practices.

### Certificate in Communication (L6)

The purpose of this course is to equip family carers with the knowledge, skills and competence of effective oral and written communications. Family carers welcomed and valued this course that increased their know-how when dealing with the various services with whom they interact - from hospitals to primary care services.

### Certificate in Groupwork and Facilitation Skills (L6)

The Certificate in Groupwork and Facilitation Skills aims to introduce practical facilitation and presentation skills and build on participants' ability to critically reflect on their own knowledge, skills and experience as group participants and group facilitators.

### Certificate in Family Caring (L6)

The Certificate in Family Caring is the next step up from Caring with Confidence and aims to facilitate a carer's development of practical insights and skills to enable them to deliver a high-quality level of family care in a safe environment at home.

### Certificate in Meeting the Challenge of Challenging Behaviour (L8)

This course supports the family carer to develop and implement comprehensive behavioural support plans for people who present with behaviours that challenge. It looks at the model of positive behaviour, proactive versus reactive strategies, examines the causes of such behaviours and evidence-based behavioural approaches.

### Certificate in Advocacy (L6)

Advocacy constitutes a critical element in protecting and progressing the rights of those people who have, traditionally, been excluded from mainstream activities in Irish society. The Certificate in Advocacy allows participants to develop a skillset that will enable them to advocate for their own needs and the needs of those for whom they care.



*Rachel O'Reilly (left) with her family on the day of her graduation on receiving her Certificate in Advocacy.*



*"The impact of these courses on both my mental health, personal life and professional pathway has been transformative. It's given me another purpose and a focus on something for myself."*

*"I've been a full-time carer for 20 years since I had to walk away from my career to care for my son. But now, by committing to this online course, I find myself noticing and appreciating my own intelligence and potential. That's a strange feeling, and it's wonderful."*

*"When I saw the notice advertising the opportunity to study a third level course from home, I felt the first little glimmer of hope I'd felt in a long time."*

*"Often feel cut off from the world, which can be really challenging for my mental health, so the course gave me a social aspect and purpose without leaving the house. That did wonders for my confidence."*





## Masterclasses – Workshops for Family Carers

The SETU/Family Carers Ireland masterclasses led by FCI staff in the community allowed family carers to reconnect in their communities while also learning a new skill. They supported a wide range of learning activities to bring family carers together to learn, share and support one another.

Workshops that were delivered to family carers in 2023 covered topics including: Health and Nutrition, Medication Management, Holistic Health and Wellbeing, Creative Music and Memory Interventions for Dementia. A total of 473 family carers attended these classes.



*Pictured are family carers from Cavan and Monaghan at the seasonal SETU Health and Wellbeing event.*





## Training Events Summary 2023

Name of Course	No. of courses delivered	No. of sessions facilitated	No. of participants
Caring with Confidence	16	128	164
Parents Plus Special Needs	9	72	103
Last Aid	9	9	56
Former Carers Workshop	1	1	5
Men Carers Workshop	4	4	92
Mental Health Workshop	15	15	121
Studio 3	1	2	32
SETU Masterclass	1	31	453
Certificate in Family Caring	1	6	13
Certificate in Learning to Learn at Third Level	1	8	20
Certificate in Advocacy	5	40	91
Certificate in Communication	1	8	20
Certificate in Group Work and Facilitation	1	8	20
Certificate in Meeting the Challenge of Challenging Behaviour	3	39	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>1,248</b>



We would like to congratulate all family carers who have engaged and benefited from our education and training programme in 2023. We would also like to extend a warm thank you to our partners who worked with us and who truly understand the importance of these courses and workshops.

## INFORMATION, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Family carers consistently report that negotiating public support systems is more stressful than their direct caring responsibilities. Getting good quality information and advice at the right time can be critical in helping family resilience and mitigating damage to a family's finances, health, employment and/or relationships.

Providing information to family carers and other community groups is an important part of the work we do. Information and awareness-raising sessions range from half-hour talks to groups of public health nurses to all-day conferences focused on specific topics.

In 2023, our staff delivered 264 different information sessions around the country, a small number of which are highlighted here.

## Dementia Conference

This one-day information and awareness raising conference was held in Limerick in November with 80 family carers caring for someone with dementia in attendance. In addition to the six incredible workshops offered, there were 20 information stands from other partners and community groups at the event.





## Autism and Girls

Following direct feedback and requests from carers, this online session was delivered by Sharon McCarthy, autism support consultant and advocate, who covered topics including early signs of autism, diagnostic challenges, gender differences and effective support strategies. Seventy carers attended the session and feedback was extremely positive.

## Thinking About Long Term Care

Training and facilitation consultant Bryan Nolan delivered a number of workshops in 2023 including 'Thinking about Long Term Care' which received incredibly positive feedback from the 28 family carers in attendance. They left the session with the knowledge they needed to feel more confident in considering long term care as part of their caring journey.

## SOCIAL INCLUSION AND WELLBEING

We frequently hear from family carers that facilitating a break from their caring role which allows them to meet with their peers and take part in self-care activities is a valued part of the support we provide.

The many social inclusion and wellbeing activities organised aim to cater for everyone, with family carers providing feedback on events they would like to take part in.

### The following were all held for family carers in 2023:

- Dementia Inclusion Social Club
- 'Knit and Natter' groups
- Coffee mornings
- Walking groups
- Physical activities (e.g. badminton, yoga, etc.)
- Quiz nights
- Bingo
- Book clubs
- Arts and crafts
- Mindfulness and meditation
- Music and dance classes.



*Family Carers Ireland, local family carers and the Waterford News and Star were invited onboard the Cailín Déise for a complimentary trip and a day sailing, food, music and camaraderie*



## Support Groups

In 2023, an average of 50 support groups took place each month across the county with approximately 400 carers taking part. These groups are held face-to-face in the community and online and either facilitated by our Community Support Managers or are peer-led groups supported by our staff.

Support groups are created based on the feedback and needs of carers. While there are several general support groups, we also offer more specific groups based on the condition of the person being cared for. Some examples include:

- Carers of Older Persons
- Carers of Adolescents with an Intellectual Disability
- Parents of Children with Additional Needs
- Autism Parents Support Group
- Parents of Children with a Hidden Disability
- Parents of Adults with an Intellectual Disability
- Caring with Additional Health Needs of Your Own
- Young Carer Online Group
- CareKids
- CareTeens
- Dads Support Group

## National Carers Week

National Carers Week is a highlight of the year, not only for family carers around the country, but also for FCI staff who enjoy putting on a full week of fun activities and events to celebrate the contribution of carers.

From June 12-18, family carers joined us online and in person for 125 separate activities including everything from afternoon tea to Zumba, meditation and bingo.



*Carlow carers attended an Easy Exercise workshop during National Carers Week.*



*A group in Cork took a trip back through Ireland's history while visiting the Cork Public Museum during National Carers Week.*









# HOME CARE SERVICES

Family Carers Ireland has been providing quality home care for more than 30 years and has been an approved HSE provider since the executive began outsourcing home support services on the basis of competitive commercial tenders.

FCI prides itself on a person-centred approach to home care, with a clear emphasis and acknowledgement of the needs of both the client and the family carer. We take a holistic approach to service delivery and promote inter-agency collaboration to ensure clients and families are aware of and avail of all relevant services that may positively impact their lives.

Undertaking contracted home care delivery gives us practical insights that inform our advocacy in support of an optimum quality home care benchmark within prevailing budgetary constraints. It also allows us to engage with many family carers who remain unaware of supports available to them beyond home support. As a not-for-profit organisation, any profits earned from the delivery of home care go directly to fund other supports for family carers.

Family Carers Ireland supports over 1,200 clients every week making over 200,000 calls a year to service users. We have a team of hundreds of trained home care workers (HCWs) located nationwide, delivering home care services across the country. We work closely with the HSE, the family and service user to ensure a robust individualised home care plan is put in place and monitored on an ongoing basis.

This team is supported by a professional, experienced management team and the service is underpinned by a best practice-based quality management system which

ensures client and staff safety are paramount and that regulatory compliance is achieved. Client and staff safety are central in the delivery of our service.

We pride ourselves on providing top quality home care through the following:

- We employ qualified HCWs who, at a minimum, have paid home care industry experience of more than one year and are working towards achieving a major award in healthcare
- We undertake the Garda vetting process for all incoming HCWs
- We require all staff to complete the mandatory Children First and Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults training
- We hold regular team meetings where our staff have the opportunity to meet with their local manager for training, organisation updates and to share information
- We engage in regular monitoring calls, home reviews and client satisfaction surveys and make appropriate changes to care plans as required
- Continuity of care, i.e. where at all possible, we seek to ensure that the same HCW is scheduled to provide care to the same client on an ongoing basis
- Each client call has a lead HCW and a support HCW to ensure that staff can take their leave comfortable in the knowledge that their client is being well looked after in their absence and ensures that our continuity of care ideal is maintained.





## 2023 CLIENT SURVEY

FCI carries out an annual survey of Home Support Services (HSS) service users who are asked to participate anonymously to enable the organisation to evaluate the effectiveness of the home care services provided to them and/or their family members and identify any areas of improvement or training needs required.

Survey queries were worded as positive statements or direct questions, to review the following topics:

- HSS service user interaction with staff:
  - in their homes
  - with office staff
  - with managers
- Staff attendance and punctuality
- Access to the service user's home care file in the home
- Opinions on the quality of the overall service
- Whether they would like their (HCW) to wear a uniform

The survey also invited respondents to provide any further feedback, as well as their contact details, if it required follow up by a manager.

A total of 405 responses (49%) were received from 820 surveys mailed to service users. This is a 7% increase on the percentage of response received in the 2022 survey (42%).

Results of note include 98% of respondents trust FCI to provide safe and effective care, a 13% increase on the number of respondents to this question in 2022 (85%), while 94% of respondents were either extremely satisfied, very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of care and support provided by FCI HCWs, an increase of 9% on the 2022 survey (85%).

Areas of focus for improvement noted in the suggestions received included HCW recruitment/cover, which is a national difficulty in the sector currently.

## HOME SUPPORT IN 2023 AND BEYOND

While some progress was made in 2023, the reform of the home care sector continues to be far too slow. Key reforms like the implementation of the Statutory Home Support Scheme, the full opening of the National Home Support office in Tullamore and the recruitment of InterRAI assessors months after funding was secured were all beset with delays in 2023. It is now a real possibility that the scheme will not be implemented in the lifetime of this Government.

Against a backdrop of rising waiting lists in the sector, this means more people will go without the care they need and deserve, or they will prematurely enter residential care while more and more family carers will go without the respite support in the home they desperately need. The missed opportunity to introduce tangible reform of the commissioning model of home support with the introduction of the new authorisation scheme for the provision of home support was particularly disappointing.



A scheme which could have significantly helped to improve the terms and conditions of HCWs and boost recruitment and retention in the sector achieved in many cases the direct opposite by virtue of insufficiently funding the travel time and expenses of workers.

The HCW recruitment crisis continued across 2023. The Cross-Departmental Strategic Workforce Advisory Group's recommendations were too vague or in some cases contradictory. Without a strategic workforce recruitment and retention strategy, the delivery of home support will struggle beyond 2024. Measures like those aimed at increasing recruitment of non-EU workers will not have the desired impact without provision of job security to HCWs. Terms and conditions for HCWs still differ hugely between HSE and not-for-profit providers. Even the most practical recommendation for social welfare reform remains unimplemented.

Many HCWs' social welfare supports inhibit them working additional hours. A person may work three full days, or 22.5 hours, and receive Jobseeker's Benefit for the other two days. However, if a HCW works even one hour per day for five days, they cannot receive Jobseeker's Benefit because the payment is based on the 'three-day rule' rather than cumulative hours worked.

The constant delays to reform are impacting the entire health service and 2024 must see an increased urgency from Government, the Department of Health and the HSE if this is to be addressed.



# PUBLIC POLICY TOWARDS FAMILY CARERS

Family Carers Ireland aims to make life better for carers. We work to create a society in which they are recognised and valued and given timely access to the support, advice and resources they need. Our work to influence and advance carer policy and our engagement with Government and policymakers is critical to achieving this.

## 2023 POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- Confirmation that a new Long-Term Carers Contribution Scheme will be introduced in January 2024 to give full-time carers (caring 20+ years) access to the State Pension (Contributory).
- Creation of a Family Carer Register by the Department of Social Protection allowing full-time carers to register their caring role.
- Announcement that Government will hold two referendums to change the Constitution's references to 'women in the home', insert recognition of care within families and expand the definition of the family.
- Announcement by Minister Humphreys that her department will establish a new Interdepartmental Working Group with the Department of Health to review the system of means tests for carer payments.
- Announcement of an increase in the income disregard for Carer's Allowance to €900 (couple) and €450 (single carers) effective from June 2024.
- Commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 in April 2023 which establishes a new legal framework for supported decision-making.
- Commencement of the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 in July 2023 which gives an entitlement to five annual unpaid days leave for medical care purposes and the right to request flexible working for parents and carers.
- Launch of the second Family Carer Scorecard.
- Pilot of the Family Carer Needs Assessment tool in CHO2.
- Growth of the Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group on Family Carers involving TDs and senators who champion carer issues across Government.

## LONG-TERM CARERS CONTRIBUTION SCHEME



Pictured in Baldoye, Dublin (left to right) are Aisling Kinsella, Community Support Manager, FCI; Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Social Protection; Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI and Marta Soltys, family carer and board member, FCI.



*"I will introduce an enhanced State Pension provision for long-term carers from January 2024. This will mean, for the first time, people who have to give up work over a long duration to look after a loved-one will have their time spent caring recognised in the pension system."*

### Minister for Social Protection Heather Humphreys

For decades, FCI has lobbied for an equitable State Pension system that recognises rather than penalises family carers and values the immense 'contribution' they make through their years of caregiving, in the same way we value social insurance 'contributions' paid through PRSI. The introduction of a new Long-Term Carer

Contributions Scheme in January 2024, as announced by Minister Heather Humphreys in November 2023, is a milestone moment for long-term carers and is a turning point in how the State should recognise and value care.

The Long-Term Carers Contribution Scheme makes it easier for those who have cared for over 20 years to qualify for a State Pension (Contributory) when they reach pension age. Under this scheme, any period in which a carer is registered as providing care to a person who requires full-time care can be included in their PRSI record for State Pension (Contributory) purposes. This will help ensure that thousands of people, mainly women, who have spent time caring for an incapacitated loved one will now be able to qualify for the State Pension (Contributory).

In September 2023, the Department of Social Protection opened a Family Carer Register allowing full-time family carers to register their caring role. FCI has actively encouraged all family carers to register their caring periods at [MyWelfare.ie](http://MyWelfare.ie) to ensure that where they have cared for a loved one(s) their pension entitlement reflects their important contribution to their family and society.

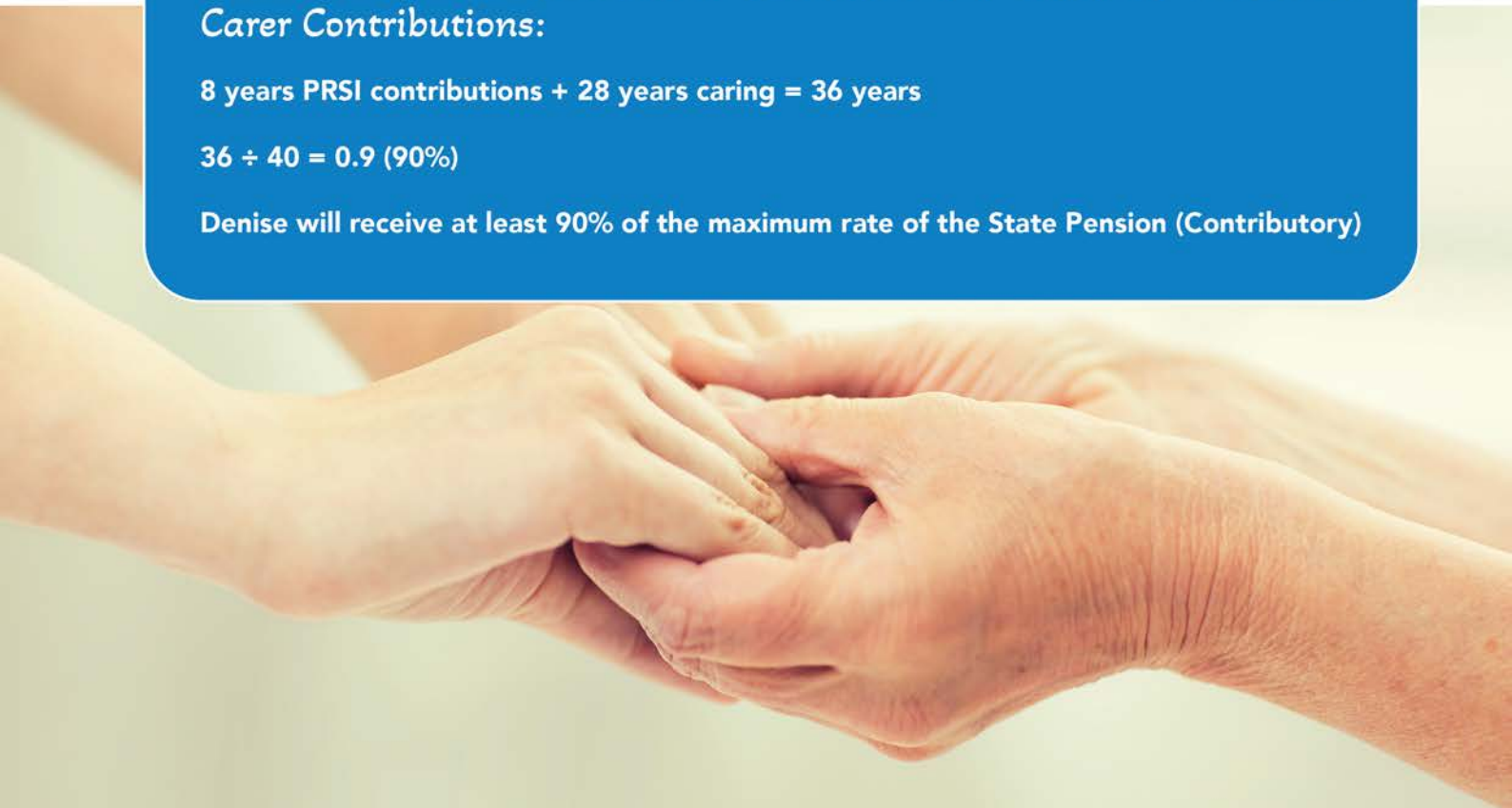
**Example 1:** Denise worked for 8 years in paid employment and has 416 paid PRSI contributions. Her first child was born with a disability and she gave up work to care for her. She will reach the age of 66 in 2024 having cared for 28 years

