

Annual Report and Financial Statements



2025

Contents

Message from the Chairperson and CEO	04
Family Caring in Ireland – The Numbers	07
Objectives and Activities	08
Achievements and Performance	10
Carer Supports: Change, Growth and Development	12
Community Supports	16
National Programmes and Events	22
Specialist Supports	40
Home Support and Respite Services	54
Policy and Public Affairs	60
A New Era in Carer Engagement	68
Family Carers in The Media	72
Research	80
Building Online Connections	84
Membership Community	86
Partnerships and Collaborations	88
Lidl Family Carer of the Year Awards	96
Caring Employers	102
Fundraising	104
Our People	110
Quality and Safety	114
Structure, Governance and Management	116
Future Plans: Consolidate, Build and Deliver	126
Risk Management	128
Financial Review	132
Statement on Relevant Audit Information	136
Directors’ Responsibilities Statement	137
Independent Auditor’s Report	139
Statement of Financial Activities	142
Balance Sheet	143
Statement of Cash Flows	144
Notes to the Financial Statements	145
Appendix	161
Reference and Administrative Details	162

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 through the country. We believe that **no one should care alone.**



Message from the Chairperson and CEO

Family Carers Ireland enters 2026 with a renewed sense of purpose, strengthened by a year of significant progress, organisational development, and deeper engagement with family carers across the country. Our mission remains at the heart of everything we do; to ensure that **no one has to care alone.**

2025 was a transformative year. We supported more family carers than ever before, and our membership grew to just under 15,000.

In 2025, we reorganised our Carer Support Service, leveraging additional funding to ensure dedicated Carer Support Managers and Information Officers in every HSE Integrated Health Area (IHA). This was a major step forward in strengthening our ability to reach and support carers within their own communities.

While funding for the Carer Guarantee fell short of what is required to fully realise its ambition, the addition of these new roles represents a meaningful investment in frontline support. Embedding these positions and strengthening our regional presence will be a key focus in the year ahead.

Key achievements in 2025 included:

- **Tremendous national reach and engagement:** Over 83,000 website users, 542,000 page views, 54,000+ social followers, and 25,000+ calls to/from our Careline and Support Centres, demonstrating strong and growing demand for trusted, accessible supports
- **Critical frontline support at scale:** A monthly average of almost 450 open case files (family carers receiving one-to-one support from a Support Manager), 1,363 assessments, and 6,039 counselling hours delivered, meeting high emotional and practical support needs for carers under pressure.
- **Respite as an essential pressure valve:** 37,716 in-home respite hours and 28,960 emergency respite hours provided, with 400+ emergency referrals, showing the indispensable role of funded respite in preventing crisis.

- **Training and capacity building driving resilience: 354 training sessions, 3,000+ participants**, strengthening carers' skills, safety, and wellbeing.
- **1:1 advocacy that delivers system navigation and impact: 573 advocacy cases and 354 information and awareness raising briefings**, reflecting the complexity of carers' challenges and our role in helping them secure entitlements and support.
- **Growing national community of carers:** Membership rose to **14,716** (with 6,101 new members), showing evidence of trust, visibility, and relevance nationally.

Our emergency respite service continued to provide vital relief to families nationwide. In Budget 2026, we secured €700,000 in recurring funding for our emergency respite service, ensuring long term stability for this essential support. This commitment enables us to plan with confidence and continue delivering timely, high-quality respite to family carers who need it most.

Our State of Caring 2024 research shows that **72% of carers surveyed state they have never received respite**. Demand for our respite retreats remains exceptionally high, with more than 1,500 family carers applying for our respite retreat – demonstrating the critical need for respite to be recognised and delivered as a national priority.

This year also saw important developments in how family carers shape and influence our work. The creation of the National Council of Family Carers (NCFC), approved by the membership at the EGM in May 2025, marks a huge milestone in our journey of supporting family carers. The NCFC convening for the first time in November was a landmark moment. With **34 delegates representing 17 local assemblies**, the NCFC provides a powerful national platform for family carers' voices and lived experience. Under the leadership of President **Johanne Powell** and Vice President **Angela Briggs**, both members of our Board, the NCFC has already begun contributing

meaningfully to our governance and strategic direction.

Following over 30 years of sustained and determined advocacy by Family Carers Ireland, Government has committed to abolishing the means test for Carer's Allowance in its lifetime and delivered the largest ever increases to the income disregards. Budget 2026 introduces a 60% rise in the weekly disregard (taking effect from July 2026) – to €1,000 for single carers and €2,000 for couples – bringing cumulative increases since 2022 to over 200%. These historic reforms mean more carers will now qualify for Carer's Allowance, and many on reduced rates will see their payments increase. We remain firmly committed to advocating for the full abolition of the means test to ensure fair and equitable support for all family carers.

The success of our fundraising efforts has been vital in sustaining our programmes. We are deeply grateful for the generosity and dedication of our supporters, who have enabled us to continue our lifesaving work. We extend our thanks to every volunteer who helped raise funds and increase awareness of the needs of Family Carers – your generosity is so very much appreciated.

Our partnership with **Lidl Ireland** continued to go from strength to strength throughout the year. The 'We Care Back' campaign shone a national spotlight on family carers, raising vital awareness of those who give so much. Across Lidl's 187 stores, we were inspired by the creativity and commitment of staff and customers alike – from spinathons and bucket collections to yet another successful Trolley Dash. We extend our sincere thanks to all Lidl colleagues for their enthusiasm and dedication and to every customer whose generosity reflects a shared belief in the mission of Family Carers Ireland.

We also want to sincerely thank **Eli Lilly and Company** for their support in 2025. Our collaboration over the past year has made a

real difference for everyone involved. Family carers gained greater visibility, received supports tailored to their needs, and enjoyed moments of recognition that helped reduce isolation and highlight their important role. Lilly volunteers also experienced the positive impact of being involved in their communities and saw firsthand the strength and resilience of Ireland's caring families. Together, we made great progress in the first year of this collaboration, and we look forward to building on this success in 2026.

In October 2025, **Standard Life Insurance** selected Family Carers Ireland as their chosen charity for 2025/2026 with funds being ringfenced for psychosocial supports, and specifically counselling, for family carers in need. We are very grateful for their support.

We are also very appreciative of the support that we receive from the **Department of Health** and the **Health Service Executive** for funding significant elements of our work to support family carers across Ireland. In particular, Family Carers Ireland was honoured to be awarded funding from the Department of Health in 2024/25 to deliver an evidence base on women's health issues associated with caring into middle and older age. It will also assess the effectiveness of available supports in promoting living well and living longer.

The Board extends its sincere gratitude to John Dunne, former CEO, whose 15 years of service as CEO laid the foundation for the strong, resilient organisation we are today. We take this opportunity to pay special thanks to our former Chairperson, Robert Anderson, for his leadership, commitment, and contribution to Family Carers Ireland.

Throughout 2025, our staff, volunteers and partners demonstrated extraordinary dedication. Their work, whether supporting carers directly, advocating for policy change, delivering training, or strengthening our organisational systems,

ensures that family carers across Ireland receive the recognition, respect, and support they deserve.

At all times, we are committed to the highest standards of governance and accountability. Our Board continually reviews our compliance with regulatory requirements to make sure we align with best practice in the charity sector, mindful of our responsibilities to all our stakeholders.

Board members also gave extraordinary insight, experience and commitment throughout the year. Each member serves as a volunteer, and 2025 placed significant demands on their time and expertise. Carer elected board members led conversations with our membership across the country, presenting and advocating for the proposed creation of the NCFC. We thank each and every one of them for their stewardship and support.

This report reflects the achievements, challenges and progress of the past year. It also looks forward, outlining our priorities for 2026 and beyond as we continue to build a society that values caring and supports those who provide it.

It is a privilege to serve Family Carers Ireland and to witness how a community of family carers, staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters can bring about real and lasting change. Together, we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that no one has to care alone.

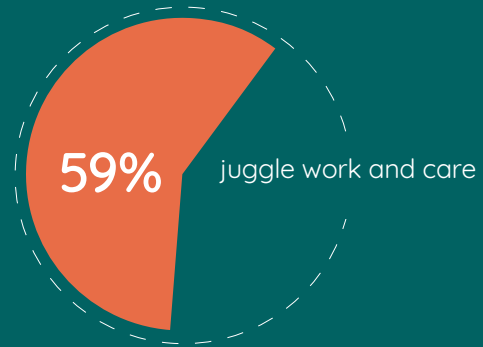


Richard Hammond S.C.
Chairperson
Family Carers Ireland



Sharon Foley
Chief Executive Officer
Family Carers Ireland

Family Caring in Ireland The Numbers



624,190

carers aged over 15 years

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.

More than
19 million hours
of care provided each week

€1.9 billion

spent on income supports for family carers

61,559

young carers aged 10-17 years

More than
€20 billion

The amount family carers save
our State each year

39% Male

61% Female

Of 2,127 current family carers who completed Family Carers Ireland's State of Caring survey in 2024:



72% have never received respite



74% reported that the individuals they support do not receive sufficient formal support



39% 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

Figures are based on the Department of Health's Healthy Ireland Survey 2025; Census 2022; CSO Population and Migration Estimates April 2025; Irish Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Study 2022 undertaken by University of Galway in collaboration with the WHO; data from the Department of Social Protection; and findings from Family Carers Ireland's State of Caring 2024 report. The replacement value of care is based on an hourly rate of €20.

Objectives and Activities



Directors' Report 2025

The directors present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of Family Carers Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Creation of Family Carers Ireland

Family Carers Ireland is a national charity dedicated to supporting an estimated 624,190 family carers in Ireland. It came into existence on 1 January 2016 following the merger of The Carers Association and Caring for Carers.

Key Objective

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

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

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

- Be confident in their individual carer roles;
- Establish and maintain a regular caring routine;
- Feel listened to, valued and not alone;
- Be able to access relevant training, advice and support;
- Be informed of their rights and entitlements;
- Meet and speak with their peers in a safe, relaxed environment;

- Take a break from a demanding and stressful caring role;
- Know where to seek additional support from the State and their community;
- Access emergency supports when needed.

Strategic Plan

The board of Family Carers Ireland 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 (Careline)	12,280	Social Inclusion/Wellbeing Activities	492
Outgoing Calls (Careline and Outreach)	13,118	Social Inclusion/Wellbeing Activities Participants	4,996
Support Group Sessions	614	Information and Awareness Raising Sessions	354
Support Group Participants	3,565		
One-to-One Supports			
Initial Assessments	1,363	Open Case Files (monthly avg.)	442
Carers Outcome Star™	1,911	Clinics	111
Counselling			
Referrals	575	Hours	6,039
Clients	679		
Training			
Training Sessions	354	Engagements with Training Participants	4,527
Training Participants	3,035		
Respite			
In-Home Respite Hours (S39)	37,716	Emergency Respite Requests Delivered	373
Emergency Respite Hours (In-Home and Residential)	28,960	Emergency Plans Registered	62
Emergency Respite Referrals Received	408	Emergency Plans Reviewed	377
Online			
Virtual Activities	368	Website Page Views	542,223
Social Media Followers	54,652	Website Sessions	448,444
Website Users	83,767		
Membership			
New Members	6,101	Total Members	14,716
Renewed Members	8,615		

Carer Supports: Change, Growth and Development



Following an internal evaluation of Carer Supports, the organisation moved ahead in 2025 with restructuring plans, shifting from a model where family carers with acute needs were assigned to an intensive specialist team, to one where they are linked with their local Support Manager. These managers now access technical support from three dedicated Care Group Specialists, part of the strengthened Policy and Public Affairs function, aligned to key life-stage care needs, creating a single, integrated pathway for community-based support.

A new Head of Carer Supports was welcomed in April, and the restructure was completed in June after a series of team consultations which resulted in several new roles being created and some existing staff moving posts. Further team members joined later in 2025 following a major recruitment campaign.

As part of the team's restructuring and growth, a phased transition plan has been developed. A Transition Manager is supporting this work and is working closely with the Senior Management Team to ensure our people, processes, supports, and systems align with the new structure.

By the end of 2025, the Carer Supports service consisted of three teams, with a total of 73 staff.

- One Head of Carer Supports
- Five Senior Managers
- One Transition Manager
- 30 Support Managers (Full-Time and Part-Time)
- 23 Information Officers (Full-Time and Part-Time)
- Three Administrators (Full-Time and Part-Time).

Despite all the change and growth, our focus has remained on providing supports and services that put family carers first. The new team structure aims to align with the HSE Integrated Healthcare Areas, ensuring that services and supports for family carers are planned and delivered in a more coordinated and consistent manner nationwide.

The focus of our Carer Supports team is to improve the wellbeing of family carers throughout and beyond their caring journey by building strong partnerships and delivering high-quality, innovative programmes that provide the right supports based on the identified needs of family carers. The team is made up of our three Community Supports teams, Special Supports team, and National Programmes and Events team.



Carer Supports Team



Community Supports Teams



Our **Carer Supports** team is committed to providing support and services in a way that creates a culture where every family carer:

- is seen as a person first, not just a family carer
- feels heard, valued, and supported when they connect with us
- grows in confidence and strength, rather than becoming reliant on services
- is recognised as the expert in their own life and supported to create a caring routine that works for them
- can both give and receive support from other carers
- is encouraged to draw on help from their family, community, and available public services.

Our **Community Supports** teams provide one-to-one and group support to family carers, creating person-centred plans and using tools such as the Carers Outcome Star™ to guide conversations on key wellbeing areas. They advocate for carers with external services. They also lead community engagement through training, groups, clinics, and signposting; organise our local assemblies; and managing local centres where needed.

National Programmes & Events Teams



Specialist Supports Teams



The role of the **National Programmes and Events** team is to develop and deliver national events and programme resources that enhance our Community Supports teams' capacity to meet the needs of family carers. It includes our Virtual Supports, Education and Training, Careline (National Helpline), Working Care Out, and supports for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers.

The role of the **Special Supports** team is to develop and deliver clinical, psychosocial and crisis supports for family carers. Clinical supports focus on counselling and improving understanding of how caring affects carers' mental health and wellbeing. The team also delivers our National Emergency Respite Scheme.



Community Supports





Thank you and all your colleagues in Family Carers Ireland for the practical help you have given me over the past number of months. You have made a real difference to my life as a carer.”

Family carer assisted by the Community Supports team

At the core of Community Supports team are dedicated teams of Support Managers and Information Officers working remotely or located around the country in one of our 14 Carer Support Centres.

