



Family  
Carers  
Ireland

No one should have to care alone



# 2024

Annual Report  
& Financial Statements



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME .....	3
CEO'S INTRODUCTION .....	4
FAMILY CARING IN IRELAND - THE NUMBERS .....	6
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES .....	7
ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE .....	8

## SUPPORT THE WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE OF EVERY FAMILY CARER REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY LIVE IN THE COUNTRY .....

A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY .....	9
INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ADVOCACY .....	17
TRAINING AND EDUCATION .....	18
RESPIRE .....	24

## PROVIDE TARGETED, EFFECTIVE SUPPORTS TO FAMILY CARERS WHO ARE STRUGGLING OR IN CRISIS .....

INTENSIVE SUPPORTS .....	26
COUNSELLING .....	28
EMERGENCY RESPIRE .....	32
EMERGENCY CARD SCHEME .....	33

## ENHANCE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CARING IN THE HOME .....

HOME SUPPORT SERVICES .....	34
DEDICATION TO QUALITY HOME CARE .....	34
CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY .....	35
THE STRUGGLE FOR A STATUTORY HOME SUPPORT SCHEME .....	37

## ADVOCATE FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN POLICY AND PRACTICE TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF FAMILY CARERS .....

POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS .....	38
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## INCREASE AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNITION OF FAMILY CARERS .....

FAMILY CARERS IN THE MEDIA .....	45
NETWATCH FAMILY CARER OF THE YEAR AWARDS .....	49
CARER DIARIES PODCAST .....	51
RESEARCH .....	52

## RESOURCES .....

OUR PEOPLE .....	55
QUALITY AND SAFETY .....	56

## FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING .....

NATIONAL FUNDRAISING .....	58
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING .....	61
LIDL IRELAND CHARITY PARTNERSHIP .....	64
CARING EMPLOYERS .....	66

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT .....

FUTURE PLANS .....	73
RISK MANAGEMENT .....	74
FINANCIAL REVIEW .....	75

## STATEMENT ON RELEVANT AUDIT INFORMATION .....

## DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT .....

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT .....

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES .....

## BALANCE SHEET .....

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS .....

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS .....

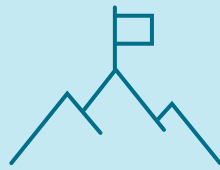
## APPENDIX .....

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS .....



## Our Vision

is an Ireland in which family carers and young 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. We believe that **no one should have to care alone**



# CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME



*Robert Anderson,*  
Chairperson

I am delighted to introduce the ninth annual report on the activities of Family Carers Ireland (FCI) covering the final full year of my term as Chairperson of the organisation.

2024 was a remarkably busy year for FCI, covering two referendums, local and European elections and a General Election. It was a very positive year in terms of income support for family carers and a disappointing one in terms of the Government's failure to follow through on the Taoiseach's commitment to fully fund the Carer Guarantee in Budget 2025. The guarantee, endorsed in the programme for government, set out to replace the current arbitrary 'postcode lottery' of public services based largely on legacy funding patterns with a coherent set of basic support services accessible by every family carer, regardless of where they live.

During the year, we obtained the approval of the Charities Regulator for proposed changes to our constitution that will be voted on by our members at an EGM in the first half of 2025. The focus of the changes is to help to build a carer movement within the organisation, expanding participation nationwide and resulting in better representation, stronger decision-making and deeper carer involvement. A new National Council driven by those with lived experience will allow a stronger and more representative voice of carers in considering issues of immediate concern to family carers while the board remains responsible for governance and compliance.

Strong governance has always been an important value in FCI. The board sets high standards for itself and expects those standards to be maintained throughout the organisation. The workload of board members is significant, and everyone involved with FCI owes a very particular debt to our unpaid, volunteer directors who bear increasingly onerous responsibilities in line with continuously changing regulatory requirements. I want to thank all my fellow directors for their time and service throughout the year. I would also like to thank the

other members of board committees who likewise give generously of their time and expertise in the service of family carers throughout the country.

I also want to thank the many individual family carers who have engaged with our activities and projects throughout the year, thereby affirming their value and helping to inform and support their continuous development. If we are not relevant to individual carers, then the content of this report would have little meaning or merit.

It takes a good deal of money to connect with and support some 80,000 family carers each year. I would like to begin by thanking all those who supported us with individual and corporate donations throughout the year noting, in particular, a major three-year partnership with Lidl that was announced in November. Having a sufficient core of 'unrestricted' funds is vital to ensure our independence to act in the interests of family carers in campaigning and service innovation. At the same time, the bulk of our support activities are provided using grant funding from a variety of State agencies including, in particular, the HSE. Whilst we are pleased to acknowledge the current scale of funding, as noted above it remains insufficient to fully deliver on the Carer Guarantee of a basic bundle of services accessible by every family carer regardless of where they live in the country.

While a board can provide governance and strategic direction, it is our staff who make FCI the organisation of which we are all so proud. I want to acknowledge and thank our staff, and particularly our Executive Management Team, for their hard work and unfailing commitment to caring families who need them. I would particularly like to acknowledge John Dunne, our Chief Executive, who indicated to the board that he wishes to retire in the third quarter 2025 after 15 years' service to family carers.

# CEO'S INTRODUCTION

*John Dunne,*  
Chief Executive



FCI exists to support and promote the health, well-being and quality of life of the more than 500,000 family carers (roughly 10% of the population) currently caring for a loved one in Ireland.

2024 was a very busy year in political terms. In addition to local, European and general election campaigns described elsewhere in this report, the year also saw a referendum which proved both divisive and traumatic for the organisation. From the time the Government first floated the idea of removing Article 41.2 of the Constitution on the basis of its outdated and sexist language, we argued that it should be replaced with something that retained the constitutional acknowledgment of the importance of care in the home and an expression of the State's responsibility to support such care. We believe the Government was sincere in its desire to achieve this but as a result of weak wording, an inadequate timeframe and poor campaigning, particularly in social media, public opinion shifted decisively in the course of the campaign and the referendum was comprehensively defeated.

In a series of regional forums organised to listen to family carers in the wake of the referendum, some carers expressed concern about our support for the Yes campaign whilst others expressed great disappointment at the outcome. The balance of opinion across all the meetings was considerably more balanced than the actual vote in the referendum. The forum discussions were constructive and respectful of differing opinions.

We now have over 13,000 paid members and overall, we provide services and supports to more than 80,000 family carers each year. Our online community averages over 10,000 website users each month and we have in excess of 50,000 social media followers.

The referendum experience undoubtedly gave additional impetus to the question of how best to change our governance structures to allow a greater number and variety of carer voices to inform our services and policy. At the end of the year, we obtained approval from the Charities Regulator to present a draft new constitution to our members for consideration. The matter will go before an Extraordinary General Meeting in the first half of 2025.

Whilst Covid might seem an increasingly distant

memory for many, the levels of acute distress amongst carers that spiked dramatically during the pandemic are still at an elevated level compared to pre-Covid data. It is worth reflecting that one reason for this may be a realisation that the type of restrictions that the wider population found so onerous during the pandemic aren't too dissimilar to the 'normal' baseline for a family carer lucky enough to have a sustainable caring routine and a viable circle of support.

In 2019, FCI proposed a Carer Guarantee to address the postcode lottery in carer supports across Ireland. The commitment to deliver the Carer Guarantee was subsequently included in the 2020 programme for government. A first tranche of funding was provided in Budget 2023 and following a major change process within the organisation, 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 in the run-up to Budget 2024 meant that there was no funding to complete the roll-out of the guarantee that year. Despite an explicit assurance to the Dáil in June 2024 that the Carer Guarantee would be fully funded in Budget 2025, only €600,000 was actually provided, far short of the additional €2.7m needed to ensure the delivery of all the commitments contained in the original proposal.

Budget 2025 also failed to make any provision to continue funding the Emergency Respite Scheme begun in 2021. This scheme provides respite in circumstances where a family carer needs:

- Crisis healthcare (physical, psychological or emotional) including substance abuse and suicide stabilisation interventions
- To attend critical medical appointments and hospital admissions (otherwise significant operations, e.g. a hip replacement offered at the end of a long waiting period, may have to be declined)
- To cope with family crises (e.g. bereavements) and unexpected care transitions (e.g. new employment or living arrangements).

Before we managed to cobble together a short-term solution for 2025 with HSE support, we had already

come across cases in which officials were advising families that 'abandoning' their loved one in an emergency department is the only available option in such situations.

Whilst it is true that only a minority of family carers are in crisis at any given time, there is strong evidence that, without adequate and appropriate support, the welfare of even the most resilient family carers is eroded over time. Family carers are central to the strategic objectives of treating complex chronic conditions in the community and ensuring the sustainability of long-term care in Ireland (and throughout the EU). They also have a significant role to play in tackling many of the current challenges associated with acute services, such as:

- Lessening demand on A&E services
- Reducing cancelled hospital appointments
- Improving medication compliance
- Delaying admission to hospitals and nursing homes
- Reducing the length of stays in hospitals
- Facilitating more timely acute hospital discharges
- Reducing readmission rates.

The CSO has estimated that family carers – the invisible health service – provide 16.7 million hours of voluntary care each week. It would cost the Exchequer at least €20bn annually if this work had to be done by paid care workers. An investment of .00002% of this would be sufficient to fund the remaining elements of the Carer Guarantee and a proper national emergency respite service each year. Failure to do so is yet another example of penny-wise, pound-foolish financial management.

I am happy to be able to report a more coherent and sustained commitment to family carers on the part of the Department of Social Protection. Budget 2025 contained generous increases in rates and disregards for Carer's Allowance in addition to many other developments which also benefitted family carers. The introduction of the new Long-Term Carers Contributions Scheme in January 2024 was a milestone moment in pension policy, giving carers who have cared for more than 20 years access to the Contributory State Pension. It represented the culmination of a decade of dialogue with the department on that issue and, in that context, I am happy to note a significant impetus to exploring alternatives to a means-tested allowance as the basic income support for family carers.

FCI remains committed to the provision of high-quality home support – in a system that is not obviously geared to facilitating this. We continue to await the promised statutory regulation and enforcement of consistent quality standards across the sector. We were also disappointed that the costing model that underpinned the new authorisation scheme introduced in 2023 was effectively abandoned in 2024 – because the system was unwilling to fund the increases it indicated were required. We are also concerned at the continuing denial of night-time and Sunday home support hours

– the former a legacy of a tendering process which would by today's legal standards have been deemed manifestly defective. On the plus side, we must acknowledge increases in the overall budget for home support, although still not at the level required to enable the shift care for chronic conditions from hospital to the community.

This is my last introduction to an annual report of FCI as I will have retired before the next one is written. In looking back on a busy 15 years, I am struck by how many of my memories are centred on the amazing people I have worked with during that time. Carers care may be a truism but it means that, however heated matters might be at any moment, there was always an underlying assurance of everyone's motivation and goodwill and I would like to pass on my heartfelt thanks not only to those who were part of the story in 2024, but to everyone I've had the pleasure to meet and work with since 2009.

My thanks firstly to the many individual family carers who have given time, their most precious commodity, to come to meetings and contribute stories, insights and ideas on a myriad of topics. Lived experience is messy and the authentic voice of caring can be angry, frustrated or frightened, but I have always been impressed by how it is always done in a spirit of solidarity whereby no matter how terrible the circumstances being described, it is commonplace to hear the comment that "I know there are others worse off". Our effectiveness in advocating for improvements in carers' health, wellbeing and financial security are entirely built on the courage and generosity of spirit of individual family carers.

I would also like to thank all those who served on the board over the years 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. I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank the various chairpersons I have worked with throughout the years, each of whom I believe made a lasting contribution to the continuing growth and development of the organisation.

Last and by no means least, I want to acknowledge and thank our amazing staff. We could never have achieved the successes listed throughout this report without committed teamwork by large numbers of skilled and dedicated individuals in every part of the country. I trust they will forgive me for including a special, heart-felt thank you to members of the Executive Management Team with whom I have worked very closely for more than a decade.

FCI is a small organisation in the context of the scale of the overall family caring agenda, but it is growing strongly and consistently punches above its weight. I have every confidence that this will continue to be the case well after I am gone.

# FAMILY CARING IN IRELAND – THE NUMBERS

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY  
**500,000**  
FAMILY CARERS IN IRELAND

**(1 in 8)** who care for loved ones such as children or adults with additional needs, physical or intellectual disabilities, frail older people, those with palliative care needs or those living with chronic illnesses, mental health challenges or addiction.



**67,000**  
YOUNG CARERS  
10-17 YRS



**€1.7 Billion**  
spent on income support for family carers



\*in avoided home care costs

**13%** of carers deliver at least 40 hours of medical required care

**74%** of carers reported that the individuals they support do not receive sufficient support

**39%** of carers live in households with a total income less than **€30,000**

**49%** have paid privately for any product or services that, in theory, should be publicly provided to support their caring role

**72%** of carers have never received respite

**48%** of carers are severely lonely

**69%** of carers find it difficult to make ends meet

Source: Family Carers Ireland State of Caring 2024 Report.

Figures are based on the CSO's Irish Health Survey 2019; Census 2022; CSO's Population and Migration Estimates April 2020; Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study undertaken by NUIG and in collaboration with the WHO; data from the Department of Social Protection and findings from FamilyCarers Ireland's State of Caring 2024 report. The replacement value for care is based on an hourly rate of €20.



# OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

## DIRECTORS' REPORT 2024

The directors present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of Family Carers Ireland (FCI) for the year ended 31 December 2024.

## CREATION OF FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

FCI 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.

FCI'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

The board of FCI approved a new strategic plan in November 2023 covering the period up to 2028. The plan sets out the rationale, actions and goals of each of the five strategic objectives. It also addresses three strategic enablers highlighting the growing demands associated with operating an effective and compliant charity in Ireland today.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:	
1	Support the well-being and resilience of every family carer regardless of where they live in the country.
2	Provide targeted, effective supports to family carers 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.

STRATEGIC ENABLERS:	
1	Governance (Compliance, Risk, Quality and Safety)
2	Resources (Our People, Our Technology, Our Finances)
3	Marketing and Fundraising (Our Brand, Our Fundraising, Our Partnerships and Alliances)

# ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## Supportive Community

Incoming Calls ( <i>Careline</i> )	5,235	Inclusion/Wellbeing Activities	521
Outgoing Calls ( <i>Careline and Outreach</i> )	12,423	Inclusion/Wellbeing Activities Participants	4,428
Support Group Sessions	787	Information Briefings	342
Support Group Participants	4,629		

## One-to-One Supports

Initial Assessments	2,068	Open Case Files ( <i>monthly avg.</i> )	469
Outcome Stars	3,351	Clinics	221

## Counselling

Referrals	689	Hours	5,483
Clients	529		

## Training

Training Sessions	348	Engagements with Training Participants	3,484
Training Participants	1,244		

## Respite

In-Home Respite Hours ( <i>S39</i> )	64,922	Emergency Respite Requests Delivered	366
Emergency Respite Hours ( <i>In-Home and Residential</i> )	33,529	Emergency Plans Registered	79
Emergency Respite Referrals Received	393	Emergency Plans Reviewed	403

## Online

Online Activities	460	Website Users	133,892
Social Media Followers	50,018	Website Page Views	694,212

## Membership

New Members	5,642	Total Members	13,293
Renewed Members	7,651		

# SUPPORT THE WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE OF EVERY FAMILY CARER REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY LIVE IN THE COUNTRY

The FCI model of Carer Supports has an overarching focus on the individual carer's wellbeing. It is underpinned by the evidence-based carer support guidance published by the UK National Institute of Health and Care Excellence.

Through our Carer Supports, we aim to enhance the wellbeing of family carers through and beyond their care journey by maximising partnerships and providing high quality, innovative programmes of appropriate, targeted supports based on identified need and risks. The department is devised of four key functions: Community Supports, Intensive Supports, Psychosocial Supports, and Training and Education.

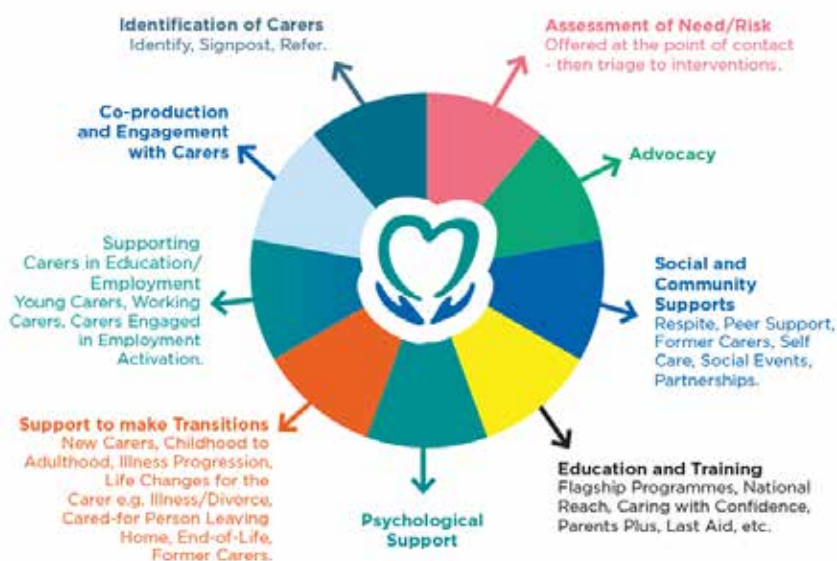
We support family carers (including young carers) who care for loved ones such as children or adults with additional needs, physical or intellectual disabilities, frail

older people, those with palliative care needs or those living with chronic illnesses, mental health challenges or addiction. We also ensure former carers benefit from a sense of community with other individuals who are no longer actively caring, as they transition from their caring role.

The Head of Carer Supports (acting) leads a team of over 60 people which includes four national leads, four regional managers, 28 managers, 19 information officers, three young carer staff and three part-time counsellors.

## A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

At the core of Community Supports are dedicated teams of professional support managers and information officers working remotely or located around the country in one of our 15 Carer Support Centres. Our team works together to deliver a wide range of supports and services including information on rights and entitlements, wellbeing reviews using the Carers Outcome Star™, one-to-one clinics, support groups, advocacy on behalf of carers, and a wide range of social inclusion and wellbeing activities. These supports not only help carers feel less isolated, but also encourage community engagement, provide opportunities to meet with other carers and share experiences, and access events that promote mental and physical well-being.



Community Support Managers establish partnerships with external organisations and the facilitation of local and regional fundraising events contribute to the overall sustainability of these support programs. Through these collective efforts, family carers are empowered to continue their essential work while maintaining their own health and quality of life.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

*"I found FCI important for connecting with others in the same role, as you can feel isolated at times so meeting up for a chat, a coffee or some fun activity is really important."*

**Feedback from support group attendee**

Connecting with other family carers can provide a wide range of valuable benefits. It offers a sense of community and support, helping carers feel less isolated in their journey. Sharing experiences with others who understand the challenges can reduce stress and provide practical advice or emotional relief. These connections foster a space for carers to exchange coping strategies, information about resources, and even tips for managing difficult situations. Additionally, forming relationships with others in similar circumstances can promote mental well-being, create lasting friendships, and help carers feel empowered and more confident in their caring roles.

The following events are just some of those that brought carers together in 2024.

*"I really look forward to the group meetings. Since I came to the first one, I don't feel so alone. It's a great opportunity to meet up, find out what's going on with Family Carers Ireland. I get lots of information on what's available and what is happening for carers. For me it is a safe place to share how caring is going for me and to get advice and support".*

**Feedback from support group attendee**

"Embracing Neurodiversity: Empowering Family Carers for a Brighter Future" took place in Sligo in November 2024 and presented a unique opportunity for family carers of neurodiverse individuals to come together, share experiences, and gain valuable insights. Guest speakers, most of whom were neurodiverse themselves, covered different aspects of neurodiversity including emotional regulation workshops, information stands for other neuro-affirming groups within Sligo-Leitrim, and a play and sensory space for children. All parents/carers were supported to bring their children along with them, as we knew most are unable to attend events due to their caring role. The event was a huge success and received very positive feedback.