#### Calculation for State Pension (Contributory) applying Long-term Carer Contributions:

8 years PRSI contributions + 28 years caring = 36 years

$36 \div 40 = 0.9$  (90%)

Denise will receive at least 90% of the maximum rate of the State Pension (Contributory)



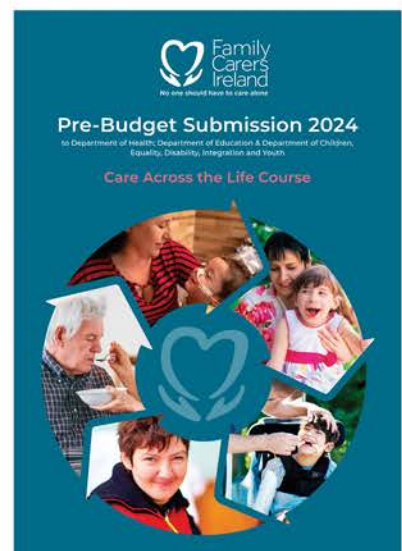
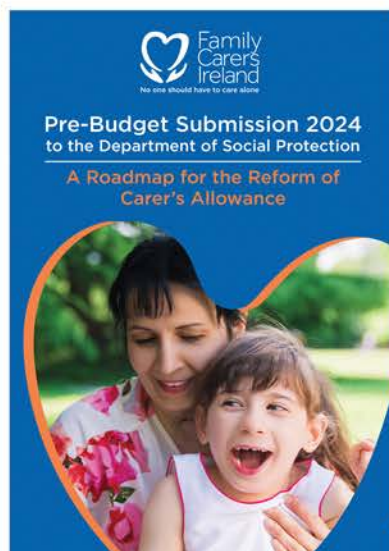


# BUDGET 2024



Pictured at the launch of FCI's pre-budget submissions at Buswells Hotel in Dublin are (left to right) Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, FCI; Lynsey O'Donovan, family carer and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI.

On July 6th, FCI launched our Budget 2024 campaign at a briefing in Buswell's Hotel Dublin. FCI published two prebudget submissions (i) A Roadmap for the Reform of Carer's Allowance targeted specifically at the Department of Social Protection and (ii) Care Across the Lifecourse targeted at the Department of Health, Department of Education and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The briefing was well attended by TDs, senators, Government officials and members of the national media.





Our pre-budget campaign focused on the dissemination of our Budget 2024 priorities to family carers, politicians and policymakers across the country, as well as holding meetings with Government TDs and ministers in their local constituency offices.

FCI also had the opportunity to raise our budget priorities directly with Minister Humphreys and officials at the Department of Social Protection’s annual budget forum which took place on July 19th in Farmleigh House, Dublin.

## Budget 2024: Summary of Key Announcements

- Income disregard for Carer’s Allowance will increase from €750 to €900 for couples and from €350 to €450 for single carers effective from June 2024
- €12 increase in weekly carer payments
- €400 cost of living payment for people getting Carer’s Support Grant
- Christmas Bonus double payment in December
- Increase in rate of Domiciliary Care Allowance from €330 to €340 per month
- Increase in Qualified Child payments from €42 to €46 for under 12s and from €50 to €54 for over 12s. Lump sum payment of €100 in the form of a Qualified Child Bonus
- Home Carer Tax Credit increasing from €1,700 to €1,800
- Incapacitated Child Tax Credit increasing from €3,300 to €3,500
- Single Person Child Carer Tax Credit increasing from €1,650 to €1,750
- Three energy credits for households of €150 each – totalling €450
- Additional 1,200 Special Needs Assistants

## Examples of the impact of Budget 2024 announcements on the Carer’s Allowances means test:

### Case 1

Couple: Anne works full-time and earns €1,000 gross per week. Her partner John is a full-time carer for their child who has autism. They have savings of €100,000.

Means test pre-2022: .....Qualify for CA of €29 per week  
 New disregards in 2022: .....Qualify for CA of €156 per week  
 New disregards announced in Budget 2024: .....Qualify for full rate CA of €248 per week

### Case 2

Single person: Dan works 18 hours and earns €500 per week. He also cares full-time for his mum. He has savings of €50,000.

Means test pre-2022: .....Qualify for CA of €73.50 per week  
 New disregards in 2022: .....Qualify for CA of €201 per week  
 New disregards announced in Budget 2024: .....Qualify for full rate CA of €248 per week

## ASSISTED DECISION-MAKING (CAPACITY) ACT 2015

The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act was signed into law in December 2015, however the Act was not commenced until April 2023. The Act is ambitious, dealing with Enduring Power of Attorney, Advance Healthcare Directives, bringing an end to wards of court and establishing a new system of supported decision-making. While the Act is of particular importance for people who have challenges with decision-making such as those living with frailty, dementia, an intellectual disability, an acquired brain injury or mental illness, it

may be important to all of us at certain times in our lives.

To mark the commencement of the Act on April 26th, FCI hosted an online information session for family carers with legal expertise provided by the Community Law and Mediation Centre (CLM). FCI also published two legal guides to provide practical advice to family carers (i) A Guide to the Legal Aspects of Caring and (ii) A Practical Guide for Family Carers on the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015. Both guides are available at [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).



In August 2023, FCI secured funding under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Human Rights and Equality Grant Scheme to deliver a new project – CarerAid – which will provide free legal advice clinics for family carers with queries specifically related to the Act. CarerAid will commence in January 2024 and will have a particular focus on helping carers who want to make an application, where appropriate, for a Decision-Making Representative Order (DMRO).

## WORK LIFE BALANCE AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS ACT 2023

The Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 came into effect in July and confers new employment rights for parents and carers. The Act introduces a new leave entitlement which allows employees to take unpaid leave for up to five days in any period of 12 consecutive months to provide care or support. The Act also allows employees who have six months' continuous service with their employer and who have caring responsibilities the right to request flexible working arrangements. The right of parents and carers to request flexible working will come into effect following the preparation of a Code of Practice by the Workplace Relations Commission expected in early 2024.

## REFERENDUMS ON FAMILY AND CARE

On March 8th 2023, International Women's Day, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced Government's intention to hold a referendum in November to change the Constitution's references to 'women in the home', insert recognition for family carers and expand the definition of the family. Specifically, the referendums sought approval to:

- amend Article 41 to provide for a wider concept of family beyond just the marital family, and
- delete Article 41.2 (which refers to the role of women in the home) and insert a new Article 42B to recognise family carers.

Despite the intention to hold the referendum in November, the final wording for Article 41 and the replacement of 41.2 (referred to as Article 42B) was not published until December 5th, when Government also announced that the referendum would be held in March 2024.

A coalition of civil society organisations including FCI, the National Women's Council, One Family, Treoir and SIPTU welcomed the news that the referendums were to be held but expressed disappointment that the wording did not go as far as had been recommended. After careful consideration, FCI and the other members of the coalition agreed to collectively campaign for a YesYes vote.

*'The State recognises that the provision of care, by members of a family to one another by reason of the bonds that exist among them, gives to society a support without which the common good cannot be achieved, and shall strive to support such provision.'*

## Article 42B

## FAMILY CARER SCORECARD 2023

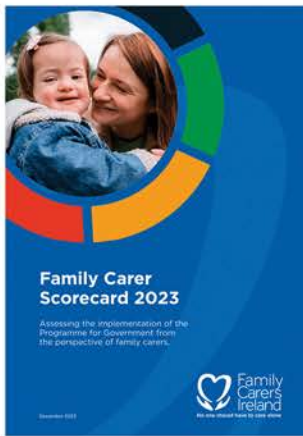


*Pictured at the launch of the Family Carer Scorecard 2023 are Catherine Cox (left), Head of Communications and Policy, FCI with family carers (from right) Tracy Carroll and her children Willow and Noah for whom she cares; Sinead Tighe who cares for her son Daniel and Lynsey O'Donovan who cares for her son Jack.*

On December 7th, FCI published its second Family Carer Scorecard. Assessed by family carers from across Ireland, the scorecard rates Government's progress in implementing the 18 commitments contained in the Programme for Government that have the potential to significantly improve the quality of life of family carers and those for whom they care. The findings highlight the concerning lack of progress in some areas and even regression in crucial areas that directly affect family carers.

Of the 18 Programme for Government commitments voted on by family carers, four received a score of 'Regressive'; six received a score of 'No Progress'; five received a score of 'Limited Progress'; three received a score of 'Good Progress' and zero received a score of 'Commitment Achieved'.





While the scorecard recognises some important and positive developments, specifically progress towards a pension solution for long-term carers and increases to the income disregard for Carer's Allowance, these gains are eclipsed by setbacks and insufficient progress in relation to critical health areas. Of particular concern are regressive steps in areas such as home support, assessment of need waiting times and the availability of vital respite and disability day services.

A copy of the Family Carer Scorecard is available at [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).

## CARERS' GUARANTEE

Inconsistent and inadequate funding to the caring sector has led to a postcode lottery where access to essential supports is determined by where a carer lives rather than what they need. The Carers' Guarantee proposal was developed by FCI in 2019 and sets out how, with additional annual funding of €5m, FCI could ensure the uniform delivery of a core basket of services (peer support, training, emergency respite, advocacy and information) to family carers across the country, helping to eliminate the postcode lottery that has long characterised carers' access to services.

Recurring funding of €2m was secured in Budget 2021 for implementation of the Carers' Guarantee. €1.9m of this

funding was made available to FCI, while the remaining €100,000 is supporting the development and delivery of online supports through Care Alliance Ireland.

As part of the 2023 Estimates Process, the Department of Health sought additional funding of €2m for the Carers' Guarantee which, if successful, would bring the total allocation to €4m, closer to the €5m initially proposed. This additional funding would have allowed FCI to establish a comprehensive network of online and in-person family carer groups, enabled the rollout of a carer identification programme, allowed FCI to provide one-to-one intensive support to an additional 10,000 family carers and engage with thousands more through our self-directed supports and carer identification campaign, provided additional training and information sessions, face-to-face groups and online communities, as well as increased counselling hours and emergency respite packages.

Unfortunately, the additional funding sought towards the Carers' Guarantee in the Estimates Process was not secured. While the annual allocation of €1.9m has allowed FCI to begin to make progress in delivering the Carers' Guarantee, it is critical that the additional €3m funding necessary is secured if the organisation is to deliver fully on the commitments made in the original proposal.

Critically, if FCI is to deliver the Carers' Guarantee at the existing level of service, then funding levels must be benchmarked against inflationary pressures. FCI is continuing to engage with the department and the HSE to ensure the full roll-out of the Carers' Guarantee.

## OIREACHTAS CROSS-PARTY INTEREST GROUP ON FAMILY CARERS

The Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group on Family Carers was established in June 2021 and is run with administrative support from FCI. The group is made up of 26 TDs and senators across political parties who have



*Pictured are members of the Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group on Family Carers with FCI representatives outside Leinster House.*



an interest in advancing carer policy and improving the lives of family carers. The group is jointly chaired by Deputy Marian Harkin and Deputy Pauline Tully. During 2023, the group hosted a number of important briefing events for members of the Oireachtas:

- March 8th - Senator Tom Clonan hosted a briefing on the experiences and support needs of young carers. The event highlighted the findings of a collaborative research project between FCI, University College Cork, the University of Limerick and the Irish Second-Level Students' Union.
- June 13th - Deputy Marian Harkin hosted a briefing on the report 'Towards a Participation Income for Family Carers' delivered by FCI and Prof. Mary Murphy and Dr Pauline Cullen from Maynooth University.
- September 27th - Deputy Pauline Tully hosted a briefing on FCI's Budget 2024 priorities.



*Pictured (left to right) are Dr Pauline Cullen, Maynooth University; Eileen Flynn, Senator; Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI; Prof Mary P. Murphy, Maynooth University; Jennifer Murnane O'Connor, TD; John Dunne, CEO, FCI and Dr Nikki Dunne, Research Manager, FCI*

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

During 2023, FCI appeared before two Oireachtas committees:

- Joint Committee on Autism: FCI appeared before the committee on May 30th. Our contribution focused on realising the rights of children with autism and the need to adopt a whole of family approach with supports in place to enable and sustain family members in their caring role as well as the autistic person.



*Pictured at the Joint Committee on Autism are (left to right) Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI and Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, FCI*

- Joint Committee on Social Protection: Representatives from FCI and Maynooth University appeared before the committee on October 11th to discuss the joint paper 'Towards a Participation Income for Family Carers'.

## Annual Carers' Forum

The Annual Carers' Forum hosted by the Department of Social Protection was held on May 17th and was opened by Minister Heather Humphreys. This event is an opportunity for Government departments, carer organisations and family carers to discuss the policy issues that affect family carers. The event consisted of sessions on health, social protection supports, transport and housing issues for people with disabilities and older people and issues affecting young carers.

## Free Legal Advice Clinics

During 2023, FCI continued to deliver free legal advice clinics to family carers. The project, which is run in collaboration with the Community Law and Mediation Centre (CLM), gives family carers access to a solicitor to discuss legal issues relating to employment, wills and legacies, social welfare, housing, and family and child law. A total of 31 legal advice clinics were provided to family carers during 2023.

## Policy Matters Newsletter

FCI issued our first policy newsletter 'Policy Matters' in July to provide a quarterly round-up of carer-related policy news and developments. The newsletter will be issued each quarter to a broad audience of family carers, members of the Oireachtas, Government department staff and employees of FCI. People can subscribe to the newsletter by visiting the policy and lobbying section of [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).



## Policy Submissions

FCI regularly contributes to calls for submissions by Government departments and state bodies in relation to a variety of issues. The following policy submissions were made during 2023:

- Submission to Central Statistics Office on the content of Census 2027
- Submission to Department of Housing on a Review of the Differential Rent Scheme
- Submission to Department of Education on the Review of the EPSEN Act 2004
- Submission to Department of Social Protection on the Review of Means Tested Payments
- Submission to Inter-departmental Group on the Referendum Wording in relation to Article 41.2
- Submission on the National Equality Data Strategy

## Conferences and Speaking Events

During 2023, FCI was delighted to contribute and present at the following events:

- Department of Health women's health webinar
- Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association (IMNDA) annual conference
- European Parliament Interest Group on Carers – 'Addressing care poverty'

- Lions Club Carer Respite Weekend in Sligo
- Children's Health Ireland conference for parents of children with complex needs
- Rights and entitlements session for family carers - South Dublin Libraries
- Presentation to students of SETU and Royal College of Surgeons
- Presentation to nursing staff in Beaumont Hospital
- Virtual information sessions on Domiciliary Care Allowance, Fair Deal, Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit and Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015

## Representation on National Committees

FCI represents family carers on a number of national committees, including:

- Community and Voluntary Pillar of Social Partnership
- HSE's Patient Engagement Forum
- Gender Equality Coalition
- HSE Family Carer Needs Assessment Pilot Steering Group
- EUROCARERS' Policy Group
- Home Care Coalition Working Group
- Loneliness Taskforce

## Care-related motions brought before the Dáil and Seanad in 2023

### Dáil motions

- Delivery of a Rights-Based Care Economy in Ireland: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-12-07/speech/292/>
- Home Care Workers and Home Support Scheme: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-11-08/speech/11/>
- Funding for Persons with Disabilities: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-10-18/27/>
- Home Care and Support Services: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-06-21/speech/21/>
- Respite Care Services: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-05-30/speech/169/>
- Access to Autism and Disability Assessments and Supports: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-05-24/speech/14/>
- Transport Support Schemes for People with Disabilities: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-05-04/speech/273/>
- Reform of Carer's Allowance Scheme: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-03-22/speech/23/>

### Seanad motions:

- Care Payments: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2023-07-12/speech/56/>



# HIGHLIGHT CARERS' CONTRIBUTION

## ENGAGING WITH FAMILY CARERS

### LISTENING TO FAMILY CARERS



*Pictured at the Limerick Listening to Family Carers event presenting on FCI's Strategic Plan 2024-2029 is Karen McCullagh, National Lead for Community Supports.*

Two rounds of Listening to Family Carers events took place during 2023. The spring forums were held between February and March and included five events including in-person meetings in Kilkenny, Dublin, Cork and Galway and an online forum. Each event included a presentation and discussion on three key topics (i) Reforming Carer's Allowance, (ii) Supporting family carers through the commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and (iii) Shaping FCI's strategic plan for 2024 and beyond. A copy of the presentations was circulated to carers who registered to attend the event.

The autumn forums took place during October and November and were held in Offaly, Kilkenny, Limerick, Dublin, Cork and Galway. A seventh virtual forum was also held to facilitate the views of those who could not attend the in-person events. The agenda was focused on three areas (i) providing an overview of Budget 2024 announcements, (ii) scoring the 18 commitments contained in the Programme for Government for inclusion in the Family Carer Scorecard 2023 and (iii) planning ahead - inviting carer input into FCI's new strategic plan and discussing issues of importance including the upcoming referendums on family and care.