In 2025, our Community Supports team was restructured towards alignment with the HSE Integrated Healthcare Areas, to ensure services and supports for family carers can be planned and delivered more consistently across the country, with three teams in the South, East and West.



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, providing opportunities to meet with other carers and share experiences, and access events that promote mental and physical well-being.

Our online resources and virtual support options ensure that carers can still connect with their peers and receive the help they need regardless of their location. Carers are also referred for regular or emergency respite to give them the breaks necessary to help sustain their caring role.

They also benefit from ongoing education and training tailored to their needs and interests and participate in training sessions that equip them with the skills needed to care for their loved ones while also managing their own wellbeing.

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.

Connecting Carers

Family Carers Ireland recognises the unique advantages of bringing carers together when providing supports, information and gathering feedback. This approach allows us to maximise our reach and resources, gives carers the opportunity to connect with others in a similar situation and empowers them to provide peer support to each other.

Support Managers are responsible for arranging and facilitating a wide range of activities and groups to support family carers. While activities and groups vary, their general aim is to:

- Increase carer knowledge
- Support carer well-being
- Facilitate social connectivity
- Listen to the voice of carers.

Connecting with other family carers, whether through support groups or other social activities, 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.

A small number of the community events that brought carers together in 2025 are listed below.



Family carers from Laois visited Athlone where they enjoyed a trip along the Shannon on the Viking ship.



Family carers from Kilkenny and Carlow came together in Butler House for an afternoon tea full of laughs and chat.



Carers from our Newcastle West support group in Limerick explored the sights and sounds of Listowel.



Community Garda Mary Gardiner met with a group of Tralee family carers in Rahoanane Community Centre for a talk on personal safety.



Wexford carers were treated to a wellbeing event at Johnstown Castle and Gardens as part of our collaboration with Lilly.



Felt artwork created by family carers in Laois and Offaly (pictured above) went on display in Tullamore Library as part of the “Threads of Care” exhibition, an initiative of Laois and Offaly ETB Community Education supported by Family Carers Ireland.



Carers from Cork and Kerry enjoyed a Christmas outing in the Gaeltacht village of Ballyvourney.



Dublin family carers were treated to a wellness event ahead of the busy Christmas period.



An overnight retreat in Knock, Co. Mayo offered family carers a valuable opportunity to rest, reflect and connect with other family carers and their local Support Managers.



A large group of family carers from Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary took a trip to Kylemore Abbey where they enjoyed a tour of the Kylemore Victorian Walled Garden during fabulous weather.



Family carers in Waterford visited the stunning Mount Congreve House and Gardens during National Carers Week.



A new three-month Couch to 5K wellbeing initiative was introduced in South Tipperary which aimed to support local carers in improving their physical health, mental wellbeing, and overall fitness in a supportive and encouraging environment.

National Programmes and Events



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, with communications increasing by almost 33% year-on-year.

In 2025, the service was largely operated by a core staff of three Information Officers (part-time), led by our Careline Manager, who offered a vital listening ear to those in need of support and/or information and signposted those in need of additional supports to the relevant part of the organisation such as their local Community 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 Family Carers Ireland; 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.

One of Careline's most notable achievements in 2025 was the comprehensive coverage provided to coincide with the additional volume of calls received because of Lidl's We Care Back multimedia advertising campaign which encouraged family carers to self-identify. Thanks to a partnership with external call centre Arema and the additional support provided by staff

across the organisation, all calls were handled in a professional, empathetic and informed manner.

Mindful that caring is often 24/7, we are extremely grateful to the Samaritans who continue 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.

Alongside the Samaritans, we would also like to thank Volunteer Ireland and Arema Connect who were key partners in supporting the Careline in 2025.

Caring in Offaly



While working on the CE scheme, I was encouraged and supported throughout my completion of a range of healthcare courses. The scheme also allowed me to gain a lot of experience as well as confidence in my ability to work with people who require assistance and emotional support in their lives. This helped me greatly when I commenced my four-year honours degree in Psychiatric Nursing.”

Testimonial from former Caring in Offaly participant

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.

Our Caring in Offaly (CIO) scheme celebrated 30 years of success in April 2025, with participants engaged in various capacities, ranging from the provision of respite in the home, to office duties in the national office.

Those supporting in-home respite care gain experience through working in family carers' homes, which enables the carer to leave the home and take a much-needed break. This goes hand-in-hand with the required completion of the QQI Level 5 Major Award in Healthcare, training that is a standard requirement for employees in the care sector. Following successful completion of this award, many CIO participants have progressed to third level education.

The scheme provides much-needed administrative support to staff while affording office-based participants the opportunity to gain experience through working in a busy office environment. Administrative participants may choose to study QQI Level 5 in Office Skills, or Business Studies, or other courses that will support their future careers. Of those who have successfully gained QQI Level 5 qualifications, many have also climbed the ladder of success on completion of their scheme.

The progression rate of participants through the CIO scheme onto further education or into employment is very high. The scheme is proud to say that many of its participants have successfully progressed into management or nursing jobs, because of the excellent training and mentoring they have received.

The number of staff working with Family Carers Ireland through the schemes in 2025 included one supervisor, one assistant supervisor, three administrators and 19 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.

Work carried out by our CIO team in 2025 included:

- 12,803 hours of respite delivered to family carers in their homes
- 3,188 admin support hours to Family Carers Ireland teams across services, membership and national office reception.
- Service provision in line with Family Carers Ireland policies, procedures, processes
- Training, mentoring and supervision for CE participants
- Managing the project, i.e. budgets, payroll, Department of Social Protection systems, etc.

We are grateful to the many participants who have worked with us over the years and provided significant support to family carers in the home and to the organisation.



Pictured from left to right are Phil Newton, CE Administrator; Alison Hackett, CE Supervisor; and Lauryn Bracken, CE Administrator.

Education and Training

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. All courses and workshops offered by Family Carers Ireland seek to provide practical, relevant information while

also offering a safe and supportive social space - online and in person - where participants can relax and connect.

In 2025, we expanded our education and training reach to groups and carers who were previously not connected with our organisation by strengthening existing partnerships and developing new collaborations with community and national organisations. Below is a brief overview of just some of the courses and workshops delivered in the year.



Pictured from left to right are David Ryan, Associate VP for Sustainability, SETU; Rosemary Flynn, Director of Lifelong Learning, SETU; Sharon Foley, CEO, Family Carers Ireland; Prof. Veronica Campbell, President, SETU; Tim Conlon, Head of Policy and Strategic Planning, HEA; Leona Davey, family carer, and her son Alex; President Catherine Connolly, President of Ireland; Dr Helen Murphy, Head of Faculty Education and Lifelong Learning, SETU; Michael Kenny, family carer; Nicola McEntee, Project Coordinator, SETU; and Mr Brian McEnergy, husband to President Connolly.

Photo credit: Brownes Photography

Supporting Family Carers Across Ireland Project

“ This project shines a welcome spotlight on the vital, yet all-too-often unseen contribution that family carers across our country perform. Their service is extraordinary, providing compassion, care and stability to loved ones without recognition or reward.”

President Catherine Connolly speaking at the showcase of the Supporting Family Carers Across Ireland project report in December 2025

For many family carers, funded, part-time third-level courses offer the only realistic pathway into higher education. The Supporting Family Carers Across Ireland project, a partnership between Family Carers Ireland and South East Technological University (SETU), has had a transformative effect on the lives of hundreds of family carers across the country, providing access to accredited certificate courses in subject areas that give them the space, knowledge and resources to maintain and enhance their wellbeing and care safely and confidently for their loved ones at home.

Beginning in 2018 with the co-creation of a Level 6 Certificate in Family Caring, which was delivered in nine different regions across the country over the subsequent two years, the project went on to secure €1m in Higher Education Authority (HEA) Systems Performance funding to support its expansion to provide accredited, fully-funded, part-time higher

education courses specifically for family carers from 2022 to 2025.

Courses were 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.

In December 2025, a project report was published showing that:

- 791 family carers completed 43 accredited online programmes (2022– 2025)
- Online delivery removed barriers such as transport, cost, and replacement care, enabling participation from carers across 25 counties.
- 66 students enrolled in multiple programmes, with some completing up to seven courses, demonstrating strong ongoing demand.
- Programmes spanned Levels 6 to 8, covering communication, advocacy, disability studies, health and wellbeing, leadership, equality, and management.
- 661 family carers attended 60 masterclasses held nationwide, fostering national communities of practice and peer-led support networks.
- Partnerships with Women’s Collective Ireland and the Irish Deaf Society expanded access, including delivery through Irish Sign Language.

In February 2026, it was announced that SETU, in partnership with Family Carers Ireland, has received renewed Targeted Enhancement Fund (TEF) support from the HEA to continue the project.



Pictured are family carers from the Irish Deaf Society with Dr Derek O'Byrne, Vice President for Academic Affairs, SETU (third from right), on the day they were presented with their certificates having completed the Level 6 Certificate in Advocacy.



Pictured are some of the family carers who were awarded Level 4 certificates in 2025.

Caring with Confidence

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

In 2025, we were delighted to strengthen and expand our partnership with Laois Offaly ETB, creating a clear and supportive educational pathway for family carers by linking Caring with Confidence with the Level 4 Introduction to Healthcare programme.

We were pleased to pilot this innovative new version of our flagship course with Kilkenny Carlow ETB and Waterford Wexford ETB, reinforcing our commitment to inclusive and flexible learning opportunities for family carers.

The success of this collaboration was most clearly demonstrated in Waterford Wexford ETB, where 11 of 12 family carers not only completed the Level 4 programme, but also progressed together to the Level 5 Special Needs programme, supported by the same tutor and timetable.

Men Carer Workshops

Research suggests that male family carers are often less likely than females to access or reach out for support services during their caring role. 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 Family Carers Ireland.

Family Carers Ireland values its partnership with the Irish Men's Sheds Association and recognises the collaboration as an effective way to raise awareness of our services and supports. We were delighted to deliver our workshops as one element of their 10-week Sheds for Life programme.

In 2025, the programme reached several men's sheds including Ratoath, Broomfield, Slane, Abbeyleix, Moate and Multyfarnham. The impact of this collaboration is evident in the meaningful, open conversations that follow each visit. Many of those attending, who are family carers but had previously not identified themselves as such, and are aware of other men in their communities who are caring for a loved one and know where to turn to for support.

Information about the work of Family Carers Ireland has also been added in to the Irish Men's Sheds Association's official handbook. Our Community Support Managers have confirmed that many men have made further contact with them for additional support as a direct result of attending a shed and making that initial contact.



Members of men's sheds in Ratoath and Slane who participated in workshops delivered by Family Carers Ireland staff Deborah Weafer, Information Officer, and Michelle Collins, Education and Training Administrator.

Parents Plus Special Needs Programme

Family Carers Ireland 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. It was created to help parents better manage challenges, improve their family's wellbeing, and strengthen their connections with other parents.

The three pillars of the course include:

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

Family Carers Ireland recognises the personal knowledge that family carers themselves contribute to this course, with each of the five courses delivered online in 2025 (listed below) co-facilitated by a Support Manager and a parent with lived experience of raising a child with additional support needs.

1. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate intellectual disability with associated autism (ages 7-12)
2. Parents caring for a teenager with mild to moderate intellectual disability with associated autism (ages 13-18)
3. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate intellectual disability with associated autism (ages 7-12)
4. Parents caring for a child with moderate intellectual disability with complex needs (ages 8-16)
5. Parents caring for a child with mild to moderate intellectual disability with associated autism (ages 8-16).

We are delighted to confirm that all parents of children with additional needs who contacted Family Carers Ireland seeking a place on the PPSN courses in 2025 were successful, with all programmes offered based on the identified needs of parents.

Below are some of the themes that emerged from the parent evaluations of the effectiveness of the programmes offered in 2025:

- Impact of the course content, structure and impact overall was very good.
- Discussions and learning from strategies used by other parents proved very useful.
- Participation reduced the isolation associated with caring for a child with additional needs.
- The use of the break-out rooms was very beneficial to parents
- Offering an evening course proved invaluable in supporting access for those balancing care and paid employment.

Last Aid

Family Carers Ireland currently holds the licence to deliver the Last Aid workshop in Ireland. It introduces participants to an educated approach to end-of-life care for loved ones and explores how we can prepare ourselves to reduce stress for everyone involved in this sad, but inevitable, part of our lives.

The four key modules delivered during the workshop are:

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

In 2025, we delivered two face-to-face workshops and one online session.



Thanks very much for the course and information. I found it extremely useful and informative. I had the perception of death in very clinical terms but from my own experience with my Mam when she died at home, it was so important to have that human element and less of the clinical side of things. Planning ahead and making a list of wishes and discussing with family members the preferences, even down to who you want to be in the room, when the time comes, is so important.”

Family carer who attended Last Aid workshop

Communication with Doctors

Developed by Dr Mary Cronin and Professor Sinead McGilloway of Maynooth University and licensed to Family Carers Ireland for delivery, Communication with Doctors aims to help family carers to identify common barriers to effective communication with healthcare professionals. The workshop itself provides practical exercises in applying structured communication tools tailored to home care contexts, with participants given the confidence to communicate assertively about the needs of the care recipients and the impact of caregiving on their own wellbeing.

In 2025, the workshop was delivered in person in ten locations across the country and proved very

popular. Two additional focus groups in Clare and Limerick evaluated the programme to gain a clearer understanding of its real-world impact. These focus groups are being conducted by researcher Mary Cronin and supported by Family Carers Ireland.



Pictured with Family Carers Ireland staff and volunteers are family carers who attended the Communication with Doctors workshops in Kilrush and Naas.

Minding Your Wellbeing

“ It covered everything and more than I hoped for. It showed me the benefit of slowing down and not being on autopilot so much.”

Family carer who attended Minding Your Wellbeing workshop



Pictured are family carers who attended the Minding Your Wellbeing workshop in Co. Clare with staff from the HSE and Family Carers Ireland

We were delighted to continue our partnership with the HSE Health Promotion Team in the mid-west in 2025 and offer family carers in the area the Minding Your Wellbeing programme. The initiative provides a unique opportunity for family carers to learn about the key elements of mental wellbeing, such as mindfulness, gratitude, self-care and resilience. Minding Your Wellbeing aims to provide tools and guidance to help develop and maintain a positive outlook by exploring ways to support family carers' mental health.

We would like to congratulate all family carers who have engaged and benefited from our education and training programmes in 2025 and to extend a warm thank you to our many partners and volunteer facilitators who supported us throughout the year.