Family carers from Clare enjoyed a city tour of Cork where they learned about the local history, explored the city and enjoyed each other's company.



Family Carers from Tipperary and Roscommon pictured at the SCCUL Sanctuary in Galway.





Christmas lunch was an event filled with great food, wonderful conversations and plenty of laughter.



Members of the Carers Choir in South Tipperary visited local nursing homes in December to sing some Christmas carols and were also invited to sing live on air on Tipp FM.



Young Carer Support Manager Elayne O'Hara and a child playing a game at the Embracing Neurodiversity conference.



Family carers in Cork attended a Christmas wreath-making workshop.

*"Thank you for a wonderful conference today. As a family we felt so welcome from the moment we walked in the door. Having a very hyperactive little lady in our lives often means feeling judged and anxious attending large gatherings and a huge lack of understanding. Today was a very different experience and we felt completely at ease. My daughter loved the whole experience, just hearing ADHD and dyslexia being spoken about freely and meeting both other kids and adults with ADHD made her feel special. She is asking when will the next meeting be. The speakers all did a fantastic job, and we gained a lot from today. A special thank you for the endless activities and kindness. Ye did a fantastic job. I would love to see more of this."*

**Feedback from Embracing Neurodiversity conference attendee**

## SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS

*"I really look forward to the Zoom calls every Wednesday. It makes me feel happy and proud to be a young carer and knowing I'm not the only one who has it hard sometimes at home."*

Young carer who attends an online support group

Young carers are young people under the age of 18 whose lives are in some way affected because they provide care, assistance or support to another family member in the home.

Young adult carers are recognised as a separate group and are aged between 18 and 24 years. The person they care for is often a parent but can be a sibling, grandparent or other relative who needs care, support or supervision because of disability, chronic illness, mental health challenges or problems with drugs or alcohol misuse.

This cohort often take on significant responsibilities at a young age, which can impact their well-being, education and social life. While many young carers find pride in their ability to support their family members, it is crucial to recognise the potential stress and isolation they may experience, as well as the need for support and resources.

In 2024, our Young Carers team facilitated or partnered with other youth organisations to host 170 support groups while 11 training sessions/workshops were held covering

topics including self-care, nutrition, mental health, practical care skills, First Aid, Lámh, and autism awareness.

Thirty-six social inclusion, wellbeing and respite activities were delivered, providing young carers with a vital break from their caring responsibilities and an opportunity to relax and have fun. Activity breaks include a range of activities such as fun days out, creative workshops, outdoor activities and Sibshops which support siblings of children with additional needs.

Across the year, 150 one-to-one support sessions were held with young carers where staff explore all aspects of their caring role and use age-appropriate assessment tools to best identify the areas that the young carer would benefit from getting additional support.

*"Very good service that is provided to kids that find themselves having to do things that their peers would not have to do on a daily basis... It's great to have the kids meet each other so they know they are not alone in doing this... The care packages are lovely and the kids love to see them coming as they feel special. Thanks to everyone for their help and support for the children."*

Parent of child supported by Young Carers team







Young carers attending a First Aid training workshop in Dublin.



One of the many Sibshops attended by young carers around the country in 2024.



Young Carers Adventure Day tested skills and nerves, but everyone came away with increased confidence in themselves and new friends.



A lucky group of young carers enjoyed a trip to Baysports waterpark in July.



Pictured at the International Young Carers Conference Manchester 2024 are Sean Collins, young adult carer; Elayne O'Hara, Young Carer Support Manager, FCI; Ellen Shumba, young adult carer; Andy McGowen, Carers Trust; Niamh Finucane, Young Carer Support Manager, FCI; Breda Moloney, UCD and Aoife Bowman Grangel, UL.





## MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

We have seen exponential growth of our membership community since the Covid-19 pandemic and on the back of a huge increase in public conversations and awareness about family caring brought about by factors including the recent referendums and general election campaign.

Many family carers have seen a genuine need for the FCI membership card, which costs just €20 per year. Not only does the card identify the holder as a family carer, it also unlocks over 110 different affiliate partner offers. The Membership team continues to onboard new and relevant partners, who are dedicated to driving value and discounts for family carers all over Ireland. Seasonal events have also become a calendar highlight, with a selection of nationwide venues offering family carers either free or a discounted entry fee and included events such as Easter, Halloween and Christmas. Partners offering these to our members include Kildare Farm Foods, Navan Adventure Centre, Wonderlights and Elf Town (Galway/Dublin), to name but a few.

At the end of 2024, the membership base stood at 13,293, with renewals up 26% on 2023 and the Carer Supports team having completed over 5,700 new welcome calls to members joining for the first time in 2024. These calls act as an introduction as to who we are as a national charity and how we can work towards a better tomorrow for each family carer that engages with us.



### KEY MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS:

- **13,293** members
- **7,651** renewals
- **5,773** welcome calls completed
- **87%** female
- **13%** male
- **Average age: 35-44yrs**
- **Top 5 conditions of cared-for person(s):** ASD/Autism; ADHD; Learning/Intellectual Disability; Mental Health Challenges; Down Syndrome
- **3,500** members in Dublin; **1,500** members in Cork.

# BUILDING ONLINE CONNECTIONS

## SOCIAL MEDIA

FCI has a vibrant and active online presence with a strong community of family carers established across multiple social media channels. Particularly following the Covid-19 pandemic, social media networks have 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 2024. Our Instagram channel in particular experienced significant follower growth in the year, with the number of accounts following our page rising by 37% to more than 4,900, and reach (lifetime) rising by 51% to over 253,000.

While follower numbers on Facebook showed a more modest growth of 7% to 34,000, reach (lifetime) experienced similar growth, rising by 54% across the 12 months to over 2.4m.

Followers of our LinkedIn page grew by 29% to almost 2,700 while X (formerly Twitter) saw the number of followers rising by 1% to over 8,500.

Across the year, hundreds of family carers also reached out to our social media channels by private message – primarily via Facebook and Instagram – with many of these referred to their local Community Supports team for further support.

## WEBSITE

Our website acts 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 FCI's services, supports, activities, events, campaigns and membership. It hosts suites of eLearning courses for both family carers and young carers and serves as a repository of key publications including annual reports, strategic plans, research reports, policy submissions and much more.

Website traffic continued to increase steadily in 2024 with sessions (i.e. periods of time during which users interacted with the website) in particular showing strong growth, rising by 76% in the year to more than 374,000. Page views also grew by 13% to over 694,000.

Our Membership Hub, launched in late 2023, attracted strong interest in its first full year of operation with over 50,000 page views recorded in the secure log-in area which allows members to access their benefits and discount codes; update their personal details and renew quickly and easily.

Content across the site is refreshed regularly, with the calendar of activities and events for family carers and the learning and education sections 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.

A major website rebuild project will be initiated in 2025 with a view to significantly improving the user experience and ensuring that family carers, wherever they may be on their caring journey, can access the support and information they need quickly and easily.

## ONLINE COMMUNITY FORUM

Our online community forum, overseen by our Virtual Supports Manager, 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 more than 1,300 registered members by the end of 2024.



# INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ADVOCACY

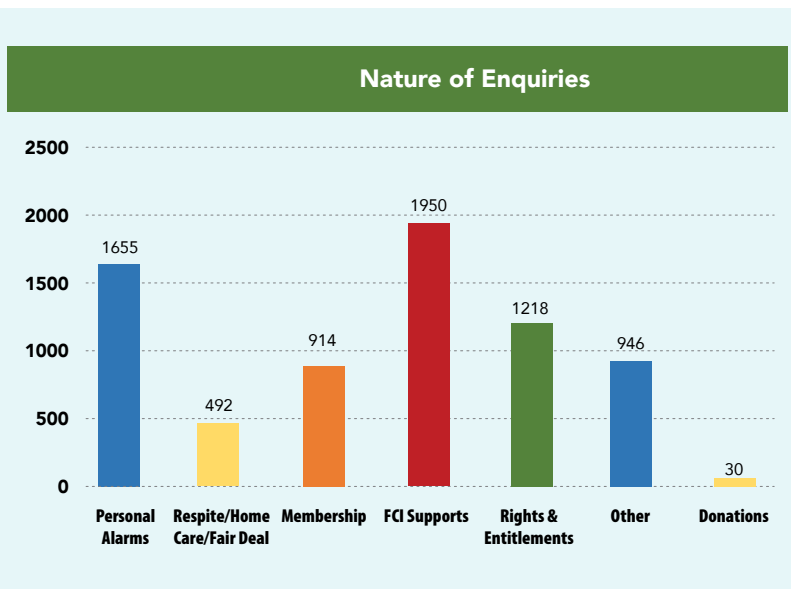
Family carers consistently report that negotiating public support systems is more stressful than their direct caring responsibilities. Getting good quality information and advice at the right time can be critical in helping family resilience and mitigating damage to a family's finances, health, employment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

## NATURE OF CARER ENQUIRIES

Family carers reach out to FCI seeking information on a variety of topics relevant to their caring role. They do so by contacting us through our National Freephone Careline, by phoning or dropping into our Carer Support Centres or by sending emails or texts.

**In 2024, there was 7,531 specific inquiries made by family carers.**

The areas with the most enquiries are noted in the table below.



## NATIONAL FREEPHONE CARELINE

Our National Freephone Careline (1800 24 07 24) continues to offer a friendly, informed, supportive and confidential service to family carers throughout Ireland. Staff and volunteers 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.

Ongoing training is provided to new staff while refresher training is regularly carried out for existing staff across many areas including information on the supports and services provided by FCI; family carers' rights and entitlements (e.g. Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, Carer's Support Grant, etc); information on our free

counselling service; emergency care planning, respite and emergency respite; training and education; peer support groups and membership. Induction, effective call handling and customer service training are included in the training and refresher programmes.

Mindful that caring is often 24/7, we are 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. FCI 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 2024.





# TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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

In 2024, we welcomed back some of our traditional programmes and introduced new workshops to family carers across the country. All courses and workshops delivered by FCI are created with a view to providing family carers with practical information and guidance.

We are determined that these programmes should be governed by our established practice of listening to family carers and that we continue to hear and understand their needs before creating new courses/workshops or continuing with established courses.

A hugely important aspect of our programmes, both in-person and online, is that they provide safe social spaces for family carers and a vital opportunity for peer support.

Listed is a brief overview of courses and workshops delivered to family carers in 2024.

## CARING WITH CONFIDENCE

Our flagship programme has been designed to provide family carers with the basic information and guidance they need – particularly for those who are new to the caring role. Modules covered across eight weeks include safety in the home, First Aid and rights and entitlements.

We were delighted to work with Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) and Irish Times Training in 2024 to create a pathway of education for family carers by linking Caring with Confidence with a L4 Introduction to Healthcare. Ten family carers engaged with the programme and of the eight who completed, we are proud to say that four achieved distinctions and four secured merits.

Going forward, FCI plans to work with ETBs across the country to ensure that family carers, who may have opted out of formal education, are provided with an opportunity to re-engage.



Representatives of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board and FCI pictured at the launch of Caring with Confidence at the LOETB Enterprise Hub, Tullamore.





**PICTURED ARE FAMILY CARERS WHO WERE AWARDED CERTIFICATES ON COMPLETION OF THE CARING WITH CONFIDENCE COURSE.**

## PATIENT MOVING AND HANDLING

The Physical, Mental and Psychological Impact of Caring, published in 2019 following a collaboration between FCI, College of Psychiatrists of Ireland and UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, found that despite the risk of physical injury, less than one in five (18%) family carers received training for their role. Four in 10 carers have suffered from back injuries, and almost two-thirds (67%) of these felt their back injury was caused or made worse because of their caring role. Manual handling training was the most common training need identified when carers were asked what training they would like to receive.

**4 in 10 carers have suffered back injuries**

Our Patient Moving and Handling training seeks to equip family carers with invaluable techniques that will protect them from physical injury in the future. Carers who participated in this training in 2024 expressed their appreciation, indicating it was of immense practical help to them in their daily tasks while a number said that it would assist them in gaining employment as a care worker as the course was certified.

*"I took the Patient Moving and Handling course with other carers from the group. It was brilliant. The man who delivered the course encouraged us to share our experiences and helped us with safer ways to move and handle our loved ones. The group was very friendly, open and easy to ask questions. It is the best course I have ever done. We got loads of opportunities to use the equipment under his direction."* **Feedback from course attendee**



*Pictured are family carers in South Tipperary who attended Patient Moving and Handling training.*

## MEN CARER WORKSHOPS

Two in every five family carers are men, according to the most recent census, and research has shown that they are less likely to reach out for support throughout their time caring. Our Men Carer Workshops seek to engage with men in a wide variety of caring roles, provide them an overview of the supports available to them and encourage a connection with FCI.

In 2024, we delivered our workshops through the "Sheds for Life" community-based health promotion programme which is aimed at supporting the physical, mental and social wellbeing of Men's Sheds members. FCI is proud of this partnership with the Irish Men's Sheds Association and see this as a fantastic vehicle for increasing awareness of our services and supports.

The format of the workshop has proven to be very effective. It includes examples (through recorded stories) of men carers, the support they received from FCI and how this improved the quality of their lives.

We are delighted to say that leaflets outlining the work of FCI have been delivered to all Men's Sheds and the services and supports offered by the organisation are now advertised in the Irish Men's Sheds Association's official handbook. Our Community Support Managers have confirmed that many men carers have made further contact with them for additional support as a direct result of attending a shed and making that initial contact.



*Members of Gurrabraher Men's Shed in Cork were visited by local Community Support Manager Peter Cox in April 2024.*

## PARENTS PLUS SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMME

FCI and the Parents Plus charity have collaborated to deliver the Parents Plus Special Needs (PPSN) Programme - the first evidence-based programme in the world designed to support parents of children and young adults who have additional support needs.

The three pillars of the course include:

- Supporting families
- Supporting children
- Parent self-care.

Each of the five courses delivered online in 2024 (see below) was co-facilitated by a Community Support Manager and a parent who has lived experience raising a child with additional support needs.

1. Parents caring for a child with a severe intellectual disability with complex needs (*all ages*)
2. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate intellectual disability with associated autism (*ages 9-12*)
3. Parents caring for a young person/teenager/ with mild to moderate Intellectual disability with associated autism (*ages 12-19*)
4. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate intellectual disability with a dual diagnosis (*ages 13-18*)
5. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate intellectual disability and autism (*ages 9-12*).

## LAST AID

FCI 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.

## FORMER CARERS WORKSHOP

This programme recognises the contribution of former carers, provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on their caring role and to think about future plans.

Family carers often fail to recognise or value skills and competencies gained throughout their caring journey and this workshop provides them with a forum for exploring and confirming their vast knowledge before considering and supporting 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.

## MINDING YOUR WELLBEING

We were delighted to partner with the HSE Health Promotion Team in the mid-west to offer the Minding Your Wellbeing pilot programme which provides a unique opportunity for family carers to learn about the key elements of mental well-being, such as mindfulness, gratitude, self-care and resilience.

A two-part workshop delivered in Limerick in November was very well received, with one carer noting that the programme "covered everything and more than I hoped for. It showed me the benefit of slowing down and not being on autopilot so much".



*Pictured are attendees of the Minding your Wellbeing pilot programme delivered in Limerick in November 2024.*



## ACCESS TO THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION



Pictured are participants of the Supporting Family Carers Across Ireland Project who were presented with academic awards at SETU's Carlow campus in November 2024.

Courses are delivered online and on a part-time basis, making it easier for attendees to balance their responsibilities. Students gained knowledge in a range of subjects such as advocacy, communication, resilience, and social care, providing them with skills that benefit their existing roles and, in many cases, lay the foundations for future learning.

Through HEA funding, course fees are covered for participants, ensuring that financial barriers to family carers accessing education were removed.

The project was extended for a further 12 months in September 2024.

*"This experience has empowered me to grow both as a carer and as an individual. It has been challenging, but incredibly rewarding, and today, I am proud to be recognised for my achievements."*

**Michael G. Kenny, a family carer from Kerry, speaking at the SETU graduation ceremony in November 2024**

*"Balancing the demands of caregiving with the pursuit of your course work is no small feat. Today, we celebrate your strength, resilience, and the invaluable contributions you make to both your families and society. You have demonstrated remarkable dedication to your studies, proving that caregiving and learning can go hand in hand."*

**Professor Veronica Campbell, President of SETU, speaking at the SETU graduation ceremony in November 2024**

A total of 253 family carers received third-level academic awards in November 2024 thanks to the 'Supporting Family Carers Across Ireland' project. Courses were delivered by SETU (South East Technological University) in partnership with FCI and funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

**253 carers received 3rd Level Academic Awards.**

The project, which has delivered certificate courses to 607 participants since 2022, is a pioneering initiative that provides family carers with the opportunity to develop skills, enhance their knowledge and gain academic qualifications all while continuing their vital caring roles at home.



Pictured from left to right are Caroline Poole, National Lead for Partnerships and Innovation, FCI; Nicola McEntee, Project Coordinator, SETU; Michelle Woods, Project Administrator, SETU; and Deirdre Geoghegan, Education and Training Support Manager, FCI.



Listed below are some of the courses that family carers availed of through this unique opportunity in 2024.

### Learning to Learn at Third level (Level 6):

The journey to third level education is particularly challenging for some family carers. Often, they want to re-engage with formal training but cannot find a way in. The "Learning to Learn at Third Level" Level 6 certificate was introduced to enable family carers to gently make the transition to third level education. Students explore a range of different learning styles and are introduced to academic reading and writing techniques and strategies, planning, structuring, writing assignments and using academic practises.

### Certificate in Communication (Level 6):

The course seeks to equip family carers with the knowledge, skills and competence of effective oral and written communications. Those who took part welcomed the learnings, saying it increased their know-how when dealing with the various services with whom they interact - from hospitals to primary care services.

### Certificate in Meeting the Challenge of Challenging Behaviour (Level 8):

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 (Level 6):

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.

### Certificate in Health and Wellbeing in Social Care Practice (Level 6):

This course addresses the factors that impact on health and well-being, with participants given the opportunity to explore elements such as the holistic care of disabled children and adults with lifelong and life-limiting conditions and to understand the relationship between nutrition and population health and wellbeing in social care.

### Masterclasses – Workshops for Family Carers:

The SETU/FCI 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.

Twelve masterclasses were held in 2024 throughout the country with 98 family carers attending.

## Training Events Summary 2024

Name of course	No. of courses delivered	No. of participants
Caring with Confidence	11	103
Former Carers	7	47
Men Carers	14	186
Mental Health	19	186
Rights and Entitlements	20	162
PPSN	5	52
Last Aid	1	6
Communication with Doctors	12	105
Dementia Care and Support	1	5
Patient Moving and Handling	10	74
Certificate in Meeting the Challenge of Challenging Behaviour (SETU)	3	60
Certificate in Communication (SETU)	1	20
Certificate in Advocacy (SETU)	4	80
Certificate in Health and Wellbeing in Social Care Practice (SETU)	2	40
Certificate in Groupwork and Facilitation Skills (SETU)	1	20
Masterclass (SETU)	12	98
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>1,244</b>

We would like to congratulate all family carers who have engaged and benefited from our education and training programmes in 2024 and to extend a warm thank you to our partners who worked with us and who truly understand the importance of our courses and workshops for family carers.

# RESPITE

*"I am really thankful for the great help of providing me respite. I felt so relieved that somebody heard my cry. I cannot explain the feeling in my heart for your kind and humble service you provide, just considering everyone as equal. You cannot even imagine the amount of help you have done for me and my family by providing time to listen to my tears and worries and making things work..."*

**Family carer who received respite from FCI**

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.

FCI provides specialised respite for family carers in parts of the country where it is funded to do so. In 2024, family carers availed of almost 65,000 hours of in-home (Section 39) respite delivered by FCI.

## THE URGENT NEED FOR RESPITE CARE

FCI's work in contracted home care delivery provides us with valuable insights that inform our advocacy for family carers. It also brings us into direct contact with numerous family carers who are often unaware of the full range of supports available to them beyond basic home support.