FCI has compiled a summary document of the feedback and comments received which is available at [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).

### MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

As part of our organisation, we have almost 11,000 family carers who are members of FCI. With their membership card, they not only have something tangible that identifies them as a family carer, but they also use it to access over 100 partner offers and discounts from businesses all over Ireland both in person and online through using a special promo code. We work to ensure we are bringing valuable savings to our family carers on all products and services that may be of benefit to them. Members now have access to a bespoke area on our website - the Membership Hub - which was launched in Q3 2023 and gives members direct access via our website to an area which houses all their discount codes. The hub also allows members to renew their membership easily without having to complete the application form again and allows them to update their personal information, should their name, address or caring responsibilities change during their membership period.

Membership welcome calls also form part of the overall offering. These calls provide the opportunity for us to reach out to new members, share information about our supports and services and to highlight any local offers they can avail of as part of their membership. In 2023, there were over 5,000 welcome calls made to new members.

### Membership Stats:

**New members: 5,303** (+15% on 2022)

**Renewals: 6,045** (+7% on 2022)

**Breakdown: 87% female, 63% male**

**Most prevalent conditions of persons being cared for: ASD, Intellectual Disability, ADHD, Down Syndrome, Epilepsy**







# SHINING A LIGHT ON THE REALITIES OF CARING IN IRELAND

## SHAPING CHANGE WITH RESEARCH

Throughout 2023, Family Carers Ireland's research team continued to focus on generating and supporting robust research which meaningfully involves family carers and is engaging and useful for a wide range of interested parties including carers, researchers, policymakers, practitioners and members of the public. Key highlights of the year included the publication of 'Towards a Participation Income for Family Carers' with Maynooth University and the 'Carer Harm' report with UCD, the hosting of our third annual research conference and the growing reach of the Carewell Conversations podcast series in partnership with UCD.

In 2023, our dedication to nurturing involvement and collaboration in research with family carers, researchers, and stakeholders took significant strides forward. Notably, we refreshed our Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) panel and facilitated a discussion at our research conference to explore ways to deepen family carers' participation. This effort has been complemented by our partnerships with an expanding network of researchers, which have broadened the reach and enhanced the impact of our work. This advancement reflects our unwavering commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships and continually refining our research programme to support family carers and stakeholders more effectively.

## 'TOWARDS A PARTICIPATION INCOME FOR FAMILY CARERS'

In June 2023, FCI launched the report 'Towards a Participation Income for Family Carers', followed by a briefing at the AV Room in Leinster House. In collaboration with Professor Mary Murphy, Dr Pauline Cullen and Shane Gough of Maynooth University, this research merged the knowledge of carers, practitioners and academics to develop a concrete income support reform proposal with implementation recommendations for carers.

The recommendations developed focus on what needs to be done to advance a new income support for family care – Family Carer's Income Support. This builds on previous recommendations by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) (2020) and the Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality (2022) which proposed that a participation income be established for care work. Participation income is when 'people are paid, not for doing nothing, but in exchange for an activity that is useful for the society' (Atkinson, 1996). It is noted the dominant concern that underinvestment in, and lack of adequacy of, services is also a clear priority for family carers, and our recommendations need to be understood in this context: parallel investment in comprehensive services is essential.

The report recommends:

- Introduction of a Participation Income based non-means tested Family Carer's Income Support (FCIS) for all family carers who fulfil the assessment criteria.
- Establishment of a Participation Income FCIS Implementation Group.
- Ensuring adequacy of Participation Income FCIS by benchmarking and indexing the payment in line with Commission on Tax and Welfare recommendations.
- Establishment of a Navigational Operations Group to improve navigational processes related to applying for and proving eligibility for a new FCIS and for existing payments.

Representatives of FCI and Maynooth University appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection on October 11th to discuss the research. FCI's opening statement focused on the rationale for introducing a participation income and included a contribution from a family carer who spoke about the difficulties she experienced in navigating the social welfare system and applying for Carer's Allowance. The contribution from Maynooth representatives focused on the methodology and findings of the research.

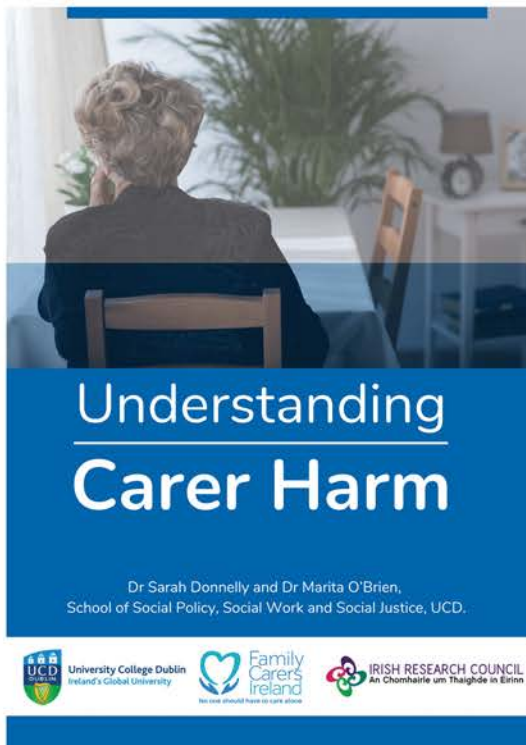




*Pictured are Shane Gough, Dr Pauline Cullen and Prof Mary P. Murphy, Maynooth University; Dr Nikki Dunne, Research Manager, FCI; Emily Thyne, family carer and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI.*

More details about these recommendations including suggestions for their implementation and appropriate timelines for the implementation of each recommendation can be found in the full report on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).

## 'UNDERSTANDING CARER HARM'



In partnership with Dr Sarah Donnelly, UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice, FCI launched the 'Understanding Carer Harm' report in March 2023. This research, which looked at family carers who experience harm in their caring relationship,

was funded by the Irish Research Council's New Foundations Grants Scheme and involved secondary data analysis of survey responses and interviews with nine family carers (five carers of autistic people and four carers of people with dementia) who have experienced carer harm as well as interviews and focus groups with a range of professionals.

### Key findings include:

- Family carers spoke about experiencing a wide range of types of harm including shouting, screaming, damage and destruction of personal possessions or the family home and significant levels of physical violence as well as knock-on emotional and psychological distress. This impacted on their own and other family members' health and wellbeing.
- Participants reported the challenges of navigating a fragmented and complicated health and social care system. They recounted the experience of constantly having to 'fight' and 'beg for help' in order to stay safe. Professionals reflected on their immense feelings of helplessness and frustration about their inability to respond, highlighting the link between carer harm and the absence of appropriate condition-responsive services.

The research findings informed the development of four information leaflets, which were co-designed using a World Café methodology. The findings from the World Café sessions highlighted the complexity yet also the importance of naming carer harm, the need to raise awareness of carer harm amongst professionals and family carers as well as potential supports that would be helpful for those that are experiencing carer harm.

After the launch, a series of webinars took place in May and June to raise awareness of the issue and continue the conversation with national and international experts. The research has been presented at academic conferences, including the Irish Gerontological Society Conference and the All-Ireland Social Work Educators Forum. Peer review publications are in development.

The full report is available here and a series of information leaflets produced on carer harm can be found on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).



## 'PARTNERSHIP IN PRACTICE': FCI'S ANNUAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE



*Pictured at the Partnership in Practice conference is event chair Robert Anderson*

The 'Partnership in Practice' conference is an annual event hosted by FCI and is designed to engage diverse stakeholders including family carers, researchers, health and social care practitioners and government and non-governmental representatives to work together to unpack some of the challenges in carer-related research. FCI is committed to meaningful PPI, with the event focusing on best practices in partnership and the challenges and solutions to meaningful involvement of family carers in research.

The third annual conference was held on December 6th in the Ashling Hotel, Dublin. This was the first time that the conference took place in-person, thanks to funding from the HRB's Conference and Events Scheme, so opportunities to network were critical to the design of the day. Future conferences will build on this work and discuss priority research areas for family carers.

Over 60 participants, including family carers, researchers, government and charity representatives and health and social care professionals attended the conference.

The event was structured around a morning session where speakers presented on important themes and learnings to consider in better supporting family carers, and a facilitated session where participants reflected on the principles underpinning meaningful PPI.

### The agenda included:

- Guest speakers with direct experience and examples of translating research into practice providing tangible outputs;
- Small, mixed discussion groups to brainstorm the barriers and solutions for translating research into practice (and provide networking opportunities);
- Informal networking breaks over refreshments.

Participants shared their recommendations for planning, managing and financing better carer involvement in research, which were shared in a plenary session and are included in the second part of the report for consideration in progressing PPI and conference follow up activities.



### OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- The CAREWELL Conversations podcast series, a collaboration between FCI and UCD funded by HRB, successfully expanded its scope and audience in 2023. This series delves into the various issues impacting on those who juggle paid employment with unpaid caregiving responsibilities, incorporating insights from a diverse array of stakeholders including family carers, employers, HR professionals, employer representative organisations and the research community. Over 6,000 people tuned into the podcast in 2023 with "Policies and practices that provide support for family carers in the workplace" with Mary Connaughton from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) the most popular episode with over 1,000 plays.
- The TCD TILDA study on older family carers' resilience, funded by the HRB/HRCI Joint Funding Scheme, progressed with its first peer-reviewed publication in *Frontiers in Public Health*. A PPI group has been formed to guide and support the research.
- The FCI PPI Panel, a dedicated group of family carers engaged in research as co-researchers, was updated in 2023 with new training and had its inaugural in-person meeting at the Partnership in Practice conference. Throughout the year, these carers actively participated in projects at various universities, with a growing interest from researchers nationwide in collaborating with the FCI PPI Panel members.
- In 2023, FCI published an analysis of gender in the State of Caring 2022 survey.
- Two internal evaluations were completed during 2023; an impact evaluation of the National Emergency Respite Scheme and a process evaluation of FCI's new model of carer supports.



## RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION PARTNERSHIPS

Across 2023, FCI continued to develop key research partnerships nationally and internationally, resulting in many opportunities to disseminate and raise awareness of our work:

- FCI continued a local partnership with both UCD and UCC PPI Ignite.
- The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and FCI published the 'Cost of Living while Caring' based on the anonymised dementia-specific data collected by FCI as part of 'The State of Caring 2022' report.
- FCI contributed to multiple events with a PPI focus, including as a panellist for the PPI Festival Event 'Building PPI relationships: Tools to help patient and community organisations address PPI capacity issues'.
- FCI sat on multiple research advisory groups, including the UCC Carevisions project.
- FCI has participated in EUROCARERS' Research Working Group meetings, sharing updates on the organisation's research activities.
- FCI is a member of the programme team for the 'Scottish Universities Insight Institute Knowledge Exchange Programme', with University of Strathclyde, University of Dundee which focuses on the relationships between family carers and formal carers.
- FCI was invited to contribute as a panellist at the 'Learning from International Models' session at the Canadian Caregiving Summit.
- FCI co-authored one peer reviewed publication on the topic of working family carers.
- FCI presented at the Transforming Care Conference 2023 and the Irish Integrated Care Conference 2023.





# MAKING PEOPLE AWARE OF FCI AND WHAT WE OFFER

## FAMILY CARERS IN THE MEDIA

Highlighting the realities of family carers' lives and shaping public policy towards those caring for loved ones at home are cornerstones of FCI's work with the media both nationally and regionally. We seek to recognise and celebrate the work of family carers while also shining a light on the challenges that they face, often stemming from a lack of vital supports and services from the State.

Our efforts in this regard were acknowledged at the 2023 Awards for Excellence in Public Relations as FCI and MKC Communications won the best issues-led campaign award for 'No one should have to care alone' which sought to increase awareness of family carers, to amplify their voices, advocate for their rights, promote the brand of FCI and strengthen fundraising efforts. The annual awards hosted by the Public Relations Consultants Association Ireland (PRCA) and the Public Relations Institute of Ireland (PRII), recognise the best in Irish public relations, public affairs and internal communications across the public and private sectors.

Below is a brief snapshot of national media coverage featuring family carers and FCI across the year.



*Pictured at The Awards for Excellence in Public Relations are (left to right) Laurie Mannix, Co-Founder and Director, MKC Communications; Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland and Sarah Lawlor, Senior Client Manager, MKC Communications.*

## JANUARY

2022 Netwatch Family Carer of the Year Colette O'Shea joined FCI's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox on **Ireland AM** on **Virgin Media One** to chat to presenters Tommy Bowe and Muireann O'Connell about caring for her husband Kieran who had Motor Neurone Disease and frontal lobe dementia and her son Luke who has advanced Crohn's Disease. Sadly, Kieran passed away later that month.



*Pictured on Ireland AM are Tommy Bowe, presenter; Muireann O'Connell, presenter; Colette O'Shea, 2022 Netwatch Family Carer of the Year and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland.*



## FEBRUARY

The **Irish Examiner** published an article on the back of the announcement that the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPER) was joining FCI's Caring Employers programme to support employees balancing work and care. Speaking to the paper, Paschal Donohoe, Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, said: "This partnership with Family Carers Ireland is a tangible demonstration of our commitment to providing inclusive leadership in building the workplace of the future."

## MARCH

Young carer Jodie O'Brien from Dublin and her mother Suzanne featured in an article published by the **Irish Sun** which focused on the need for the Government to do more to support young people with caring responsibilities. The article highlighted a report published by FCI to mark Young Carers Action Day which revealed high levels of stress and loneliness amongst young carers.

## APRIL

The launch of two legal guides by FCI in partnership with Community Law and Mediation was published by **Irish Legal News**. The publications, *A Guide on the Legal Aspects of Caring* and *A Practical Guide for Family Carers on The Assisted Decision-Making Capacity Act*, explain the important changes brought in with the commencement of the act and the legal supports available to family carers. Rose Wall, CEO at Community Law and Mediation, said:

"From our work with FCI providing free legal advice to family carers, we have identified a need for accessible, practical information on the legal issues associated with caring and the implications of the Assisted Decision-Making Capacity Act, commenced today."

## MAY

Jane Johnstone from Wexford, who cares full-time for her two adult sons Evan and Daniel who have autism and complex medical needs, spoke to **RSVP Magazine** as part of a series of articles titled *Caring for the Carers* which sought to highlight the challenges faced by family carers across the country. Jane described being run into the ground as a result of not being able to take a break: "I am trying to be responsible by asking for respite but there's nothing available. I am just trying to keep things together. I can't take a breath... So much is expected from us as family carers. I feel like we are filling in the gaps of the services as they just aren't there. Twenty years later, I am still battling."

## JUNE

The **Irish Daily Star** interviewed Dublin family carer Lynsey O'Donovan, who cares for her son Jack, for a lengthy feature published in *Chic Magazine* about the "invaluable" support provided to her by FCI and her hopes of raising awareness of the organisation. Lynsey said that she and Jack were "so proud" to be ambassadors for the Heart of Gold fundraising day and that she "would love for people to know more about the charity, more about what they do and the fights that they do for us."



*Pictured are Jane Johnstone and her son Daniel.*



*Pictured are Lynsey O'Donovan and her son Jack.*



## JULY

FCI's pre-budget submission was the focus of an article in the **Irish Sun** which included quotes from FCI's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox who said: "Family carers, who save the public purse billions a year, are being expected to quietly prop up our health system with little to no support. This situation simply cannot continue. So we have set out an extensive range of policy recommendations that must be pursued as a matter of urgency. It is time for action, it is time for substantial and meaningful change."

## AUGUST

The impact of the lack of respite for family carers, in particular for older parents caring for children with intellectual disabilities and autism, was the focus of a package which aired on **This Week** on **RTÉ Radio 1**. Angelina Moore from Dublin, who cares for her adult son Edward who has autism, spoke about her battle to try and get residential care, the fact that their respite has been cut from six weekends a year to two and the impact this has had on their health: "I'm concerned because I can see myself regressing. I can see what's happening his and my health... What chance has my son got if they are telling me he isn't even on a list. This is a stockpiling crisis. Do people need to fall before they get any help?"

## SEPTEMBER

Ahead of a briefing in Leinster House for Oireachtas members on FCI's pre-budget submission, Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox appeared on **The Pat Kenny Show** on **Newstalk** to make the case for the abolition of the means test for Carer's Allowance, saying that "carers should be paid for the work that they do, based on needs and the care they provide, not based on the income of a partner or the household."

## OCTOBER

FCI's Caring Employers Promotions Officer Brian Doyle and Marketing Manager Sue O'Grady spoke to the **Irish Times** for an article focusing on the "sandwich generation" who are working and raising their own families while caring for elderly parents. Brian provided fantastic insight into caring for his late father, who had vascular dementia and passed away in 2019, and now caring for his mother who was also diagnosed with dementia. While Sue highlighted the importance of employers properly supporting staff who are balancing career and care.

## NOVEMBER

The Netwatch Family Carer of the Year awards featured prominently across national print and broadcast media, with **Six One** on **RTÉ 1** broadcasting a package featuring 2023 Netwatch Family Carer of the Year Breda Morrissey from Co. Cork who cares for her husband Timmy who sustained catastrophic injuries when he was knocked down by a car in 1999. Speaking after being presented with the award, Breda was keen to recognise the other regional finalists who were also recognised on the day: "What I got today is not just for me. It's for all of yee."

## DECEMBER

The launch of FCI's Family Carer Scorecard 2023, which scores the progress made by Government on delivering on commitments made in the Programme for Government, featured in national media including the **Irish Independent**. Speaking to the paper, FCI's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox urged Government to back up its words with actions: "The Government's failure to make substantive progress on many commitments vital to family carers is deeply disappointing... With limited progress in some areas, no progress in others and even regression in critical areas, it's evident that urgent and comprehensive action is necessary to address the unmet needs of family carers and those for whom they care."