Working Care Out

Working Care Out supports family carers who wish to return to paid work or education by providing access to a range of supports including one-to-one wellbeing reviews and a group skills development programme. Supported by the Dormant Accounts Fund, the project was re-introduced in mid-2025, having previously been delivered in 2023 and 2024.

The programme incorporates a newly developed resilience building course – Time to Flourish – which seeks to build the confidence of those who may find the prospect of returning to work and education daunting while virtual clinics are available to family carers offering professional support in establishing realistic goals and exploring solutions to the challenges they may face.

Group skills development courses provide family carers with an interactive, practical and flexible space to learn how best to prepare themselves to fulfil their goals while counselling is made available to attendees, allowing them to work through any emotions which may have been causing an obstacle for them when moving forward in their journey to work or education.

By year end, 62 family carers had completed their first Carers Outcome Star™ wellbeing review, and all were offered one-to-one appointments in our career coach clinic and an opportunity to participate in our skills group development course with bi-weekly check-in support over the phone. A total of 12 family carers returned to formal education, three were successful in securing part-time employment and two took up volunteering activities in their communities.

Three-quarters of those who participated in Working Care Out in 2025 reported that they now feel less socially isolated and in a better place to further their personal goals.

Young Carers and Young Adult Carers



Pictured from left to right are Niamh Finucane, Support Manager, National Programmes and Events; Elayne O'Hara, Support Manager, National Programmes and Events; and Karen McCullagh, Senior Manager, Carer Engagement, visiting Lilly Kinsale in January where they met with the team to plan activity breaks and a school programme to be delivered throughout 2025.

Family Carers Ireland provides a range of supports and activities to young carers and young adult carers throughout the country.

Young carers are children and 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 people 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 2025, our supports for young carers and young adult carers moved to our newly created National Programmes and Events team, with our two excellent Young Carer Support Managers taking up additional responsibilities.

Our work continues to include:

- Respite days
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) days
- SibShops
- Online Groups.

Listed below are just a small number of the highlights of our activities across 2025.

Respite and Activity Days



Thank you so much for thinking of the children in the family who are also impacted when caring for a loved one... It was a fabulous carefree outing, and I understand my youngest opened up a conversation with another child, sharing mutual difficulties (which I never thought he'd do). Thanks for the support of the generous volunteers..."

Parent of young carer who attended a respite activity day as part of our collaboration with Lilly.

Throughout 2025, Family Carers Ireland delivered a range of activities and events designed to give young carers and young adult carers a break from their caring role and an opportunity to meet with their peers in a relaxed and fun environment



A group from the northwest at Zipit Forest Adventures in Lough Key Forest Park.

A highlight in the calendar was a respite activity day for 32 young carers from Limerick, Cork and surrounding areas at Ballyhass Adventure Centre in Mallow organised as part of our collaboration with Lilly and supported by the company's wonderful volunteers – Eilis, Martyna, Chantelle and Clodagh. Lilly Kinsale also hosted a STEM day and hackathon where eight young carers were given a tour of the site and a chance to chat to employees about what it is like to have a STEM-related career.



Young carers attending the Lilly Kinsale STEM day and hackathon.

Elsewhere, young carers from the northwest enjoyed a day of swinging, climbing and ziplining at Lough Key Forest Park in Roscommon while a group from the southeast took part in a team building exercise at The Stables obstacle course in Wexford. The success of these days demonstrated the importance for young carers to get a break, have fun and meet others in similar situations.



Young carers from the southeast pictured at The Stables in Gorey.



Young carers enjoying the aquapark and zipline at Ballyhass Adventure Centre.



A group of young carers from the southeast taking on the obstacle course at The Stables in Gorey.

Sibshops

Sibshops are activity-based sessions designed especially for siblings of children with additional needs. In a relaxed, fun environment, young people can connect with others in similar situations, share both the challenges and the joys of their family life, and feel heard and supported.

In 2025, Family Carers Ireland facilitated eight Sibshops which were attended by 53 young carers from around the country.



A group of children enjoyed the beautiful sensory space during a Sibshop held in the Family Carers Ireland Carer Support Centre in Tullamore.



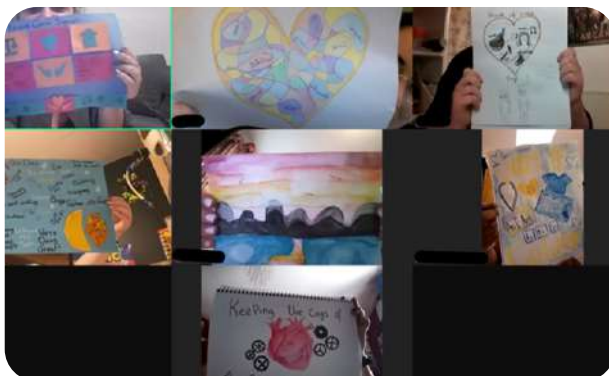
Pictured are young people attending a Sibshop in Sligo.



We partnered with the local Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) to deliver a Sibshop in Swords, Co. Dublin.

Young Carer Online Groups

A total of 62 online support group sessions were facilitated for young carers and young adult carers in 2025. An incredible 374 participants attended the sessions throughout the year and took part in a wide variety of activities, games and discussions.



Young Carers Action Day

Young Carers Action Day, which takes place in mid-March annually, aims to raise public awareness of young carers and young adult carers and the incredible contribution they make by caring for loved ones. It is also a day to call for more action to support young people with caring responsibilities and to give them the support they need to live full and healthy lives.

To mark the day in 2025, a new initiative supported by Family Carers Ireland was launched in University of Limerick (UL) to help students with caring responsibilities. A student carer infographic, which signposts students to the supports available to them at UL, was disseminated across the campus. The project aims to raise awareness and increase support for students who are struggling to juggle their studies with their caring duties at home.



Pictured from left to right are Conor Curran, second year UL student and young adult carer; Elayne O'Hara, Support Manager, National Programmes and Events, Family Carers Ireland; and Breda Moloney, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Limerick.

As part of Young Carers Action Day 2025, we teamed up with Atlantic Technological University to raise awareness and deliver an information session on the Sligo campus. To tie in with the 2025 theme of "Give me a break", tokens for free

tea/coffee were handed out and students and staff were encouraged to enjoy a break, while reading information about Ireland's young carers and the supports and services provided by Family Carers Ireland.

The highlight of activities associated with Young Carers Action Day was a visit by 14 young people to Leinster House ahead of a Dáil debate on a motion by the Labour Party on young carers. Addressing politicians and policymakers in the AV Room, four members of the group gave powerful speeches to call for proper recognition, supports and services for young people who help to care for loved ones at home.



Pictured are young carers accompanied by Family Carers Ireland staff outside Leinster House.



Young Carers in Áras An Uachtaráin

In June, Support Managers Elayne O'Hara and Niamh Finucane were joined in Áras an Uachtaráin by four young carers for a garden party hosted by President Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina who praised them for the help and support they give to their family members.

Pictured from left to right are Niamh Finucane, Support Manager, National Programmes and Events, Family Carers Ireland; Benjamin Buday, young carer; Conor Curran, young carer, President Michael D Higgins; Elayne O'Hara, Support Manager, National Programmes and Events, Family Carers Ireland; and Sarah Anne Buday, young carer.

Eurocarers Young Carers Working Group



Pictured from left to right are young carers Sean Collins; Lucy Connors; Sarah Ann Buday; Shauna Tighe; and Sinead Norris, Support Manager, Corporate Partnerships, Family Carers Ireland.

Four young carers were accompanied by Support Managers Elayne O'Hara and Sinead Norris on a visit to Amsterdam in November a meeting of the Eurocarers Young Carers Working Group.

The group drafted a message to bring to European governments and policymakers:

Across Europe, young carers share the same challenges: invisibility, emotional strain, and limited opportunities. But we also share strength, resilience, and the desire to help shape a better future.

- **Recognise us.**
- **Support us.**
- **Include us.**
- **Act now.**

**This is our Amsterdam Message.
This is our voice.**



Virtual Supports



As part of National Carers Week in June, Family Carers Ireland delivered 30 online events.

Virtual Supports continued to play a central role in extending our reach to family carers nationwide in 2025. Led by our Virtual Support Manager Norah Duffy, we responded directly to family carers' feedback by identifying needs, sourcing high-quality facilitators and delivering a comprehensive programme of online supports aligned with their preferences.

Across the year, Family Carers Ireland delivered 368 virtual events, attended by 2,560 participants, underlining the continued demand for accessible, flexible and meaningful online supports. While eight dedicated virtual support groups met over 83 sessions, with 448 attendees availing of peer support as they shared experiences, advice and encouragement.

New initiatives introduced in 2025 included two sold-out personal development programmes, titled *Living an Extraordinary Life*, which supported carers to reflect on their own identity, aspirations and wellbeing beyond their caring role. We also collaborated with MS Ireland to

establish a new support group for carers of people living with MS, and launched a Carer Speaker Series in which family carers shared their lived experiences with their peers. Topics featured to date include: "Transitioning My Son to Residential Care", "Unschooling My Child", "Making a Will", "Battling for My Mother and Brother" and "A Renewed Way of Living", each offering powerful insights into the realities of caring and the resilience of family carers.

A particular highlight from the year was the publication of *The Writing Well*, a special collection of poetry and prose written by family carers who take part in our nationwide online writing group.

With a varied selection of topics and themes, the book captures the compassion and strength of family carers' lived experiences, while highlighting the value of creative expression as a meaningful tool for connection and wellbeing.

The publication was celebrated with a beautiful online launch in September with words from award winning playwright and poet, Darren Donohue, and readings from the contributors.

Our online forum, managed by our Virtual Support Manager, continues to play an important role in supporting family carers, with membership growing to 1,629 by the end of 2025. The forum now hosts more than 400 topics and over 2,000 posts, providing an accessible resource for members to engage with and for all carers to view. It attracts an average of more than 10,000 views each month, reflecting strong and ongoing engagement.



Specialist Supports



“ I wasn't sure what to expect with counselling as I have never done it before. As a carer, you tend just to get on with things and forget about yourself but I know now I need to care for myself also. Talking to someone without any judgement and focusing on myself has helped so much. Thank you for this wonderful service.”

Family carer who received counselling

National Counselling Service

No. of referrals to service in 2025:	575
No. of family carers engaged with service:	679 (+28%)
No. of clinical hours facilitated:	6,039 (+10%)

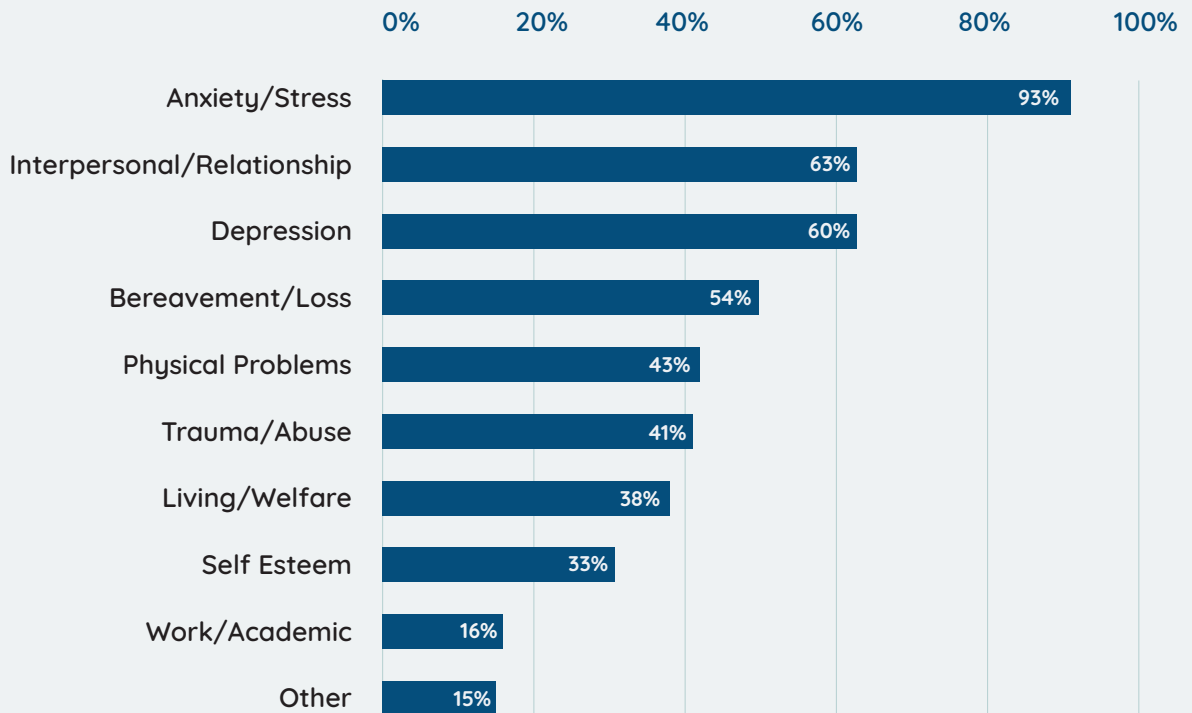
Family Carers Ireland's National Counselling Service aims to support and enhance family carers' mental health and emotional wellbeing by providing a safe, non-judgemental therapeutic space for them to discuss and work through any problems or difficult feelings they are experiencing. The service also aims to empower family carers to develop strategies and acquire tools to stay well within their caring role.

Resources for the service were increased in 2025 with the appointment of a part-time Clinic Manager in June. In addition to carrying a clinical caseload, the Clinic Manager is responsible for the daily operation of the counselling service and provides clinical support and guidance to all staff, volunteers and external panel counsellors as necessary. Additional funding for the service was secured through a corporate partnership with Standard Life in August 2025, which allowed the recruitment of two additional part-time staff counsellors.

Currently, the service is led overall by the Senior Manager for Specialist Supports, managed by the Clinic Manager, and delivered by a team of five part-time staff counsellors, a dedicated Information Officer, five volunteer counsellors and a panel of 35 external counsellors. In 2025, workshops were provided to staff, volunteer and external panel counsellors throughout the year to support the development of their clinical work. Workshops were delivered on neurodivergent informed practice, management of suicidal risk and narrative therapy.

Family carers can self-refer to the counselling service through the Careline or their local centre. Referrals may also come via a wellbeing review with a Support Manager. After a referral, an intake appointment is arranged with a staff counsellor to discuss the family carer's needs, goals, and how the service works. This helps match them with a suitable counsellor.