While FCI's provision of home support hours has increased significantly over the years, there has been a concerning trend in recent years in the decline of the number of family carer respite hours funded by the HSE. There are growing concerns that Section 39 family carer respite hours are being absorbed into general home support tender hours, with no guarantee that they are being ring-fenced for the specific needs of family carers.

At a time of considerable national wealth, it is deeply frustrating to witness the significant challenges that many family carers still face in accessing formal respite support services to assist them in their demanding caring roles. Respite provides carers with the opportunity to maintain their own health, well-being, and capacity to continue providing care.

Despite the undeniable importance of these services, a substantial number of family carers in Ireland still struggle to secure adequate support. The State of Caring 2024 survey revealed that 74% of carers reported that the individuals they care for do not receive sufficient formal support. This stark disparity between the needs of care recipients and the available support underscores the urgent need for systemic improvements in service provision.

Respite care is not merely a service; it is a vital lifeline. It offers family carers a chance to recharge, to maintain their own health, and to nurture their social connections. However, recent surveys paint a distressing picture: the percentage of carers who have never accessed respite care has risen from 66% in 2022 to a stark 72% in 2024. This alarming trend likely reflects the fact that respite and day care services have not yet fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels in many parts of the country.

The continuing delays in home care reform have far-reaching consequences, impacting the entire health service. The year 2025 must be a turning point. It requires a renewed sense of urgency from the Government, the Department of Health, and the HSE if this critical issue is to be effectively addressed, and the needs of family carers are to be finally met.





# PROVIDE TARGETED, EFFECTIVE SUPPORTS TO FAMILY CARERS WHO ARE STRUGGLING OR IN CRISIS

## INTENSIVE SUPPORTS

*"The service and support we received was out of this world. Our situation was very overwhelming people are so kind especially when we were in such a difficult position. It's people like you that make others' lives all the better. You all have tremendous talent, probably unknown to yourselves. We will be forever grateful."*

**Family carer supported by Intensive Supports team**

The purpose of the Intensive Supports team is to provide a high level of support to family carers who are in burnout or in need of concentrated support.

The team of seven Intensive Support Managers (ISMs), supported by four Information Officers (IOs), provide guidance, an informed and hearing ear plus tangible supports to family carers who present with a high level of carer burden from all corners of Ireland.

Every family carer is offered a one-to-one wellbeing review using the Carers Outcome Star™ which is a tool that was developed to assess the carers current wellbeing (Star 1) and to put a plan in place to improve and then re-assess (Star 2).

The Carers Outcome Star™ helps family carers to recognise their strengths, their needs and the barriers they may be facing in their caring role. Star conversations with family carers can take place in person, via telephone or video call depending on the need of the family carer.

The star covers seven key outcome areas:

1. Health
2. The caring role
3. Managing at home
4. Time for yourself
5. How you feel
6. Finances
7. Work

A person-centred action plan is then agreed and developed in collaboration with the ISM. Individual tailored support is provided over a 12-week period where the ISM may offer/recommend FCI supports and services such as emergency respite, counselling, or training to name but a few. They may also signpost to or advocate on behalf of the family carer with an appropriate external service. The ISM will regularly link in with the family carer and work towards achieving the goals that they have set out in the action plan. A second STAR will be completed at end of the 12 weeks.

ISMs also deliver weekly carer clinics within Integrated Care Program for Older Persons (ICPOP) centres. Here, family carers are referred by the geriatric consultant or nurse manager to meet an ISM in person in clinic. Referrals are also sent to the ISM outside clinic times. Eighty-nine referrals were received from ICPPOP clinics in 2024.

One of our most successful ICPPOP clinics is the Cork South Hub, where an ISM attends weekly memory and post diagnostic clinics to support family carers. A referral pathway was developed for professionals to refer family carers to FCI from different teams within the hub. The ISM works collaboratively with the referee to support the family carer and the cared-for person with



an integrated, wrap-around service that is designed to achieve the best outcome for the family.

Those supported by the clinic have given hugely positive feedback, with one carer stating that they “felt heard for the first time and not alone in caring role”.

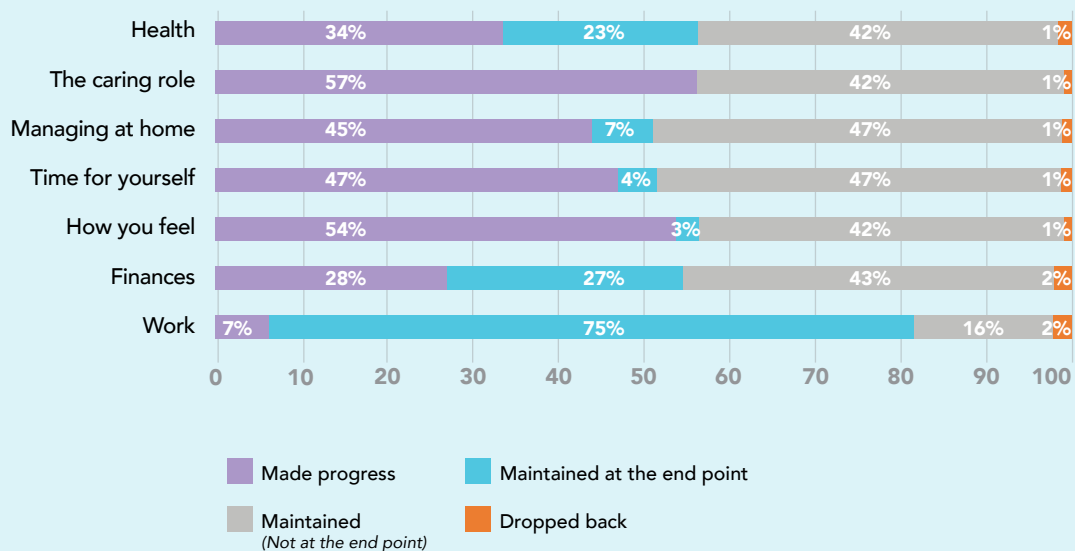
The Intensive Supports team deliver information sessions on a regular basis to health professionals and encourage referrals to FCI. In 2024, there were 1,318 referrals (520 internal, 798 external), with the team working with 862 family carers over a 12-week period. Of the 862 carers who went through the Carers Outcome Star™ process, the following results were recorded:

**83%** of carers made progress in at least one outcome area.

**67%** of carers made progress in at least two outcome areas

**51%** of carers made progress in at least three outcome areas

#### How much progress are people making in each outcome area?



COUNSELLING

No. of referrals to the counselling service in 2024: **689** (+69%)

No. of carers the service had the capacity to engage with in 2024: **532** (+7%)

No. of clinical hours delivered in 2024: **5,488** (+11%)

FCI’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.

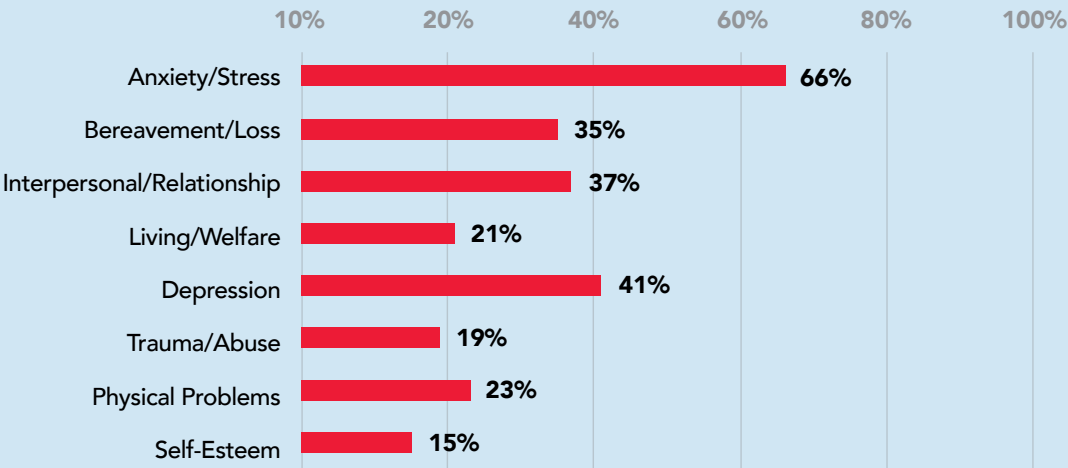
In addition to providing one-to-one therapeutic counselling support to family carers in 2024, the service also developed and delivered two workshops on ‘Simple Tools for Managing Stress and Anxiety’. These workshops were offered to those on the waiting list for counselling.

In 2024, we streamlined the referral process for counselling to support carers to access the service in a timely manner. Family carers can request to be referred to counselling upon first contact with the organisation or may be referred to counselling following a conversation with a Support Manager. The service received 689 referrals in 2024, an increase of 69% from 2023. Due to resource constraints, it was not possible to increase service delivery to match this demand, which has resulted in longer wait times than usual.

Once a referral is received, 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 explains how the service works and goes through the client counselling agreement with the family carer. 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. Many people are experiencing more than one challenge in their lives when they seek counselling, with two thirds of those seeking counselling in 2024 reporting challenges related to anxiety and stress, while nearly half reported experiencing depression. Interpersonal or relationship issues and challenges related to bereavement or loss were identified by approximately a third of carers attending. The main challenges identified at intake are outlined in the graph below.

IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES AT ASSESSMENT

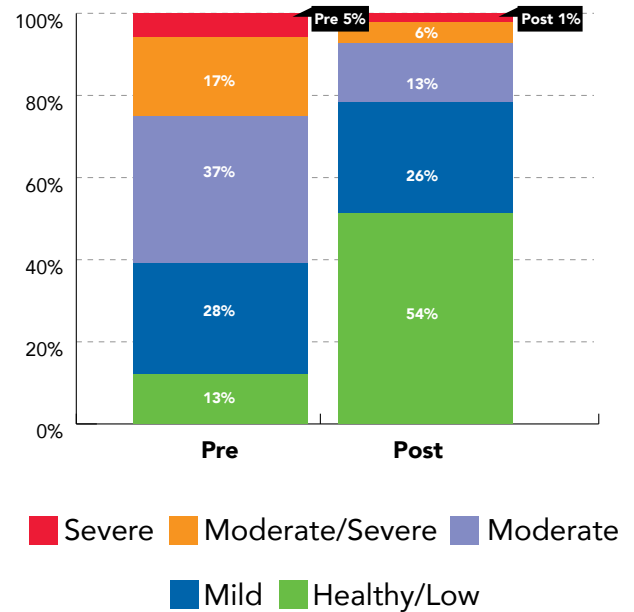


In 2024, we provided 5,488 hours of counselling to 532 family carers from across the country. The counselling space allows family carers to say what they need to in the session. In counselling, your counsellor will encourage you to talk about what it is that is troubling or bothering you and will listen non-judgmentally to what you say. Counselling can help people in different ways. 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 people 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 family carers who engage with the service is using the CORE-OM questionnaire. This validated tool measures current levels of psychological distress. Family carers complete the questionnaire before they begin counselling, every 4 weeks during counselling and at the end of counselling. In 2024, 380 family carers completed counselling with the service. The graph below illustrates the levels of distress measured by the CORE-OM before counselling began and after counselling had finished.

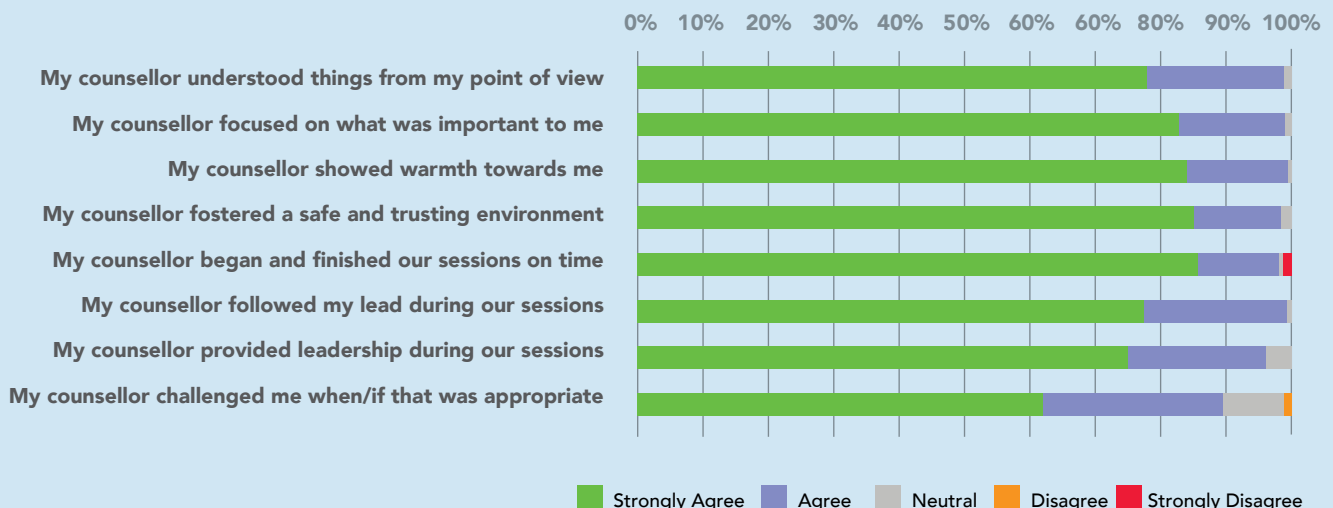
As the graph shows, only 14% of carers had healthy or low levels of psychological distress prior to commencing counselling which increased to 54% of carers experiencing healthy or low levels of distress after the counselling intervention. Likewise, 21% of carers were experiencing moderate/severe or severe levels of psychological distress prior to counselling commencing, which reduced to 7% 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.

### Levels of Psychological Distress Pre and Post Counselling

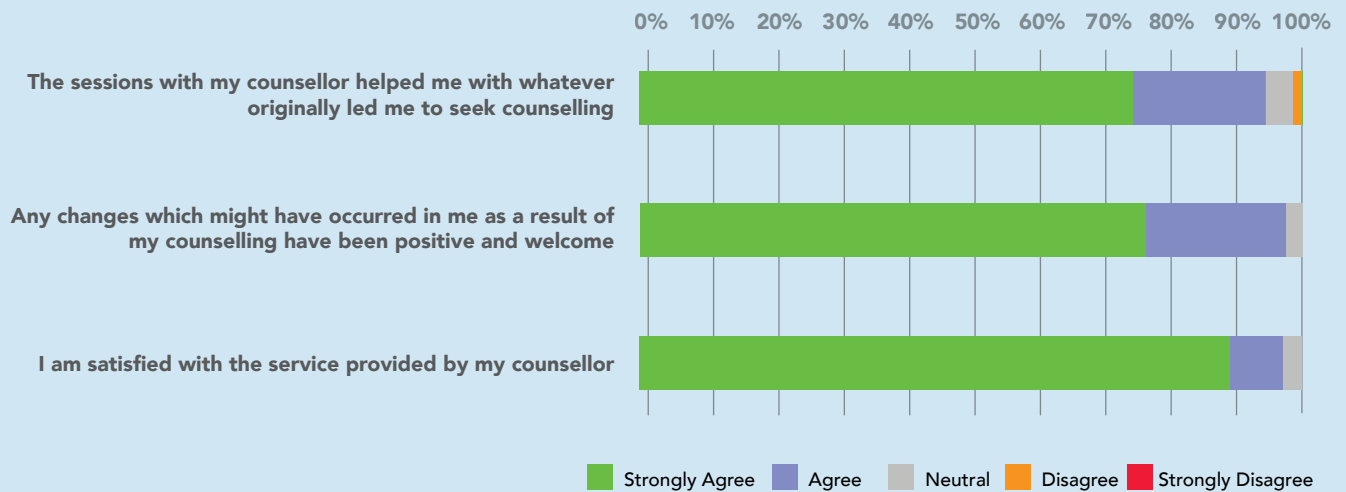


When counselling is finished, all family carers are invited to provide feedback on their experience with the service. In the questionnaire, they are asked to rate their working relationship with their counsellor, the outcome of working with their counsellor and their satisfaction with the counselling service. In 2024, we received feedback from 148 family carers who had completed their counselling.

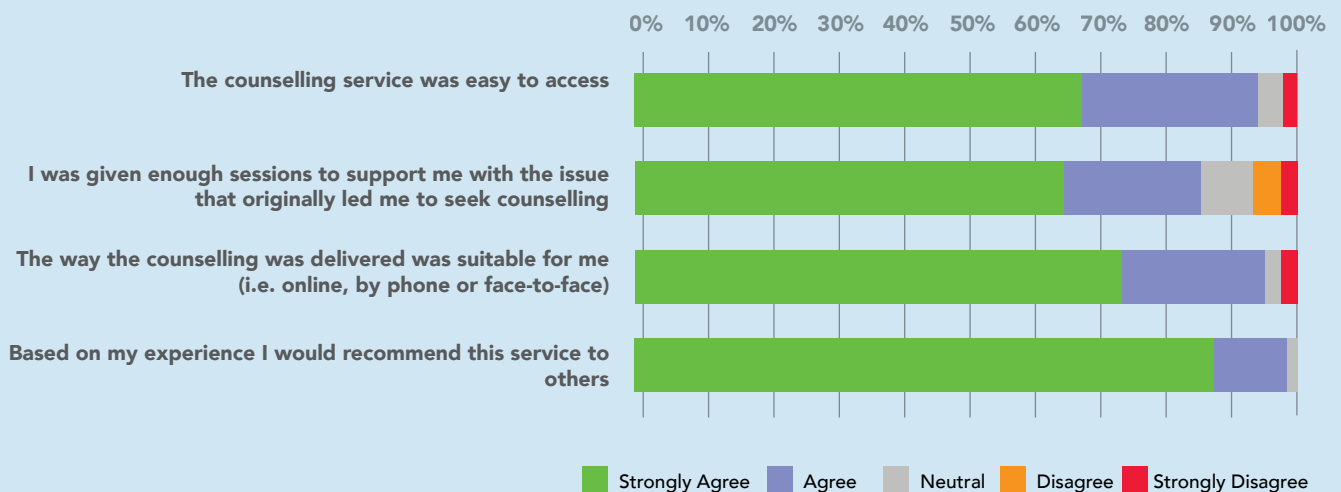
### WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR COUNSELLOR



## 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 2024.

*"My counsellor was astute, observant, tuned in, kind and caring, a great listener giving me great direction when needed. She had a huge impact on my recovery for which I am very grateful."*

*"I had experienced counselling in the past but nothing to the level of what [my counsellor] provided me with. Lifting blocks and positive changes that will stay with me for a better future. [My counsellor] is excellent at what she does. I have been very lucky to be assigned to her and I am very grateful to FCI. It helped me grieving, recovering from serious illness and most importantly improved my relationship with my [cared-for person] and also reconnect with family and friends."*



"Counselling with [my counsellor] was the most positive experience I've experienced in my life. She helped guide me through some very tough challenges with empathy professionalism confidence and trust. [My counsellor] always had our sessions well planned and relevant with her wise knowledge and experience with the areas that I struggle with. It was like I found someone who truly understood and helped me feel better about myself.

She made me see how to feel grounded secure and heard. Our time together has provided me with tools to cope, notes on how to get further help for the situation I'm in. Quite frankly I will carry our sessions on into the world and my life and greatly appreciate the opportunity carers Ireland provided to help me cope with life demands. Thank you."

"I generally feel calmer, less anxious and more able to cope; these are things I initially came looking for. More than this though, I have a developing sense of wonderment, new ideas and a balancing of a new me. This was not what I expected but I'm sensing it's what I actually needed. Thank you."

"Thank you very much to Family Carers Ireland for the counselling service. When I got in touch with you, I was in crisis, but through the guidance and support and understanding of my counsellor, I have been able to work through the issues which were tormenting me. It really was so appreciated".

"[My counsellor] was a fantastic help to me. I initially came to the FCI for counselling regarding a particular issue, [my counsellor] helped me work through that and peel back other layers that were contributing to that issue and others. She offered a wider perspective and helped me to see things that I hadn't before. At the same time, she identified what I needed, how I saw things and what my sticking points were and worked within those confines to help me see that wider perspective. She was very supportive, personable and capable throughout my sessions and I can't thank her and FCI enough. I wouldn't be the mother I am today without this support, nor anywhere near the mother and woman I know I can become now. Thank you very much."