*Pictured right to left are Brian Doyle and his mother Adrienne at home in Ballinteer, Dublin.*



*Pictured left to right are Miriam O'Callaghan, awards host and patron; Breda Morrissey, Netwatch Family Carer of the Year; Mick Galwey, Netwatch Brand Ambassador and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland.*



# OUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

## WEBSITE

Throughout 2023, the Family Carers Ireland website continued to act as a valuable resource for tens of thousands of family carers seeking support in their caring role, guidance on their rights and entitlements and information on the organisation's services, supports, activities, events, campaigns, membership and much more.

More than 610,000 page views were recorded on the site in 2023, a 7% increase on the previous year, while other key metrics which showed good progress on 2022 included average session duration (2 minutes 29 seconds) and average page load times (2.44 seconds) which improved by 13% and 3% respectively. The total number of site users (148,831) and sessions recorded (212,913) held steady on the back of significant growth in 2022.

Significant work was undertaken in the first half of the year to facilitate the creation of a secure log-in portal for our members which launched in Q3. The Membership Hub allows members to access their membership benefits and discount codes; update their personal details and renew quickly and easily. Other development work included expanding our eLearning resources for family carers with the addition of modules on caring with compassion, and recognising and responding to carer burnout.

As we look to build on the success of fundraising in recent years, the Get Involved section of the website underwent a complete overhaul with a firm focus on increasing awareness of both local and national campaigns and integrating the Enthuse platform which encompasses fundraising, donations and events registration technology and allows supporters to seamlessly sign up for events and donate.

Content across the site is refreshed regularly, with the calendar of activities and events for family carers and the learning and education sections in particular routinely updated as both in-person and online events, workshops and programmes are confirmed. Details of our media, policy, lobbying and research activities are also updated on an ongoing basis with press releases, reports and submissions published regularly throughout the year.

Significant restructuring of the website is planned in 2024 with a view to improving the user experience and ensuring the CMS (content management system) meets the needs of the organisation going forward.

## KEY WEBSITE METRICS

### Users

148,831

### Sessions

212,913

### Page Views

614,756

### Avg Session Duration

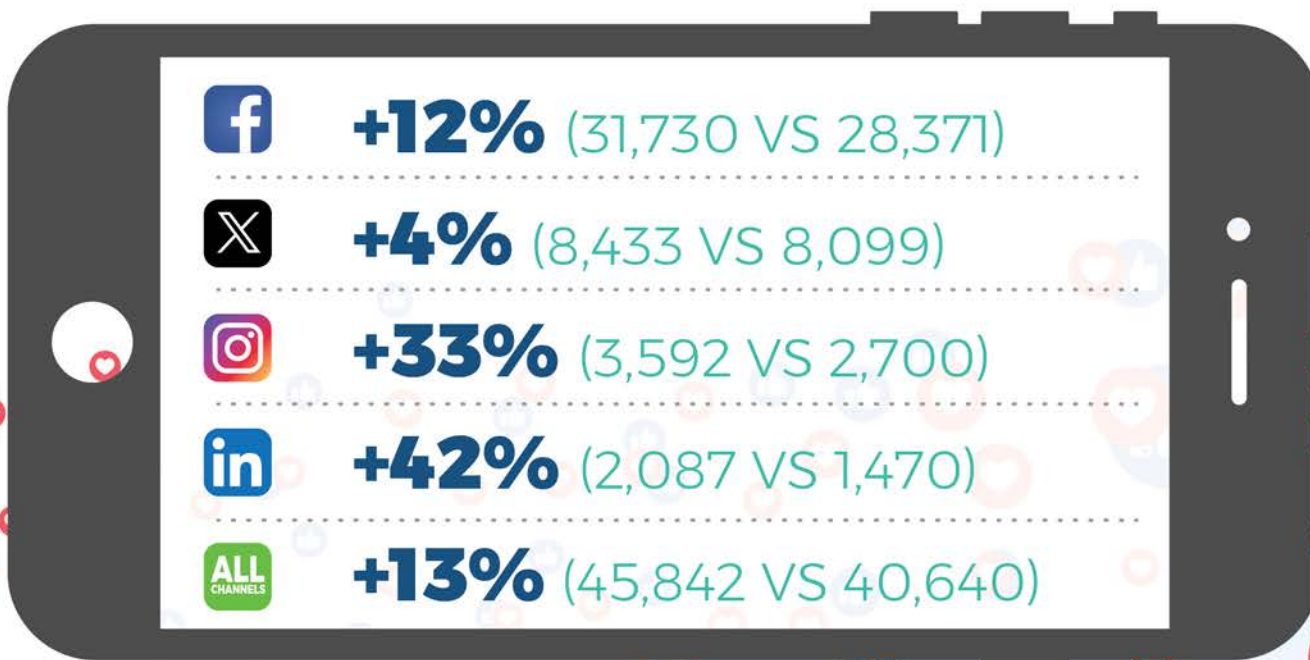
00:02:29

### Avg Page Load Time (sec)

2.44



## SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS: 2023 VS 2022



### SOCIAL MEDIA

FCI has a vibrant and active social media presence with a strong community of family carers established across multiple channels. Particularly since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, social media has allowed us to engage with greater numbers of family carers than ever before and keep them informed of the organisation's activities; supports and services; campaigns and causes; coverage of family carer related topics in news and politics and membership benefits.

We routinely reach tens of thousands of people every month across our social media channels, with the national Facebook page in particular continuing to connect with large numbers across 2023.

Follower numbers on Facebook rose by 12% in the year to almost 32,000, with the page securing over 115,000 unique engagements.

X (formerly Twitter) saw the number of followers rising by 4% to over 8,400 and tweets earning an average of almost 1,000 impressions per day.

Followers of our LinkedIn page grew by 42% to almost 2,100 while our Instagram account saw follower numbers increase by one-third to nearly 3,600.

Across the year, hundreds of family carers also reached out to our social media channels by private message

– primarily via Facebook – with many of these referred to their local Community Supports team for further support.

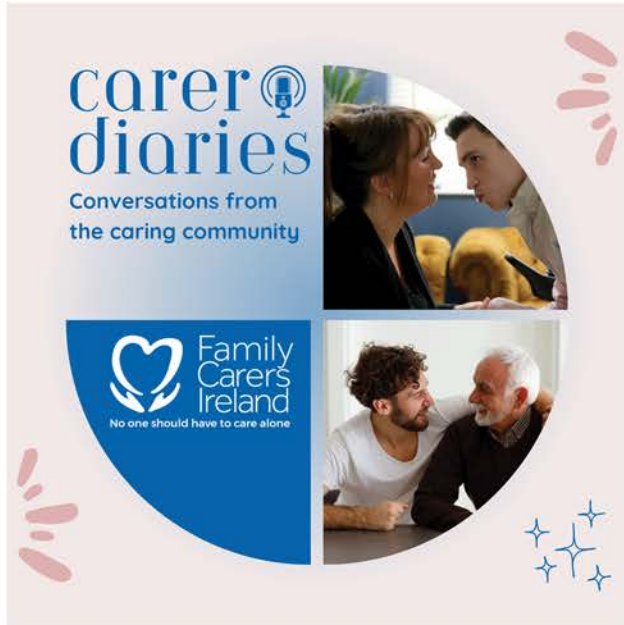
### ONLINE COMMUNITY FORUM

Our online community forum aims to empower family carers to interact with one another in a safe space to share learning, information and insight and to provide and receive emotional support from their peers.

It is organised by thread categories with dedicated areas, for example, for parents of adults with an intellectual disability; family carers of children or adults with special needs; those caring for a person with dementia and families and supporters of people with mental health challenges. The forum also allows family carers to create condition specific topics where they can connect with others in similar caring circumstances. Established in May 2021, the forum had almost 1,150 registered members by the end of 2023.



## CARER DIARIES PODCAST



We are proud to have launched our first ever podcast series, The Carer Diaries, in October 2023.

'Carer Diaries: conversations from the caring community' is a podcast series featuring family carers and care experts which aims to shine a light on the experiences of those providing care for loved ones at home and discuss how they can be better supported to care safely and with confidence.

Guests in 2023 included Bank of Ireland employees Dave Hyland and Jennifer Breen who discussed the challenge of balancing their careers with caring; CEO and founder of Spiritual Earth Calodagh McCumiskey who offered advice on facing challenges when caring for an elderly loved one; family carer Tracy Carroll chatting about her battles with the education system and trying to access supports and services for her two children; Anna de Siún, National Lead for Psychosocial Supports with FCI, discussing the organisation's counselling service with family carer Mary\* (name changed to protect her anonymity) who who shared her experiences of reaching out while in crisis; and family carer Jane Johnstone, Caring Employers Promotions officer with FCI, offering advice on caring over Christmas.

We look forward to continuing Carer Diaries into 2024 and promoting our podcast across the caring community and more widely. The podcast can be accessed on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie) or via Spotify.

## RAISING FUNDS FOR FAMILY CARERS

Thanks to the generosity of members of the public and corporate partners, 2023 was a successful fundraising year for FCI even though the cost-of-living crisis continued to impact on the public while globally, the

focus turned to supporting the people of Ukraine and Gaza.

We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank everyone that donated to our charity and the cause of family carers. We continue to appreciate that when times can be tough for people financially, they still have the goodwill to fundraise or donate and for this we are truly grateful.

2023 was a fantastic year with a range of fundraising activities undertaken in support of FCI. Below are some highlights.



*Pictured at the launch of Heart of Gold are Ryan Baird (centre), Leinster and Ireland rugby player and young carer ambassador; Lynsey O'Donovan (top left) and her son Jack; Anthony Sheehan (right), Vice President of Global Supply Chain at Horizon, and Catherine Cox (bottom left), Head of Communications and Policy, FCI*

## HEART OF GOLD

The fourth edition of our national fundraising day, Heart of Gold, was held in 2023 and represented our most successful one to date with over €125,000 raised.

Proudly supported by Horizon, we officially launched the campaign at Horizon to mark the partnership and to acknowledge their invaluable support. On the day, we were delighted to be joined by Ireland and Leinster rugby player and Young Carer Ambassador Ryan Baird and family carer Lynsey O'Donovan and her son Jack who were our Heart of Gold Ambassadors and helped launch the campaign.

In addition to our national launch, local launches were held in our support centres around the country, bringing together family carers to share their story and raising awareness of FCI in their local community. The public were encouraged to show their support by purchasing a Heart of Gold Pin, hosting a coffee morning, signing up for our 50 miles in June Challenge, or simply donating on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).





*Heart of Gold launches held in Clonmel and Tullamore*

A highlight of the campaign was the production of a TV advertisement featuring Jack and Lynsey which was broadcast throughout National Carers Week. Thanks to Lynsey and Jack, we were able to bring the reality of family caring into peoples' homes across the country.

The funds raised will be utilised to sustain the provision of essential services that family carers rely on to care for their loved ones safely including the National Freephone Careline, counselling, respite and local drop-in centres.


## 50 Miles in June

As part of Heart of Gold 2023, we launched our first Facebook Fundraising Challenge called 50 Miles in June which raised more than €27,000. For the month of June, we asked people to walk, run or jog 50 miles and raise funds for the Heart of Gold campaign. The challenge started on June 1st and participants had the entire month to complete the 50 miles.

Participants joined a Facebook group with members supporting each other throughout the challenge. Six hundred members joined the group of which 356 went on to register and set up an online fundraising page for the challenge.

A special thanks to everyone who took part and raised vital funds. We would particularly like to mention Deridre Burke, Paula Robinson, Jeremia Kelly, Orlaith Ni Bhriain and Ceara Ryan Crowe who together raised an incredible €4,200.

This was our first Facebook fundraising challenge and we are looking forward to doing more in 2024 with 50 Miles in June returning alongside another challenge in spring.

**I'm doing the 50 Miles in June Challenge for**  **Family Carers Ireland**  
No one should have to care alone

Today's Miles	Total Miles	Today's Miles	Total Miles	Today's Miles	Total Miles
1st	1	14th	14	26th	26
2nd	2	15th	15	27th	27
3rd	3	16th	16	28th	28
4th	4	17th	17	29th	29
5th	5	18th	18	30th	30
6th	6	19th	19		
7th	7	20th	20		
8th	8	21st	21		
9th	9	22nd	22		
10th	10	23rd	23		
11th	11	24th	24		
12th	12	25th	25		
13th	13				

**FINISH**

**You did it!! Thank you for your support.**





## COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS

In addition to our annual national campaign, Community Support Managers held a number of exciting fundraisers around the country to help support the events and activities provided by FCI.

The Tribes Motorcycle Club hosted the second annual Charity Motorcycle Ride in support of FCI, starting in Eyre Square, Galway City with stops along the way to The Lodge in Knockmore, Co. Mayo. Entertainment was provided by The Phase Band and the turnout was brilliant. **The event raised €2,620.**

Our Community Supports team in the west dipped their toes in the water for family carers in the Cold Water Dip Challenge in September. On the day, 80 participants joined the team and took the plunge in Clare, Limerick, Sligo, Roscommon and Galway. A total of **€2,581 was raised** for family carers. The event was a great day out and will be returning in 2024.





The Billy Mac and Friends Mega Concert took place for the 16th Year in the Greville Arms Hotel, Mullingar on Tuesday 5th September featuring Simon Casey, Pascal Brennan, Chris Loughrey, Camillus Egerton, Sabrina Fallon, Michaela Hogg, the Mullingar Gospel Choir, and Joe Connaire and friends. Billy Mac himself also performed which got the crowd singing along!

The music on the night was performed by The Tennessee Breakdown Band and **the total amount raised was €8,510.**

A big thank you to Billy Mac, his wife Margaret, all the event artists and band, MC John Corroon, the audience members who supported the event, raffle ticket sellers, the local businesses who donated raffle prizes and the staff of the Greville Arms Hotel.



CHRISTMAS  
*Hope*  
APPEAL

GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE  
THIS CHRISTMAS.

Family Carers Ireland  
No one should have to care alone

# Christmas Appeal

Our Christmas Hope Appeal encouraged companies and individuals to lend their support to help fund our essential counselling service in 2024 which is a lifeline for so many family carers.

The appeal was led by Mary\*, a family carer and mother to two young autistic children, who bravely shared her story of feeling overwhelmed by her caring role and how she found hope after reaching out to FCI and engaging in counselling.

*"It was only two minutes into the call and I felt heard and saved. I can only describe the sessions as life-changing and re-charging. Don't get me wrong, they are not easy, but in the discomfort and soul searching, there is HOPE and that's all I need."*

**\*Mary, family carer (name changed to protect anonymity)**

The appeal ran for six weeks and **raised €46,000.** We would like to thank the companies and individuals who gave so generously.





# GROW SUSTAINABLY

## OPTIMISE RESOURCES

### OUR PEOPLE

Family Carers Ireland relies on its employees and volunteers to fulfil the objectives of supporting family carers. We are committed to doing this through mutual respect, openness, honesty, integrity and sustainability.

One of FCI's recurring annual objectives is to ensure our employees have a supportive and flexible work environment where they can develop their career while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Such an environment allows our teams to carry out their roles to the best of their ability which in turns results in family carers and clients getting the best support they can.

#### Being a Good Employer

We remain incredibly conscious of the challenges facing all our employees, inside and outside of work. In 2023, we focused on expanding the work started in 2022 to remain an employer of choice in the sector.

To ensure family carers are at the forefront of the organisation's objectives, we need to provide a supportive and understanding work environment for our employees to prosper in. All employees, whether in a frontline or back-office role, are incredibly proud to work for an organisation that makes a real difference to people's daily lives. They also need to experience the tangible benefits associated with their roles.

#### Hybrid and Remote Working Opportunities: Office-Based Employees

Hybrid and remote working remain the preferred working models for our office-based employees in 2023. Both working models can be positive and challenging in equal measure but as an organisation, we are proud to be in a position to enable our employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance through providing flexible working arrangements.

It is important for our office-based employees to have in-person engagement with colleagues for motivation, connection and energy while still having the benefit of being able to work from home.

No one working model fits all functions and teams within FCI. Flexibility will continue to form part of our future working model to ensure that employees are supported and that family carers remain at the core of our focus.

### Reward

We continued to place significant focus on reward in 2023 with a comprehensive benchmarking exercise completed as part of the development of a new three-year reward strategy.

The aim of this strategy is to attract, retain and motivate quality candidates and employees which in turn preserves the provision of quality supports and services to family carers and clients. The most effective reward strategy will meet the needs of our employees and the organisation whilst also meeting our values in a fair and responsible manner. This will be communicated in the first quarter of 2024 and subsequently implemented.

In September 2023, all office-based employees received an annual salary increase. Access remains open for office-based employees to a defined contribution pension scheme and this is in addition to our group PRSA scheme which is open to all employees.

October 2023 saw the introduction of enhanced travel payments and a standard payment for travel time to our Home Care Workers. This is another step in the right direction during a time when everyone has been impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.

#### Development Opportunities

Our employees continue to carve out challenging and rewarding careers across numerous functions within the organisation. Many bespoke training and education opportunities for specific roles and groups of employees were offered in 2023, with training and development continuing to be a key objective going forward.

#### Employee Wellbeing

Management is acutely aware of the challenges our employees face in balancing work and personal commitments in a time when there are many external pressures on people. The organisation continues to promote and encourage employee wellbeing amongst all our staff.

In 2023, we developed new and enhanced some existing policies to promote positive employee wellbeing:

- Flexible Working Policy
- Working Time Policy
- Maternity Leave Policy
- Unpaid Leave for Medical Care Purposes Policy
- Domestic Violence Leave Policy



To achieve our strategic objectives beyond 2023 and to continue to provide much needed support to thousands of family carers, we want and need to have motivated, energised, and happy employees. The health and wellbeing of our employees will remain a key focus for the years ahead.