Identified Challenges at Assessment

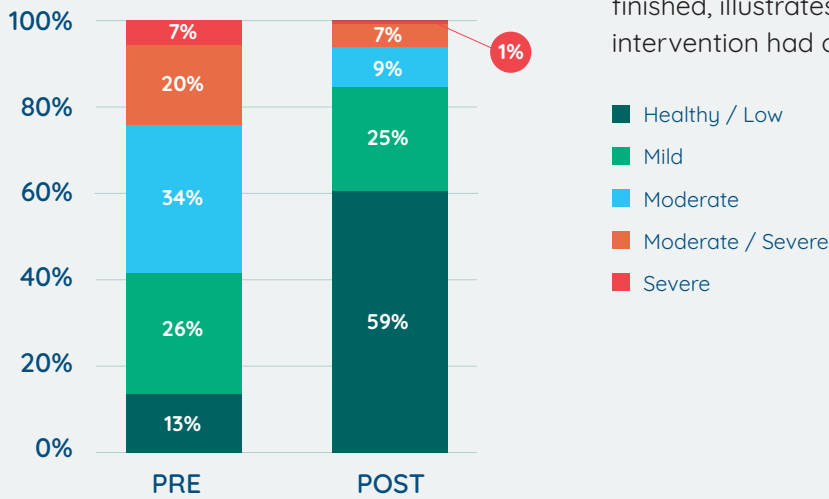


The counselling space allows family carers to say what they need to in the session. In counselling, the counsellor encourages the family carer to talk about what it is that is troubling or bothering them and listens non-judgmentally to what they say. Counselling can help people in different ways. Just 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 four weeks during counselling and at the end of counselling.

In 2025, 519 family carers completed counselling with the service.

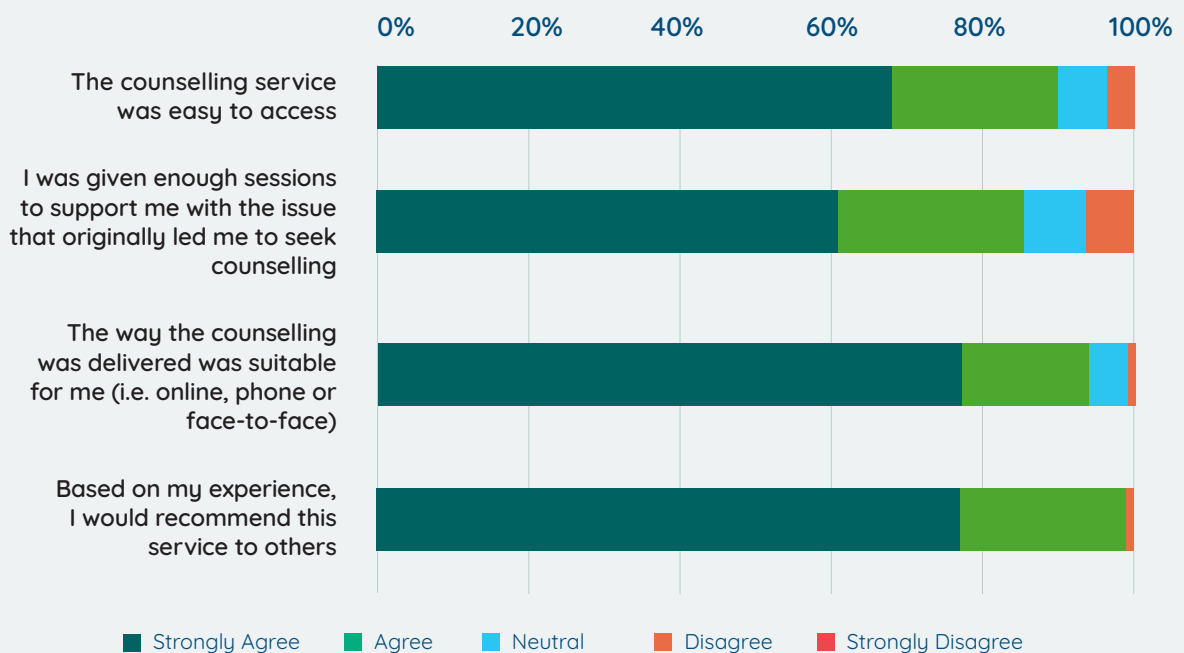
Levels of Psychological Distress Pre and Post Counselling



The graph to the left, highlighting the levels of distress measured by the CORE-OM before counselling began and after counselling had finished, illustrates the positive impact the intervention had on family carers.

When counselling is finished, all family carers are invited to provide feedback on their experience with the service including their working relationship with their counsellor, the outcome of working with their counsellor and their satisfaction with the service. In 2025, 140 family carers who had completed their counselling provided feedback, the results of which were overwhelmingly positive.

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 2025.

“ I am a carer to my elderly mother. [My counsellor] was excellent in the way she listened so intensely to me in all the many aspects of caring for a family member. It was so good to talk things out to a person who understood my situation.”

“ I would like to thank you for providing such an amazing service. The counselling that I received has been so life changing. I learned how to process so much in such a positive way and moving forward, I know I have the skills to help me navigate any challenges that come my way.”

“ I have had counselling before but feel this was the first time I've had proper therapy. [My counsellor] was very supportive and insightful. I learned so much from her, including tools that I will help me going forward. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to have had therapy through Family Carers Ireland. Thank you so much.”

“ Overall, getting to the bottom of why I was feeling the way I was has helped my state of mind, I don't think negatively towards myself anymore and in stressful situations, I'm finding my anxiety to be manageable... I feel like I'm a better mum and carer thanks to [my counsellor]. I can't thank her enough for everything she did for me and my family. I would highly recommend this service to anyone who is struggling, especially the ones who struggle to admit defeat and ask for help.”

Carer Assistance Fund

The Carer Assistance Fund (CAF), funded by Lidl Ireland, is a discretionary fund provided by Family Carers Ireland to support carers who are facing a specific, time-limited challenge in their caring role or who are at immediate risk of burnout (emotional, mental or physical exhaustion caused by prolonged stress within the caring role). The CAF was piloted from October to December 2025.

Support Managers can apply to the fund to purchase goods or services that will provide immediate support to family carers as part of a holistic support intervention.

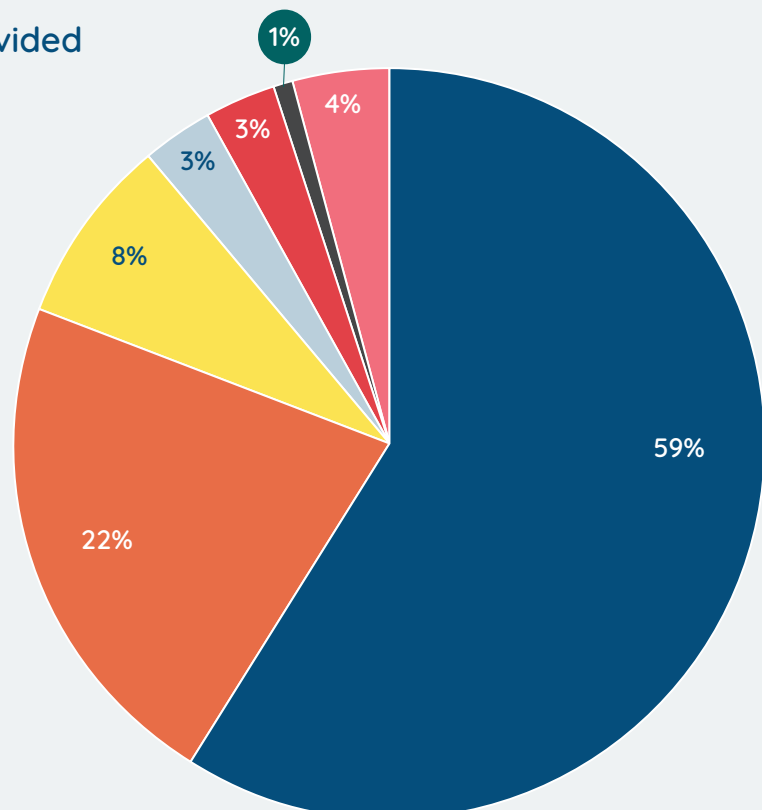
The aim of the CAF is twofold:

1. To relieve as much as possible the immediate impact(s) of current challenges
2. To support family carers to build resilience.

Support Managers who are working directly with family carers submit applications to the fund through an online application form, providing a brief outline of the challenge being faced and the category of support being applied for to relieve that challenge. A total of 74 family carers were supported through the CAF from October to December 2025.

Based on learning from a similar fund run by Family Carers Ireland in previous years, eight categories of support were identified as being available for carers. An exceptional cases category was included to allow other types of supports to be considered, ensuring space for a needs-led approach to the delivery of this fund. The graph below illustrates the percentage of applications to the CAF in each available category.

Types of Support Provided



Every carer who received support was invited to give feedback on their experience, either to their Support Manager or through an online feedback form. The feedback received from 20 family carers highlights the impact these types of supports can have.

“

Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I got such a shock when I opened this because I wasn't sure it was real. It's a full shop. This will make a huge difference. Thank you for thinking of me/us and please send on my thanks to those that sponsored this voucher. I am walking on air.”

Family carer who received a food/clothing voucher

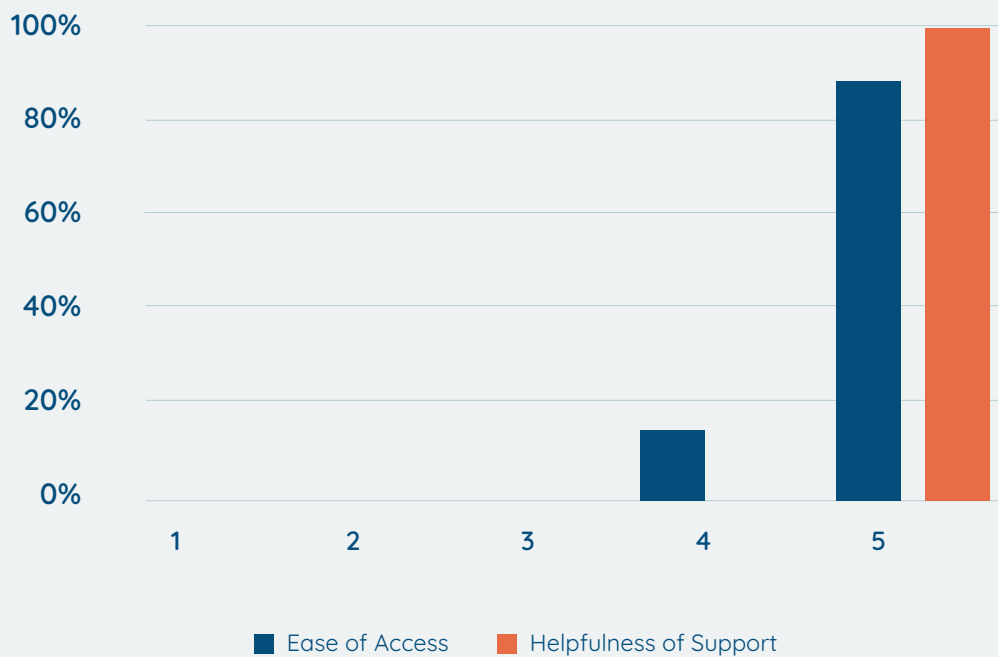
“

We cannot thank your organisation enough for funding our little girl's assessment. We feel like our little girl's voice can be heard now. Your kindness has been an absolute blessing. Your organisation has made it possible to go ahead and secure a special school placement for our child. As a carer myself for our two little girls with additional needs, this funding massively benefits both our girl and our family life and we would like to thank your organisation from the bottom of our hearts.”

Family carer who received funding to support a child's assessment

Family carers were also invited to rate how easy they found it to access the fund, and how helpful the support or service had been to them. They were invited to give feedback rating their experience on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best and 1 being the worst. The majority of carers (88%) responded that they found the process of accessing the fund very easy, with 100% of carers responding that the support/service provided was extremely helpful.

Rating of Carer Assistance Fund



Emergency Respite Scheme

Established in 2021, Family Carers Ireland's National Emergency Respite Scheme is designed to support those caring for older persons, people with disabilities or children with additional needs who find themselves with little or no support at a time of emergency. Emergency respite is defined as substituting for the family carer either by placement of an in-home care worker or the temporary placement of the care recipient outside the home.

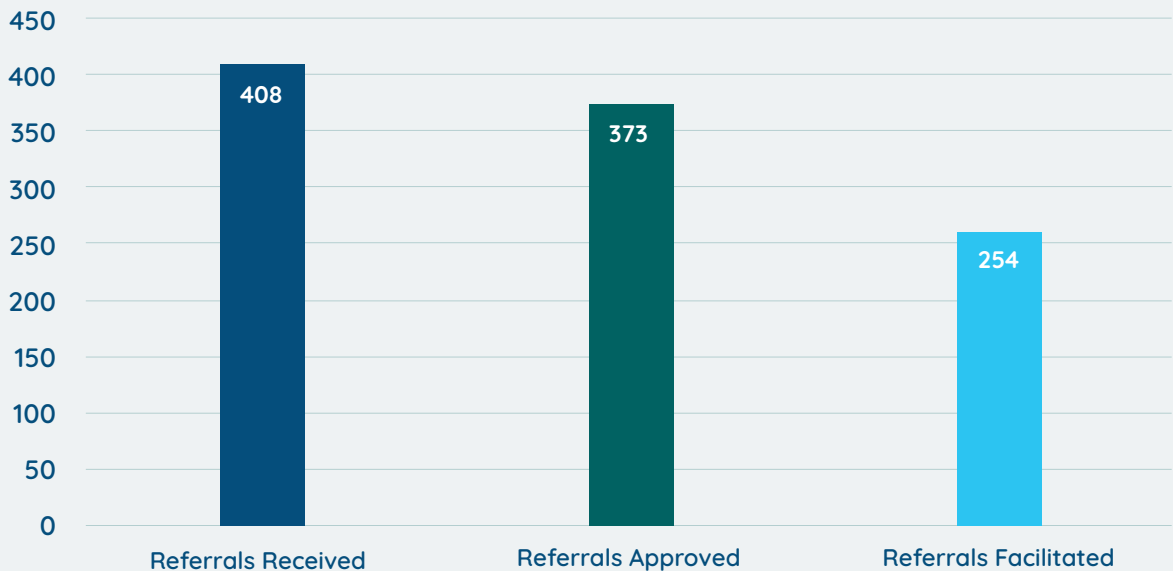
In recognition of its impact and ongoing demand for support, the scheme has been approved multi-annual funding, commencing January 2026, which will support the continued

delivery of the scheme, enabling longer-term planning and service development to support family carers nationwide.