"I generally feel calmer, less anxious and more able to cope; these are things I initially came looking for. More than this though, I have a developing sense of wonderment, new ideas and a balancing of a new me. This was not what I expected but I'm sensing it's what I actually needed. Thank you."

"[My counsellor] was just amazing. I immediately felt that she 'got ' me. Her approach was so down to earth that I felt I knew her all my life, making it very easy for me to open up about my issues. I'd highly recommend [my counsellor] to anyone looking for non judgmental, extremely helpful counselling."

## EMERGENCY RESPITE

*"I am so grateful to the Information Officer for the way she listened to what I needed so carefully. She then proceeded to offer your emergency respite service. When I agreed, she put emergency respite in place for me so I could attend a medical appointment for myself. I was so stressed out worrying about my own health and who was going to care for my wife if anything happened to me. This brief intervention provided me with an opportunity to have a scan, the results of which gave me peace of mind afterwards knowing my own health was going to be ok. It was the perfect solution in perfect timing for me and I am very grateful as I do not have family in this country who could step in".*

**Family carer who received emergency respite from FCI**

In 2024, the National Emergency Respite Scheme offered much-needed support to family carers who found themselves in an emergency or crisis situation with little or no support/back-up. 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, 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.

In 2024, 393 referrals were received and 257 cases were facilitated, an increase from 179 in 2023. Of the cases facilitated, 160 were as a direct result of carer burnout. Allowing the carer time to recharge physically and emotionally can prevent carer burnout from escalating and provide an opportunity to explore support options for the future to prevent burnout from reoccurring.

Respite care hours vary for each case and are based on need. Suitable emergency respite is delivered in a timely manner, responding safely and creatively to the emergency presenting with the needs of both the family carer and the person who needs support always at the centre.

Offering the option of both in-home respite and residential respite allows for a tailored approach to care. If a care recipient requires 24/7 care and emergency

respite is required, often appropriate residential respite is the best choice as nursing homes can provide round-the-clock care for those with complex health conditions or individuals requiring constant supervision.

When the care recipient does not have such complex needs and only short periods of care are required, for example the carer needs to attend a medical appointment or the carer requires respite in the form of block hours, home support respite is most often the preferred option as it allows the care recipient to stay at home in a familiar environment.

The scheme has also been a vital support for those caring for children with additional needs, with 32 cases of respite for such children facilitated in 2024. Family carers who care for children with additional needs often face significant challenges when they themselves fall ill or require medical treatment, with some saying that they are unable to attend crucial appointments due to lack of support for their child's care.

*"My PHN saw I was at breaking point and referred my case to Family Carers Ireland, who came on board immediately. The support I got was tremendously appreciated and gave me the opportunity to recharge my batteries and recover."*

**Family carer supported by the National Emergency Respite Scheme**

## EMERGENCY CARD SCHEME

*"It has been very reassuring knowing the emergency service is available. Thank you very much."*

### Family carer signed up to the Emergency Card Scheme

FCI's Emergency Card Scheme was launched on 31 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 2024, 79 new people joined the scheme while 403 existing members had their plans reviewed, bringing the total membership to 482.





# ENHANCE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CARING IN THE HOME

## HOME SUPPORT SERVICES

For over 30 years, FCI has provided high-quality home care services. Our enduring commitment to a person-centred approach underscores our understanding of the delicate balance between the needs of the individual receiving care and the often-unseen burdens carried by family carers. FCI's holistic approach to service delivery goes beyond simply providing care; we actively foster collaboration with other agencies to ensure clients and their families are fully informed about and can access all relevant supports available, creating a comprehensive network of care.

FCI's direct involvement in delivering contracted home care provides invaluable practical insights that fuel our advocacy efforts. This frontline experience also allows us to connect with countless family carers, many of whom remain unaware of the broader range of supports available to them beyond basic home support services. Any surplus generated from home care services is directly reinvested to fund other vital programs and supports for family carers, ensuring that resources are channelled where they are most needed.

The scale of FCI's home support impact is significant. We provide support to over 1,000 clients every week, translating to over 200,000 home visits annually. This extensive network of care is delivered by hundreds of trained Home Care Workers strategically located throughout the country. As an approved provider of home support, FCI works in close partnership with the HSE, the family, and the individual receiving care to develop and continuously monitor robust, individualized home care plans which are regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure they continue to meet evolving needs.

*200,000 Home Visits Annually to 1,000 Clients*

A dedicated and professional management team provides essential support to the frontline care workers, and the entire service is underpinned by a best-practice-based quality management system. This system prioritizes client and staff safety above all else, while also ensuring strict adherence to all regulatory requirements.

## DEDICATION TO QUALITY HOME CARE

FCI's commitment to providing exceptional home care is evident in our multifaceted approach:

- Qualified and Experienced Home Care Workers:** FCI employs Home Care Workers who possess a minimum of one year of paid experience in the home care industry. Furthermore, these dedicated individuals are actively supported in pursuing a major award in healthcare, demonstrating our commitment to professional development and enhancing their skills.
- Rigorous Vetting Procedures:** FCI prioritizes safety and security by conducting thorough Garda vetting for all prospective Home Care Workers. This comprehensive screening process provides peace of mind for both clients and their families.
- Mandatory Training and Safeguarding:** All FCI staff members are required to complete mandatory training in Children First and Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults. This ensures that staff are equipped to recognize and respond appropriately to any potential safeguarding concerns.
- Ongoing Professional Development:** FCI fosters a culture of continuous learning by holding regular team meetings. These meetings provide a valuable forum for staff to receive ongoing training, stay updated on organisational policy developments, and share information and best practices with their colleagues.
- Regular Monitoring and Feedback:** FCI employs a robust system of regular monitoring calls, home reviews, and client satisfaction surveys. This feedback loop allows us to continuously assess the quality of care provided and make necessary adjustments to care plans to optimize client well-being.
- Continuity of Care as a Cornerstone:** FCI recognizes the importance of building strong relationships between clients and their Home Care Workers. We prioritise continuity of care by striving to ensure that the same Home Care Worker is assigned to a client on an ongoing basis, whenever

possible. This consistency fosters trust and allows for a deeper understanding of individual needs.

## CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

*"The quality of care my dad receives from FCI is excellent. As a family, we are able to switch off when in the safe hands of FCI's carer's Majella and Michelle. Rosaleen in the office is compassionate and understanding and accommodating. I had only to contact head office once and again the person on the phone was very kind and professional. We have only positive things to say about FCI and feel that the service provided is so good because of the carers employed."*

**FCI Service User, CHO 2**

Our commitment to quality care is reflected in our 2024 Client Satisfaction Survey which attracted hugely positive feedback. A total of 400 responses were received from a total of 800 surveys mailed to service users. The response rate of 50% was a 1% increase from the 2023 survey. Key findings included:

- 92% were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with the quality of care and support provided by their Home Care Worker.
- 89% of respondents were very likely or likely to

recommend FCI's home support service to a family member, relative, friend or neighbour.

- 86% were extremely satisfied that their Home Care Worker arrives on time.
- 93% were extremely satisfied or satisfied that their Home Care Worker stays for the time outlined in their care plan, to ensure essential care requirements are met.
- 84% answered "Yes" when asked if they are satisfied with the information in the FCI home care folder.
- 92% stated "Yes" when asked if they know who to contact in their FCI centre should service queries arise.
- 83% were extremely satisfied or satisfied that their phone calls and emails to FCI office staff are answered promptly.

Additional questions were included in the second part of the survey in 2024 focusing on the amount and type of care that service users need which varies considerably - from needing a few hours support each week with shopping, collecting medication and attendance at medical appointments to round-the-clock and personal care. FCI is keen to understand if the current formal HSE home support are meeting the needs of our service users. Findings from this part of the survey included:

- 50% of respondents currently receive 1-5 hrs while 4% of respondents receive 16-20 hours.
- 86% of respondents answered "Yes" when asked if they were successful in receiving more hours from the HSE.
- 49% of respondents answered "Yes" when asked if they receive enough Home Support hours for their specific home care situation while 20% of respondents answered "No" they were unsuccessful in receiving more hours from the HSE.

Areas of focus for improvement which were collated from the suggestions received included:

- Requests for additional hours.
- Additional overnight care.
- Home Care Workers to escort service users to medical appointments and shopping trips.



A total of 120 compliments were received from respondents to the survey. Below is some of the feedback received from service users.

*"We are very satisfied with his carer. She is very kind to Peter - she also sits and talks to him as he can be very lonely."*

Service User, CHO 1

*"Alison, your care is a blessing to our family. She is sincere, kind, caring and thoughtful. Alison cares for Martin like it were her own family member. She is almost part of our family at this stage. Thank you for such a fantastic service."*

Service User, CHO 6

*"My carer is exceptional in her care and concern each time she visits me. Together with this, she makes me laugh - very important in overall caring. Thank you to Attracta and office staff for their professionalism."*

Service User, CHO 2

*"We would be lost without the hours we have. It's invaluable and the carers are backbone of the "staying at home" vulnerable people. They are without doubt a huge part of enabling people the dignity of remaining in their homes for as possible."*

Service User, CHO 8

*"Breda is a superb carer and an excellent brand ambassador for FCI. She is calm, gracious, discreet and extremely efficient and has a deep understanding of dementia care. I would award her carer of the year if such an accolade existed!"*

Service User, CHO 3

*"We couldn't have a better family carer than Pat. He is super. From washing up to taking in turf or sweeping the floor or giving a shower, an absolute outstanding caring gentleman."*

Service User, CHO 8



## THE STRUGGLE FOR A STATUTORY HOME SUPPORT SCHEME

The journey towards a Statutory Home Support Scheme in Ireland has been marked by significant delays and unmet promises. The Government first committed to introducing such a scheme in January 2017, with the subsequent Sláintecare Implementation Strategy, published in 2018, targeting its introduction by 2021. Regrettably, this crucial scheme has yet to be realised. While the Department of Health continues its efforts to develop regulations, explore funding options, reform the service delivery model, pilot the interRAI assessment tool, and address chronic staff shortages within the care sector, the scheme was not introduced during the term of the previous Government.

The general scheme finally received approval and was published in May 2024. Pre-legislative scrutiny of the legislative framework commenced in June 2024 and was completed by October 2024. A legal drafter was assigned in September 2024 and, at the time of writing, is still engaged in working through the heads of bill while draft regulations, which have been amended following public consultation and stakeholder engagement, still need to undergo a final legal drafting process.

The 2024 General Election brought further delays to the already protracted timeline for the introduction of the regulations and legislation. Assuming no policy changes under the new Government, the Department of Health reform group's plan for 2025 is to bring forward primary legislation establishing the licensing and registration system for all providers of home support in Ireland. It is anticipated that this will be followed by a transition period of up to two years. Draft HIQA quality standards were released for another round of public consultation in the fourth quarter of 2024, with the deadline for submissions closing in December.

The ongoing failure to deliver the long-awaited statutory scheme has a profound impact on family carers. A well-resourced scheme would provide individuals with the choice to receive care more appropriately in their own homes and communities. It would also rectify the current legislative anomaly where individuals have an entitlement to nursing home support under the provisions of Fair Deal, but no equivalent entitlement to be cared for at home.

This situation unfolds against a backdrop of increasing waiting lists within the sector. More people are going without the care they need and deserve, and more family carers are left without the vital respite support in the home that they desperately require. The missed opportunity to introduce tangible reform of the home support commissioning model with the introduction of the new HSE authorisation scheme for the provision of home support, and the one-year review of the scheme in 2024, was particularly disappointing. A scheme that had the potential to significantly improve the terms and conditions for home care workers and boost recruitment and retention in the sector has, in many cases, achieved the opposite due to insufficient funding for travel time and expenses for workers.



# ADVOCATE FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN POLICY AND PRACTICE TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF FAMILY CARERS

## POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In addition to our normal calendar of policy and public affairs events, 2024 saw the Communications and Policy Team campaigning on the Referendums on Family and Care in March, the local and European elections in June and the general election in November. Through these campaigns and our other policy and public affairs efforts, FCI aims to create a society in which family carers are better recognised, valued and supported with access to the services and resources they need, when, where and how they are needed.

### POLICY KEY POINTS

- The introduction of a new Long-Term Carers Contributions Scheme on 1 January giving full-time carers caring 20+ years access to the State Pension (Contributory).
- Continued implementation of the Family Carer Register by the Department of Social Protection allowing full-time carers to register their caring role via MyWelfare.ie.
- The right to request flexible working for parents and carers legislated for under the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Act 2023 came into effect on 7 March 2024.<sup>1</sup>
- Referendums on Family and Care which took place on 8 March.
- Seven in-person and two virtual Listening to Family Carers events hosted by FCI took place during April and May.
- Annual Carers' Forum hosted by the Department of Social Protection on 22 May.
- Local and European Elections on 7 June.
- Launch of FCI's Pre-Budget Submission 'A New Social Contract for Care' on 27 June.
- Ratification of the UNCRPD Optional Protocol effective from 30 November.

- Establishment of an Interdepartmental Working Group with the Department of Social Protection and the Department of Health to review the system of means-testing carer payments.
- Announcement of an increase in the income disregard for Carer's Allowance to €1,250 (couple) and €625 (single carers) effective from July 2025.
- Announcement that the Carer's Support Grant will increase to €2,000 in 2025.
- Carer's Allowance made an eligible payment for the Fuel Allowance scheme from January 2025.
- Launch of FCI's general election manifesto in October.
- Growth of the Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group on Family Carers involving 26 TDs and Senators who champion carer issues across Government.

## REFERENDUMS ON FAMILY AND CARE

On 8 March 2024, Irish citizens voted in two referendums. The first referendum concerned expanding the concept of Family in the Constitution to include non-married families. The second referendum proposed to delete an existing part of the Constitution to remove the reference to women's role in the home and insert new text providing recognition for the care provided by family members to each other (Art 42B).

As the national charity supporting family carers, FCI joined a coalition of organisations who campaigned for a Yes/Yes vote. The coalition believed that a Yes vote in both referendums would give constitutional recognition to the diversity of family types, create an important constitutional affirmation of the essential good that care work provides to society and place an onus on the State and future governments to do more to support carers leading to improved access to services, financial support, and recognition of carers' rights.

FCI respects the outcome of the referendums which

<sup>1</sup> The right to 5 days unpaid leave for medical care purposes under the Work Life Balance Act commenced in 2023.



were both overwhelmingly defeated. We welcome the national conversation regarding care and disability that the referendums created and that they have brought into focus the challenges and hardships faced by family carers and those in need of care. FCI wants to continue that conversation as we work to achieve the recognition, resources and respect family carers deserve.

## LISTENING TO FAMILY CARERS REGIONAL FORUMS

During April and May, FCI hosted seven in-person Listening to Family Carers events in Dublin, Tullamore, Galway, Monaghan, Cork, Kilkenny and Limerick. Two additional online forums were hosted on May 8th and 9th to facilitate carers who could not attend in person. The programme for the forums focused on (i) reflections on the Referendums on Family and Care and (ii) preparing for the local, European and general elections. The feedback received regarding FCI's position on the referendum was constructive and, in most forums, was relatively positive. Some carers understandably expressed concern about our campaigning for a Yes vote, however the explanation and discussion that followed was constructive. All feedback received during the forums regarding the local and European election priorities were incorporated into FCI's respective manifestos.

## ANNUAL CARERS' FORUM

On 22 May, family carers and FCI staff attended the Department of Social Protection's Annual Carers' Forum in Pearse Street, Dublin. The forum is a long-standing commitment made by Government in the policy document 'Towards 2016' to provide an opportunity for family carers to discuss the issues impacting their lives and to explore progressive solutions as to how these issues could be addressed by Government departments.

Minister for Social Protection Heather Humphreys and representatives from a number of Government departments were in attendance, including officials from Social Protection, Housing, Health, Children and Disability, Transport, Further and Higher Education, along with other stakeholders including the HSE, National Transport Authority and Tusla.

During the forum, FCI delivered a presentation on 'Building a Community of Caring Employers', which set out the efforts being made by the organisation to better support working carers.



Pictured at the Annual Carers' Forum are Teresa Leonard; Deputy Secretary General, Department of Social Protection; Zoe Hughes, Senior Research and Policy Officer, Care Alliance Ireland; Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, FCI; Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Social Protection; Liam O'Sullivan, CEO, Care Alliance Ireland; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI.



BUDGET 2025



*Pictured at the launch of FCI’s pre-budget submission are Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, FCI; Damien Douglas, family carer; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI.*

We launched our pre-budget submission for Budget 2025 on 27 June in Buswells Hotel, Dublin calling for a bold and ambitious approach from the Government to address long-standing issues affecting family carers across the country. The submission, titled ‘A New Social Contract for Care’, outlined eight pillars of change essential to support and recognise the invaluable contributions of family carers:

- 1. Abolition of the Carer’s Allowance means-test
- 2. A fair and adequate income
- 3. A right to respite
- 4. Fully fund the Carer Guarantee
- 5. Deliver the Statutory Home Support Scheme
- 6. Prioritise support for children with additional needs
- 7. Deliver housing, transport, and climate justice
- 8. Support carers in employment.

As part of our pre-budget campaign, Community Support Managers and family carers met with

Government TDs locally to seek their support in progressing the priorities outlined in our submission. In addition, FCI attended the Department of Social Protection’s annual Pre-Budget Forum in Dublin Castle on 11 July, which was hosted by Minister Humphreys; the first budget stakeholder event hosted by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on 18 July and a consultation forum held by Minister of State for Special Education Hildegarde Naughton that took place on 25 July to inform future special education policy as well as Budget 2025. A copy of FCI’s pre-budget submission was sent to all members of the Oireachtas.

Budget 2025: Summary of Key Announcements

- Increase in Carer’s Allowance income disregard from €450 to €625 for a single person and from €900 to €1,250 per week for a couple (July 2025).
- Increase in the Carer’s Support Grant from €1,850 to €2,000.
- Carer’s Benefit extended to include self-employed workers.
- €12 increase in all weekly social welfare payments.
- Double week cost-of-living bonus to pensioners, carers, lone parents, people on disability payment and long-term jobseeker recipient (October 2024).
- Once off payments of €400 for recipients of Carer’s Support Grant, Disability Allowance, Blind Pension, Invalidity Pension and Domiciliary Care Allowance (November 2024).
- Carer’s Allowance made a qualifying payment for Fuel Allowance and the disregard for Fuel Allowance means increased for people aged 66+ to €524 (single person) and €1,048 (couple).
- €150 increase in Home Carer Tax Credit, €300 increase in Incapacitated Child Tax Credit and €60 increase in Dependent Relative Tax Credit.
- 768 additional special education teachers and 1,600 extra special needs assistants (SNAs).

Impact of Budget 2025 announcements on the Carer’s Allowance means test:

Ann works full-time and earns €1,400 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 2021:	Does not qualify for Carer’s Allowance.
Means-test 2023:	Does not qualify for Carer’s Allowance.
Means-test 2024:	Qualifies for €43.50 per week.
Means-test 2025:	Qualifies for full-rate Carer’s Allowance of €260 per week.

## LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

FCI launched two separate election manifestos in advance of the Local and European Elections that took place on 7 June. Our local election manifesto 'Building Caring Communities' called on local election candidates to make 10 pledges to better support family carers by improving housing, transport, disabled facilities and the accessibility of public spaces and the built environment.

Our European election manifesto 'Building a Caring Europe' called on candidates running in the European election to pledge that if elected to the European Parliament, they would work to implement the proposals contained in the EU Care Strategy and join the EU Champions for Carers Group, an active, dynamic and forward-looking group of MEPs from across member states who support the creation of a more carer-friendly Europe.

The manifestos were sent to all election candidates, political parties and directors of elections and shared with family carers through our social media and support network. In addition, FCI circulated a canvas card and encouraged family carers to leave copies close to their front door or download a copy to their phone so they could raise these important issues when candidates canvassed their area.