### Community Employment Schemes

Caring in Waterford (covering Waterford and Wexford) and Caring in Offaly (covering Offaly and Laois) are the two Community Employment (CE) Schemes sponsored by Family Carers Ireland and managed respectively by two supervisors and an assistant supervisor. The purpose of CE Schemes is to support and encourage people who are long-term unemployed (or otherwise disadvantaged) to return to work by offering part-time and temporary placements in jobs based within local communities.

A core aspect of the supervisors' role is to support and coach participants towards gaining skills, competencies and qualifications in preparation for employment.

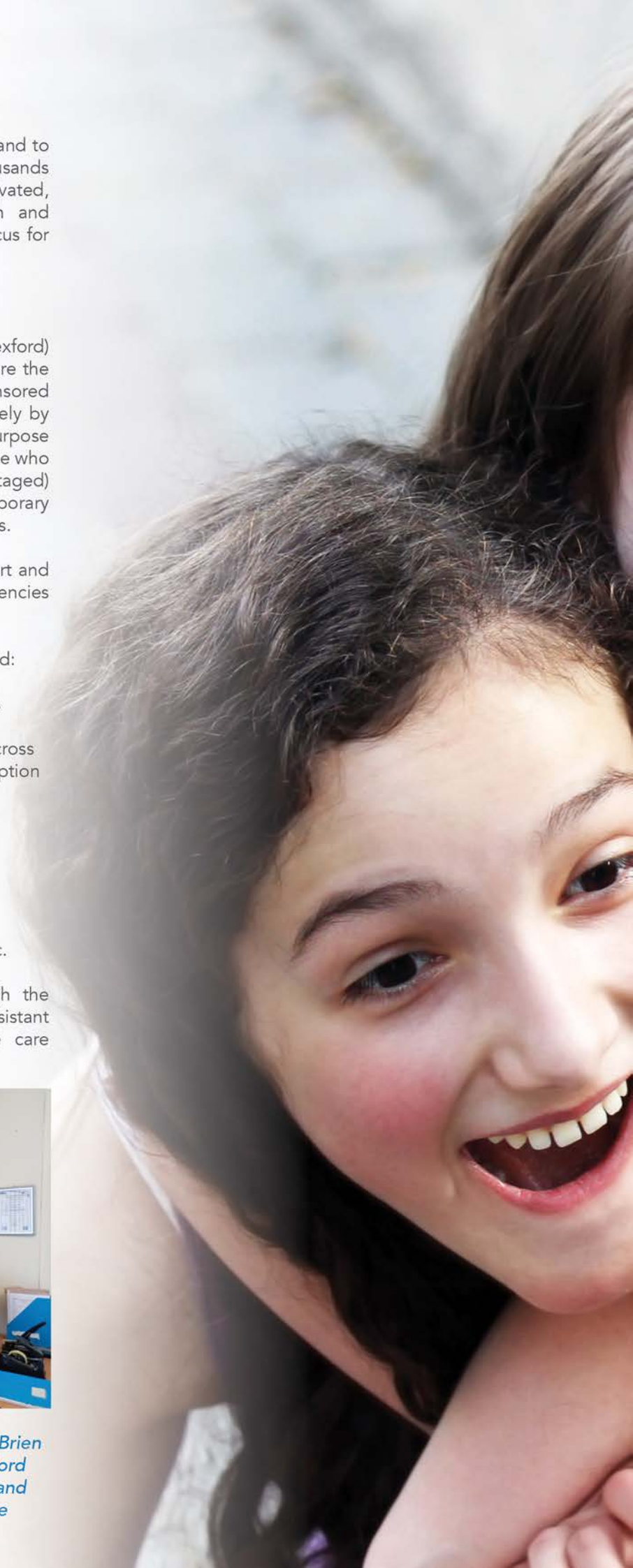
Work carried out by our CE teams in 2023 included:

- 19,409 respite hours delivered to family carers
- 8,112 admin support hours provided to FCI across services, membership and national office reception
- Service provision in line with FCI policies, procedures and processes
- Training, mentoring and supervision for CE participants
- Project management, i.e. budgets, payroll, etc.

The number of staff working with FCI through the schemes in 2023 included two supervisors, one assistant supervisor, eight administrators and 30 home care trainees or assistants.



*Pictured are CE Scheme participants Thomas O'Brien and Samantha Scallan from the Caring in Waterford scheme who received certificates for fire safety and the use of safe evacuation equipment at a course organised by FCI.*





## QUALITY AND SAFETY

Staff compliance with national guidelines and legislation, through ongoing organisational wide quality and safety (Q&S) improvements, is a priority for Family Carers Ireland. Staff are continuously trained on the prevention of risks, errors or harm to cared-for persons and family carers during the provision of services provided.

We have a Q&S framework in place which is currently under update, in line with the new five-year strategic plan and continuous Q&S improvements made.

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, we are happy to acknowledge that as a result of successful infection prevention and control management and use of personal protective equipment, there is excellent control of infection transmission within the organisation. This is the high quality we continuously aim to achieve in every service we provide.

### Software Improvements

FCI has an ongoing focus to roll out Q&S improvements across all areas of the organisation. Investment in Q&S software improvements has supported the roll out of the electronic management of training, documentation and incident/complaint reporting in the organisation.

The phased implementation of additional electronic quality management solutions for managing risks and audits, by the end of 2024, will provide a quality-centric culture focused on continuous improvement. Valuable quality information will be shared and connected throughout the organisation and all Q&S processes will be automated and standardised on completion. Compliance with financial, helpline and home support Q&S standards will become natural, invisible and intuitive. The implementation of the final phases of this software will enable the organisation to demonstrate its compliance with the home support services national regulations and HIQA standards, which are currently in draft and expect to be in place by 2024/2025.

The Q&S department will aim to promote further progressive quality improvements, in line with the updated framework, with an aim of providing a shared voice to the expectations of all of our clients and staff.





# PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES



*Pictured at the launch of the Lidl and FCI Caring Employers partnership are (left to right) Sue O’Grady, Marketing Manager, FCI; Anne Hennessy, Senior Employee Relations Manager at Lidl Ireland; her mother Noreen Hennessy and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI.*

## CARING EMPLOYERS

Caring Employers is a one-of-a-kind programme of supports in Ireland, partnering with pioneering companies in a pledge to support those juggling care and career – ensuring they feel supported and empowered in the workplace. Family Carers Ireland collaborates with member companies to provide a bespoke programme of events over a 12-month period that deliver practical supports for staff.

In 2023, more leading Irish employers joined the programme including Lidl, An Post, SIRO, AIB and Irish Distillers. They join Irish Life and Bank of Ireland, both members since 2019, who renewed their membership along with Irish Rail, the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform and SETU who all renewed for their second year. Membership now stands at 10 companies with a combined staff total of over 50,000.

To ensure we deliver a practical and accessible offering, webinars are now recorded and sent to employers for internal use. In 2023, we also added more speakers covering new topics such as positive communication in the family unit, autism and puberty along with people manager workshops. A highlight from the programme in 2023 was the support shown by employers in marking European Carers Day 2023 (October 6th) which sought to raise awareness about the crucial need for work-life-care balance for family carers across Europe and ensuring all of those who provide care at home are properly supported.

In a mark of solidarity with Ireland’s family carers, a collection of the country’s most iconic landmarks were lit up in gold including the Phoenix Monument, the Wolfe Tone Monument, Casino Marino, the Rock of Cashel and the Yellow Steeple.

We were thrilled to have the support of Bank of Ireland, Irish Rail, Irish Life and AIB who illuminated locations including College Green, Heuston Station, Athlone Railway Bridge, Irish Life Plaza and Northumberland Square, and AIB Molesworth Street, showcasing their commitment to supporting their caring colleagues.

*“I deeply appreciate the significance of this gesture. It’s a heartfelt reminder that we are not invisible. I’d walk a million miles for one of my son’s smiles, I’m his Dad and his carer, but being seen and supported by our colleagues is vital in terms of fostering an inclusive and compassionate workplace. It sends a message that family carers are not alone in their journey.”*

**Dave Hyland, Operations Manager, Bank of Ireland**



Looking to the future, 2024 promises to be an exciting year for the programme and we look forward to reporting on increased membership in the next annual report.

## STRENGTHENING DISABILITIES PROJECT

In 2023, Family Carers Ireland implemented a project named Strengthening Disabilities which was funded by the HSE.

The project's objectives were to support carers using the Carers Outcome Star™ and identify those who would benefit specifically from Parents Plus training and Studio 3 behavioural training. FCI received referrals from the nine CHO Disability Managers and from our own network of Support Managers across the country.

During 2023, a total of 212 family carers were referred to the project. Of those, 101 availed of Parents Plus training and 56 availed of Studio 3 behavioural training, with more registered to undertake Studio 3 behavioural training in 2024.

Those referred were also offered counselling, respite, equipment, education and advocacy as part of efforts to develop a sustainable caring routine.

## WORKING CARE OUT

The Working Care Out (WCO) Project, supported through the Dormant Accounts Fund, began in January 2023 and will be completed in June 2024.

A total of 102 family carers actively engaged in WCO, completing their first Carers Outcome Star™ Wellbeing Review within a week of registering. Together, the Project Manager and family carer looked at the seven areas of the Carers Outcome Star™ and created an individual action plan to support them to progress to work or education. All participants were offered a one-to-one appointment in our virtual career coach clinic where they have been given the opportunity to prepare or update a CV and participate in our skills group development course, with bi-weekly check-in support with the Project Manager over the phone.

Most family carers found the prospect of returning to work and education daunting. Completing the first star broke down each task of returning to work or education into manageable and achievable goals which gave them confidence in succeeding in those goals. It also highlighted other factors in the caring role where the carer needed additional support.

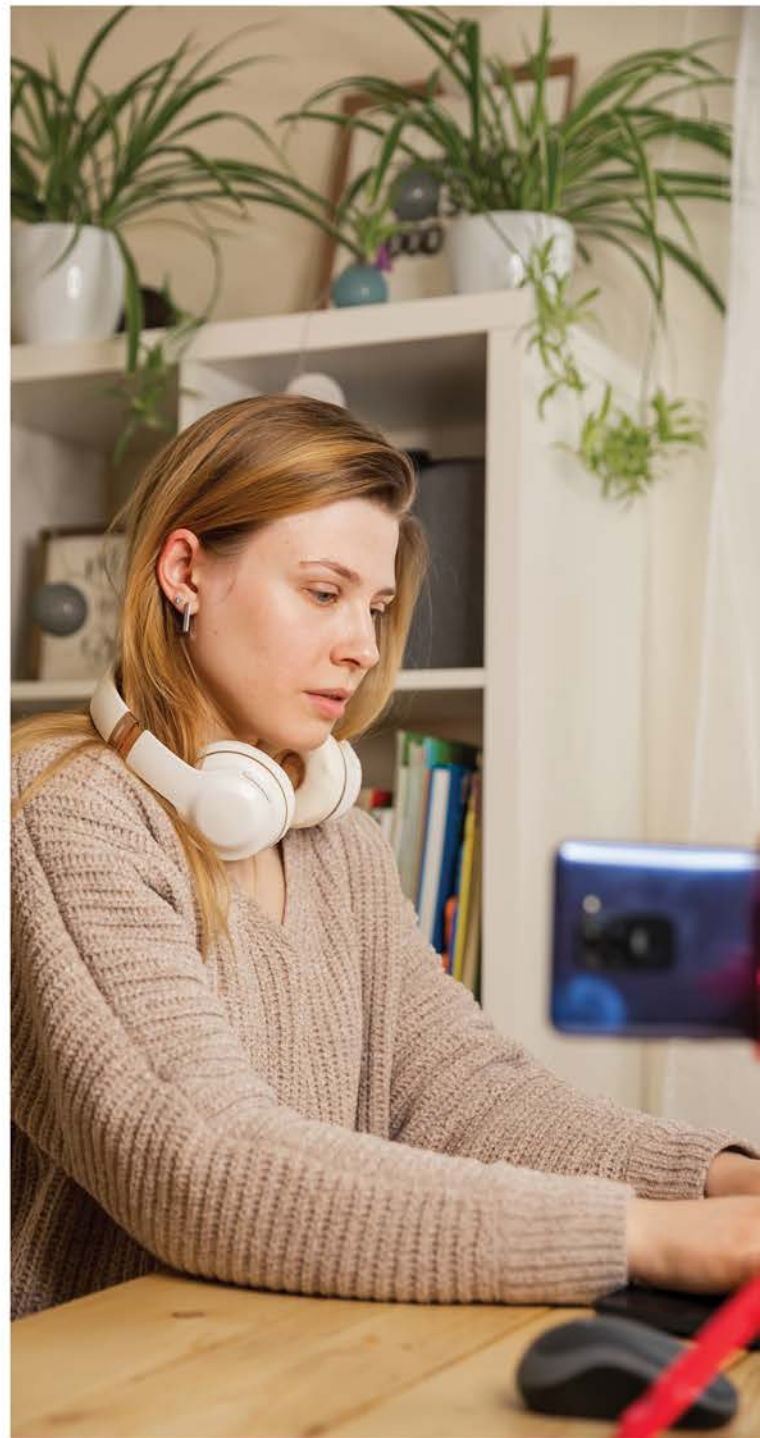
In 2023, 82 family carers attended the programme's virtual career clinic which offers professional support to establish realistic goals, discover solutions to challenges faced in returning to work or education, explore options, develop action plans, build self-confidence and instil motivation to act. Feedback from the clinic has been very positive with 75% of participants feeling more confident and knowledgeable about the path to take to gain access to education or employment.

Thirty-five family carers took part in the three group skills development programmes which provide participants an interactive, practical and flexible space to learn how best to prepare themselves to fulfil their goals in getting back to work or education. Having the opportunity to meet carers in a similar situation helps to tackle social isolation while discussing and sharing challenges within a peer environment

has given participants greater confidence, with 80% of family carers reporting the programme helped them overcome obstacles they faced in looking for work.

Twenty-five family carers returned to formal education with 10 of those participating in QQI Level 5 Healthcare Training with the use of a laptop purchased through the Dormant Accounts Fund. Seven family carers were successful in securing part-time employment and five returned to full-time employment. Fifteen family carers availed of our counselling services.

WCO has been a valuable resource for family carers in providing vital support for those seeking to return to work or education and the interest and demand for this programme continues to exceed our expectations.





# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## CONSTITUTION

The charity is registered as a company limited by guarantee (CLG), not having a share capital (CRO No. 572819) and is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority (Registered Charity No. 20029029). The charity has been granted charitable status under Section 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997 (CHY 10962). The principal objective is to benefit the community by supporting and promoting the health, wellbeing and quality of life of family carers and those for whom they care; to facilitate the affiliation of groups and group members representing family carers throughout Ireland and to liaise with, support and take counsel from such groups.

## BOARD

Family Carers Ireland is governed by a voluntary board of directors. Each director is appointed for a three-year term and may serve a second three-year term if recommended by the Nominations and Succession Planning Committee. This committee advises the board on its composition to ensure the board has an appropriate mix of skills and experience in the discharge of its duties and responsibilities in line with the requirements as set out in the constitution.

## MEET OUR DIRECTORS



**Robert Anderson**

Robert Anderson is recently retired Head of the Social Policies unit at Eurofound, where he has worked as research manager since 1988 on a range of topics relating to living conditions and quality of life, including several international research projects exploring aspects of family care across Europe. Prior to joining Eurofound, Rob worked as Programme Manager at the WHO European Office in Copenhagen, with responsibility for the European Regional Programme in Health Promotion. He studied human sciences at Oxford University and sociology as applied to medicine at Bedford College, London. Rob served as President of EUROCARERS from 2009 to 2012 and is chairperson of the Research and Policy Committee.



**Angela Briggs**

Angela is a mum to five wonderful children. Her daughter was born with physical disabilities and apart from being her mum, she is also her full-time carer. Over the years, her daughter has struggled in accessing services of health care, education, transportation, mental health, operations, financial issues and much more. Angela has been and continues to be her voice and her advocate in fighting for her rights.



**Barbara Carroll**

Barbara brings more than 25 years' experience of business partnering, human resources and executive coaching both at consultancy and at senior leadership level across industries including professional services, digital technology, legal, construction and tourism. Currently the Director of Human Resources at the Law Society of Ireland, she has a wealth of experience in human resources and organisation development, diversity, equity and inclusion, transformation and change management. She has a particular interest in workplace culture and has spoken on the topic both nationally and at European level.

Barbara holds a Certificate in Company Direction from the Institute of Directors, a Masters in Business Practice from UCC, Post-Graduate Diplomas in both Leadership and Management from the Irish Management Institute and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Employment Law from the Law Society of Ireland. Her primary degree is a BA (Hons) in Industrial Relations and Human Resources Management with the National College of Ireland. She is an accredited assessor of the European Foundation for Quality Management and a qualified Executive Coach. Barbara is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, a member the Institute of Directors, the Learning and Development Institute and the European Mentoring and Coaching Council.

Barbara is a member of the Finance and Organisation Committee. She has personal experience as a family carer with the support of home care workers and respite care. In her time outside work, Barbara enjoys spending time with her friends and family, horse riding, current affairs, yoga, GAA, theatre and the arts.





**David Girvan**

David is a full-time family carer for Jessica, his daughter, who has severe intellectual and physical disabilities. He is also the sole caregiver for his mother who has dementia.

David believes it is important that family carers continuously shape the direction of the organisation, have meaningful input and be in attendance to advise and inform non-family carer volunteer board members and senior management about the realities of carers' lives.