In 2025, the scheme received 408 referrals, the majority of which (91%) met the criteria for an emergency referral and were approved. In total, 68% of approved referrals were facilitated.

The most common reasons for cases not being facilitated was the service was no longer required (e.g. cared-for person admitted to hospital), the absence of an appropriate respite provider, and/or the cared for person/family carer declining respite once a provider had been sourced.

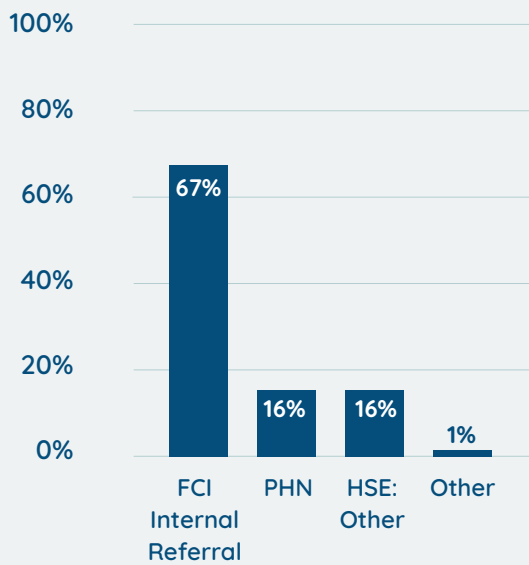
2025 Referrals



Referrals are accepted through staff members and from professionals working in the community (i.e. social workers, PHNs, GPs, etc.).

A review of referral sources indicate that most referrals (67%) were made internally within the organisation, including Support Manager and Information Officers. Public Health Nurses accounted for 16%, while other HSE professionals such as Home Support Co-ordinators also accounted for 16%.

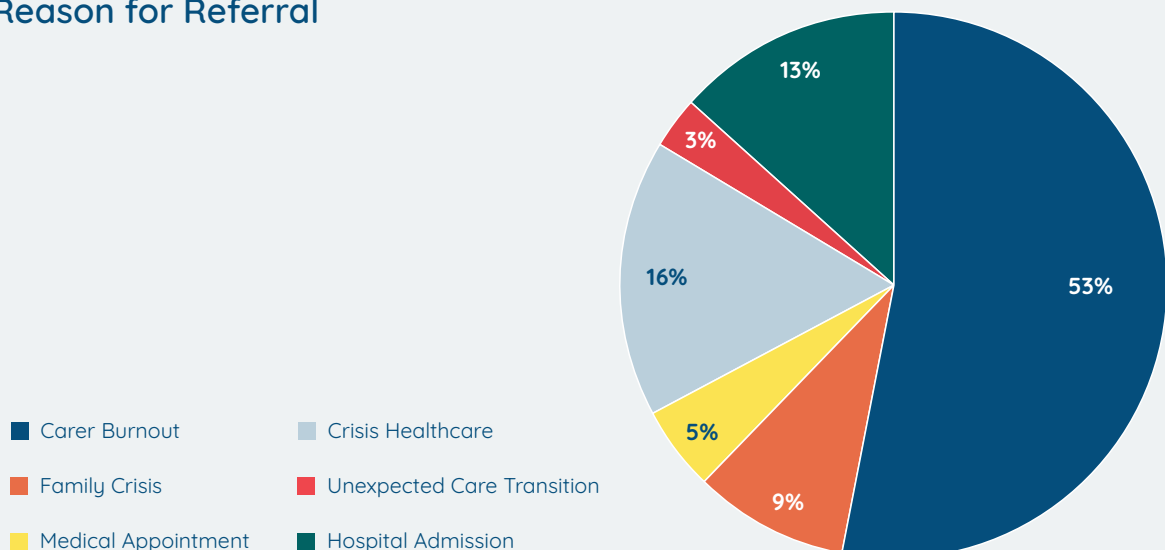
Referral Source



The scheme received the highest proportion of referrals for carer burnout, accounting for 53% of the total. Many family carers have limited or no access to regular, planned respite, which can result in prolonged periods without a break from their caring role. In some cases, they continue in their role for several years without adequate support, eventually reaching crisis point with limited awareness of available options.

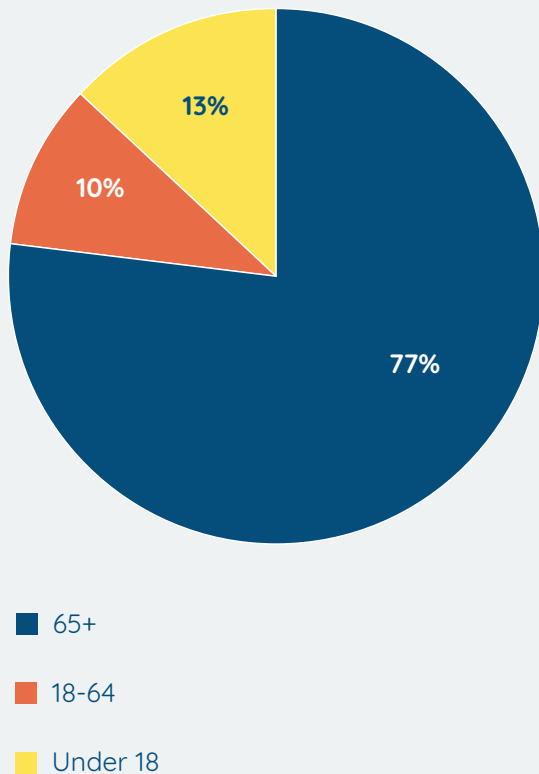
Crisis healthcare referrals accounted for 16% of all referrals, representing the second largest referral category. A referral for crisis healthcare is submitted when the family carer experiences a sudden and significant health event that prevents them from continuing in their caring role. In 2025, circumstances that resulted in a referral being submitted under this category included a family carer being involved in a road traffic accident or receiving a serious medical diagnosis such as cancer.

Reason for Referral



Of the referrals received, the majority at 77% related to care recipients aged 65 and over, 13% were for children and adolescents under the age of 18. Just 10% of referrals were for adults aged 18-64.

Referrals Received Per Age Group



In 2025, family carers could receive up to 48 hours of in-home respite over a period of four weeks, while up to one week of residential respite could be provided. In exceptional cases, the provision of additional respite hours would be considered. During the year, exactly half of facilitated cases involved in-home respite while half involved residential respite.



I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for the emergency respite support I received at a time when I was completely overwhelmed and didn't know where to turn... The respite allowed me to rest, clear my head, and regain some strength during a very difficult period. Even that short break helped me feel more capable of continuing in my caring role and reminded me that I am not alone. The kindness, understanding, and professionalism shown to me throughout the process meant more than I can put into words. I am deeply grateful that Family Carers Ireland was there when I needed support most."

Family carer supported by Emergency Respite Scheme

Psychoeducational Programme

Funding was secured in 2025 for the development and delivery of a resilience programme for family carers. Our Counselling Service developed and piloted Small Steps to Change: Building Resilience into Daily Life, a four-part psychoeducational programme which aims to support family carers to build resilience and enhance their wellbeing. Drawing on knowledge from the fields of health psychology, positive psychology and cognitive behavioural therapy, this interactive, online series of workshops is led by mental health professionals.

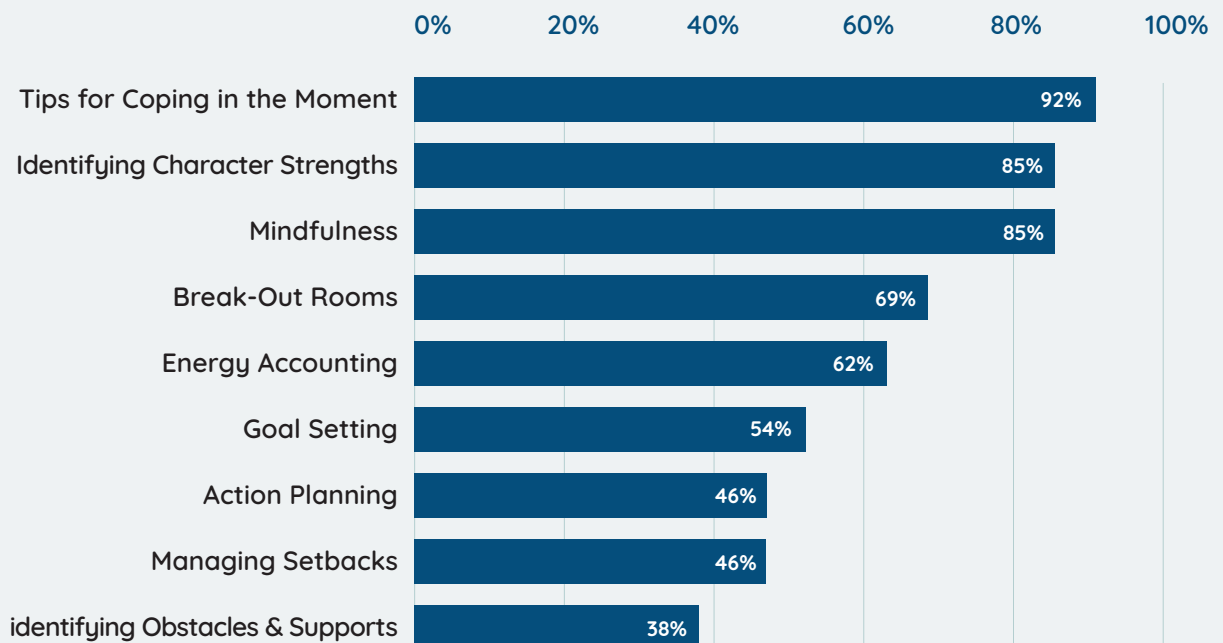
Each session combines evidence-based strategies with practical guidance to empower family carers in building resilience within their lives and their caring roles. The programme aims to create

a supportive, informative environment where participants gain new insight into their thoughts and feelings, and practical tools to create small changes to enhance their health and wellbeing.

The workshop was delivered three times between February and December 2025. In total, 42 family carers engaged with the programme, and feedback from the first two programmes was used to further develop content and delivery. An accompanying workbook was also developed and printed, giving participants a space to record their thoughts, insights and planned actions.

Feedback was received from 13 participants on the final programme delivered over November and December 2025. Overall, 100% of participants said that they found the programme to be helpful, with the following topics identified as being most beneficial:

Most Helpful Topics



Carers were also invited to give feedback on what changes they might make in their daily life as a result of the programme. 'Looking after myself more' and 'taking time for myself' were recurring themes in the feedback received. Another recurring theme was being more mindful in daily life, which included being compassionate with themselves. Other changes identified included:

- Planning and setting realistic goals
- Being more aware of my behaviours
- Being more compassionate with myself and being OK with my feelings
- Better nutrition
- Asking for help.

Suggestions for improvements to the programme included having more time, either longer sessions or over a longer space of time, and the opportunity to stay in touch with other participants after the course had finished. Another suggestion was to record the programme so that people could listen back and dip in and out of the presentations. Finally, some participants named that they would like the opportunity to attend the programme in person in the future.

Participants were also invited to give general feedback on the course, some of which is illustrated below:

“ Really enjoyed the course and found advice and helpful and also helpful listening to other people's ideas and tips to look after yourself.”

“ Great workshop. I learned a lot and felt connected with group participants.”

“ The four sessions I had was great, well-presented and executed. I don't think there could have been better people involved.”



Home Support and Respite Services





Dedication To Quality Home Care

Family Carers Ireland delivers its own professional home support services, grounded in a deep understanding of the realities faced by family carers. The service is designed not only to meet assessed care needs, but also to provide practical relief to family carers.

Our service supports approximately 1,300 clients each year, delivering care across a range of needs and settings. Over the course of the year, the service provides more than 220,000 home visits, reflecting both the intensity of support required and the trust placed in the organisation by families and statutory partners.

The organisation delivers HSE-tendered home support services under the national Home Support Authorisation Scheme, working in partnership with the HSE to support people to remain living safely and with dignity in their

own homes. In addition to statutory provision, we also deliver dedicated family carer in-home respite services, and emergency respite services responding directly to the needs of carers who require flexible, reliable breaks from caring.

“

Thank you for all your help and support over the years. You have no idea how valued the service is. The carers who come in to look after my mother are fantastic. They keep us going and my mother is comfortable and happy.”

Feedback from home support services client

Family Carers Ireland’s home support model is informed by the organisation’s wider work with family carers, including research, advocacy and direct supports. This insight ensures that care is delivered with an understanding of the pressures faced by families, particularly where caring responsibilities are intensive or long-term.

Continuity of care, reliability and relationship-based support are central to the service. Home support workers are matched carefully with clients and families, and services are structured to complement – rather than replace – the role of the family carer.

We are one of a small number of providers who deliver overnight home support as part of the HSE Home Support Authorisation Scheme. Overnight care plays a vital role for families where care needs are high, and caring is required around the clock.

The organisation recognises that, for many family carers, the opportunity to have a full night's uninterrupted sleep is essential to sustaining care at home and protecting family carers' physical and mental health. By providing overnight supports, Family Carers Ireland addresses one of the most acute and often unmet needs identified by carers themselves. Despite repeatedly highlighting to the Government, Department of Health and the

HSE about the lack of overnight service provision in the authorisation scheme, regrettably to date nothing has changed.

Quality is embedded throughout Family Carers Ireland's home support services. Care is delivered in line with HSE service specifications and evolving national standards, with a strong focus on safety, dignity, respect and person-centred practice. Ongoing supervision, training and quality assurance processes support home support workers to deliver consistent, high-quality care.

The scale of the service, the volume of visits delivered each year, and the organisation's ability to provide both day and overnight supports reflect Family Carers Ireland's established role as a trusted provider within the home support system.



Client Satisfaction Survey

Our commitment to quality care is reflected in our 2025 Client Satisfaction Survey, which once again attracted hugely positive feedback. A total of 324 responses were received from 798 surveys mailed to service users, giving a response rate of 47%, a 9% decrease on the 2024 survey.

Key findings included:

- **91%** were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with the quality of care and support provided by their Home Care Worker.
- **89%** were very likely or likely to recommend the home support service to a family member, relative, friend or neighbour.
- **82%** were extremely satisfied that their Home Care Worker arrives on time.
- **90%** 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.
- **86%** answered “Yes” when asked if they are satisfied with the information in their home care folder.
- **89%** stated “Yes” when asked if they know who to contact in their Family Carers Ireland centre should service queries arise.
- **81%** were extremely satisfied or satisfied that their phone calls and emails to office staff were answered promptly.