After the election, FCI contacted each of the 949 newly elected local councillors and 14 MEPs to initiate ongoing engagement with regard to advancing the pledges set out in both manifestos. Even in the early stages of their tenure as councillors and MEPs, much has been achieved, with progress made in relation to exemptions for carers with regard to local authority rents, commitments to create more Changing Places facilities for people with disabilities and a commitment from four MEPs to champion carer rights in Europe by joining the EU Champions for Carers Group.



## GENERAL ELECTION 2024

The general election on 29 November provided an important opportunity to shine a light on the challenges faced by family carers and to make sure carer issues were foremost in the minds of all candidates and political parties, ultimately ensuring carers are a priority for the next government and feature prominently in the new programme for government.

In the weeks ahead of the election, FCI launched a General Election 2024 webpage which stored all our election resources. FCI's election manifesto 'A New Social Contract for Care: 10 Pledges for Family Carers' set out the commitments we called on each political party and candidate to deliver if they are elected to the next Dáil. If delivered, these pledges will help to achieve a new social contract for care by creating a society where family carers are properly recognised, compensated fairly and have timely access to the services they need when they are needed.

Our Carer Canvas Card 'Make Carers Count in General Election 2024' provided a summary of FCI's election manifesto and reasons why carers must count in the election. We encouraged carers and their families to download the card to their phone so they had easy access to it when meeting candidates on the election trail.

FCI hosted a General Election 2024 Hustings: Political Party Priorities for Family Carers on 5 November in the Ashling Hotel, Dublin. This in-person event was live-streamed to those unable to attend and featured a presentation on the 10 pledges contained in our manifesto, a panel of political representatives who spoke briefly about their party's priorities for family carers and an open floor questions and answers session where family carers highlighted the issues that are important to them with politicians. In addition, our Community Support Managers hosted local events where candidates across all constituencies were invited to visit their local Carer Support Centre or another local venue to meet with family carers and discuss the pledges set out in our election manifesto.

In order to make it easier to understand the commitments made by each party, we provided a summary on our website of all the political party manifestos and their specific commitments for family carers. We also published a political party commitment card showing that the leaders of each of the nine main political parties had fully endorsed the 10 pledges included in our manifesto.

Finally, and importantly, we had the voice of family carers who in a number of personalised videos described what they expect from Ireland's next government.

# 10 Pledges for Family Carers: Political Party Commitment Card

10 Pledges for Family Carers		FG FINE GAIL	FF FIANNA FÁIL	GP GREEN PARTY	SF SHANACHY	SD Social Democrats	Lab Labour	PBP PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT	Ind Ire Independent	Aontú
1	Establish a new non-means-tested Family Carer Payment to replace Carer's Allowance.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Implement a Respite Strategy guaranteeing family carers access to appropriate and regular respite.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Abolish waiting lists for Assessments of Need and give children a right to the interventions identified in the assessment report.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Deliver a plan to realise every child's constitutional right to an education in a place and manner appropriate to their needs.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Support family carers to enter or remain in employment or education if/when they can.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Continue to develop the supports and services available to family carers throughout the country (the 'Carer Guarantee').	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Reform the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Scheme and introduce a Transport Support Scheme committed to in 2013.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Establish a statutory home support scheme that delivers high-quality and affordable home care.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Facilitate independent living for disabled people with appropriate choice and control over where, how and with whom they live.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Guarantee sustainable services for family carers by funding voluntary organisations delivering Service Level Agreements on behalf of Government on a full cost recovery basis.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Signed by:		Simon Harris	Michelle Martin	Roderic O'Donovan	Mary Lou McDonald	Holly Cairns	Ivana Bacik	Richard Boyd Barrett	Michael Collins	Peadar Kirby

After the election, FCI's focus was fixed on the formation of the next government and making sure that ambitious and firm commitments for family carers make their way into the new programme for government. During the government formation talks in December, FCI reached out to each party leader and their negotiating teams re-affirming their party's commitment to the 10 pledges and seeking their confirmation that these will be reflected in any programme agreed by potential coalition partners.

have spent time caring for an incapacitated loved one will now be able to qualify.

FCI encourages 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 includes the years they have spent providing full-time care.

## LONG-TERM CARERS CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEME

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 the new Long-Term Carers Contributions Scheme in January 2024 was a milestone moment in pension policy, giving carers who have cared for more than 20 years access to the State Pension (Contributory). 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





**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 age 66 in 2025 having cared for 28 years.

## Calculation for State Pension Contributory applying Long-Term Carers Contributions:

8 years PRSI contributions + 28 years of caring = 36 years

36 divided by 40 = .9 (90%).

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

## CARERAID PROJECT 2024

Following the commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 in April 2023, Community Law & Mediation (CLM) and FCI came together to deliver free legal advice clinics and training for family carers specifically related to the act. The project, referred to as CarerAid, was delivered by Aoife Doonan BL and was funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC).

CarerAid provided 37 free legal advice clinics to family carers during 2024. These were delivered via Zoom or by phone, depending on the preference of the carer. In addition to the monthly clinics, the project also included three training sessions for family carers and FCI staff designed to provide an overview of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 in practice. The sessions were delivered on 26 March, 18 September and 21 November 2024. The November session was recorded giving carers and staff the opportunity to rewatch the session. The CarerAid End of Project Report 2024 is available on our website.

## CARER LEGAL ADVICE CLINICS

In addition to the CarerAid Project, FCI continued to deliver free legal advice clinics for family carers. The project, which is also run in collaboration with CLM, gives family carers access to a solicitor to discuss legal issues relating to employment, wills, social welfare, housing, and family and child law. A total of 38 legal advice clinics were provided to family carers during 2024.

## CARER GUARANTEE

In 2019, FCI proposed a Carer Guarantee to address the postcode lottery in carer supports across Ireland. The commitment to deliver the Carer Guarantee was subsequently included in the 2020 programme for government. Despite assurances from the Taoiseach in June 2024 that the Carer Guarantee would be fully funded<sup>2</sup>, Budget 2025 provided funding of just €600,000, far short of the additional €2.7m needed to ensure the delivery of all the commitments contained in the original proposal.

FCI's general election manifesto sought a commitment from all political parties that if they formed part of the next government, they would commit the additional €2.7m in recurring annual funding required to deliver the guarantee and that the funding would be inflation-indexed. We are pleased to confirm that the leaders of all political parties endorsed this commitment.

## OIREACHTAS INTEREST GROUP AND COMMITTEE APPEARANCES

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 and independents, who have an interest in advancing carer policy and improving the lives of family carers. During 2024, the group continued to support the policy efforts of FCI and host briefing events. With the dissolution of the Dáil on 8 November, the group has come to a natural end. We extend our thanks to the members for their incredible support and contribution to advancing carer policy and for providing a voice for family carers within the Oireachtas. In particular, we thank both co-chairs Deputy Marian Harkin and Deputy Pauline Tully.

FCI will re-establish the group in 2025

During 2024, FCI was invited to appear before two Oireachtas committees. At the Oireachtas Committee on Health on 7 February, representatives of FCI and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland discussed the health needs of people with dementia and the supports available. FCI's contribution focused on the training needs of dementia carers, financial supports, Carer Needs Assessments, the implementation of Sláintecare and the Carer Guarantee.

While on 29 May, FCI and family carer Moira Skelly appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection to discuss the means-testing of Carer's Allowance. In our contributions, we acknowledged the progress made by Minister Humphreys and the Department of Social Protection in increasing the income and capital disregards, and the new Long-Term Carers Contributions Scheme. However, we emphasised

<sup>2</sup> Dáil Éireann Debate, 18 June 2024. [https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2024-06-18/4/#spk\\_69](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2024-06-18/4/#spk_69)

the need for reform of the Carer's Allowance scheme, the impact that the means test has on family carers and FCI's proposal for a new family carer payment.

## POLICY SUBMISSIONS AND CARE-RELATED DÁIL MOTIONS

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 2024:

- Submission to the Department of Social Protection on the Reform of Disability Payments
- Submission to the Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection and the Islands on Budget 2025
- Submission to the Department Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on the successor strategy to the National Strategy for Women and Girls
- Submission to the Commission on Care
- Joint submission from Home Care Coalition to HIQA on Draft National Standard for Home Support Services
- Submission to the Minister for Special Education on family carers' views on special education in Ireland.



### Care-related motions brought before the Dáil during 2024:

- Supporting People with Disabilities and Carers  
<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-12-07/speech/292/>
- Support for Carers  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1364?lang=en>
- Abolition of Carer's Allowance Means Test  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1645?lang=en>
- Carer's Allowance Means Test  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1563?lang=en>
- Carers  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1499?lang=en>
- Disability Services  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1610?lang=en>
- Disability and Special Needs Provision  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1557?lang=en>
- Disability Justice  
<https://dailbusiness.oir.ie/more/motions/1415?lang=en>

# INCREASE AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNITION OF FAMILY CARERS

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.

## FAMILY CARERS IN THE MEDIA

In early 2024, the Referendums on Family and Care ignited a vital national conversation about care and disability issues with those both for and against the proposed changes to the constitution featuring prominently across the media. The debate in the lead up and the aftermath of the care referendum being defeated brought to light the challenges faced by family carers and those receiving care and highlighted the need for a more ambitious, progressive, and rights-based care system. It was a wake-up call that the State cannot be complacent in its obligation to support the hundreds of thousands of family carers who provide care.

This conversation continued throughout the year, with care becoming a key focus of the General Election campaign, particularly the means-testing of Carer's Allowance.

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

## JANUARY

Conor Byrne from Co. Wicklow, who has helped to care for his mum Ann since she suffered a stroke when was just eight years old, spoke to national media including RTÉ Radio 1 and the Irish Independent about his experience of juggling exams and studies while caring for a loved one. It followed the publication of a report by the ESRI highlighting the impact of caregiving on educational outcomes for young people and the need for more supports.

Speaking to Morning Ireland, Conor, who is a former Netwatch Leinster Young Carer of the Year, said it is very hard to strike a balance:

"A lot of people aren't gifted with the fortune of having support services around them and I know from experience how hard and overwhelming it is to focus on academic studies and try and care for a loved one."

## FEBRUARY



*Pictured at the launch of the 'YesYes' platform is Sinead Tighe, family carer.*

The launch of the 'YesYes' referendum campaign by a coalition of civil society organisations (including FCI) featured heavily across national broadcast and print media. Speaking to TheJournal.ie, Sinead Tighe from Co. Dublin, who cares for her son Daniel who has Sotos Syndrome, explained why she was advocating for the constitution to recognise family carers: "It would give us a voice to be heard and allow us to share our lived experience – as only this will help implement change."



## MARCH



*Lynsey O'Donovan and her son Jack appearing on RTÉ's Prime Time.*

Lynsey O'Donovan from Co. Dublin, who cares for her son Jack who has cerebral palsy, epilepsy, is PEG-fed, non-verbal and a wheelchair user, featured on a Prime Time special which aired on RTÉ 1 in the days leading up to the referendums.

Lynsey said that she hoped a yes vote on the care amendment would lead to improvements in support:

"We hope that not only Government but society recognises us for all the work that we do... It's not praise we're looking for; it's active support from Government and society."

## APRIL

Ahead of the Regional Group tabling a motion in the Dáil calling for the abolition of the means test for Carer's Allowance, FCI's Head of Communications and Policy



*Pictured at Leinster House are Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, FCI; Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI; Tracy Carroll, family carer; Willow Carroll; Deputy Peter Fitzpatrick; Deputy Seán Canney; Deputy Verona Murphy and Deputy Denis Naughten.*

Catherine Cox spoke to Newstalk about her hopes that Government would support the measure:

"We really welcome this call to abolish the means test for family carers and we are calling on the Minister to support the motion... We really do believe she will support this because she has brought in many positive changes over the last three years and we hope that she will continue to do that. We hope to see real change in the upcoming budget and by 2027, we want to see the means test for Carer's Allowance abolished."

The motion ultimately passed after it went unopposed by Government.

## MAY

A call by the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection to abolish the Carer's Allowance means test was the focus of a panel discussion on The Late Debate on RTÉ Radio 1. It followed a sitting of the committee where stakeholders, including FCI, were invited to discuss the impact of the means test.

Speaking on The Late Debate, People Before Profit TD Richard Boyd-Barrett said that abolishing the means test made economic sense:

"Essentially you're trapping carers in poverty and insisting they stay poor when they're doing society and vulnerable people such an enormous service. So there's absolutely no justification for this and potentially you are putting women particularly, or carers, in a very, very vulnerable position. So we need to get it rid of it [the means test] immediately. It is money well spent. In fact, ultimately, it's about saving society."



## JUNE



*Family carer Moira Skelly speaking to Virgin Media News.*

The publication of FCI's State of Caring 2024 report was covered extensively by national print, broadcast and online media including RTÉ, the Irish Independent, Irish Daily Mail, Virgin Media and TheJournal.ie, with a particular focus on the financial struggles reported by family carers surveyed as part of the research and the lack of respite.

Speaking to Virgin Media News at the launch of the report, family carer Moira Skelly from Co. Dublin, who alongside her husband Paul cares for their daughter Ciara who has epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism and global developmental delay, outlined the impact of providing 24/7 care over many years:

"Just moving her to change her pad, to shower her, to get her in and out of bed, in and out of the wheelchair, it's all physical - pulling, dragging, lifting. I've had surgery on my shoulder in which I've torn my tendons, I have a bulging disc in my back at the minute so it's obviously impacting our health now as we're aging, and our assessments haven't changed. We haven't been assessed in years. Although our needs are changing and Ciara's needs are changing, our respite remains at two to three days every couple of months."

On Morning Ireland, FCI's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox said the lack of respite for family carers was hugely concerning:

"72% of the carers who were surveyed have never received respite and that is a hugely shocking and distressful figure... Respite is crucial to recharge the batteries to maintain the health, the physical and mental health, of the family carer. Yet so many are not getting access and the problem is, respite is so inconsistent and fragmented, it's available in one county, one town, and not in the next so we have a complete postcode lottery of respite, of services in this country, for family carers."

## JULY

Business representative group IBEC published a feature on FCI's Caring Employers programme in its online business e-zine Engage. The article, which gave an overview of the programme, outlined the benefits to businesses of supporting those balancing work and care, featured quotes from FCI's Marketing Manager Sue O'Grady who said:

"We are really proud of the programme and where it is today. Launching this in 2019, we couldn't have dreamed of working with the companies who have signed up so far and we're embracing being able to reach so many family carers, bringing personalised, expert supports right to their desks."

## AUGUST

The reality of being a family carer was the topic of discussion on *Younified*, a podcast by Newstalk which seeks to provide a platform for the stories and perspectives of people from underrepresented and diverse communities around Ireland. Speaking to presenter Mamobo Ogoro, family carers Jane Johnstone from Co. Wexford and Tracy Carroll from Co. Meath shared insights into what an average day looks like when caring for children with additional needs and the constant battles that family carers face when trying to access basic supports and services. Tracy cares full-time for her daughter Willow who has a range of complex medical needs and her son Noah who has ADHD, while Jane cares for her two adult sons Evan and Daniel who are autistic.



*Pictured are Mamobo Ogoro, Younified presenter; Tracy Carroll, family carer, with her daughter Willow; and Jane Johnstone, family carer.*

## SEPTEMBER



*Pictured are Claire Byrne, RTÉ and Amanda Fox, family carer.*

Calls for the abolition of the Carer's Allowance means and action to address therapy waiting lists, two of the key pillars of FCI's pre-budget submission, featured prominently in pre-budget media coverage.

Speaking on Today with Claire Byrne on RTÉ Radio 1, Amanda Fox from Co. Dublin, who cares for her son Luke who is autistic and has an intellectual disability, spoke of how she was awarded a reduced rate of just €20 when she applied six years ago:

"You just feel undervalued, unworthy. It just really brings you down. I kind of just thought, I'm doing a harder job than I ever did... yet I'm not recognised, not seen as anything, not heard..."

## OCTOBER

FCI's reaction to the measures announced in Budget 2025 was carried across multiple media outlets including the Irish Examiner, with FCI's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox acknowledging the positive announcements:

"The increase in payments and expanded eligibility for Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, and the Fuel Allowance are positive steps forward. However, while lump sums and financial support increases are welcome, they still fall short of ensuring a fair and adequate income for those providing care at home.

## NOVEMBER

With the Netwatch Family Carer of the Year Awards taking place on the eve of the General Election, the Irish Times' coverage of the event focused on what family carers wanted from the next government.

Sarah Dooley from Co. Laois, who was named the national award recipient, called on whomever formed the next government "to provide more services with additional needs, speech and language, occupational therapy – none of it is available." Sarah cares for twins John and Patrick, who are autistic and non-verbal, and her eldest son Cathal who had been undergoing treatment for leukaemia.

Munster award recipient Joe O'Loughlin from Co. Limerick, who cares for his wife Donna, who has a traumatic brain injury, and their three children including Jacob (6) who is autistic, has ODD and ADHD, and Caleb (4) who faces multiple complex challenges including a brain injury, autism, epilepsy, scoliosis and oral dysphagia, said carers need to be treated a lot better by the next government. "A lot of promises are made before elections, but not a lot of them are kept. For my two boys I get €680 a month. That wouldn't cover a week of Caleb's therapy. Caleb has never had a public therapy session. Everything has been private because he has to wait two years. I had to borrow €35,000."

## DECEMBER

Following the announcement of FCI as Lidl Ireland's new charity partner, RSVP Magazine interviewed Fair City, Love/Hate and panto star Johnny Ward and TV chef, food blogger and author Gina Daly about their own experiences of caring for loved ones and why they were supporting the initiative.

Johnny, who moved back in with his mother after she fell ill in 2019 suffering a heart attack and a stroke, said it was a "no brainer to get involved straight away" and that he's "absolutely thrilled to be the ambassador of this very worthy cause and incredible and vital partnership".

Gina, who cares for her son Gene who was born with Down syndrome in 2021, also previously cared for her late father, saying that "as somebody who's been a carer for my dad before, I thought it would be nice to highlight it and shine a light on it".



# NETWATCH FAMILY CARER OF THE YEAR AWARDS



*Pictured from left to right are Mick Galwey, Netwatch Brand Ambassador; Maura Fahy, Netwatch Connacht Family Carer of the Year; Sarah Dooley, Netwatch National Family Carer of the Year 2024 (Leinster); Cathy Kelly, Netwatch Ulster Family Carer of the Year; Joe O'Loughlin, Netwatch Munster Family Carer of the Year; and Miriam O'Callaghan, Charity Ambassador and awards host.*

The Netwatch Family Carer of the Year Awards, which entered their 17th year in 2024, seek to honour all family carers while shining a light on the urgent need for greater recognition and support of those who go above and beyond in caring for their loved ones, often without support from the State.

We received hundreds of nominations from across the country as family and friends sought to pay tribute to family carers and young carers in their lives who go the extra mile every day in caring for their loved ones.

At a gala awards ceremony in the College Green Hotel in Dublin in November, Sarah Dooley, from Debbycot, Mountmellick, Co. Laois, was named the national Netwatch Family Carer of the Year for 2024. A mum of four boys, she has shown extraordinary strength and dedication in caring for her children, overcoming immense challenges to ensure they receive the love and support they need.

Sarah's youngest sons, twins John and Patrick (5), are autistic and non-verbal, while her son Cathal (7) has been undergoing treatment for leukaemia for the past three years. Sarah has fought tirelessly to secure school placements for John and Patrick and has put her career on hold to care full-time.

The awards also honoured regional finalists Joe O'Loughlin (Munster); Cathy Kelly (Ulster) and Maura Fahy (Connacht).

Joe, from Athea, Co. Limerick, cares for his wife Donna, who has a traumatic brain injury, and their three children

including Jacob (6) who is autistic, has ODD and ADHD, and Caleb (4) who faces multiple complex challenges including a brain injury, autism, epilepsy, scoliosis and oral dysphagia. Despite barely getting a few hours of sleep each night, Joe tirelessly supports his family including their baby girl Precious and is constantly on the road driving his loved ones to medical appointments and therapies across the country at hospitals such as Temple Street, Crumlin, Cork University, and Kerry General.