Prior to becoming a carer, David was a successful senior level manager and businessperson with extensive board-level experience. Since becoming a carer, he has been actively involved in advocating for carer and disability rights and has significant experience advocating "on the ground" and at the highest levels of public sector and government.



**Wendy Hamilton**

Wendy is based in the Garden County and has been around family carers for the past five years, through her association with Netwatch and now as a board director. Wendy has held both CEO and COO roles, and has qualifications in business, lean practice and company direction. She takes a practical approach to most things in life from shovels to spreadsheets.



**Richard Hammond (Vice-Chairperson)**

Richard Hammond S.C. is a Senior Counsel (being in the first coterie of solicitors ever to be elevated to that status by the Government of Ireland on 1st September, 2020). He practises as a solicitor with his spouse Joyce A. Good Hammond at Hammond Good LLP, Solicitors & Notaries Public, in Mallow, Co. Cork where he is a partner. He is a self-described "succession law enthusiast" who also specialises in professional regulation, having served in roles with a number of regulatory bodies for different professions. Richard teaches regularly at the Law School of the Law Society of Ireland. Both he and his spouse have experience of family care. Outside of professional activities and academia, Richard's interests include country walks with his spouse and children, reading, current affairs, supporting Cork's GAA teams and Liverpool Football Club.



**John Healy**

Dr John Healy is Deputy Executive Director of Genio, a non-profit organisation that specialises in supporting reforms in complex, challenging systems. John oversees the programmes in Ireland in disability, mental health, homelessness, drug addiction and action research and led the organisation's work in the Service Reform Fund, a €45m collaboration with the Irish Government and philanthropy. He also supports Genio's work on scaling innovations and collaborating with public sectors in Europe. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the School of Business at Trinity College Dublin, where he lectures and researches in organisation theory and innovation in complex, social service systems.



**Cora Long**

Cora Long has been a carer from an early age, caring for her father who had emphysema and her mother who had a stroke. In her early married years she also cared for her mother in law who had many health issues. She also looked after her husband for over 10 years and now looks after her sister in law who has multiple health issues. Cora served on the board of Caring for Carers before and during the merger years. Presently, she is chairperson of the East Clare support group and a member of the Carer Supports and Engagement Committee.



**Kara Madden**

Kara Madden is from Co. Cork and is carer to her son who has had mental health issues for 20 years. She is also a former carer for her mother who had dementia. She has been involved with mental health issues and has been working with mental health professionals for years. Kara is a volunteer on the National Panel and in recent years has been involved with Patients for Patient Safety Ireland which works with the WHO. She is currently involved in their campaign around medication without harm.



**Hugh McGeown**

Hugh is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, having qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 2004 following completion of an accounting degree at the University of Ulster. He became a partner in 2008. Hugh has developed considerable experience in advising a broad range of clients including both indigenous and multi-national businesses



across many industries. An experienced audit professional, he has over 20 years' worth of knowledge earned through working on audit and assurance assignments for a broad range of clients from owner managed SMEs to large multi-jurisdictional businesses with turnovers in excess €1bn.

Hugh has a particular interest in the design and implementation of compliance solutions for the investment management community. This has yielded significant experience in advising clients in that space with regards to their compliance needs as well as acting for fast paced start-ups throughout their growth journey. He is experienced in advising clients that are establishing a presence in Ireland, from their initial setup to dealing with all aspects of corporate compliance and on-going reporting requirements.

Hugh has a keen interest in sport and participates as an age group competitor in running and cycling events. He lives in Dalkey, South Dublin with his wife Joanna and their four children, where he can be found at the side of a GAA or rugby pitch most weekends.



**Patricia O'Regan**

Patricia joined Family Carers Ireland approximately five years ago. She became a full-time carer in 2012 when her son, then 14, became very ill following an infection, which has left him with a myriad of mental health and physical symptoms which has altered the course of his life completely. It is believed this condition is PANS/PANDAS.

Like so many other carers, Patricia spends her life not only taking care of him and the rest of the family but also dealing with the myriad of doctors, therapists and hospitals while battling to help him achieve some quality of life now and into the future.

As a young person, she helped care for her grandmother who had dementia, helped care for her father until he passed away in 2008 and also her mother whose needs escalated to 24/7 care following a stroke, until she entered an assisted living facility last June.

Patricia has a background in business with a Bachelor of Commerce degree, NUIG 1981, and a Postgrad Diploma in Marketing, NUIG 1982, and has worked in industry, customer services and purchasing for American multinationals. She also lived in Denver, Colorado and Seattle, Washington from 1987 to 1991 working in various hospitality industry jobs and was also self-employed with an import knitwear business.

Patricia returned to Ireland in 1991, working initially in the insurance industry and then running her own B&B business. Having married in 1993, she chose to become a full-time at home parent, becoming very involved in school parents' associations, community associations and charity fundraising which she continues to be involved in.



**Marta Soltys**

Marta is originally from Poland, living in Ireland for 19 years. Due to her family's needs, she is a full-time family carer. She is a mother of two fantastic boys, one of whom is autistic and requires more attention and assistance than most of his peers, and the other is currently awaiting an assessment of needs.

Before her children arrived, Marta gained a master's degree in Social Rehabilitation/ Pedagogy of Social Maladjustment from Jagiellonian University. Marta has undertaken home care skills FETAC Level 5 modules and has some experience in professional care (four years as a childcare assistant in pre-school, over 1,000 hours as a home help assistant and a year-long Tús work placement helping people with intellectual disabilities).

Marta has also worked for over a year as a community interpreter (Polish/English) all over Ireland.

## METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The Nominations and Succession Planning Committee will review any board nominations made by directors, groups or sub-committee members in the context of the skills mix required for the smooth operation of the organisation.

The governance of the charity is the responsibility of the directors who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution which outlines that the board shall comprise a maximum of 14 (and a minimum of 3) directors made up as follows:

- Six shall be from a carer background (the board shall regulate the nomination process to ensure geographical balance on the carer panel);
- Six shall be nominated by a committee of the outgoing board to ensure a mix of management and governance experience on the new board; and
- Up to two additional directors co-opted by the board.

The organisation seeks to ensure that a majority of board members have personal experience of being a family carer on a full-time or part-time basis.



Directors are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the organisation. Additional directors may be appointed by ordinary resolution and hold office until the next AGM.

## GOVERNANCE

The board of Family Carers Ireland is committed to achieving high standards of governance and during 2019 undertook a key project of adopting the Charity Regulatory Authority (CRA) Charities Governance Code with regard to strengthening its overall governance infrastructure. This process involved reviewing our current governance framework, documenting how the organisation demonstrates conformance with the code and completing the Compliance Record Form along with collating all of the relevant supporting data to facilitate a review annually. The board formally adopted the CRA Charities Governance Code initially in May 2019 and reviews each year its updated Compliance Record Form to ensure continued compliance.

The organisation has achieved the 'Charities Institute Ireland' triple lock of best practice by signing up to the new Governance Code, adopting best practice reporting by adopting the Charity SORP (FRS 102) – Statement of Recommended Practice and adhering to the CRA Guidelines on Fundraising along with adhering to the CRA Internal Financial Control Guidelines for Charities.

The board delegates the day-to-day management of the organisation to the CEO who is supported by an Executive Management Team comprising four department leads in Carer Support; Home Support, Communications and Policy; and Corporate Services.

The board and sub-committees meet on a regular basis and the following outlines the board and sub-committee meetings during 2023. The first figure outlines the number of meetings the member was eligible to attend, whilst the second figure outlines the number of actual meetings attended. Each board member is also a member of at least one board subcommittee and attendance is also outlined below.

Board Member	Board	ARC	FAQ	QSC	CSE	MFC	RPC
Robert Anderson (Chair)	8/8	-	2/4	1/2	-	-	3/3
Johanne Powell (Chair CSE)	4/4	-	-	-	10/10	-	2/3
Peter O'Connell (Chair MFC)	1/3	-	-	-	-	0/0	-
John Healy	5/8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Veronica Baylon	2/4	-	-	-	0/4	-	0/3
Cora Long	5/8	-	-	4/4	6/10	-	-
Tom Jordan	2/4	-	3/6	-	-	-	-
Wendy Hamilton	3/5	-	-	-	-	0/0	-
Richard Hammond (Chair FAO) (Vice Chair)	8/8	-	6/6	-	-	-	-
David Girvan	3/4	-	-	-	4/5	-	-
Marta Soltys	4/4	-	-	-	5/5	-	-
Angela Brigga	8/8	-	-	-	6/10	-	-
Patrica O'Regan	3/4	-	-	-	4/5	-	-
Kara Madden	7/8	-	-	2/2	7/10	-	-
Barbara Carroll	4/4	-	5/6	-	-	-	-
Hugh McGeown	4/4	-	6/6	-	-	-	-
Other External Committee Members		ARC	FAQ	QSC	CSE	MFC	RPC
Antoinette Greene	-	-	-	-	4/4	-	-
John Lonergan	-	2/2	-	-	-	-	-
Luke Mooney (Chair ARC)	-	2/2	-	-	-	-	-
Frank Goodwin	-	-	-	-	-	-	3/3
Shane McCarthy	-	2/2	4/4	-	-	-	-
Eugene Conlon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deirdre O'Donnell	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/3
Pamela Farag (Chair QSC)	-	-	6/6	4/4	-	-	-
Richard Hammond	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Barbara Kovach	-	-	-	-	1/4	-	-
Ann Vaughan	-	-	-	-	-	-	3/3
Cillian Mac Domhnaill	-	1/1	-	-	-	-	-
Paddy Hennessy	-	-	3/4	-	-	-	-
Gloria Kirwan	-	-	-	1/2	-	-	-
John Murray	-	-	-	2/2	-	-	-
Anne-Marie McGauran	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/1

Note the following acronyms are used in the above table: FAO: Finance and Organisation, ARC: Audit and Risk, QSC: Quality and Safety, CSE: Carer Support and Engagement, MFC: Marketing and Fundraising, RPC: Research and Policy.



Directors do not receive remuneration or other benefits from their work with the charity. All expenses wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred on behalf of a director in the performance of their role are reimbursed in line with Family Carers Ireland policy on board expenses and amounted to €14,460 for 2023 (2022: €1,077).

## TRAINING AND POLICIES ADOPTED BY THE BOARD

The board reviews its performance on an annual basis which is reviewed by the entire board with initiatives arising from this brought forward by the chairperson.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DECISION MAKING

Operational decisions in the running of the charity are the responsibility of the CEO and four senior managers: Head of Carer Support, Head of Communications and Policy, Head of Home Support and Head of Corporate Services. The Head of Corporate Services also acts as the Company Secretary. The CEO and Company Secretary attend meetings of the board and the CEO reports to the Family Carers Ireland board through the chairperson.

To support the board in the breadth and effectiveness of its function, Family Carers Ireland has established six subcommittees with clear terms of reference to support the board work programme as follows: Finance and Organisation; Audit and Risk; Quality and Safety; Carer Support and Engagement; Research and Policy; and Marketing and Fundraising. The board also has a Nominations and Succession Planning committee which meets as required. The chairperson or a nominated director of each committee reports back to the board at each board meeting.

## FINANCE AND ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

The Finance and Organisation Committee has a focus on strategic planning, budgeting and financial control, human resourcing, information technology and overall facilities management within the organisation. The committee oversees the efficient financial management of the organisation including the collection, investment, borrowing and outlay of all monies required (including fundraising) and members span the areas of expertise required to perform the functions as outlined.

## AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit and Risk Committee consists of experts in the areas of audit, corporate governance and financial management. This committee assists the board in fulfilling its responsibilities by independently reviewing financial statements and the effectiveness of the internal controls. The committee also monitors the effectiveness of the external audit function and is currently chaired by a senior professional, Luke Mooney, who is not a member of the board.

## QUALITY AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Quality and Safety Committee oversees the supports and services provided by Family Carers Ireland and seeks to

ensure that the organisation is following best practice in all aspects of its clinical and social care. All committee members have the relevant expertise and experience to allow them advise on the development of quality and safety standards within the organisation.

## CARER SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Given the establishment of a Marketing and Fundraising Committee which now oversees Member Services, the name of the Committee changed to Carer Support and Engagement and will now focus on the organisation's suite of supports to carers and how we engage with these carers effectively.

## RESEARCH AND POLICY COMMITTEE

The Research and Policy Committee oversees the organisation's research activity and policy positions; helps support the evaluation of policy campaigns; and advises on approaches in specific areas. The committee's key responsibilities include advising the board on the development of policies designed to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of family carers and reflect their interests and concerns as well as advising on the development of a research strategy that incorporates an ethics policy and greater Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) so that family carers can become meaningfully involved in the development of a research agenda relating to care.

## MARKETING AND FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

The Marketing and Fundraising Committee oversees the implementation of the organisation's marketing strategy which has been developed in line with the five-year strategic plan. Activity will be monitored, measured and reported upon to the board along with the streamlining of fundraising.

## RELATED PARTIES

A related party register is maintained by the organisation and reviewed by the Finance and Organisation Committee at each meeting with disclosure to the full board at the next board meeting. During the course of 2023, there were no payments made to directors outside of the normal travel and subsistence policy.

## PAY POLICY FOR SENIOR STAFF

The organisation values its staff and strives to attract a high calibre of staff given its wide remit to deliver supports and services to carers. Pay rates are benchmarked against the sector using published survey data – our policy is to align broadly with the middle pay band for our size and sector. We introduced a three year pay framework in 2019 and were delighted to be able to honour increases in 2021, notwithstanding the disruption Covid-19 caused to our normal budgetary model. The key management personnel comprise the CEO & Executive Management Team (EMT). The Chief Executive's total remuneration is disclosed in note 13 to the accounts. It is reviewed by the board annually following advice from the FAO committee. The pay bands of other senior staff are also set out in note 13. These are approved by the FAO on the advice of the Chief Executive.



# FUTURE PLANS

In the course of 2024, we will begin implementation of the organisation's new Strategic Plan and, subject to a successful EGM, the roll-out of new governance and carer participation structures.

The new strategic plan covering the period 2024-2028 will focus the organisation's efforts on five strategic objectives:

1. Promote the wellbeing and resilience of every family carer regardless of where they live in the country
2. Provide targeted, effective supports to family carers particularly those who are struggling or in crisis
3. Enhance the Sustainability of Caring in the Home
4. Advocate for systemic change in policy and practice to improve the lives of family carers
5. Increase awareness, understanding and recognition of family carers.

It will also include three strategic enablers:

- A. Governance
- B. Resources
- C. Marketing and Fundraising.

Specifically in the course of 2024, we will undertake a full review of the first year of new structures developed to deliver a nationwide Carers' Guarantee with a view to maximising efficiency and effectiveness and mapping the optimum model for the fully-funded initiative. This will include a plan to significantly increase volunteer roles to support scaling up a number of carer support and communication activities. It

will also have regard to how best to align with the new HSE regional structures being put in place as part of the Sláintecare strategy and the implications of population-based budgeting for existing section 39 funding under local SLAs.

Following the chaos of the 2024 Health Estimates, we will be active in making the case for fully funding the Carers' Guarantee and adjustments to the funding model underpinning home support services in Budget 2025. We will also be reviewing the organisation's own budgetary architecture once details of the WRC ruling on the indexation of grant-funded pay become clearer. We also anticipate some significant developments to increase our brand awareness and public fundraising.

FCI will be preparing a new State of Caring report in the first half of 2024 and will continue to work closely with the HSE and the Department of Health on the development of a new Carer Needs Assessment process. We will be developing programmes to respond to a number of agendas emerging from recent research into the lived experience of family carers, in particular the challenge of safeguarding against carer harm, and will also be working closely with the Department of Social Protection on the introduction of a new Family Carer Register being created on foot of the new long-term carers pension contribution scheme.

In the middle of 2024, we will be running active campaigns around the European and local elections while preparing for the general election which may happen in the latter part of 2024 or in the first quarter of 2025.





# RISK MANAGEMENT

The directors maintain and regularly review a comprehensive risk register which assesses the major risks to which the organisation is exposed, identifies controls to mitigate these risks and contains an action plan to further reduce the level of risks. These risks are categorised under the headings of Governance along with the six board Committees.

The risk register process involves staff teams initially identifying risks facing the organisation under the seven areas and this being reviewed quarterly by the EMT, annually by each board committee and subsequently by the full board. 'Current top risks' is an item on the agenda of every board meeting.

## Principal Risks and Uncertainties

In common with all organisations offering personalised responses to individual circumstances, our main operational risks centre on consistency and fidelity in the delivery of services and supports. This is exacerbated by the increasing and not always consistent regulatory regimes we operate in as a charitable company providing health and social care services. These compliance risks are managed through the use of formal policies and procedures, ongoing training, effective management and supervision, client feedback and regular audit and review.

Failure to attract and retain the right staff and volunteers is a fundamental risk for every human services organisation. We strive to make Family Carers Ireland a place where staff and volunteers feel supported, empowered and valued. Government policy of refusing to acknowledge pay cost pressures in its funding for voluntary organisations means that our capacity to compete with public sector salaries represents an escalating external risk that is largely outside our control. This is particularly acute in the context of the current tight labour market.

Loss of funding or cash flow represents another ever-present risk to our capacity to fulfil our mission. A key element in the management of this financial risk involves regularly reviewing available funds, managing the funding mix of the organisation and margins on each element of our activity. The organisation also operates conservative accounting policies and a prudent reserves policy.

As an organisation that seeks to be the authentic voice of family carers, we acknowledge the risk that our policy and advocacy positions do not reflect the current reality of life for all family carers in every part of the country. We manage this risk by organising a variety of regular 'listening' activities and forums and by welcoming and engaging with feedback on our published policy positions.

We have a significant, active online community which we value greatly but it brings with it a risk of reputational risk in terms of inaccurate or defamatory information being published on our forums. We manage this risk by rules, monitoring and restricted permissions.