As was the case in 2024, additional questions were included in the second part of the survey focusing on the amount and type of care that service users need. Family Carers Ireland is keen to understand if current formal HSE home support hours are meeting the needs of our service users.

Feedback from respondents captured in this part of the survey included:

- **42%** currently receive 1–5 hours per week, 26% receive 6-10 hours and 4% receive 16-20 hours.
- **53%** of respondents answered “Yes” when asked if they receive enough Home Support hours for their specific home care situation, while 25% answered “No”.
- **39%** answered “Yes” when asked if they had looked for additional hours from the HSE. When asked if they were successful in obtaining additional hours, only 24% answered “Yes”.

Areas of focus for improvement were collated from the suggestions received from respondents and will inform our ongoing quality enhancement work.

A total of 74 compliments were received from respondents to the survey. Feedback received from service users was overwhelmingly positive.

“ [Our carer] is excellent and provides outstanding care. She is honest, reliable, dependable, and goes out of her way to ensure our blind mother aged 101 can live at home. Thank you.”

“ My carers are helpful, understanding and very nice people. I look forward to our chats, and I am very happy with our current hours.”

“ Look forward to seeing my carer. She will always lift the mood and we have a good laugh!”

“ [Our carer] is a pure godsend to mam. She makes sure she has had dinner, and is great company for her, which has really helped her. We can't speak highly enough of all the girls that help mum.”

“ [Our carer] is kind dedicated, competent, and exceptionally good. I feel so lucky to have her. She is a wonderful person.”

Challenges In Home Supports

Home support and respite services remain critical to sustaining family care arrangements in Ireland. Where available and reliable, these services reduce pressure on family carers, support continuity of care at home, and help prevent avoidable hospital admissions or residential care placements.

Throughout 2025, home support continued to be identified by Government as a priority area within health and social care policy, supported by increased investment and ongoing reform initiatives. At the same time, evidence from family carers, service providers and statutory data indicates that access to services remains uneven, with persistent gaps between approved supports and what is delivered in practice.

In 2025, Government allocated approximately €838 million to home support services, representing the highest level of funding to date. The funding was intended to support delivery of approximately 24 million home support hours nationally, with services reaching around 60,000 people by year-end. Budget 2025 also included a specific €21.5 million allocation to expand home support hours.

However, parliamentary responses throughout 2025 repeatedly noted that increased funding has not always translated into full delivery of approved hours, primarily due to workforce constraints. This distinction between funding allocation and service delivery is particularly important for family carers, as approvals without delivery do not reduce caring responsibilities or provide respite in practice.

Official responses indicate that at the end of 2025, approximately 5,600 people were on a waiting list for home support, either awaiting a new service or additional approved hours.

At the same time, concerns have been raised by providers and sector analysts regarding the accuracy and consistency of waiting-list data held at local HSE level. In several areas:

- waiting lists are not centrally maintained or routinely published,
- data is often only accessible through Parliamentary Questions, and
- differences in local recording practices make national comparisons difficult.

This lack of transparent, standardised data makes it challenging to assess the true scale of unmet need and to plan services effectively, particularly for carers seeking clarity on likely timelines for support or respite.

Throughout 2025, Government consistently identified recruitment and retention difficulties as the principal constraint on delivering home support and respite services.

Workforce stability is significantly hindered by the disparity in employment terms between HSE staff and those in the private or non-profit sectors – sectors that, despite the gap, deliver a major portion of publicly-funded care. These disparities may include differences in:

- job security and contract certainty
- access to pensions and paid leave
- guaranteed hours
- career progression pathways.

Evidence suggests that precarious employment conditions in parts of the sector contribute to staff turnover, directly affecting continuity and availability of care for families. For family carers, this can result in cancelled visits, reduced respite opportunities, and increased reliance on unpaid care.

Legislative And Regulatory Developments

In December 2025, Government approved the publication of the Health (Amendment) (Home Support Providers) Bill 2025, marking the first statutory framework for the regulation of professional home support providers in Ireland.

The bill provides for:

- mandatory registration of home support providers
- oversight and inspection by HIQA and the Chief Inspector of Social Services
- minimum standards set through national HIQA standards and ministerial regulations.

While the bill focuses on quality and regulation, Government has stated that it represents the first stage of a wider Statutory Home Support Scheme, with work ongoing on funding models, assessments and workforce planning. Family Carers Ireland is already well-positioned to meet these forthcoming requirements, having established a robust infrastructure and internal quality standards that align with the anticipated legislative and regulatory frameworks.

Despite regulatory progress in 2025, the home support sector remains in a state of dysfunction. Evidence from family carers shows that service delivery is still inconsistent and unreliable. At the heart of this crisis is a persistent recruitment and retention failure that will only be resolved through decisive Government intervention.

Policy and Public Affairs





Pictured attending the Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection are Gráinne Loughran, Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer, Alone; Seán Moynihan, CEO, Alone; Sinead Tighe, family carer and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland.

Family Carers Ireland is committed to ensuring Ireland's family carers are recognised, supported and empowered by bringing their perspectives and priorities directly to Government and policymakers.

We deliver a range of targeted campaigns to give a voice to carers, raise public awareness and advance carer policy. Our policy priorities are informed by carers and evidenced through our programme of research and regular carer consultations while our lobbying activities take various forms including meeting with political representatives and Government Ministers, presentations before Oireachtas committees, engagement with department officials and policymakers and representation on national committees and working groups.

In 2025, we strengthened our Policy and Public Affairs function through the establishment of three dedicated Care Group Specialist roles, aligned to key life-stage care needs:

- Care Group Specialist – Children (under 18 years)
- Care Group Specialist – Adults (18–66 years)
- Care Group Specialist – Older People (66 years and over).

The introduction of these specialist positions significantly enhances our capacity to undertake informed and targeted policy development, advocacy and lobbying. The Care Group Specialists also provide an important source of expertise and support to the Carer Supports team, particularly in responding to complex and high-need cases.

Collectively, these roles expand our organisational expertise across children's disability services, adult disability services, and supports for older people, strengthening our ability to represent and advocate for family carers across the full lifespan.

2025 Policy Highlights

The policy and public affairs landscape shifted significantly in 2025, highlighted by the formation in January of a new coalition Government comprising Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Regional Independent Group.

Their joint programme for government – Securing Ireland’s Future – sets out a vision to create a more secure, caring and progressive society with ambitious plans to better support family carers by abolishing the Carer’s Allowance means test, increasing financial support, improving access to respite, funding the Carer Guarantee, abolishing waiting lists and delivering greater investment in disability services and supports for adults and children. If delivered, these commitments would mark a significant step toward alleviating the challenges faced by Ireland’s family carers by providing them with the resources and supports they need, when, how and where they are needed.

Family Carers Ireland recognises the significant challenges, competing demands and difficult decisions facing Government. However, the programme agreed sets out a clear roadmap for the actions required to build a more inclusive, secure and caring society. By delivering on these commitments, Government can ensure that family carers and the people they support are placed at the heart of national policy and social progress.

Listed below are some of the notable policy developments in the year.

- Ratification of the new programme for government – Securing Ireland’s Future – which includes 34 commitments for family carers, including a commitment to phase out the Carer’s Allowance means test.
- Formation of a new Cross-Party Interest Group for Family Carers involving 32 TDs, senators and ministers committed to championing carer issues within Government.
- Carer’s Allowance income disregard increased from €900 to €1,250 (couples) and from €450 to €625 (single carers) in July 2025. A further increase was announced in Budget 2026 which will bring the disregard to €2,000 (couples) and €1,000 (single carers) in July 2026.
- Carers can now apply for Domiciliary Care Allowance, Carer’s Allowance and Carer’s Benefit online via MyWelfare.ie.
- Carer’s Benefit extended to include self-employed carers.
- Carer’s Allowance became an eligible payment for the Fuel Allowance scheme.
- €700,000 annual funding secured for the Emergency Respite Scheme.
- €250,000 Dormant Accounts Fund support for Family Carers Ireland’s Carer Pathways Programme, helping family carers to upskill and re-enter or remain in work.

Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group For Family Carers



Pictured at the AV Room, Leinster House, are members of the Cross-Party Interest Group for Family Carers and representatives of Family Carers Ireland.

Following the formation of the 34th Dáil in January, a new Oireachtas Cross-Party Interest Group for Family Carers was established. The group brings together representatives from all political parties and independents and is co-chaired by Deputy Mark Wall (Labour), Senator Pauline Tully (Sinn Féin) and Deputy Erin McGreehan (Fianna Fáil).

The group held its inaugural meeting on 25 June in the AV Room at Leinster House. Key items discussed included updates on the Carer Guarantee, the Emergency Respite Scheme, and a proposal to mark Ireland's presidency of the European Union in 2026 with a dedicated carer-focused event. Attendees also received a briefing on the new Long-Term Carers Contribution Scheme. A second meeting of the group was held on 23 September, to seek the support of the group in advancing the proposals presented in Family Carers Ireland's pre-budget 2026 submission.

Digitalisation Of Carer Payment Applications

In May 2025, the Department of Social Protection announced the launch of a new online application service for Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) via the MyWelfare.ie portal. This digital shift aims to streamline the DCA application process for families, allowing them to upload necessary medical reports directly through a verified MyGovID account. In November, the expansion of online services was extended to include applications for Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit, enabling carers to submit claims and supporting documentation, such as employer or education certificates, without relying solely on paper forms.

These updates represent a significant move toward modernising public services and making the application process for care-related payments less onerous on family carers.



Pictured from left to right are Lynsey O'Donovan; Jack O'Donovan; Moira Skelly, Ciara Skelly; and Paul Skelly.

1. Abolition of Carer's Allowance means test.

2. A fair and adequate income for carers.

3. A right to respite.

4. Deliver the Statutory Home Supports Scheme.

5. Fully fund the Carer Guarantee.

6. Prioritise supports for children with additional needs.

7. Deliver housing, transport and climate justice.

8. Support working family carers.

Budget 2026

Family Carers Ireland's pre-budget submission was launched on 3 July at Buswells Hotel, Dublin. During the launch, we welcomed the commitments made to family carers in the programme for government and urged members of the newly elected Oireachtas to use Budget 2026 as an opportunity to deliver on those promises and send a clear signal of their determination to improve the lives of family carers.

The submission, titled Ensuring No One Has to Care Alone, outlined eight pillars of change essential to support and recognise the invaluable contributions of family carers.

As part of the pre-budget campaign, Support Managers along with family carers met with their local Government TDs to seek their support in progressing the priorities outlined in our submission.

Nationally, Family Carers Ireland appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection to discuss family carers' priorities for Budget 2026, attended the Department of Social Protection's annual pre-budget forum, and met with several key Government ministers.

Budget 2026: Summary of Key Announcements

Social Protection:

- Increase in the Carer's Allowance income disregard from €625 to €1,000 (single carers) and from €1,250 to €2,000 (couples) (July 2026).
- Weekly social welfare payments, including Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit, will increase by €10 with proportionate increase to Half-Rate Carer's Allowance and Increase for Qualified Adult payments (January 2026).

- DCA will increase by €20 to €380 per month (January 2026).
- Christmas bonus double payment (December 2025).
- Weekly Fuel Allowance rate will go up by €5 per week to €38 (January 2026).
- Child Support Payments will increase by €8 for children under 12 (up to €58) and by €16 for those aged 12 and over (up to €78 per week).
- Eligibility for Fuel Allowance extended to those receiving Working Family Payment (March 2026, with payments backdated to January 2026).
- Income thresholds for the Working Family Payment increased by €60 (January 2026).
- Back-to-School Clothing and Footwear Allowance extended to two and three year olds subject to means test (June 2026).

Health and Disability:

- €3.8bn for disability services – including 250 new residential care placements and day service supports for 1,400 young people finishing school, and 50 places for older adults
- Funding for 6,500 private Assessments of Need.
- 150,000 hours of home support, 10,000 overnight and 15,000 day respite sessions for people with a disability.
- New dedicated unit established in the Department of Children, Disability and Equality to lead a full review of Ireland's disability service model.

Special Education:

- 1,717 additional SNAs (bringing total to almost 24,900).
- Additional 1,042 teacher posts, including 860 additional teachers working across various special educational needs settings including in mainstream, special classes, special schools.
- New Education Therapy Service to roll out therapy supports directly into special schools.

Notification Of Taxation Of Carer's Allowance And Carer's Benefit

From 1 January 2026, Revenue will be automatically notified when an individual is awarded Carer's Allowance or Carer's Benefit. This new arrangement replaces the previous system, under which family carers were required to self-declare receipt of these payments to Revenue. Depending on individual circumstances, this change may or may not result in a tax liability.

The communication of this automatic notification caused understandable concern and confusion among many family carers. It is important to emphasise that this measure does not represent any change in taxation policy, as both Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit have always been taxable sources of income. Instead, it removes the obligation from the carer to make this declaration themselves.

Family Carers Ireland continues to campaign for Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit to be made tax-exempt, in line with comparable social welfare payments such as Jobseeker's Allowance and Disability Allowance.

Annual Carers' Forum



Pictured from left to right at the Annual Carers' Forum 2025 are Zoe Hughes, Senior Policy and Research Officer, Care Alliance Ireland; Dara Calleary, Minister for Social Protection; Sinead Tighe, family carer; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland.

On 28 May, staff members and family carers attended the Department of Social Protection's Annual Carers' Forum, held at Pearse Street, Dublin. The forum provides an important platform for family carers to highlight the challenges they face and to engage directly with policymakers.

Representatives from several Government departments were in attendance, including Social Protection; Housing; Health; Children, Equality and Disability; Transport, and Further and Higher Education. Key stakeholder organisations, including the HSE, the National Transport Authority, and Tusla, were also represented.

During the forum, Family Carers Ireland's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox and family carer Sinéad Tighe delivered a presentation on Delivering the National Carer Guarantee. The Department of Social Protection has circulated a report on the forum's proceedings amongst those who attended.

Special Education Consultative Forum

The Special Education Consultative Forum brings together five key stakeholder organisations – Family Carers Ireland, Inclusion Ireland, AslAm, Down Syndrome Ireland and the National Parents Council – to engage with representatives of the Department of Education and the National Council for Special Education on matters relating to special education.