Cathy from Carndonagh, Co. Donegal is mum to four incredible children including Timothy (10) who has hydrocephalus and a profound learning disability and Lucy (14) who has severe cerebral palsy. Her older boys Lochan and Shay are both in college. Cathy is sole parent to her children following the tragic death five years ago of her beloved partner Kevin in a work-related accident. She is a wonderful mother who works tirelessly every day for all her children, but particularly in caring full-time for Timothy and Lucy who have complex needs.

Maura from Renmore, Co. Galway is mum to Ronan (26), Hannah (23) and Emma (21), and began caring for her parents Helena (90) and Paddy (94) 14 years ago, following her father's cancer diagnosis and subsequent leg amputation. Sadly, Paddy passed away in September. She continues to provide loving, full-time care for her mother and balances these intense responsibilities alongside caring for own family. She has navigated considerable personal sacrifices over the years but despite these challenges, she remains unwaveringly positive.



*Shannon Egan with her sister Alanna.*

The awards also highlighted the contribution of five remarkable young carers including Shannon Egan (16) from Athlone, Co. Westmeath who is the younger sister to Alanna who is 24 and has Koolen de Vries Syndrome. Their mum Laura describes Shannon as her “right hand woman”, adding that she is always there to help.



*Ellen Gannon with her mother Helen.*

Ellen Gannon (11) from Newcastle West, Co. Limerick helps her mother Helen care for her younger twin brothers Andrew and James (9) who are non-verbal and attend a special school. Helen describes her daughter as a patient, kind, caring and gentle soul who is adorable with her brothers.



*Sarah Conway with Mick Galwey and Miriam O'Callaghan.*

Sarah Conway (11) from Ballycroy, Co. Mayo helps care for her brother Mick (10) who is autistic, non-verbal and faces other health challenges. While battling leukaemia when she was younger, Sarah always put on a brave face while being a wonderful, caring, kind and thoughtful sister. She has the biggest heart and is a huge help to her parents.





Lucy Connor and her brother Hugh.

Lucy Connor (14) from Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan was nominated by her mum Ciara who describes her as the family's "little rock" who keeps everyone safe and brings such joy into their home. She helps care for her mum, her brother Hugh who is autistic and recently has been helping to support her dad due the onset of a long-term illness.



Senan Vaughan and his mother Marion

Senan Vaughan (12) from Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin helps to care for his sister Abby (10) who has a moderate intellectual disability, a chromosomal disorder, a club foot and is autistic and brother Eoghan (7) is autistic and non-speaking. Senan knows how to communicate with Abby, keeps her safe when they're out and about and is a huge advocate for her. He is also a huge support to Eoghan, helping him with daily tasks, comforting him and keeping an eye on him.

**A special thank you to our title sponsors Netwatch, whose partnership with FCI came to an end in 2024 after six incredible years. The support of all the team at Netwatch has been integral to the success and growth of the awards at county, regional and national levels.**

**Thank you also to our awards host and patron Miriam O'Callaghan who continues to give so generously of her time.**

## CARER DIARIES PODCAST

'Carer Diaries: conversations from the caring community' is a podcast series from FCI. Launched in October 2023, it features family carers and care experts and seeks 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.

Among the topics covered in 2024 were the challenges of caring while growing older, recognising the signs and symptoms of developmental delay and the sensitive

subject of carer harm which featured a family carer sharing her own lived experience of carer harm.

The podcast can be accessed on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie) or via Spotify.



# RESEARCH

During 2024, the research team at FCI continued to focus on generating and supporting research that 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.

Highlights of FCI's work in research across the year include the publication of our third national State of Caring survey, which was carried out between January and March. It captured the view and experiences of what life is like in Ireland in 2024 for 2,127 current family carers.

In November, we held our fourth annual research conference while throughout the year, we continued to work with our Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) panel whose members took part in a range of research projects on caring. This effort has gone hand-in-hand with our partnerships with a network of researchers, which has broadened the reach and enhanced the impact of our work, while continuing our commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships and to continually refining our research programme to support family carers and stakeholders more effectively.

## STATE OF CARING 2024

Launched in June 2024, this report sets out the findings of Ireland's third State of Caring survey. The survey was completed by 2,127 current family carers who shared their views and experiences of what life is like for family carers in Ireland in 2024. Aged between 20 and 89 years, and with an average age of 49, the survey participants care for approximately 3,000 care recipients and represent a range of caring situations – parents caring for a child with an illness or disability, those caring for an adult, carers of older people, and those caring for multiple people. A majority of those who responded to the survey (71%) are members of FCI and most completed it online by way of a questionnaire link sent to FCI's membership and also disseminated through our networks.

The findings show that carers continue to face significant challenges in a range of areas including difficulties securing adequate support, with a significant majority (74%) reporting insufficient formal support for those they care for. Those surveyed who have never accessed respite care rose from a rate of 66% reported in 2022 to 72% reported in 2024, pointing to ongoing inadequacies and gaps in the support system.



*Pictured at the launch of the State of Caring 2024 are Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI; Joanne Murphy, Research Officer, FCI; Moira Skelly, family carer; Willow Carroll and Tracy Carroll, family carer.*

The survey highlighted difficulties faced by family carers in securing stable and appropriate housing necessary for effective caring, with almost 1 in 5 (17%) of mortgage holders having missed a mortgage payment in the past year. Over one-third of those in private rental (35%) and those in local authority housing (32%) have missed a payment in the past year, adding a layer of uncertainty and stress.

Moreover, over a third of the family carers surveyed reside in homes that are not suitably adapted, lacking essential accessibility features such as ramps and grab bars. However, the financial burdens extend beyond housing, with many family carers experiencing reduced earning capacities and heightened economic pressures that challenge their ability to provide care. This financial strain is evident as more than a third report household incomes below €30,000 annually, significantly less than the national median.

Family carers who are struggling financially often must make difficult decisions and cut back on spending. Among the 69% of carers surveyed experiencing financial distress, 29% are cutting back on essentials, such as food and heat, and 16% have struggled to pay utility bills.

Issues concerning health and loneliness also emerged as concerning with 16% of respondents reporting bad or very bad health and 76% reporting severe or moderate loneliness (48% at a severe level, 28% at a moderate level).

Recommendations arising from the State of Caring 2024 report were made under five headings:

1. Making housing suitable for caring, disability and ageing households
2. Improving the financial situation of carers
3. Addressing carer loneliness
4. Improving access to supports and services
5. Supporting carer health and wellbeing.

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



*Pictured at the 'Partnership in Practice' conference are PPI contributors Damien Douglas, Ray Lucey, Christine Osswald and Lorraine Woods.*

The 'Partnership in Practice' conference is an annual event hosted by FCI, with 2024 representing the fourth edition of the event. Over 50 people attended the event which was held on 4 December at the Ashling Hotel in Dublin and chaired by Robert Anderson. The conference is designed to engage stakeholders on issues related to family caring and involves family carers, researchers, health and social care practitioners as well as representatives of Government departments, statutory bodies and NGOs. It presents an opportunity to hear about findings from recent carer-related research and to work together to unpack some of the challenges facing such research. FCI is committed to meaningful PPI, so providing opportunities to hear the perspectives of family carers on their experiences of involvement in research was intrinsic to the conference.

The conference was planned by an advisory panel convened by FCI consisting of family carers and academic and civil society representatives. Panel members co-developed the agenda for the day along with the discussion group topics and aimed to devise an inclusive event with content that was useful and accessible to the range of people attending. The conference took place over a morning session where speakers presented research on family carers, followed by a facilitated discussion session. Speakers shared the findings of their research as well as some of the key ways that they engaged in PPI. Related recommendations were made for policies and practices affecting carers and there was a lively engagement by conference participants with the issues raised.

The agenda included:

- Guest speakers presenting on research on caring, accompanied in each case by speakers who have been involved in related PPI processes as well as having experience of caring

- Q&A sessions after each presentation
- Roundtable discussion (small, mixed discussion groups to brainstorm on a strategic approach to research for FCI with recommendations shared with the larger group).

A report on the 2024 conference will be published shortly.



*Conference attendees taking part in the roundtable discussion.*

## RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS AND SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

FCI continues to develop key research partnerships nationally and internationally, resulting in many opportunities to learn from others as well as to disseminate and raise awareness of our work:

- In 2024, FCI became part of a panel of international affiliates of the Carers New South Wales Knowledge Exchange platform, a research translation project led by Carers NSW aiming to improve outcomes for family and friend carers across Australia by connecting research to practice.
- FCI has participated in the Research Working Group meetings of **EUROCARERS**, sharing updates on the organisation's research activities.
- FCI presented at the 2nd International Congress on Care, under the theme "**Other Ways of Caring are Possible**", which took place in November in Gran Canaria and aimed to highlight new research, interventions, and knowledge in the field of care from a multidisciplinary and global perspective.
- PPI: FCI continues our partnerships with both **UCD** and **UCC PPI Ignite**, and we are members of the Health Research Charities Ireland (HRCI) PPI Shared Learning Group.
- FCI delivered a **workshop**, "An Introduction to PPI," as part of post-graduate modules at UCC and RCSI.
- FCI was invited to contribute as a panellist at the 'Housing and Disability: A Crisis within a Crisis' session at the **St John of Gods Research Conference**.
- FCI was invited to speak at the launch of UCC's PPI Ignite Festival.
- FCI co-authored two **peer reviewed publications** in 2024, one on the topic of workplace supports for carers, the second on the subject of depression amongst young carers.
- FCI sat on several **Research Advisory Groups**, including UCD's **ECLECTIC** project and DCU's **Cost2Care** project.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Irish Research Council, New Foundations:** FCI collaborated with UCC in successfully applying for funding for a project focusing on cultivating expertise in facilitating engagement in PPO for dementia research.
- **The HRCI-HRB Joint Funding Scheme project** with the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) on resilience amongst older family carers came to an end in 2024. Amongst its activities were in-person focus groups with older carers aiming to provide a deeper understanding of the patterns and consequences of caring on mental health and wellbeing. A report is expected to be launched in the first half of 2025.
- **UCC Seed Funding Scheme:** FCI collaborated in 2023 on the project entitled 'PPI POWER: Planning Our Work with Equity and Respect', which focused on issues of PPI with people with intellectual disabilities. It is hoped that this project will continue its work in 2025, as funding is being sought to take the work further by carrying out a project as co-designed by the steering group.
- **The FCI Public and Patient Involvement Panel**, a dedicated group of family carers, engaged in research as co-researchers, actively participated throughout the year in projects at various universities, and there is ongoing interest from researchers nationwide in collaborating with panel members.
- An **internal evaluation** of FCI's Family Carers Needs Assessment (FCNA) Pilot Project was completed during 2024.



# RESOURCES

## OUR PEOPLE

At FCI, we depend on our employees to succeed in meeting our objectives of supporting family carers and service users. We are committed to doing this through mutual respect, openness, honesty and integrity and sustainability.

## BEING A GOOD EMPLOYER

A key objective for FCI is to remain supportive to our employees as they navigate the challenges we all experience through work and personal life while ensuring the needs of family carers and service users continue to be met as an absolute priority. We continue to provide flexible working options to employees across the country and have rolled out significant benefits through the implementation of FCI's Reward Strategy 2024 -2026.

The aim of the 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 service users. It is critical that we meet the needs of our employees and the organisation whilst ensuring we are doing so in a fair and responsible manner.

In October 2024, all employees received a pay increase inclusive of pay restoration due to Section 39 organisations under agreement reached with the HSE at the Workplace Relations Commission. Each employee was also issued with an individual reward statement detailing their overall employment benefit package.

The organisation's behaviour framework was updated in 2024 to support line managers and employees alike regarding line management support and supervision along with identifying development needs.

Training and development opportunities for our employees remains a key objective for the organisation. In 2024, we continued to roll out bespoke training and education opportunities for specific roles and groups of employees including discipline and grievance, leading remote teams and dignity at work.

## EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

The work carried out by many FCI employees can be rewarding and challenging in equal measures. It is the responsibility of management to implement as many support measures as possible for our employees. We continue to promote and encourage employee

wellbeing amongst all our employees and were fortunate to team up with Mental Health Ireland in 2024 for a series of workshops. We also partnered with Ibec to roll out many elements of their Workplace Wellbeing Day. We continue to monitor and review our policies and procedures ensuring we are adhering to HR best practice as we strive to support the wellbeing of our employees.

## GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

We published our third gender pay gap report 2024. The gender pay gap refers to the difference between what is earned on average by women and men based on average gross hourly earnings of all paid employees. Since its inception in 2022, our gender pay gap has reduced year-on-year and currently sits at 7.02%. It is challenging to identify the full breadth of reasons that contribute to the different gender pay gap results and this sector has its own limitations in reporting on the gender pay gap.

To invoke real change, we need to maintain our commitment to specific actions to address the gender pay gap for 2025. However, it should be noted that many of the factors that impact us in attracting more male candidates for roles across the organisation are sectoral and societal rather than specifically linked to FCI.

## CE SCHEMES

The purpose of the Community Employment (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.

We are proud to say that our Caring in Offaly Scheme, which operates in Offaly and Laois, is one of the most successful in the country and has been in operation since CE Schemes were first introduced some 29 years ago. The Caring in Waterford Scheme closed in March 2024.

The number of staff working with FCI through the schemes in 2023 included one supervisor, one assistant supervisor, five administrators and 26 home care staff. A core aspect of the supervisor's role is to support and coach participants towards gaining skills, competencies and qualifications in preparation for employment.

FCI is delighted to confirm that some 65 families availed of the in-home respite service delivered by CE participants in 2024. We are also grateful to the many

other CE participants, attached to other schemes, who work with FCI to provide significant support across the organisation.

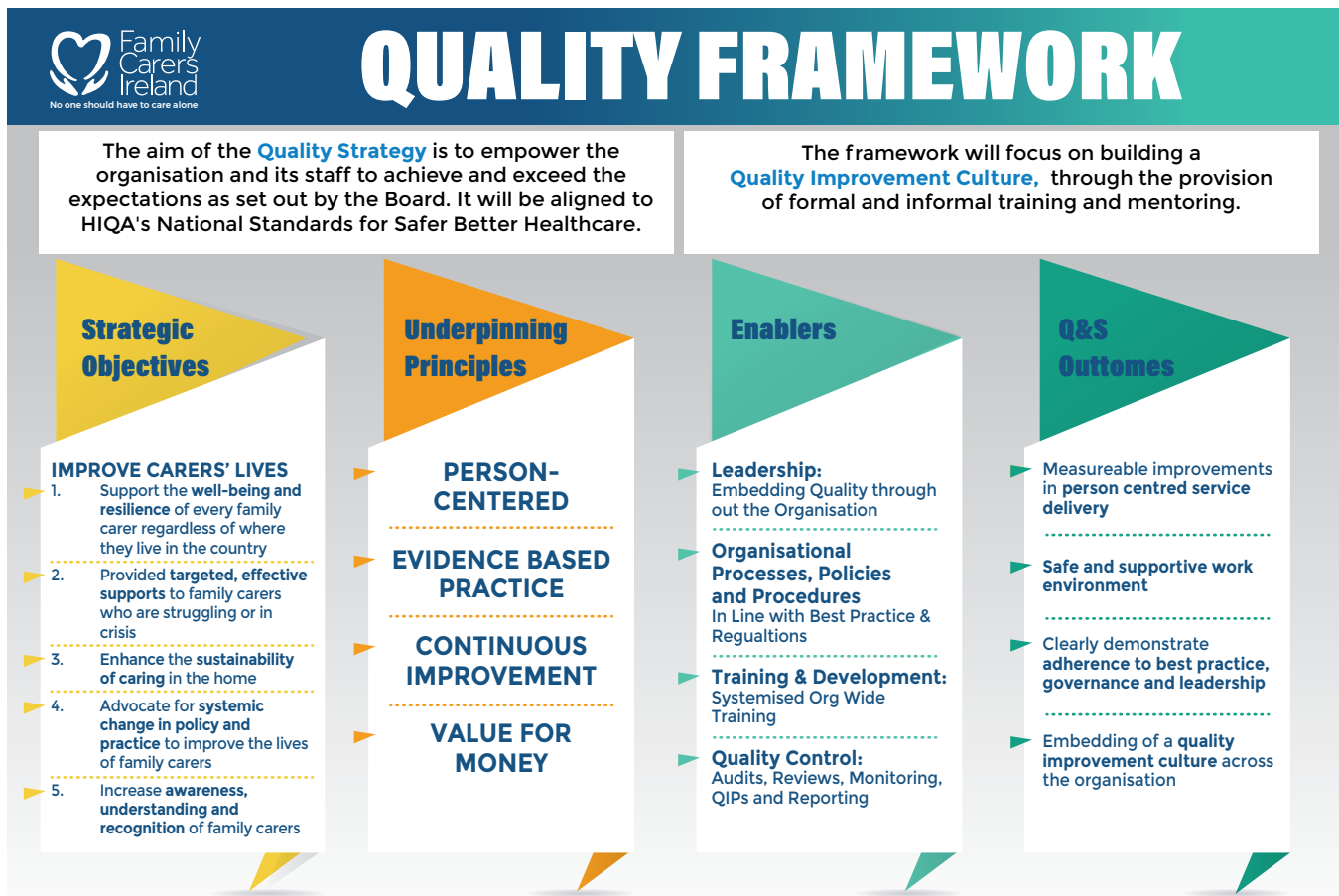
Work carried out by our CE teams in the year included:

- 12,622 respite hours delivered to family carers
- 4,212 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.

## QUALITY AND SAFETY

Ensuring staff compliance with national guidelines and legislation remains a key priority for FCI and is supported by the ongoing, organisation-wide quality and safety (Q&S) enhancements. Continuous training is provided to staff to recognise risks, prevent errors, and safeguard both cared-for persons and family carers throughout service delivery.

We updated our Q&S framework which focuses on five strategic objectives over the life of the plan. The aim of this strategy is to empower the organisation and its staff to achieve and exceed appropriate quality standards in every aspect of what we deliver, focusing on building a quality improvement culture.



## CARER, CLIENT AND STAFF SAFETY

An essential element of providing quality care and services to all FCI clients and staff is to ensure safety and wellbeing is at the forefront of the supports and services we provide. All staff receive relevant training and risk assessments are completed by Home Support Services managers prior to our healthcare workers visiting clients' homes while ongoing competency assessments are reviewed to ensure all health care workers are up to date with training and compliance.

Person-centred care remains a core principle in building a quality improvement culture. All suggestions for improvement and feedback are welcomed and encouraged from our clients. The monitoring of calls, reporting and logging of feedback received from our clients and the management of complaints assist in achieving a quality person-centred care approach. All this information is collated into quarterly reports and analysed for any ongoing themes or changes and discussed at the Quality and Safety Committee (a sub-committee of the board of directors). The learning

and quality improvement plans highlighted at these meetings are communicated and shared with staff on an ongoing basis.

## QUALITY SOFTWARE IMPROVEMENTS

Following the rollout of electronic software across all areas of the organisation in 2023, a significant increase in the number of reported incidents, complaints and safeguarding matters were recorded over the last year. A total of 95 incidents were reported in 2024, which were reviewed and closed out to ensure continuous learning and quality improvement across all departments.

All FCI staff are trained to report incidents through the electronic software which enables the early identification of reoccurring trends. The Q&S department supports staff with incident and complaint management with a focus on the root cause analysis and the corrective and preventative measures when appropriate.

The electronic document module ensures staff receive up to date policies and procedures in line with evidence-based practice which is one of the underpinning core principles of the Q&S framework.

The phased implementation of the electronic quality management audit module was rolled out in 2024 with the initial early test audits completed in the Q&S department. The aim for 2025 is to implement the audit module across all departments, which will enable a standardised approach to auditing and ensure areas of non-compliance or high risk are captured and managed effectively through the software's corrective and preventive features. This final phase, which will also include the implementation of the risk module, will facilitate the organisation's ability to demonstrate its compliance with relevant standards for the delivery of its service.





# FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING

## NATIONAL FUNDRAISING

Thanks to the generosity of the public and corporate partners, 2024 was a great year for FCI even though the cost-of-living crisis continued to impact on the public and globally the focus turned to supporting the people of Ukraine and Gaza. We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank everyone who donated to our charity and the cause of family carers. We continue to appreciate that when times are tough for people financially, they still have the goodwill to fundraise or donate to FCI and for this we are truly grateful. 2024 was a fantastic year with a range of fundraising activities undertaken in support of FCI. Below are some highlights from national fundraising campaigns held during the year.

### HEART OF GOLD RAISES OVER €55,000



*Pictured are Eileen Aherne, National Fundraising Manager, FCI; Rosemary Kratschmar, family carer; Sammy Kratschmar; and Mick Galway, Netwatch Brand Ambassador.*

Our annual national fundraising day, Heart of Gold, took place on Thursday 13 June and was supported by our Heart of Gold Ambassadors, family carer Rosemary Kratschmar and her son Sammy. Alongside her husband Siegi and daughter Stephanie, Rosemary cares for Sammy who lives with Down Syndrome, hearing loss, epilepsy, sleep apnoea and ADD.

Rosemary shared a heartfelt message in support of the campaign:

*"It truly does take a village to raise a child, and that couldn't be more true for a child with special needs. The journey is long and sometimes lonely, and no one should have to navigate it alone. Having the support of the community and services like those provided by Family Carers Ireland not only helps us care for Sammy with love and dignity but also reminds us that we are part of a larger family that understands and shares in our challenges and triumphs."*

Thank you to Rosemary and Sammy for being wonderful ambassadors and for giving your time freely to highlight the daily challenges faced by family carers as well as raising awareness of the campaign.

We asked the public to show their support for family carers by purchasing a Heart of Gold Pin, signing up for our 50 miles in June Challenge, or simply donating on [www.familycarers.ie](http://www.familycarers.ie).

In 2024, the campaign took place on one day rather than two days and we ran a volunteer recruitment campaign in the weeks beforehand to ensure we had enough volunteers to cover more locations in a single day than in previous years. Thank you to everyone who volunteered on the day and helped our Community Support Managers with collections up and down the country. We could not have done it without your support. Unfortunately, on the day, the collection was hampered by torrential rain which lasted up until lunchtime in some parts of the country. As a result, the footfall was low in these areas which resulted in the collection being down in comparison to the previous year.

Overall, the campaign raised over €55,000 and we would like to sincerely thank everyone who took the time to both sell and buy our gold hearts, participated in our 50 Miles in June Challenge, or made a donation in support of essential services that family carers rely on to care for their loved ones safely.

We look forward to Heart of Gold 2025 which will take place during National Carers Week.



*A selection of photos from our staff and volunteers who supported Heart of Gold.*

## 50 MILES IN JUNE



*Participants received a free t-shirt and earned a 50 Miles in June medal.*

As part of Heart of Gold 2024, the 50 Miles in June Challenge returned for a second year with over 500 people registering to walk, run or jog 50 miles during the month of June to raise funds for the Heart of Gold campaign.

We created an online community on Facebook which was joined by over 800 people and together, we

supported each other with our daily walks. Anyone who raised over €80 in 2024 received a 50 Miles in June medal.

A special thanks to everyone who took part and walked the 50 miles in their blue FCI t-shirt to raise vital awareness of family carers and funds to support them.



## CHRISTMAS CARER HEART APPEAL

Our 2024 Christmas fundraising campaign, the Christmas Carer Heart Appeal, asked the people of Ireland to sponsor a heart and placing it on our online Caring Christmas Tree in recognition of a family carer, on behalf of someone receiving care, or in memory of someone.

The campaign also included our national Christmas raffle which ran for four weeks and proved to be a huge success thanks to prizes including a Sunway Holiday voucher worth €1,500, a dinner and B&B package at Ashford Castle and two-night stay with spa treatments at Fota Island Resort. Congratulations to our lucky winners and thank you to Sunway Holidays, Ashford Castle and Fota Island Resort for their incredibly generous support.



**Christmas Carer HEART APPEAL**  
All proceeds to benefit Ireland's hidden frontline, family carers.

**1st Prize: €1,500 Sunway Holiday Voucher**  
**2nd Prize: Ashford Castle 1 Night B&B for 2 + 5 Course Meal**  
**3rd Prize: Fota Island Resort 2 Nights B&B for 2**

**Tickets**  
1 for €5  
3 for €10  
7 for €20

SCAN THE QR TO BUY

Raffle LIVE Tuesday 12th Nov @ 11am (closes 11th December @ 5pm). [WWW.FAMILYCARERS.IE](http://WWW.FAMILYCARERS.IE)

A special thank you to Yvonne Flynn who wrote a personal letter to our corporate donors asking them to support the Christmas appeal.

Yvonne lives in Oranmore, Co, Galway with her husband Conor and cares for her 11-year-old son Fiachra who has Down syndrome and is autistic. In her letter to corporate donors, she spoke of the love, care and friendship Fiachra's twin brother Cillian provides to his sibling and the support that FCI has provided to the family:



*Cillian McCarthy with his twin brother Fiachra.*



"Fiachra's routine and medications will shape our Christmas and Cillian will continue to help Fiachra with everything from dressing and comforting him, to offering encouragement whilst being his best friend. Even when Fiachra is reluctant to go on trips, Cillian doesn't mind missing out. When I ask why he helps so much, his answer is simply 'because he's my twin brother'.

"Last November, we all went to Family Carers Ireland's Family Carer of the Year Awards and what a day it was! It was a celebration of our wonderful Cillian and my heart was bursting with pride when he was named the Connacht Young Carer of the Year. This award and experience brought awareness to our wider family and community of what young children sometimes do when they have someone in their life who needs a little extra care.

"Family Carers Ireland have been an amazing support to us offering events and advice for me and for Cillian, like sibling workshops and fun days out. For Cillian, this provides a safe space for him to express himself with like-minded young carers who 'get it'."

Thank you to our corporate donors and to everyone who supported our Christmas Carer Heart Appeal by sponsoring a heart or purchasing a raffle ticket. Together, you helped raise over €22,000 to help improve the lives of Ireland's hidden frontline, family carers and young carers, by providing the supports and services they need to care safely.



*Pictured at the Netwatch Family Carer of the Year Awards 2023 are (back row) Yvonne Flynn, Conor McCarthy and Miriam O'Callaghan with (front row) Fiachra McCarthy and Cillian McCarthy.*

# COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

2024 was the year that communities up and down the country came together in support of fundraising for FCI and our local Carer Support Centres. Our local and regional fundraising events and donation drives not only raise vital funds, they also increase the profile of family carers in the community and highlight their contribution to Irish society.

There were many fantastic events across the year and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who donated or fundraised for FCI in 2024. Below are just a few highlights.

## COLD WATER DIP

On 21 April, our Community Supports team in the west held five Cold Water Dips with approximately 80 participants taking the plunge and raising €4,513 to support family carers.

This challenge is not for the faint-hearted but it was very well supported and we are looking forward to it becoming an annual fixture in our national fundraising calendar, with the 2025 event due to take place in October and plans already underway to make it bigger and better than the previous two years.



*A selection of photos from our Cold Water Dips.*



## HELL AND BACK



*Patricia Blee and Vicky Ward celebrate after completing their Hell and Back challenge for FCI.*

In September, Community Support Manager for Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal Tricia Blee and Regional Support Manager for the West Vicky Ward (along with Vicky's husband Anthony) braved the Hell and Back challenge to raise vital funds for FCI. The 8km event sees participants braving mud swamps and ice-water baths, crawling through an electrified frame, being shot at with plastic pellets and climbing over and under countless obstacles. A huge thank you and well done to Tricia, Vicky and Anthony for raising €2,319 for FCI.

## CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH



In October, the Norman family from Co. Laois organised a charity football match in Arlington Football Pitch in Portarlington. The fundraiser was the idea of Robert Norman, who wanted to do something to show his appreciation for the support he and his family have

received from FCI. Robert's mam Martina is his full-time carer.

Robert reached out to his local Community Support Manager Beth Wogan and from there, the wheels were put in motion to organise a charity football match between Norman's XI and the Laois Fire Fighters.

Robert challenged the local fire brigade to come on board as his team's opponents on the day and they gladly accepted the challenge. On 27 October the Laois Fire and Rescue team lead by Sub Station Officer Ed Gallagher and Norman's XI lead by Robert took to the pitch. Laois firefighters emerged victorious, and the cup is proudly on display in the station along with a framed jersey.

The celebrations continued after the match with a raffle and refreshments for both teams and the community at the Railway Bar. Thank you to the Laois firefighters for making this event happen and for the community who attended the match and donated. We are forever grateful to Robert, and his parents, Martina and Joe for organising the match and bringing the community out in force to support FCI.

An incredible €6,660 was raised from car washes, bake sales and raffles.

## SILENT WALK



*Pictured are Amy Kelly, Community Support Manager, FCI; Peter Dunleavy, Clarke's Bar; and Joan McLeod, FCI.*

On 2 November, the community in Mullingar came together for a Silent Walk along the canal and took the time to reflect on those in their community who need support. The walk culminated in a night of music and refreshments at Clarke's Bar. A special thank you to Peter Dunleavy, Clarke's Bar and Joan McLeod for organising this wonderful community walk and for raising an incredible €5,405 for FCI.



## BLACK TIE BALL



*Pictured are Vlad Zlatov; Elena Minkova, Power4Good; Beth Wogan, Community Support Manager, FCI; Brian Sheridan, Chairperson, Power4Good; Rose Dunne, family carer; Molly Buckley, President Power4Good; Lorraine Corrigan; Thato Thebe; Anita Thomas; Power4Good.*

We were delighted to be chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the Annual Black Tie Ball organised by the Power4Good charity in Tullamore, Co. Offaly. Over 200 guests attended the ball, which took place in the Bridge House Hotel in Tullamore in November.

Guests were treated to a drinks reception on arrival, followed by a four-course meal with wine and entertainment by The Secrets and a late night DJ. The evening was a fantastic occasion and raised €5,000. A special thank you to Community Support Manager Beth Wogan who worked tirelessly with the organisers to create a wonderful night of glam and fun!

## TESCO COMMUNITY FUND



*Community Support Manager Fiona Hartigan (left) accepting a Tesco Community Fund donation.*

Through the Tesco Community Fund, customers nominate local causes in their community and then vote for their preferred cause in store by placing the blue token they receive at the checkout in the donation box of their charity of choice. After 12 weeks, the number of tokens is counted and up to €2,000 is distributed proportionally between three local good causes. Many of our Carer Support Centres around the country have benefitted from the scheme and we are hugely grateful for this support.





# LIDL IRELAND CHARITY PARTNERSHIP

## LIDL COMMITS TO RAISING €1 MILLION FOR FCI

November 2024 saw the launch of our fantastic new charity partnership with Lidl Ireland. Over the next three years, this partnership will help grow national awareness of the 500,000+ people caring for loved ones with additional care needs in our communities all over Ireland.

As well as raising awareness, this partnership will see customers and Lidl's 6,000 employees in 180 stores, three distribution centres and their head office come together to raise €1 million for FCI which will be transformative in enabling us to deliver our vital services and support carers across the country.



*Pictured are Gina Daly, influencer; Maeve McCleane, Chief People Officer, Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland; Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI; Sue O'Grady, Marketing Manager FCI and Johnny Ward, actor.*

Fair City, Love/Hate and panto star Johnny Ward and influencer Gina Daly supported the launch by sharing their own experiences of caring for loved ones.

Johnny never considered himself to be a family carer but when his mum became ill in 2019, he made the decision to move back home to care for her with the support of family and friends.

"Providing care for my mother was an obvious choice for me, and I am grateful I get to spend this time with her, but there are certainly lots of pressures and difficulties that come with a caring role. Sometimes



having a family member dependent on your care can be very challenging and leaving them in the care of others comes with a real sense of guilt. It is brilliant that Family Carers Ireland can help carers to navigate these complex feelings and stresses with the many different services they provide all over the country."

Gina is a full-time carer for her son Gene, who was born with Down Syndrome in 2021.

"I am extremely lucky to be in a position to be able to spend each day with Gene and it has been a beautiful journey, but I know not everyone is in the same situation to do so.

"Caring can be both extremely rewarding and overwhelming; it brings moments of joy and connection, as well as times of solitude and strain. There's a particular kind of responsibility that comes with knowing someone depends on you fully, particularly your own child, and it's easy to feel the weight of it especially when you try to balance care for them as well as care for yourself.

"That's why support networks and resources, like those provided by Family Carers Ireland, are so essential. They remind us that we're not alone in this journey and offer the tools we need to navigate the many aspects of caring."

Not only are we aiming to raise funds, we are also seeking to raise national awareness of family caring by encouraging all of Lidl's customers and colleagues to SEE CARERS.

Lidl's much-loved Trolley Dash kickstarted their fundraising efforts in November, with customers raising an incredible €314,000.

This new multi-year partnership builds upon our existing relationship with Lidl, with FCI having worked with the retailer to introduce the Caring Employers programme to provide tailored support and resources for Lidl's own colleagues who are balancing work and caring commitments.



*Pictured are Maeve McCleane, Chief People Officer, Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, FCI.*



*Pictured at the launch of Trolley Dash 2024 are Gina Daly, influencer and Johnny Ward, actor.*



# CARING EMPLOYERS

The working carer cohort is a particularly difficult group to reach and to support. Too often, those balancing career, care and family life put the needs of others first, resulting in huge mental, physical and financial pressures and ultimately burnout.

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. FCI collaborates with member companies to provide a bespoke programme of events over a 12-month period that delivers practical supports for staff.

Now in its sixth year, the initiative continues to gain momentum, with a growing number of employers working with FCI to support staff with caring responsibilities and to future-proof their workplaces for those who may take up caring roles in the coming years. The curtains closed on 2024 with a total of 15 active Caring Employers members, as we welcomed Tesco, PwC, HSBC, Marsh McLennan (Mercer) and a second Government department, the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine. They joined existing members - Irish Life and Canada Life, Bank of Ireland, Irish Rail, SETU, AIB, Lidl, Irish Distillers, AIB, An Post and the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform.

In addition to a bespoke annual programme of activity for each Caring Employer member, FCI also runs a monthly CareTALK Series, which brings together all our members for a topical webinar. These events are recorded and issued to all members, ensuring we engage with and empower as many working family carers as possible. In 2024, we held eight CareTALK events with over 400 family carers attending to learn more about topics including Self-Care for Family Carers, the Assisted Decision-Making Capacity Act, Exploring the Art of Switching Off and Recognising the Signs of Developmental Delay.

We delivered 10 people manager workshops to eight of our members in 2024, hosting over 100 managers throughout the year. With self-identification a key focus for the programme, it is vital that people managers/team leaders are empathetic and flexible when supporting those with caring responsibilities at home, so we are delighted to have engaged with so many leaders over the course of the year.

As we face into a new year and set new goals for the programme, we look forward to welcoming more of Ireland's progressive companies to the Caring

Employers family and working alongside their change and policymakers to make our country and our workplaces more carer friendly.

## EU WORK-LIFE BALANCE DIRECTIVE

The introduction of the EU Work-Life Balance Directive, which was transposed into law in March 2024, has been a step in the right direction that gives working carers a practical support of five days of additional care leave per year, alongside the right to request flexible working arrangements. Although the five days are unpaid, FCI has seen a positive show of support from our members, with most not only paying their employees during this leave, but many having doubled it to 10 days per year.

Through FCI's research, both quantitative and qualitative, we have identified that family carers who are working and caring take an average of nine days' annual leave per year for their caregiving duties, with most of this time used to bring the persons they care for to appointments.

We very much welcome this new directive while encouraging employers, where possible, to ensure employees are paid for those five days, given that some may choose to take annual leave instead if they are unable to afford taking unpaid leave. Throughout the year, we have worked closely with the HR departments within our member organisations to ensure their policies are up to date and well communicated to their workforce.

## SUPPORT AND FOCUS FROM IBEC

In March 2024, IBEC published a research report "Better Care, Better Business" which featured FCI's Caring Employers programme, with a focus on Irish Life and Irish Rail, two of the programme's original members. The report followed a survey on caring responsibilities carried out with a representative sample of 1,200 adults aged 25-65 years of age which found that almost half said they were a primary carer, with a quarter of those saying the care they provided was to an adult.

As Ireland faces an increasingly ageing population, mainly due to improvements in healthcare and lifestyle changes, there is a direct correlation in the increased need for the provision of elder care. Changing demographics also include the increase in children being born with additional needs or rare diseases and thus, the need to support such families must be a priority not only for Government, but for society and employers.





# 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 (Chairperson)**

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.



**Wendy Hamilton**

Wendy is based in the Garden County and has been around family carers for the past six 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 1 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 six 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.

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.



**Johanne Powell**

Johanne cared for her daughter Siobhan, from when she was born in February 1984 to her passing in August 2020. Siobhan was born with a rare chromosome disorder. She was intellectually and physically disabled, requiring 24/7 care. Johanne and her husband Alan were devoted to Siobhan who was their only child and spent years lobbying on behalf of Siobhan for the provision of services to cater for her needs.



**Marta Soltys**

Marta is originally from Poland, living in Ireland for 20 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 2024. 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	NRC	RPC
Robert Anderson (Chair) (Chair RPC)	6/6	-	3/6	-	-	-	4/4	3/3
John Healy	6/6	-	-	-	-	-	2/4	-
Cora Long	6/6	-	-	4/4	9/10	-	-	-
Wendy Hamilton	3/6	-	-	-	-	-	3/4	-
Richard Hammond (Vice Chair) (Chair FAO)	6/6	-	6/6	-	-	-	2/4	-
David Girvan	1/2	-	-	-	5/7	-	-	-
Marta Soltys	5/6	-	-	-	5/10	-	-	-
Angela Briggs	5/6	-	-	-	6/10	-	-	1/2
Patricia O'Regan	6/6	-	-	-	9/10	-	-	-
Kara Madden	5/6	-	-	4/4	7/10	-	-	-
Barbara Carroll	5/6	-	5/6	-	-	-	3/4	-
Johanne Powell	2/2	-	-	-	10/10	-	4/4	-
Hugh McGeown	4/6	-	4/6	-	-	-	-	-
Other External Committee Members		ARC	FAQ	QSC	CSE	MFC	NPC	RPC
John Lonergan	-	0/1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luke Mooney (Chair ARC)	-	2/2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frank Goodwin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2/3
Shane McCarthy	-	2/2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deirdre O'Donnell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2/3
Ann Vaughan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3/3
Cillian McDohmnaill	-	2/2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tom Jordan	-	-	3/3	-	-	-	-	-
Alison Egan	-	-	2/4	-	-	-	-	-
Paddy Hennessy	-	-	6/6	-	-	-	-	-
Gloria Kirwan	-	-	-	4/4	-	-	-	-
Pat Montague	-	-	-	-	-	1/1	-	1/1
John Murray (Chair QSC)	-	-	-	2/3	-	-	-	-
Lynsey O'Donovan	-	-	-	-	-	1/1	-	-
Johanne Powell (Chair CSE)	-	-	-	-	10/10	-	3/3	-
Virginia Pye	-	-	-	2/2	-	-	-	-
Tracey Carney (Chair MFC)	-	-	-	-	-	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 by a director in the performance of their role are reimbursed in line with Family Carers Ireland policy on board expenses and amounted to €10,510 for 2024 (2023: €14,460).

## 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 2024, there were no payments made to directors outside of the normal travel and subsistence policy.

## PAY POLICY FOR SENIOR STAFF

The key management personnel comprise the CEO and Executive Management team (EMT).

Family Carers Ireland values its staff and endeavours to attract and retain a high calibre of employee across the organisation. In 2024, the organisation implemented our new three-year employee reward strategy for the period 2024 – 2026. The aim of this strategy is to attract, retain and motivate quality candidates and employees which in turn will safeguard the excellent supports and services being provided to family carers. 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 strategy provides us with a clear outline of our cost profile over the next three years and facilitates appropriate planning going forward.

The CEO and EMT salaries are disclosed in note 10 to the accounts.





# FUTURE PLANS

The Chief Executive, John Dunne, has indicated his intention to retire in 2025 and the recruitment of a suitable replacement will be a significant priority in the early part of the year.