New risks facing the organisation during this time are being actively managed as well as being captured and added to our risk register for ongoing review and monitoring. Finally, in line with good practice, we recognise the ever-present risk of events which, however unlikely, have the potential to constitute an existential threat to the organisation. We seek to manage these risks by designing robust recovery/redundancy capabilities in all essential systems and regularly reviewing our disaster response protocol.

## Funds held as Custodian

There are no funds held in this category.

## Taxation Exemption

The charity has been granted charitable status under Sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.

## Political Donations

There were no political contributions which require disclosure under the Electoral Act 1997.

## Accounting Records

The measures taken by the directors to ensure compliance with the requirements of Sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014, with regard to the keeping of accounting records, are the employment of appropriately qualified accounting personnel and the maintenance of computerised accounting systems. The company's accounting records are maintained at the company's registered office.



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial results for the year are outlined in the Statement of Financial Activities (page 73), the Balance Sheet (page 74) and the Statement of Cash Flows (page 75) and further explained in the notes to the accounts on pages 76 to 90.

Income for the financial year was €13,426,688 which is derived from a wide range of funding streams but is predominantly broken down into HSE, grant and fundraising. This funding is used to provide supports and services across the country to family carers and contracted services on behalf of the HSE with regard to supporting the cared-for person in the home.

We received €6,921,337 from our HSE funding partners to deliver a range of supports services across our network along with national funding for key posts and shared services across the organisation.

Our In Home Support Services Income was €4,911,907 but the shortage of qualified home care workers in the sector impacts on our ability to respond to the need for such support and thereby help more family carers.

We received donations amounting to €65,884 to support family carers.

Expenditure for the year was €13,221,339 and is in line with our income and the associated fulfilment requirements of contracts and grants awarded. The net surplus on resources for the year was €205,349 which predominantly reflects strategic investment in carer supports.

## PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

Principal funding for the year arose from income from:

- Health Service Executive
- Department of Health (National Lottery Fund)
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Scheme to Support National Organisations)
- Dementia 5 Steps programme
- Community Foundation for Ireland
- Dormant Accounts Fund
- Fidelity Europe Foundation
- and various private and corporate donations and grants.

## INCOME

Total income for 2023 was €13.426m which is an increase of 4% on the 2022 levels. This increase predominantly relates to charitable activities, the detail of which is outlined below.

### *Income from Donations and Legacies*

Income from donations and legacies amounted to just over €65k which is a drop of just under of 51% on 2022 levels. This

decrease relates to restricted corporate donations received in 2022 for the Crisis Fund.

### *Income from Charitable Activities*

Income from Charitable Activities comprises Service Level Agreements under Section 39 funding from the HSE, the delivery of home support under tender and fixed contract prices with the HSE and specific purpose grants, with key grants being from the Dormant Accounts Fund, Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO), National Lottery Funding, Community Foundation of Ireland and Community & Voluntary Pillar.

In 2023, income from charitable activities was €12.73m which is an increase of 4% on 2022 levels and predominantly relates to an increase in Section 39 funding of €569k and in home support of just over €29k and a decrease in grants of €56k.

The provision of in-home support has become an important part of the organisation's activities, generating a modest surplus to subsidise our 'charitable' activities and also allowing us to gain a much fuller understanding of and engagement with HSE social care services.

### *Income from Trading Activities*

Income from Trading Activities can be categorised into Fundraising and Membership and Other Trading Activities. Income from Trading Activities for 2023 was €600,828 which is an increase of 16% on 2022 levels and represents an increase in Fundraising and Membership income to €421,837 and an increase in Other Trading Activity to €178,991.

Fundraising and Membership income are important revenue streams for FCI but form a small part of our overall total income. Our strategic plan has a focus on growing both income streams over the five-year period and 2023 saw membership continue to grow consistently throughout the year.

### *Income from Investments*

Income from investments for 2023 was €25,965 which represents a decrease of 3% on 2022 levels and comprises rental income and bank interest received on short term deposits.

## EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure for 2023 was €13.22m which is an increase of just under 6% on 2022 levels. This increase predominantly relates to charitable activities, the detail of which is outlined below.

### *Expenditure on Raising Funds*

Expenditure on raising funds breaks down into Fundraising and Membership and Other Trading. The amount spent in 2023 was mainly in keeping with the 2022 levels with just a 1% decrease in costs in 2023.



### *Expenditure on Charitable Activities*

Expenditure under Charitable Activities comprises the fulfilment of Service Level Agreements under HSE Section 39 funding, of home support contracts at tendered and fixed rates with the HSE and programme delivery of specific purpose grants, with key grants during the year from Dormant Accounts Fund, Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO), National Lottery Funding, Community Foundation of Ireland and Community and Voluntary Pillar.

In 2023, expenditure on charitable activities was €13.09m which is an increase of 6% on 2022 levels and predominantly in line with the increase in income levels.

## RESERVES

The board has responsibility for developing an appropriate reserves policy for the organisation.

The reserves policy was developed taking into consideration the requirement to retain sufficient unrestricted reserves to safeguard the continuity of its core activities whilst making sure that the maximum resources are going towards these activities.

The reserve policy in Family Carers Ireland is to maintain unrestricted reserves at a level which ensures the organisation's core activity could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty and it is considered prudent to hold at least six months' cover.

The Finance and Organisation Committee review the level and adequacy of the reserves on an annual basis which is brought to the board as part of the Annual Financial Statements review.

The organisation receives income under two specific categories; unrestricted income which has no specific restrictions attached to how this money is spent except within its charitable objects and restricted income which can only be used for a specified purpose.

The restricted reserves are zero and the unrestricted reserves are €3.299m at year-end with these levels having been reviewed by the board through the Finance and Organisation Sub-Committee. This is reviewed against our policy to hold six months' reserves which equates to €4.546m and during the transitional growth period, the board considers the current reserves of €3.299m to be an acceptable level of reserves.

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecasting cycle, taking into consideration the risks associated with each income stream and the organisation's commitments.

## INVESTMENTS

The charity has no long-term financial investments. All reserves are on short term deposit to ensure the effective management of cash-flow and access to liquidity.

### *Events since the balance sheet date*

There have been no events since the balance sheet date, which necessitate the revision of the figures included in the financial statements, or inclusion of a note thereto.



# STATEMENT ON RELEVANT AUDIT INFORMATION

In the case of each of the persons who are directors at the time this report is approved in accordance with Section 330 of the Companies Act 2014, so far as each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's statutory auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's statutory auditors are aware of that information.

## Auditors

In accordance with Section 382(2) of the Companies Act 2014, the auditors, Mazars, have expressed their willingness to continue in office.



Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors

Director: Robert Anderson

Date: 28/05/24

Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 28/05/24



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

for the year ended 31 December 2023

The directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with Irish law and regulations.

Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under the law, the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the Companies Act 2014, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council and The Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the net income or expenditure of the company for the financial period and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and net income or expenditure of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website. Legislation in Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors



Director: Robert Anderson

Date: 28/05/24



Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 28/05/24



# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

## TO THE MEMBERS OF FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

### Report on the audit of the financial statements

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Family Carers Ireland, for the year ended 31 December 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows, and notes to the Company financial statements, including the summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 2. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish Law and FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in the United Kingdom by the Financial Reporting Council (FRS 102).

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Company as at 31 December 2023, and of its results for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report.

We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern for

a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements;
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014;
- the accounting records of the Company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited; and
- the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.



# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

## TO THE MEMBERS OF FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are necessary for the purposes of our audit.

### *Matters on which we are required to report by exception*

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the directors' report.

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the requirements of any of Sections 305 to 312 of the Act, which relate to disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions are not complied with by the Company. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Respective responsibilities

#### Responsibilities of directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on page 70, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework that give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

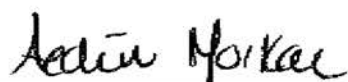
#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority's website at: [http://www.iaasa.ie/getmedia/b2389013-1cf6-458b-9b8f-a98202dc9c3a/Description\\_of\\_auditors\\_responsibilities\\_for\\_audit.pdf](http://www.iaasa.ie/getmedia/b2389013-1cf6-458b-9b8f-a98202dc9c3a/Description_of_auditors_responsibilities_for_audit.pdf). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

Our report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Aedín Morkan  
for and on behalf of Mazars  
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Audit Firm  
Harcourt Centre  
Block 3  
Harcourt Road  
Dublin 2

31 May 2024

Date:



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

		Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Unrestricted Funds 2022	Restricted Funds 2022	Total Funds 2022
	Notes	€	€	€	€	€	€
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	4	65,884	-	65,884	91,799	43,130	134,929
Charitable activities	7	4,911,907	7,822,104	12,734,011	4,941,095	7,309,468	12,250,563
Trading activities	8	592,810	8,018	600,828	516,200	210	516,410
Investment income	9	25,965	-	25,965	26,809	-	26,809
<b>Total income</b>		<b>5,596,566</b>	<b>7,830,122</b>	<b>13,426,688</b>	<b>5,575,903</b>	<b>7,352,808</b>	<b>12,928,711</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds	10	72,944	56,509	129,453	49,700	81,247	130,947
Charitable activities	11	5,136,627	7,955,259	13,091,886	4,850,738	7,499,838	12,350,576
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>5,209,571</b>	<b>8,011,768</b>	<b>13,221,339</b>	<b>4,900,438</b>	<b>7,581,085</b>	<b>12,481,523</b>
Net income/ (expenditure) before transfers		<b>386,995</b>	<b>(181,646)</b>	<b>205,349</b>	675,465	(228,277)	447,188
Transfers between funds		<b>(181,646)</b>	<b>181,646</b>	-	(228,277)	228,277	-
<b>Net movement in funds for the year</b>		<b>205,349</b>	-	<b>205,349</b>	447,188	-	447,188
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
Total funds brought forward	22	<b>3,093,507</b>	-	<b>3,093,507</b>	2,646,319	-	2,646,319
Total funds carried forward	22	<b>3,298,856</b>	-	<b>3,298,856</b>	3,093,507	-	3,093,507

There were no other recognised gains or losses in the current or prior year other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities. The notes on pages 76 to 90 form part of these financial statements.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 December 2023

		2023	2022
	Notes	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets:</b>			
Tangible assets	17	273,020	257,059
<b>Current Assets:</b>			
Debtors	18	1,495,617	2,033,636
Cash and cash equivalents	25	2,960,390	2,485,557
		<b>4,456,007</b>	4,519,193
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	19	(1,430,171)	(1,682,745)
Net Current Assets		<b>3,025,836</b>	2,836,448
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		<b>3,298,856</b>	3,093,507
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>			
Unrestricted		<b>3,298,856</b>	3,093,507
Restricted		-	-
<b>Total Funds</b>	23	<b>3,298,856</b>	3,093,507

The notes on pages 76 to 90 form part of the financial statements.

Approved by the Board of Directors on DATE and signed on its behalf by:



Director: Robert Anderson

Date: 28/05/24



Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 28/05/24



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

		2023	2022
	Notes	€	€
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided by / (used in) by operating activities	24	<b>501,156</b>	(781,762)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	17	<b>(26,323)</b>	(3,998)
Cash used in investing activities		<b>(26,323)</b>	(3,998)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		<b>474,833</b>	(785,760)
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at start of the year</b>		<b>2,485,557</b>	3,271,317
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year</b>	25	<b>2,960,390</b>	2,485,557

The notes on pages 76 to 90 form part of these financial statements.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 1) GENERAL INFORMATION

These financial statements comprising the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes 1 to 30 constitute the individual financial statements of Family Carers Ireland for the financial year ended 31 December 2023.

Family Carers Ireland (the "company") is a Company Limited by Guarantee (registered under Part 18 of the Companies Act 2014) incorporated in the Republic of Ireland. It is a charity registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority and a public benefit entity. The registered office and principal place of business for the company is Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The principal activities of the company are disclosed on page 7.

#### Statement of Compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (FRS 102). The financial statements have also been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities".

#### Currency

The financial statements have been presented in Euro (€) which is also the functional currency of the company.

### 2) ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the company's financial statements.

#### Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2014, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS102)) as published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator which is recognised by the UK Financial Reporting Council (FRC) as the appropriate body to issue SORPs for the charity sector in the UK. Financial reporting in line with SORP is considered

best practice for charities in Ireland. The Directors consider that the adoption of the SORP requirements is the most appropriate accounting to properly reflect and disclose the activities of the organisation.

#### Income

Income is recognised when the company has entitlement to the funds, performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Where income has not yet been received but all criteria for recognition have been satisfied, the income is accrued as a debtor on the Balance Sheet. Where income pertaining to grants with specific performance related conditions has been received in advance, it is deferred as a creditor on the Balance Sheet until the relevant conditions have been met.

Income arising from tax rebates is only recognised on confirmation from Revenue of the amount and when there is certainty of receipt.

Donation and fundraising income are recognised when the donations are received. Income from legacies is recognised when it becomes probable that the funds will be received. This is where there is a grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate and any conditions attached are within the control of the company.

In accordance with SORP, general volunteer time is not recognised.

Grants from Government agencies and other sources are recognised as income when the company is legally entitled to the income and has fulfilled the conditions of the grant agreement. Such funds are classed as restricted funds. The individual grant agreements establish the purpose for which the company can lawfully use the restricted funds.

Unrestricted funds are funds spent at the discretion of the Directors to further any of the company's purposes. Unrestricted funds can also be used to supplement expenditure made from restricted funds.

Income from other trading activities comprises mainly fundraising and membership income and is recognised once the funds have been received.

Bank deposit income is recognised when the interest has been applied to the account.



## Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a legal or constructive obligation exists as a result of a past event, a transfer of economic benefit is required in settlement and the amount of obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure includes any Value Added Tax which cannot be fully recovered and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Cost of raising funds comprise of the costs incurred in Fundraising and Membership and the direct costs of providing private respite care.

Charitable expenditure consists of those costs incurred in undertaking the work to meet its charitable objectives. It includes costs that can be attributed directly to these activities and also costs that are of an indirect nature but necessary to support them.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared activity costs. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources. Support costs relate to salary and governance expenditure which are allocated based on the mechanism by which they are funded.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements and statutory requirements of the company. These include costs related to the strategic planning, board training, AGM costs, audit costs and costs incurred due to legal and statutory requirements.

## Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Tangible Fixed Assets are recorded when a resource is controlled by the company, it is probable that the expected future economic benefits associated with the asset will flow to the company and the cost can be reliably measured. Tangible Fixed Assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis on assets with a value exceeding €1,000 over its expected useful life as follows:

<b>Buildings</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Computer Equipment</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Office Equipment</b>	<b>33%</b>

## Impairments of assets

If an asset is impaired the impairment loss is the difference between the carrying amount and the present value of the estimated cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. The impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

If there is a decrease in the impairment loss arising from an event occurring after the impairment was recognised the impairment is reversed. The reversal is such that the current carrying amount does not exceed what the carrying amount would have been had the impairment not previously been recognised. The impairment reversal is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

## Financial Instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' of FRS 102 in respect of all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's Balance Sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial assets comprise trade debtors, accrued income, other debtors and cash at bank. Financial liabilities comprise trade creditors and accruals.

Financial assets including trade and other debtors are measured initially at transaction price. Subsequently, they are measured at amortised cost less any provision for impairment. The aim is to ensure that there is adequate provision for bad and doubtful debts and as such the policy is to allow for a bad debt provision for all debt over six months old. All movements in the level of provision required are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Trade creditors are measured at transaction price, unless payment is deferred beyond normal business terms or is financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate. In this case the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, and the financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.





# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

## 2) ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTD)

### Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash consists of cash on hand and demand deposits. Cash equivalents consist of short term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash that are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value

### Provisions and Liabilities for Charges

Provisions are recognised when the company has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably.

### Employee Benefits

The company provides a range of benefits to employees, including paid holiday arrangements and defined contribution pension plans.

#### *Defined Contribution Pension Plan*

The company operates a defined contribution pension plan. A defined contribution pension plan is a pension plan under which the company pays fixed contributions into a separate fund. Under defined contribution plans, the company has no legal or constructive obligations to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods. For defined contribution plans, the company pays contributions to privately administered pension plans on a contractual or voluntary basis for eligible employees at management level. The company has no further payment obligations once the contributions have been paid. The contributions are recognised as employee benefit expense when they are due. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that a cash refund or a reduction in the future payments is available.

#### *Short term Employee Benefits*

Short term benefits, including holiday pay and other similar non-monetary benefits are recognised as an expense in the period in which the service is received.

#### *Termination Costs*

Once-off termination payments that are not required by contract, legislation or other obligations or commitments, are recognised in the financial year in which they become payable.

### Taxation

No charge to Corporation Tax arises as the company has been granted an exemption under Sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. The company is registered for VAT with regard to the relevant commercial activity. All other income and expenditure are recorded inclusive of VAT incurred.

### Funds

Unrestricted funds are funds spent or applied at the discretion of the Directors to further any of the company's purposes. Unrestricted funds can be used to supplement expenditure made from restricted funds. They comprise income received and expenditure incurred for the company's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds which are set aside for a particular purpose by the Directors.

Funds held on specific trusts under the charity law are classed as restricted funds. The specific trusts may be declared by the donor when making the gift or may result from the terms of an appeal for funds. The specific trusts establish the purpose for which a company can lawfully use the restricted funds.

### Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

## 3) SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses.

Judgments and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The company makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### Going Concern

The Directors have prepared budgets and cash flows for a period of at least twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements which demonstrate that there is no material uncertainty regarding the company's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and to continue as a going concern. In making this assessment, the directors have made a key assumption that funding through the HSE Service Level Agreements for both section 39 and home support services will not materially change going forward. On this basis the directors consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. Accordingly, these financial statements do not include any adjustments to the carrying amounts and classification of assets and liabilities that may arise if the company was unable to continue as a going concern.