The forum provides a structured platform for discussion on policy developments, challenges, and priorities in special education, ensuring the perspectives of families and advocacy groups are considered in decision making. It met five times during 2025 to discuss matters including special education provision, the introduction of the new Education Therapy Service, codes of behaviour guidelines, guidelines for behaviours of concern, the summer programme and school attendance.

In May 2025, forum members met with Minister Helen McEntee and Minister Michael Moynihan to discuss their respective priorities for enhancing and delivering education provision to better meet the needs of students with additional needs.

Free Legal Advice Clinics

Family Carers Ireland continued to deliver free legal advice clinics to family carers throughout 2025, offering advice on general legal issues. The project, which is delivered in collaboration with Community Law and Mediation, gives family carers access to a solicitor to discuss legal issues relating to employment, wills and legacies, social welfare, housing, and family and child law. A total of 48 legal advice clinics were provided to family carers during the year.

Policy Submissions and Care-Related Dáil Motions

Family Carers Ireland 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 2025:

- Submission to the Department of Health on the development of Protection of Liberty Safeguards.
- Submission to Solas and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science: Delivering on Ireland's Skill Needs in Home Care and Disability Services and Supporting Young Adult Carers in Further Education and Training.
- Submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs in response to its consultation on the development of the priorities and policy programmes for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2026.
- Submission to the Department of Children, Disability and Equality on its Statement of Strategy.
- Submission to the Loneliness Taskforce on the development of a National Loneliness Strategy.

Below is a list of motions that were brought before the Dáil for debate during 2025:

- Action for Young Carers (Labour Party) – 20 March 2025.
- Fair and Sustainable Funding for Carers, Home Support and Nursing Homes Support Schemes (Independent Ireland) - 21 May 2025.
- Abolition of Carer's Allowance Means Test (Social Democrats) – 1 October 2025.
- Cost of Disability (Sinn Féin) - 14 October 2025.

A New Era in Carer Engagement





Pictured attending the first meeting of the National Council of Family Carers are delegates and Family Carers Ireland representatives.

After four years of discussion and development, the members of Family Carers Ireland unanimously approved changes to our constitution at the AGM held on 13 September 2025. Under the new constitution, the National Council of Family Carers (NCFC) is the primary means by which the board fulfils its duty to facilitate the engagement and take counsel of family carers throughout Ireland.

The approved constitution sanctioned the creation of a council made up of family carers that marks a significant change in how carers' voices are heard. Previously, engagement depended on local availability and forums and for the first time, family carers now have a continuous, structured channel to shape national policy and ensure a grassroots voice connects every county to the national stage.

“

I am very proud to have been elected as the first elected President of the new NCFC and I will work alongside our Vice President Angela Briggs and the elected delegates from each of our local assemblies to ensure the new carer engagement structure delivers on the following commitments to family carers - policy and advocacy are driven by the lived experience of family carers; family carers help shape, not simply responding to it; family carers have a stronger voice in both policy and programme development and a national movement of family carers is mobilised throughout the country”

Johanne Powell, President, NCFC

There are five core elements to the new carer engagement structure that will work collaboratively to escalate the voice of family carers to the board of directors who under the new constitution are legally obliged to consider recommendations so long as they are in line with Family Carers Ireland policies and budget.

Local assemblies are established throughout the country providing a direct link between local discussions and national decision making. Family carers from every county can now participate in discussions of importance to them and Family Carers Ireland.

Local assembly delegates are elected by their peers to represent their voice at meetings of the NCFC and general meetings of the organisation such as the AGM. They also communicate information and updates from these meetings back to their local assembly. Each assembly can elect two delegates.

The **Steering Committee** of the NCFC is comprised of elected delegate representatives from each of the six Regional Health Authorities along with the elected President and Vice President of the council. They agree the agenda for council meetings in consultation with management of Family Carers Ireland including consolidating feedback and recommendations submitted by the local assemblies.

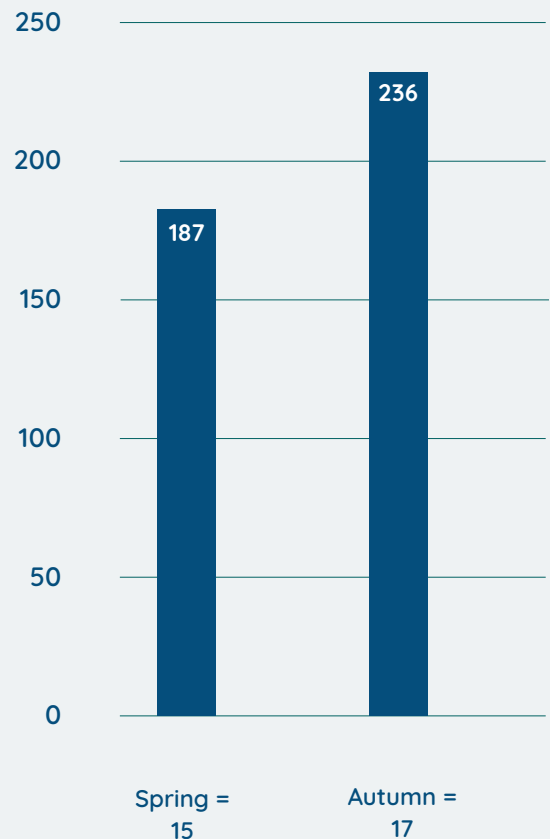
The **NCFC** is all the elected local assembly delegates plus the President and Vice President of the Council.

The President and Vice President are elected members who chair the meetings of the council. They are ex-officio members of the board who attend meetings to represent the views of family carers throughout Ireland and facilitate effective dialogue between the board and the council. Johanne Powell and Angela Briggs were elected

as the President and Vice President respectively in October 2025.

In 2025, Family Carers Ireland held 32 local assembly meetings (with 17 distinct local assemblies established by year end) to hear directly from family carers about their needs. Their feedback was presented at the inaugural meeting of the NCFC on 8 November which identified the major issues facing family carers and their priorities to the Family Carers Ireland staff and board. Respite, fair payments, stronger representation and better supports have been highlighted as key issues going forward.

Local Assemblies and Attendance 2025



Based on the feedback received, the following outlines how Family Carers Ireland will act in the coming year:

- **Stronger Representation:** We will continue to support the NCFC and local assemblies, ensuring family carers' voices are heard nationwide.
- **Participation Supports:** Travel policies and resources will be reviewed so all carers, including those underrepresented, can take part.
- **Respite Care:** Securing €700,000 for emergency respite in Budget 2026 was a major win. We will roll out a plan for emergency respite services, lobby for a national respite policy, and expand our respite weekends to three per annum.
- **Carer Guarantee:** Family Carers Ireland is working with the Department of Health on a three-year plan to ensure equal access to supports for all family carers.
- **Home Care:** As part of the Home Care Coalition, we continue to push for a statutory right to home care and maintain high standards in our own services.
- **Payments and Entitlements:** While the means test for Carer's Allowance remains, the income disregard has increased, allowing

more people to qualify. Family Carers Ireland will keep lobbying for fairer payments and simpler application processes.

- **Legal Supports:** We will re-establish legal clinics and engage with the Decision Support Service to address family carers' concerns about the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act.
- **Government Lobbying:** We are actively campaigning with Department of Health, Department of Children, Disability and Equality and Department of Finance to enhance supports available to family carers and their families.

This new carer engagement structure would not have been possible without the passion, commitment and dedication of the six members of the Carer Support and Engagement Committee who worked tirelessly alongside the board to make it a reality. A sincere thanks to Anglela Briggs, Cora Long, Johanne Powell, Kara Madden, Marta Soltys and Patricia O'Regan, who continue to represent family on the Steering Committee of the NCFC.

Old

- Board meetings focused on governance, leaving little space for policy discussions.
- National meetings (EGM/AGM) governed by legal obligations, restricting flexibility on carer issues.
- Family carer representatives on the Board have no direct, continuous way to engage with carers nationwide.



New

- The Board focuses on governance, while the National Council focuses on carer-led policies
- National Council meetings are flexible, carer-driven and focused on real issues.
- Delegates from every local assembly ensure a direct connection between local carers and national decision-making.

Family Carers In The Media



Showcasing the realities of family carers' lives and influencing public policy to better support them are central to Family Carers Ireland's work with the media at both national and regional levels. We aim to recognise and celebrate the invaluable contribution of family carers while also raising awareness of the challenges they face - challenges too often exacerbated by an absence of adequate State supports and services.

Across 2025, family carers bravely shared their experiences with the media as they battled to secure proper recognition, adequate income, and practical supports for themselves and their loved ones. Many spoke out about worsening financial hardship, exhaustion, isolation, and constant battles

to access basic services such as assessments, therapies, home support services, and appropriate long-term care for their loved ones.

A common theme throughout the year, particularly in the wake of the general election in late 2024 and the new coalition taking office in early 2025, was family carers challenging the gap between the promises made by politicians and the delivery of those commitments.

Below is a brief snapshot of media coverage relating to family carers across the year.



January

Following the publication of the draft Programme for Government, Family Carers Ireland's Head of Communications and Policy Catherine Cox appeared on Morning Ireland on RTÉ Radio 1 to react to the commitments related to family carers, in particular, the promise to abolish the means test for Carer's Allowance in the lifetime of the Government. Describing the pledge as a "pivotal development", Catherine warned that the words must be backed up by actions:

“ Whilst we welcome this, we are not naïve. We know that this is actually just the first hurdle, which was to get this into the Programme for Government... It's taken us years to get this far, but now we have to get it done and we have to turn this pledge and all the other commitments into reality, and we know from previous experience that just because it's in the Programme for Government, doesn't mean we will get this done.”

February

Writing in Letters to the Editor in the Irish Independent, Kildare family carer Aisling McNiffe, who cares full-time for her son Jack, said she was appalled by suggestions that abolishing the means test for Carer's Allowance could cost the Government €3bn a year. She urged the coalition to live up to its commitment and truly recognise the value of the contribution made by Ireland's family carers:

“ Nearly three years ago, a study was carried out by Family Carers Ireland into the costs of caring. I took part in the study as I look after my son, who requires 24-hour nursing care. There are over 500,000 family carers in Ireland, and their unpaid work saves the State over €20bn a year. The equation here is quite simple: €20bn minus €3bn leaves you with €17bn. So, we will still be saving at least €17bn by caring for our loved ones at home, but at least we would get paid for it, which is what people need to make ends meet. Many carers and people with disabilities are living in poverty... Carers were promised in the- runup to the election that the means test would be abolished in this Government's tenure. Was that another empty promise? Scrap the means test.”

March

The appearance of 14 young carers in Leinster House (ahead of a Labour Party motion calling for a comprehensive strategy on young carers) attracted coverage across national media including RTÉ (TV, radio and online) and Newstalk. Among those who addressed Oireachtas members were Benjamin Buday and his sister Sarah Ann from Co. Galway who care for their younger sibling Esther who has Down syndrome and complex medical needs.



Pictured from left to right are Benjamin Buday and Sarah Ann Buday.

Speaking to RTÉ, Benjamin called for more “physical help” for young people with caring responsibilities, while Sarah Ann said that schools need to understand the pressures young carers face at home:

“ I want teachers to be able to recognise the fact that you are a young carer so they’re not harsh with you because let’s say you have a project and there’s a deadline and you just can’t make the deadline because you’ve been in a hospital two nights in a row. It’s quite impossible... They need to put themselves into our shoes for three minutes and just think about what were going through.”



Pictured at Kilkenny Castle for the launch of Family Carers Ireland’s Step Up for Family Carers 5K Fun Walk are Danielle Dunne, Support Manager, Family Carers Ireland; Mick Galwey, Irish rugby legend; and Lisa McCormack, family carer.

April

The Step Up for Family Carers 5k fundraiser featured prominently across local and regional newspapers and radio stations. Kilkenny family carer Lisa McCormack, who cares for her son Rian and helped launch the event at Kilkenny Castle, was quoted in the Kilkenny People encouraging the public to lend their support:

“ Caring for a child with additional needs can be demanding, exhausting and, at times, isolating. The challenges can be overwhelming, and that’s why support matters. I’m so grateful for my friends and family, and I hope this walk encourages more people to stand with carers. By taking part, people are sending a powerful message - we are seen, we are valued, and we are not alone. This isn’t just about raising funds; it’s about recognition, visibility and ensuring no carer is ever forgotten. That kind of support makes all the difference.”

May

Jane Johnstone from Wexford, who cares full-time for her two adult sons Evan and Daniel who are autistic and have complex medical needs, texted into the Hard Shoulder on Newstalk following a demonstration outside Leinster House highlighting the large number of children awaiting an assessment of need for six months or longer and to discuss the challenges in accessing vital therapies. Jane highlighted the fact that parents of children with additional needs constantly have always had to fight to secure basic supports and services:

“ I couldn't help but feel a sense of Groundhog Day. Going back 25 years ago, which is a quarter of century since Evan was born and a couple of years later since he was diagnosed, myself and my late husband would've attended many protests outside of the Dáil. The issues may have been slightly different - there was no assessment of need because the Disability Act pre-dated Evan's diagnosis, but the barriers were always there.”

June

National Carers Week and the Heart of Gold fundraising campaign featured heavily across local and national media, with the Irish Independent highlighting both in an interview with Maura Fahy from Co. Galway who cares full-time for her mother Helena and previously cared for her late father.

Maura, who spoke of the inadequacy of financial supports for family carers and a lack of home help, said she worries that she is not doing enough for her mother:

“ I feel guilty that I'm not caring for her in the right way because I'm not a nurse... Menopause doesn't help either. I know women are used to multitasking, but when you're presented with all of these things at once, you think, 'how am I actually going to get through them?'. I'm being stretched to the hilt mentally, physically and emotionally, and I worry about what will happen if something happens to me.”

July



Pictured at the launch of Family Carers Ireland's pre-budget submission is Damien Douglas with his 30-year-old twin daughters Una, left, and Ailis, right.

Damien Douglas from Co. Dublin, who alongside his wife Mary cares for their twin daughters Una and Ailis who have Wolf-Hirschhorn syndrome, was among a number of family carers interviewed by national media at the launch of our pre-budget submission.

Speaking to Virgin Media News, Damien highlighted the need to work with family carers as they grow older to ensure their loved ones have appropriate residential care in future:

“What we could do 10 years ago very easily we can't do as easily now. And certainly in 10 years' time, I think it's going to be far more difficult. And the fear is that if something were to happen catastrophically to either of us, and we weren't able to manage, that the girls might be put in a nursing home or somewhere inappropriate where their needs will not be met.”



Pictured from right to left are Tracy Carroll, family carer; Willow Carroll; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland.