We will also be reorganising our carer support service based on an evaluation of the implementation of the first phase of the Carer Guarantee. As well as addressing some opportunities to make our supports more efficient and effective, it will also prepare for scaling up our local and national 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 under local service-level agreements.

Following a successful migration to a new scheduling and invoicing platform for Home Support Services in 2024, our focus in 2025 will be on a new CRM that integrates with a next generation website and a new app to serve as a gateway for self-guided carer supports.

Constitutional changes designed to enhance our governance and carer participation structures will be considered at an EGM in May 2025 and, if approved, will greatly enhance our capacity to listen to and learn from the lived experience of family carers in every part of the country.

Over the past few years, we have experienced consistent failures to follow through on undertakings in regard to

various aspects of funding for the voluntary sector including multiannual budgeting, indexation of grant-aided pay costs in line with public sector pay agreements, increased levels of funding for initiatives such as the Carer Guarantee. Whilst acknowledging that progress is being made in all of these areas, we anticipate continuing to have to carefully manage the funding mix of the organisation and the margins on each element of our activities. We will also continue to pursue conservative accounting policies and a prudent reserves policy.

We will begin to roll out two major commercial partnerships – worth at least €2m to the organisation – that were announced at the end of 2024. These partnerships have the potential to greatly enhance many aspects of our activities but their scale is a new challenge for us and we will be working hard to ensure that the partnership is successful for both sides.

Following the formation of a new coalition Government, we are putting additional staff resources in place to allow us to contribute to and monitor progress on the many commitments with potential to improve the lives of family carers. We will focus, in particular, on proper funding for the Carer Guarantee and adequate respite services (Department of Health) and the creation of a non-means-tested family carer income support to replace the Carer's Allowance (Department of Social Protection).



# 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 81), the Balance Sheet (page 82), and the Statement of Cashflows (page 83) and further explained in the notes to the accounts on pages 84 to 98.

Income for the financial year was €14,094,457 which is derived from a wide range of funding streams but is predominantly broken down into HSE, grants 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 regards to supporting the cared-for person in the home. We received €6,456,099 from our HSE funding partners to deliver a range of supports and services across our network along with national funding for key posts and shared services across the organisation.

Our In Home Support services Income was €6,271,881 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 €60,525 to support family carers.

Expenditure for the year was €13,935,095 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 €159,362 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)
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Scheme to Support National Organisations)
- Dormant Accounts Fund
- Fidelity Europe Fund
- And various private and corporate donations and grants

## INCOME

Total income for 2024 was €14.094m which is an increase of 5% on the 2023 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 under €61k which is a drop of 8% on 2023 levels.

### *Income from Charitable Activities*

Income from Charitable Activities comprises of 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 Dormant Accounts Fund, Scheme to

Support National Organisations (SSNO), National Lottery Funding and Community and Voluntary Pillar.

In 2024, income from charitable activities was €13.301m which is an increase of 4% on 2023 levels and predominantly relates to an increase in Home Support income of €1.35m, a decrease in Section 39 funding of €465k and a decrease in grants of €327k.

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, Membership and Other Trading Activities. Income from trading activities for 2024 was €705,325 which is an increase of 17% on 2023 levels and represents an increase in Fundraising and membership income to €473,054 and an increase in Other Trading Activity to €232,271.

Fundraising and membership income are important revenue streams for Family Carers Ireland 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 2024 saw membership continue to grow consistently throughout the year.

### *Income from Investments*

Income from investments for 2024 was €27,520 which represents an increase of 6% on 2023 levels and comprises of income and bank interest received on short term deposits.

## EXPENDITURE

Expenditure for 2024 was €13.93m which is an increase of 5% on 2023 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, Membership and Other Trading. The amount spent in 2024 was €258k which is an increase of 99% on 2023 levels.

### *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 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 and Community and Voluntary Pillar.

In 2024, expenditure on charitable activities was €13.67m which is an increase of 4% on 2023 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 account 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 reserves 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 objectives and restricted income which can only be used for a specific purpose.

The restricted reserves are nil and the unrestricted reserves are €3.458m at year end with these levels having been reviewed by the board through the Finance and Organisation 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 €3.458m 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

Forvis Mazars, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm, have expressed their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provision of Section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014.



Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors

Director: Robert Anderson

Date: 16 May 2025

Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 16 May 2025

# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

for the year ended 31 December 2024

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.

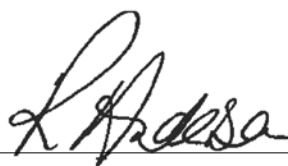
In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- 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.

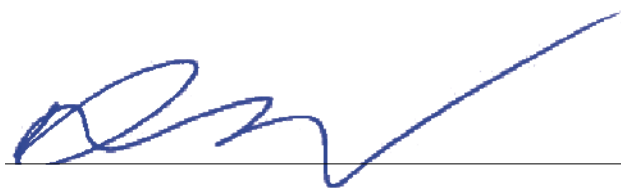
The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website. Legislation in Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors



Director: Robert Anderson

Date: 16 May 2025



Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 16 May 2025



# 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 2024, 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 2024, 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 78, 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 Forvis Mazars  
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Audit Firm  
Harcourt Centre  
Block 3  
Harcourt Road  
Dublin 2

23 May 2025

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 2024

		Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023
	Notes	€	€	€	€	€	€
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	4	60,525	-	60,525	65,884	-	65,884
Charitable activities	7	6,271,881	7,029,206	13,301,087	4,911,907	7,822,104	12,734,011
Trading activities	8	655,666	49,659	705,325	592,810	8,018	600,828
Investment income	9	27,520	-	27,520	25,965	-	25,965
Total income		7,015,592	7,078,865	14,094,457	5,596,566	7,830,122	13,426,688
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds	10	198,430	59,658	258,088	72,944	56,509	129,453
Charitable activities	11	6,495,310	7,181,697	13,677,007	5,136,627	7,955,259	13,091,886
Total expenditure		6,693,740	7,241,355	13,935,095	5,209,571	8,011,768	13,221,339
Net income/ (expenditure) before transfers		321,852	(162,490)	159,362	386,995	(181,646)	205,349
Transfers between funds		(162,490)	162,490	-	(181,646)	181,646	-
Net movement in funds for the year		159,362	-	159,362	205,349	-	205,349
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Total funds brought forward	22	3,298,856	-	3,298,856	3,093,507	-	3,093,507
Total funds carried forward	22	3,458,218	-	3,458,218	3,298,856	-	3,298,856

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 84 to 98 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 2024

		2024	2023
	Notes	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets:</b>			
Tangible assets	17	263,916	273,020
<b>Current Assets:</b>			
Debtors	18	1,570,104	1,495,617
Cash and cash equivalents	25	3,849,892	2,960,390
Total Current Assets		5,419,996	4,456,007
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	19	(2,225,694)	(1,430,171)
Net Current Assets		3,194,302	3,025,836
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		3,458,218	3,298,856
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>			
Unrestricted		3,458,218	3,298,856
Restricted		-	-
Total Funds	22	3,458,218	3,298,856

The notes on pages 84 to 98 form part of the financial statements.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 16 May 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Director: Robert Anderson

Date: 16 May 2025



Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 16 May 2025

# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

for the year ended 31 December 2024

		2024	2023
	Notes	€	€
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities	24	<b>898,308</b>	501,156
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	17	<b>(8,806)</b>	(26,323)
Cash used in investing activities		<b>(8,806)</b>	(26,323)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		<b>889,502</b>	474,833
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at start of the year</b>		<b>2,960,390</b>	2,485,557
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year</b>	25	<b>3,849,892</b>	2,960,390

The notes on pages 84 to 98 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 2024

### 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 2024.

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 2024

### 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 2024

### 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 other tangible fixed assets. The carrying amount of tangible fixed asset is €263,916 as at year end (2023: €273,020).

### 4) DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Donations	<b>60,525</b>	-	<b>60,525</b>	65,884

### 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 in many areas raises additional funds 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 2024

### 6) SECTION 39 INCOME & EXPENDITURE

	2024 Income	2024 Expenditure	2023 Income	2023 Expenditure
	€	€	€	€
Core Grant	3,730,497	3,730,497	3,628,210	3,628,210
East Coast - Wicklow	64,930	64,930	84,939	84,939
Northern – North Dublin	146,025	146,025	117,166	117,166
South Western – Kildare	16,739	16,739	16,739	16,739
South Western – Dublin West	64,230	64,230	59,710	59,710
Midlands – Laois/Offaly	132,175	132,175	132,478	132,478
Midlands – Longford/Westmeath	249,045	249,045	258,950	258,950
Mid-Western – Limerick/Clare/North Tipperary	697,404	697,404	731,266	731,266
North Western – Sligo	41,787	41,787	665,260	665,260
Western – Roscommon	160,135	160,135	160,079	160,079
Western – Mayo	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Western – Galway	52,265	52,265	26,246	26,246
Southern – Cork/Kerry	129,734	129,734	121,153	121,153
South Eastern - Kilkenny	123,106	123,106	138,769	138,769
South Eastern – Clonmel	80,585	80,585	89,732	89,732
South Eastern – Wexford	61,108	61,108	80,421	80,421
South Eastern -Waterford	65,099	65,099	106,896	106,896
North Eastern – Cavan/Monaghan	119,800	119,800	135,706	135,706
3.5% once off inflation increase	-	-	342,617	342,617
WRC	496,435	496,435	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,456,099</b>	<b>6,456,099</b>	<b>6,921,337</b>	<b>6,921,337</b>

### 7) CHARITABLE ACTIVITY INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Charitable Activity Income (See Note A)	6,271,881	7,029,206	13,301,087	12,734,011

# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2024

### CHARITABLE ACTIVITY INCOME BREAKDOWN

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
<b>Note A - Charitable Activity Income</b>				
Section 39 Grant Income (note 6)	-	6,456,099	6,456,099	6,921,337
Group	-	7,679	7,679	24,254
Dementia Project	-	156,022	156,022	312,765
Fidelity	-	93,246	93,246	167,463
Strength and Disability	-	34,293	34,293	64,171
Other Grant Income	-	85,630	85,630	64,071
Dormant Account Income	-	59,268	59,268	70,749
SSNO Income	-	42,603	42,603	71,749
Community Foundation for Ireland	-	675	675	73,338
Home Support Services	6,271,881	-	6,271,881	4,911,907
National Lottery	-	63,547	63,547	22,063
Community and Voluntary Pillar	-	30,144	30,144	30,144
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,271,881</b>	<b>7,029,206</b>	<b>13,301,087</b>	<b>12,734,011</b>

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

### 8) TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Charity Trading Income (breakdown below)	655,666	49,659	705,325	600,828

# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2024

### 8) TRADING ACTIVITIES (CONTD)

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Charity Trading Income Breakdown				
Fundraising & Membership Income	423,395	49,659	473,054	421,837
Other Trading Income	232,271	-	232,271	178,991
Total	655,666	49,659	705,325	600,828

### 9) INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Rental Income	27,520	-	27,520	25,965
Total	27,520	-	27,520	25,965

### 10) COST OF RAISING FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Fundraising & Membership Costs	159,981	59,658	219,639	104,049
Other Costs of Raising Funds	38,449	-	38,449	25,404
Total	198,430	59,658	258,088	129,453



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2024

### 11) CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
<b>Summary of Charitable Activities</b>				
Donation Expenditure	1,205	-	1,205	2,822
Other Grant Expenditure (Note A)	-	639,856	639,856	893,626
Wages and Salaries (Note B)	5,828,002	5,067,995	10,895,997	10,085,674
Overhead Expenditure (Note C)	666,103	1,473,846	2,139,949	2,109,764
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,495,310</b>	<b>7,181,697</b>	<b>13,677,007</b>	<b>13,091,886</b>

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

Note A - Other Grant Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Dementia Programme	-	110,060	110,060	277,663
Dormant Accounts Programme	-	51,424	51,424	120,549
Other Grant Expenditure	-	478,372	478,372	495,414
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>639,856</b>	<b>639,856</b>	<b>893,626</b>

Other grant expenditure comprised 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 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Direct Wages	4,469,197	1,039,423	5,508,620	4,768,186
Indirect Wages	1,358,805	4,028,572	5,387,377	5,317,488
<b>Total Wages</b>	<b>5,828,002</b>	<b>5,067,995</b>	<b>10,895,997</b>	<b>10,085,674</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 2024

### 11) CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES (CONTD)

Note C - Overhead Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	€	€	€	€
Establishment	112,743	372,466	485,209	437,235
IT and Administration	170,982	412,200	583,182	530,008
Training, PPE and Local Centre	92,576	160,746	253,322	282,751
Other Overheads	120,375	310,504	430,879	371,442
Group Expenditure	-	7,679	7,679	24,254
Programme Costs	169,427	210,251	379,678	464,074
<b>Total</b>	<b>666,103</b>	<b>1,473,846</b>	<b>2,139,949</b>	<b>2,109,764</b>

### 12) EMPLOYEES AND REMUNERATION

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Corporate Services	18	15
Communications and Policy	13	12
Carer Support	70	90
Home Support Services	29	28
Home Care Workers	408	410
	<b>538</b>	<b>555</b>

The staff costs comprise:

	2024	2023
	€	€
Wages and salaries	9,382,304	9,182,547
Social security costs	2,513,707	2,422,762
Pension costs	148,096	145,822
	<b>12,044,107</b>	<b>11,751,131</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 2024

### 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 €483,875 (2023: €511,787). 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):

	2024 Number	2023 Number
€70,000 to €80,000	11	3
€80,000 to €90,000	-	3
€90,000 to €100,000	3	-
€100,000 to €120,000	-	-
€120,000 to €140,000	1	1
	15	7

The salary (excluding employer PRSI) of the Chief Executive Officer in 2024 was €134,155 (2023: €125,485) 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 €10,510 (2023: €14,460) were paid to six directors for travel and subsistence incurred in the performance of their duties as directors.

### 15) NET INCOME / EXPENDITURE

This is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	€	€
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets (Note 17)	17,910	10,362
Auditor's remuneration	25,707	25,092

During the year, no directors received any remuneration (2023 - €NIL).  
During the year, no directors received any benefits in kind (2023 - €NIL).

### 16) AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION

The Auditor's remuneration amounts to an audit fee inclusive of VAT of €25,707 (2023: €25,092) 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 2024

### 17) TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer & Office Equipment	Building	Total
	€	€	€
At 1 January 2024	84,190	267,500	351,690
Additions	8,806	-	8,806
<b>At 31 December 2024</b>	<b>92,996</b>	<b>267,500</b>	<b>360,496</b>
At 1 January 2024	55,523	23,147	78,670
Charge for the year	12,560	5,350	17,910
<b>At 31 December 2024</b>	<b>68,083</b>	<b>28,497</b>	<b>96,580</b>
<b>At 31 December 2024</b>	<b>24,913</b>	<b>239,003</b>	<b>263,916</b>
At 31 December 2023	28,667	244,353	273,020

### 18) DEBTORS

	2024	2023
	€	€
Trade Debtors	<b>1,379,485</b>	1,315,051
Other Debtors	<b>33,518</b>	48,491
Prepayments and accrued income	<b>157,101</b>	132,075
	<b>1,570,104</b>	1,495,617

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 2024

### 19) CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year:

	2024	2023
	€	€
Trade and other creditors	202,881	197,430
Other taxation and social security costs (Note 20)	193,707	198,141
Accruals	533,453	427,585
Deferred Income (Note 21)	1,295,653	607,015
	<b>2,225,694</b>	<b>1,430,171</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

	2024	2023
	€	€
PAYE/PRSI	193,707	198,141
	<b>193,707</b>	<b>198,141</b>

### 21) DEFERRED INCOME

	2024	2023
	€	€
At beginning of year	607,015	684,209
Resources deferred during the year	609,827	32,990
Credited to Statement of Financial Activities	78,811	(110,184)
<b>At end of year</b>	<b>1,295,653</b>	<b>607,015</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 2024

22) ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENT OF FUNDS

Prior 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	-
Closing Balance at 31 December 2023	3,298,856	-	-	3,298,856

Current Year	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
Opening Balance at 1 January 2024	3,298,856	-	-	3,298,856
Income	7,015,592	-	7,078,865	14,094,457
Expenditure	(6,693,740)	-	(7,241,355)	(13,935,095)
Transfer Between Funds	(162,490)	-	162,490	-
Closing Balance at 31 December 2024	3,458,218	-	-	3,458,218

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
	€	€	€	€
Represented by:				
Fixed Assets	273,020	-	-	273,020
Current Assets	4,456,007	-	-	4,456,007
Current Liabilities	(1,430,171)	-	-	(1,430,171)
	3,298,856	-	-	3,298,856



# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2024

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

Current Year	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
<b>Represented by:</b>				
Fixed Assets	263,916	-	-	263,916
Current Assets	5,419,996	-	-	5,419,996
Current Liabilities	(2,225,694)	-	-	(2,225,694)
	<b>3,458,218</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,458,218</b>

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

	2024	2023
	€	€
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	<b>159,362</b>	205,349
<b>Adjustment for:</b>		
Depreciation charge	<b>17,910</b>	10,362
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	<b>(74,487)</b>	538,019
Decrease / (increase) in creditors	<b>795,523</b>	(252,574)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>898,308</b>	501,156

### 25) CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2024	2023
	€	€
Cash and bank balances	<b>3,849,892</b>	2,960,390

# FAMILY CARERS IRELAND

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

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2024

### 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 €148,096 (2023: €145,822). No contributions were payable at year end.

### 27) OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

	2024	2023
	€	€
Amounts payable:		
Within 1 year	72,842	70,890
Between 1 and 5 years	152,000	11,730
Greater than 5 years	66,500	104,500
Total	291,342	187,120

### 28) RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

No related party transactions took place during the year ended 31 December 2024 (2023: 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 16 May 2025.

# APPENDIX

## DETAILS OF STATUTORY FUNDING RECEIVED IN 2024

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>€232,9600 - 3 years</b>	<b>€42,603</b>	<b>€76,847</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 - 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 - 18 months</b>	<b>€59,268</b>	<b>Nil</b>
Department of Health and National Lottery	Palliative Care Grant	Palliative Care Programme	<b>€50,000</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>€6,644</b>

# APPENDIX (CONTD)

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

AGENCY:	Pobal
SPONSORING GOVERNMENT DEPT:	Department of Rural and Community Development
PROGRAMME FOR FUNDING:	Dormant Accounts
TOTAL GRANT:	€199,944
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE:	€70,749
FUNDING RECEIVED IN THE ACCOUNTING PERIOD:	€138,342
TERM OF THE CONTRACT FOR FUNDING:	From 01/01/2023 to 30/06/2024
CAPITAL ELEMENT:	€0
RESTRICTIONS:	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 31 DECEMBER 2024:</b>	Robert Anderson (Chair) Angela Briggs Barbara Carroll Wendy Hamilton Richard Hammond John Healy Cora Long Kara Madden Hugh McGeown Johanne Powell Patricia O'Regan Marta Soltys
<b>INDEPENDENT AUDITOR:</b>	Forvis 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 Sean Dillon Catherine Cox Mary Conway
<b>SECRETARY &amp; REGISTERED OFFICE:</b>	Richard Hammond SC, Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 PW50
<b>BOARD COMMITTEES AT 31 DECEMBER 2024:</b>	

## **Audit & Risk Management:**

Shane McCarthy  
Cillian McDomhnaill  
Luke Mooney (Chair)

## **Finance & Organisation:**

Rob Anderson  
Barbara Carroll  
Dr. Alison Egan  
Richard Hammond (Chair)  
Fr. Paddy Hennessey  
Hugh McGeown

## **Quality & Safety:**

Gloria Kirwan (Chair)  
Cora Long  
Kara Madden  
Virginia Pye

## **Carer Support & Engagement**

Angela Briggs  
Cora Long  
Kara Madden  
Patricia O'Regan  
Johanne Powell (Chair)  
Marta Soltys

## **Marketing & Fundraising**

Tracey Carney (Chair)  
Pat Montague  
Lynsey O'Donovan

## **Research & Policy:**

Robert Anderson (Chair)  
Angela Briggs  
Deirdre O'Donnell  
Johanne Powell  
Anne Vaughan



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.