### Estimating Useful Lives of Tangible Fixed Assets

The company reviews annually the estimated useful lives of tangible fixed assets based on the asset's expected utilisation, market demands and future technological development. It is possible that the factors mentioned may change in the future, which could cause a change in estimated useful lives. There was no change in the useful lives of tangible fixed assets. The carrying amount of tangible fixed assets is €273,020 as at year end (2022: €257,059).

### 4) DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Donations	65,884	-	65,884	134,929

### 5) VOLUNTARY INCOME

The company receives Section 39 funding through a Service Level Agreement on an annual basis from the Health Service Executive (HSE) in the geographical areas outlined in note 6.

In accordance with the disclosure requirements set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of the Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds, the company receives Section 39 funding from the HSE through local Community Health Organisations (CHO's) to provide through our national bases respite/ support services to family carers.

These HSE SLAs have specific service arrangements and funds are expended in accordance with the terms of each specific grant and invoiced to the HSE on a monthly basis.

Due to the demand for services, the company raises additional funds in many areas to provide further support and services to family carers.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 6) SECTION 39 INCOME & EXPENDITURE

	2023 Income	2023 Expenditure	2022 Income	2022 Expenditure
	€	€	€	€
Core Grant	3,628,210	3,628,210	3,643,992	3,643,992
East Coast - Wicklow	84,939	84,939	81,972	81,972
Northern – North Dublin	117,166	117,166	115,078	115,078
South Western – Kildare	16,739	16,739	16,739	16,739
South Western – Dublin West	59,710	59,710	55,080	55,080
Midlands – Laois/Offaly	132,478	132,478	123,542	123,542
Midlands – Longford/Westmeath	258,950	258,950	233,046	233,046
Mid-Western – Limerick/Clare/North Tipperary	731,266	731,266	766,102	766,102
North Western – Sligo	665,260	665,260	526,289	526,289
Western – Roscommon	160,079	160,079	134,006	134,006
Western – Mayo	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Western – Galway	26,246	26,246	28,846	28,846
Southern – Cork/Kerry	121,153	121,153	119,072	119,072
South Eastern - Kilkenny	138,769	138,769	128,149	128,149
South Eastern – Clonmel	89,732	89,732	100,805	100,805
South Eastern – Wexford	80,421	89,732	75,204	75,204
South Eastern -Waterford	106,896	106,896	93,538	93,538
North Eastern – Cavan/Monaghan	135,706	135,706	86,416	86,416
3.5% once off inflation increase	342,617	342,617	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,921,337</b>	<b>6,921,337</b>	<b>6,352,876</b>	<b>6,352,876</b>

### 7) CHARITABLE ACTIVITY INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Charitable Activity Income (See Note A)	4,911,907	7,822,104	12,734,011	12,250,563



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES BREAKDOWN

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
<b>Note A - Charitable Activity Income</b>				
Section 39 Grant Income (note 6)	-	6,921,337	6,921,337	6,352,876
Group	-	24,254	24,254	15,516
Dementia Project	-	312,765	312,765	308,022
Fidelity	-	167,463	167,463	-
Strength and Disability	-	64,171	64,171	-
Other Grant Income	-	64,071	64,071	169,725
Dormant Account Income	-	70,749	70,749	189,096
SSNO Income	-	71,749	71,749	45,000
Community Foundation for Ireland	-	73,338	73,338	82,037
Home Support Services	4,911,907	-	4,911,907	4,941,095
National Lottery	-	22,063	22,063	60,929
Rethink Ireland	-	-	-	56,122
Community and Voluntary Pillar	-	30,144	30,144	30,145
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,911,907</b>	<b>7,822,104</b>	<b>12,734,011</b>	<b>12,250,563</b>

Other grant income consists of grants given to the organisation for specified projects.

### 8) TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Charity Trading Income	592,810	8,018	600,828	516,410



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 8) TRADING ACTIVITIES (CONTD)

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
<b>Trading Activities Breakdown</b>				
Fundraising & Membership Income	413,819	8,018	421,837	347,762
Other Trading Income	178,991	-	178,991	168,648
<b>Total</b>	<b>592,810</b>	<b>8,018</b>	<b>600,828</b>	<b>516,410</b>

### 9) INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Rental Income	25,965	-	25,965	26,809
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,965</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,965</b>	<b>26,809</b>

### 10) COST OF RAISING FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Fundraising & Membership Costs	47,540	56,509	104,049	93,830
Other Costs of Raising Funds	25,404	-	25,404	37,117
<b>Total</b>	<b>72,944</b>	<b>56,509</b>	<b>129,453</b>	<b>130,947</b>



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 11) CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
<b>Summary of Charitable Activities</b>				
Donation Expenditure	2,822	-	2,822	6,744
Other Grant Expenditure (Note A)	-	893,626	893,626	1,078,482
Wages and Salaries (Note B)	4,549,004	5,536,670	10,085,674	9,233,561
Overhead Expenditure (Note C)	584,801	1,524,963	2,109,764	2,031,789
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,136,627</b>	<b>7,955,259</b>	<b>13,091,886</b>	<b>12,350,576</b>

Donation expenditure consists of costs related to crisis fund and donations.

Note A - Other Grant Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Dementia Programme	-	277,663	277,663	299,206
Dormant Accounts Programme	-	120,459	120,594	161,264
Other Grant Expenditure	-	495,414	495,414	618,012
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>893,626</b>	<b>893,626</b>	<b>1,078,482</b>

Other grant expenditure composed of costs incurred by the Company for specified projects, which are mainly attributable to National Lottery grant, Emergency Respite and Community Foundation for Ireland.

Note B - Wages and Salaries	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Direct Wages	3,349,338	1,418,848	4,768,186	4,824,110
Indirect Wages	1,199,666	4,117,822	5,317,488	4,409,451
<b>Total Wages</b>	<b>4,549,004</b>	<b>5,536,670</b>	<b>10,085,674</b>	<b>9,233,561</b>

The above wage costs exclude the cost of wages funded by way of grant income which is included in the cost of charitable activities. This cost also excludes the cost of respite wages which is included in the cost of raising funds.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 11) CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES (CONTD)

Note C - Overhead Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	€	€	€	€
Establishment	23,565	413,670	437,235	413,423
IT and Administration	119,472	410,536	530,008	580,569
Training, PPE and Local Centre	103,386	179,365	282,751	227,160
Other Overheads	149,241	222,201	371,442	329,279
Group Expenditure	-	24,254	24,254	15,516
Programme Costs	189,137	274,937	464,074	465,842
<b>Total</b>	<b>584,801</b>	<b>1,524,963</b>	<b>2,109,764</b>	<b>2,031,789</b>

### 12) EMPLOYEES AND REMUNERATION

The average number of persons employed during the year was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Corporate Services	15	15
Communications and Policy	12	14
Carer Support	90	90
Home Support Services	28	30
Home Care Workers	410	469
	<b>555</b>	<b>618</b>

The staff costs comprise:

	2023	2022
	€	€
Wages and salaries	9,182,547	8,844,787
Social security costs	2,422,762	2,362,087
Pension costs	145,822	89,220
	<b>11,751,131</b>	<b>11,296,094</b>

The above staff costs represent the total cost of wages and salaries returned to the Revenue and has been allocated across the cost of charitable activities, cost of raising funds and direct and indirect wages in line with SORP.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 13) REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS RECEIVED BY KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension costs) received by the company's key management personnel was €511,787 (2022: €513,814). The total number of employees whose benefits (excluding employer pension cost and employer PRSI) for the reporting period fell within the bands below were as follows (these include the senior management team and the CEO):

	2023 Number	2022 Number
€70,000 to €80,000	3	-
€80,000 to €90,000	3	3
€90,000 to €100,000	-	-
€100,000 to €120,000	-	-
€120,000 to €140,000	1	1
	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>

The salary (excluding employer PRSI) of the Chief Executive Officer in 2023 was €125,485 (2022: €124,523) and that was the total of his employee benefit.

### 14) DIRECTORS' EXPENSES

Expenses are paid to the Directors in line with the company's expenses policy. During the year, expenses of €14,460 (2022: €1,077) were paid to six directors for travel and subsistence incurred in the performance of their duties

### 15) NET INCOME / EXPENDITURE

This is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
	€	€
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<b>10,362</b>	17,155
Auditor's Remuneration	<b>25,092</b>	23,893

During the year, no Directors received any remuneration (2022 - €NIL).  
During the year, no Directors received any benefits in kind (2022 - €NIL).

### 16) AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION

The Auditor's remuneration amounts to an audit fee inclusive of VAT of €25,092 (2022: €23,893) in respect of statutory audit services.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 17) TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer and Office Equipment	Buildings	Total
	€	€	€
At 1 January 2023	57,867	267,500	325,367
Additions	26,323	-	26,353
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>84,190</b>	<b>267,500</b>	<b>351,690</b>
At 1 January 2023	50,475	17,833	68,308
Charge for the year	5,048	5,314	10,362
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>55,523</b>	<b>23,147</b>	<b>78,670</b>
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>28,667</b>	<b>244,353</b>	<b>273,020</b>
At 31 December 2022	7,392	249,667	257,059

### 18) DEBTORS

	2023	2022
	€	€
Trade Debtors	<b>1,315,051</b>	1,792,944
Other Debtors	<b>48,491</b>	78,770
Prepayments and accrued income	<b>132,075</b>	78,770
	<b>1,495,617</b>	2,033,636

All debtors are due within one year. All trade debtors are due within the company's normal terms, which is thirty days. Trade debtors are shown net of bad debts provisions.



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 19) CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year:

	2023	2022
	€	€
Trade and other creditors	197,430	332,035
Other taxation and social security costs (Note 20)	198,141	198,690
Accruals	427,585	467,811
Deferred Income (Note 21)	607,015	684,209
	<b>1,430,171</b>	<b>1,682,745</b>

Trade creditors and accruals are payable at various dates in the next 12 months in accordance with the suppliers' standard terms.

### 20) TAXATION AND SOCIAL SECURITY

	2023	2022
	€	€
PAYE/PRSI	198,141	198,690
	<b>198,141</b>	<b>198,690</b>

### 21) DEFERRED INCOME

	2023	2022
	€	€
At beginning of year	684,209	1,298,040
Resources deferred during the year	32,990	1,609,775
Credited to Statement of Financial Activities	(110,184)	(2,223,606)
<b>At end of year</b>	<b>607,015</b>	<b>684,209</b>



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 22) ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENT OF FUNDS

Prior Year	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
Opening Balance at 1 January 2022	2,646,319	-	-	2,646,319
Income	5,575,903	-	7,352,808	12,928,711
Expenditure	(4,900,438)	-	(7,581,085)	(12,481,523)
Transfer Between Funds	(228,277)	-	228,277	-
<b>Closing Balance at 31 December 2022</b>	<b>3,093,507</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,093,507</b>

Current Year	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
Opening Balance at 1 January 2023	3,093,507	-	-	3,093,507
Income	5,596,566	-	7,830,122	13,426,688
Expenditure	(5,209,571)	-	(8,011,768)	(13,221,339)
Transfer Between Funds	(181,646)	-	181,646	-
<b>Closing Balance at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>3,298,856</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,298,856</b>

The transfer of funds from unrestricted funds is to finance a deficit on a restricted fund.

### 23) ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

Prior Year	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
<b>Represented by:</b>				
Fixed Assets	257,059	-	-	257,059
Current Assets	4,519,193	-	-	4,519,193
Current Liabilities	(1,682,745)	-	-	(1,682,745)
	<b>3,093,507</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,093,507</b>



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 23) ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND (CONTD)

Current Year	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
<b>Represented by:</b>				
Fixed Assets	273,020	-	-	273,020
Current Assets	4,456,007	-	-	4,456,007
Current Liabilities	(1,430,171)	-	-	(1,430,171)
	<b>3,298,856</b>	-	-	<b>3,298,856</b>

### 24) RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022
	€	€
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	<b>205,349</b>	447,188
<b>Adjustment for:</b>		
Depreciation charges	<b>10,362</b>	17,155
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	<b>538,019</b>	(560,856)
Decrease in creditors	<b>(252,574)</b>	(685,249)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>501,156</b>	(781,762)

### 25) CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2023	2022
	€	€
Cash and bank balances	<b>2,960,390</b>	2,485,557



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

### 26) PENSION COMMITMENTS

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for eligible employees at executive management level. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to €145,822 (2022: €89,220). No contributions were payable at year end.

### 27) OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

	2023	2022
	€	€
<b>Amounts payable:</b>		
Within 1 year	<b>70,890</b>	97,612
Between 1 and 5 years	<b>11,730</b>	239,362
Greater than 5 years	<b>104,500</b>	142,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>187,120</b>	479,474

### 28) RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

No related party transactions took place during the year ended 31 December 2023 (2022: NIL).

### 29) POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

There have been no events since the balance sheet date, which necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements, or inclusion of a note thereto.

### 30) APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on DATE.



# APPENDIX

## DETAILS OF STATUTORY FUNDING RECEIVED IN 2023

Name of Grantor	Name of Grant	Purpose of Grant	Original Amount and Term of Grant	Amount of Grant taken into Income in Current Year	Deferred Income
			€	€	€
Pobal and Department of Environment, Community and Local Government	Scheme to Support National Organisations 2023-2025	To enhance specialists supports, strategic partnerships as well as improving organisational development	<b>€232,960</b> <b>- 3 years</b>	<b>€71,749</b>	<b>€88,300</b>
Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government	Community and Voluntary Pillar	Assist the Organisation in its role as a contributor to Public Policy	<b>€30,144</b> <b>- 1 year</b>	<b>€30,144</b>	<b>Nil</b>
Pobal , Department of Rural and Community Development (Lead) and Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (Sponsor)	Dormant Accounts Funds Measure 2	Support and improve employment opportunities for Carers and persons with a disability - M1 and M2: Family Carers and Young Carers	<b>€199,944</b> <b>- 18 months</b>	<b>€70,749</b>	<b>€67,593</b>
Department of Health and National Lottery	Palliative Care Grant	Palliative Care Programme	<b>€50,000</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>€6,644</b>
Community Foundation for Ireland	The RTÉ Toy Show Appeal	A wellbeing project for Young Carers	<b>€70,000</b> <b>- 1 year</b>	<b>€70,000</b>	<b>Nil</b>



# APPENDIX (CONTD)

## AFS DISCLOSURES UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE & REFORM CIRCULAR 13/2014 (PREVIOUSLY 17/2010)

<b>AGENCY:</b>	Pobal
<b>SPONSORING GOVERNMENT DEPT:</b>	Department of Rural and Community Development
<b>PROGRAMME FOR FUNDING:</b>	Dormant Accounts
<b>TOTAL GRANT:</b>	€199,944
<b>TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE:</b>	€70,749
<b>FUNDING RECEIVED IN THE ACCOUNTING PERIOD:</b>	€138,342
<b>TERM OF THE CONTRACT FOR FUNDING:</b>	From 01/01/2023 to 30/06/2024
<b>CAPITAL ELEMENT:</b>	€0
<b>RESTRICTIONS:</b>	As per Agreement.



# REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

<b>CHARITY NAME:</b>	Family Carers Ireland
<b>COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER:</b>	572819
<b>CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER:</b>	CHY 10962
<b>CHARITIES REGULATOR NUMBER:</b>	20029029
<b>DIRECTORS AT 16 MAY 2023:</b>	Robert Anderson Veronica Baylon (Retired 10 June 2023) Angela Briggs Barbara Carroll Catriona Fortune (Retired 24 January 2023) David Girvan Wendy Hamilton Richard Hammond John Healy Tom Jordan (Retired 10 June 2023) Cora Long Kara Madden Hugh McGeown Peter O'Connell (Retired 29 May 2023) Patricia O'Regan Johanne Powell (Retired 10 June 2023) Marta Soltys
<b>INDEPENDENT AUDITOR:</b>	Mazars, Block 3, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Road, Dublin 2
<b>PRINCIPAL BANKERS:</b>	Bank of Ireland, 2 College Green, Dublin 2
<b>SOLICITORS:</b>	Byrne Wallace, 88 Harcourt St, Saint Kevin's, Dublin 2, D02 DK18 Mason Hayes Curran, South Bank House, Barrow St, Dublin 4, D04 TR29 Moran and Ryan, Baggot Hall, 41 Baggot Street Lower, Dublin 2
<b>CEO &amp; EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM:</b>	John Dunne Catherine Cox Mary Conway Seán Dillon
<b>SECRETARY &amp; REGISTERED OFFICE:</b>	Mary Conway, Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 PW50

## BOARD COMMITTEES AT 31 DECEMBER 2023:

### Audit & Risk Management:

John Lonergan  
Shane McCarthy  
Cillian Mac Domhnaill  
Luke Mooney (Chair)

### Finance & Organisation:

Richard Hammond (Chair)  
Tom Jordan  
Hugh McGeown  
Barbara Carroll  
Fr. Paddy Hennessey

### Quality & Safety:

Kara Madden  
John Murray (Chair)  
Gloria Kirwan  
Cora Long

### Carer Support & Engagement

Johanne Powell (Chair)  
Kara Madden  
Cora Long  
David Girvan  
Patricia O'Regan  
Marta Soltys

### Marketing & Fundraising

Pat Montague  
Tracey Carney (Chair)  
David Girvan

### Research & Policy:

Robert Anderson (Chair)  
Johanne Powell  
Anne Vaughan  
Frank Goodwin

Family Carers Ireland, National Office, Market Square, Tullamore, Co Offaly

[www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie) | National Freephone Careline 1800 24 07 24



Charity Number 10692.