August

A number of family carers spoke to Lunchtime Live on Newstalk in reaction to comments from a long-standing senator that FEMPI (Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest) cuts to certain incremental payments for Oireachtas members should be reversed.

Tracy Carroll from Co. Meath, who cares for two children with additional needs, reminded listeners that many family carers are struggling to get by:

“Everybody suffered in the crash and many people never recovered from that and especially the disability sector and carers. I mean, the resources were significantly cut from the disability sector and we've never got back there. You know the crisis that's faced every day by especially children with disabilities not being able to access supports and services and families really, really struggling financially without disability in the home. I mean like it's polar opposites at times and the divide is increasing day after day, and senators and TDs are on a significant salary. Family carers are really struggling and 69% of carers find it really difficult to make ends meet.”

September

Four young carers were among the guests invited to President Michael D Higgins' final community day garden party in Áras an Uachtaráin which celebrated the contributions made by individuals across the community and voluntary sector.

The event was featured on RTÉ's Nationwide, with presenter Bláthnaid Ní Chofaigh chatting to young carers including 2024 Munster Young Carer of the Year Ellie Gannon:

“ I’m here today because I won carer of the year and was invited to come up here. I have two brothers Andrew and James Gannon – they’re both 10 years old and they’re twins. They both have non-verbal autism. I help them when they’re eating their breakfast, I help them put on their clothes sometimes in the morning and I play with them a lot.”

Asked if she enjoyed helping her brothers, Ellen replied “Yes, I really like it.”

October

The impact of the measures announced in Budget 2026 on family carers was carried across multiple media outlets including on RTÉ’S Prime Time, with Dublin family carer Sinead Tighe among those giving her reaction during a panel discussion.

Sinead, who cares for her teenage son Daniel who has a rare genetic condition, was asked what a €10 weekly increase in Carer’s Allowance would do for her:

“ It doesn’t help me at all. I don’t mean to be smiling but I think if you look at what carers save the State a year, it’s billions and I think that’s an insult to us. I think they had every choice to abolish the means test. There’s has been some welcome measures, the disregard going up, but really to allow all carers to access the Carer’s Allowance and actually to give us a more adequate payment for the work that we do. You know 24-hour care, €270 a week, that’s less than six cent an hour for that care. And is that all that I’m worth for the work that I do?”

November

All major national print, broadcast and online news media reported on the Lidl Family Carer of the Year Awards with a number of recipients interviewed across various outlets.

Speaking to Evoke, National Family Carer of the Year Angie Benhafaff from Co. Cork, who cares for her twin teenage boys Hassan and Hussein who were born conjoined, spoke of how much it means to have the support of others:

“ We came up to Dublin yesterday and we just took a trip down O’Connell Street and there was so much warmth shown to the family. I had a lady last night in O’Connell Street said, ‘We always feel like the boys are part of our own families’, and it’s quite endearing, I suppose, that we’re held so close to people’s hearts still. Everyone kind of feels they’re part of the journey, which makes it easier because you feel a lot of times, I suppose when you’re caring for children, a lot of the times it can be a very lonely journey.”



Pictured are Leona Davey, family carer (centre) with her son Alex Davey (left), and President Catherine Connolly (right). Photo credit: Brownes Photography

December

The attendance of President Catherine Connolly at the showcase of the Supporting Family Carers Ireland project report, a partnership between SETU and Family Carers Ireland, featured on RTÉ.

Family carer Leona Davey from Co. Cavan, who cares for her son, her daughter and her husband, told RTÉ that despite having some concerns about returning to education, she found the experience to be hugely beneficial:

“ I was accepted and I was delighted and the first course that I did was Learning to Learn at Third Level. That was a very exciting course, but it was very academic and I was a bit scared about that, thinking I wouldn't be able for it. But once I did it and with the support from the college and Family Carers, I went, if I can do this, I can do anything.”

Research



Family Carers Ireland continues to generate and support research that meaningfully involves family carers and is accessible and useful to a wide range of stakeholders, including family carers, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and the wider public.

Highlights from 2025 included our fifth annual research conference in December and continued collaboration with our Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) panel, whose members contributed to a range of research projects on caring. This work was complemented by ongoing partnerships with a broad research network, helping to extend the reach and impact of our research activity and strengthen our collaborative, practice-focused research programme.

Research Conference: Partnership from Research To Practice

The fifth edition of our annual research conference was held in 2025, with over 60 people attending the event which was held on 3 December at the Ashling Hotel in Dublin and chaired by Johanne Powell.

The conference is designed to engage a broad range of stakeholders on issues related to family caring, including family carers, researchers, health and social care practitioners, representatives of Government departments, statutory bodies and NGOs. It provides an opportunity for attendees to hear about recent family carer-related research and to explore how research can be translated into practice and policy impact.

We are committed to meaningful PPI and a core element of the conference design was ensuring that family carer perspectives were central to research discussions. The programme included contributions from both academic researchers and PPI contributors with lived experience of caring.

The conference was planned by an advisory panel convened by Family Carers Ireland, comprising family carers alongside academic and civil society representatives. Panel members co-developed the agenda and roundtable activities, with a focus on creating an inclusive and accessible event with practical value for attendees.

The morning session featured research presentations paired with lived experience and PPI perspectives. Topics included family carer inclusion in integrated interprofessional care teams, caring in later life and the need for policy supports, and reflections on the impact of the Understanding Carer Harm Project on policy, practice, and lived experience. Each presentation was followed by audience Q&A and discussion.

A second session focused on using research to advocate for change, followed by a facilitated roundtable discussion on communicating research for impact, where mixed small groups worked through structured questions and activities and shared their outputs with the wider group.

A full report on the 2025 conference will be published in the coming months.



Pictured from left to right at the 'Partnerships from Research to Practice' conference are presenters Seoirse O'Mahony; Dr Deirdre O'Donnell; Dr Christine McGarrigle; Sinead Tighe; Dr Sarah Donnelly and Ray Lucey.



Conference attendees taking part in a roundtable discussion.

Research Partnerships and Speaking Opportunities

We continued to strengthen our national and international research partnerships in 2025, supporting collaborative research, PPI, and knowledge exchange, while also contributing to conferences, advisory groups, and research dissemination activities.

Key developments include:

- Partnering with multiple universities and research centres on funded and proposed research projects, including University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University College Cork, University of Galway, Maynooth University, and international collaborators.
- Continued participation in the Eurocarers Research Working Group, sharing updates on State of Caring research and our wider research activity at the Vilnius research meeting and conference.
- Joining the Carers NSW Knowledge Exchange international affiliate panel, supporting international knowledge sharing on research translation and practice development.
- Contributing to and advising on several major collaborative research projects, including:
 - UCD ECLECTIC project on interprofessional collaboration in older persons' services
 - DCU Cost2Care project on missed nursing care and patient safety
 - University of Galway Hospital Discharge project (HRB-funded) on strengthening discharge communication processes
 - UCC PPI in Dementia Care New Foundations project developing PPI co-researcher capacity and micro-credential training
- Collaborating with academic partners on new and emerging funding proposals, including Horizon Europe and Research Ireland New Foundations calls, focused on carers, intellectual disability, interprofessional care, and combining work and caring.
- Supporting multiple external research teams through participant and PPI recruitment. We are currently developing standardised processes to support these requests.
- The National Screening Service (HSE) consulted Family Carers Ireland on accessible information materials for carers and those

they support regarding national screening programmes.

- Contributing to national research and policy dialogue through engagement with the Central Statistics Office on carer measurement in Census and Irish Health Survey data.
- Participation by Family Carers Ireland staff in national research and impact workshops and sector events, including:
 - HRCI research impact workshop
 - Maynooth University research-for-policy workshop
 - IASSIDD international research conference (panel contribution on PPI and caring research)
- Delivery and contribution to invited presentations and seminars, including:
 - Research presentations to carer groups and practitioner audiences
 - Contributions to Irish Association of Social Workers special interest group sessions
 - Panel contribution at the launch of the TILDA Wave 6 report.

Women's Health Project

Family Carers Ireland was delighted to receive funding from the Department of Health under the Women's Health Strategy to undertake a dedicated research project focused on the health and wellbeing of women family carers in midlife and later life.

The project aims to strengthen understanding of women's caring roles, their health impacts, and the types of supports that contribute to improved outcomes, helping to inform future policy and service development. In 2025, phase one of the project was completed, involving qualitative interviews and focus groups with women carers and analysis of existing outcomes data.

The next phase of the project is scheduled to begin in 2026 and will build on these findings to support evidence-informed recommendations and practice development.

Other Activities

- Family Carers Ireland continued development of the Louth Schools Project, documenting an early-intervention model for autistic children and its impact on parents as carers.
- Internal evaluation and applied research activity included:
 - Multiple national carer surveys in partnership with our marketing and fundraising teams
 - Caring Employers programme survey analysis and employer feedback reporting
 - Consultation-based research supporting respite, retail access, and member experience initiatives.
- Research-informed submissions were made to national policy processes, including the National Loneliness Strategy, drawing on State of Caring findings.
- Our PPI Panel continued to support research projects, co-design activity, conference participation, and research review input, with plans to refresh and expand panel membership.
- Family Carers Ireland continues to partner in the evaluation of the Communication with Doctors course (Maynooth University).

Building Online Connections

Social Media

A strong community of family carers has been established across Family Carers Ireland's social media channels. These online networks have become invaluable spaces for connection, enabling us to engage with more family carers than ever before and to share timely information about our activities, supports and services, advocacy campaigns, and membership. Through these platforms, family carers stay up to date on relevant news, policy developments, and issues that directly affect their daily lives.

Our channels now routinely reach tens of thousands of people every month, with follower numbers increasing by nearly 10% year-on-year to almost 55,000 by the end of 2025. The national Facebook page continues to attract the largest audience, with content published by the page generating more than 4.8 million views and over 30,000 likes, comments, and shares.



Instagram remains our fastest-growing channel, with follower numbers rising by more than 35% to exceed 6,600. Engagement on this platform continues to be particularly strong among those interested in our virtual supports.

LinkedIn also demonstrated robust growth in 2025, with followers increasing by nearly a quarter (23%) to over 3,500. This channel continues to play an important role in raising awareness of the supports and services offered by Family Carers Ireland to those balancing paid work and care.

In contrast, our following on X (formerly Twitter) declined slightly, by around 2% to 8,200 followers, aligning with broader trends of reduced user activity on the platform.

Throughout the year, hundreds of family carers reached out to us directly through private messages, most commonly on Facebook and Instagram, seeking information and support, with many referred to their local Community Supports team for further assistance.

Website

The Family Carers Ireland website continues to be a vital resource for tens of thousands of family carers, providing access to information, guidance, and support to help them in their caring roles. It acts as a gateway to a wide range of services, supports, information, activities, events and campaigns, incorporates interactive eLearning suites for both family carers and young carers, and includes a secure private hub where signed-up members can access benefits associated with their membership.

In addition to supporting family carers directly, the website serves as a dynamic record of our advocacy, with updates on our media, policy, lobbying, and research activities published

throughout the year demonstrating our ongoing commitment to influencing positive change for family carers. It also serves as a central repository for key publications including annual reports, strategic plans and more.

Content is refreshed on a continuous basis to ensure it remains current, relevant, and reflective of our ongoing work with and for family carers. The calendar of events and learning and education section are updated regularly to include new group meetings, programmes and workshops, both in-person and online, as they are confirmed. This ensures that family carers can easily access up-to-date information about social connections, learning opportunities and educational supports available to them.

In March 2025, a complete website rebuild project was initiated with a view to ensuring security, stability, reliability, fast load times and a significantly improved user experience overall. Launched in October 2025, the upgraded site benefits from secure, dedicated hosting and comprehensive technical support from an external web development provider certified to ISO 27001 (information security) and ISO 9001 (quality management) standards.

The site recorded 448,444 sessions in 2025, up from 374,000 in 2024, representing an increase of approximately 20%. This year-on-year growth indicates that more family carers and other stakeholders are turning to our online platforms for information, guidance and support, and that our digital content and campaigns are successfully driving people to our services.

Each session represents a distinct visit during which users can learn about their rights and entitlements, access eLearning, explore events and activities, and connect with our wider work in policy, research and advocacy.

Membership Community



Membership of Family Carers Ireland reached record levels in 2025, closing the year at 14,716 members – the highest figure in our history. While many family carers join to access the wide range of benefits and exclusive offers available through our affiliate partners, we have also seen a growing desire from family carers to connect and join a supportive community, attend local assemblies and take part in key events such as our AGM.

Our affiliate partners continue to deliver meaningful savings through carer-exclusive discounts across areas that matter most, including hotel getaways, home savings, social activities, and health and wellbeing. Members are also making strong use of the member hub on our website. Developed in response to carer feedback, it enables easy membership renewal, updates of personal information, access to discount codes, and entry to member competitions.

In 2025, the Membership team carried out a member survey to better understand our caring community, with a clear focus on strengthening the value of our offering. We remain committed to listening and responding – improving the accessibility of the member hub and expanding our network of affiliate partners to enhance membership.

Some key findings of our survey include:

- 59% care for a child under the age of 18, 21% are caring for a young adult over the age of 25, while 19% care for someone over the age of 65+
- 73% stated that their membership provides them with worthwhile savings
- 85% that have been a member more than six months stated they would renew.

Seasonal events continue to be a calendar highlight, with a selection of nationwide venues offering family carers either free or a discounted entry fee. Among our many member partners are Navan Adventure Centre; Kildare Farm Foods, Clissmann Horse Caravans; Luggwoods; Castlevew Open Farm; Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Gardens; Sligo Folk Park, Malahide Castle and Gardens; Casino Railway Museum; Newbridge House and Farm; Murtagh's Organic Farm; Elf Town; Santa's Magical Cabin Nationwide, Santa's House Express; Wonderlights; and Nore Valley Park.

Key Membership Statistics:

- 14,716 members
- 8,615 renewals
- 4,912 welcome calls completed
- 87% female
- 13% male
- Average age: 35-44 years
- Most prevalent conditions among cared-for persons: ASD/Autism, ADHD, Learning/Intellectual Disability, Mental Health, and Down Syndrome.

Partnerships and Collaborations



“ Family Carers Ireland, and Lidl as the sponsors for this fund, have made a huge difference to me and my daughter. It may seem like a small thing to some people, but a warm winter coat was a huge thing for us. It may seem like it was just financial aid but in fact the help helped my mental wellbeing too, not just through the vouchers but from knowing somebody actually cares.”

Family carer who received a food/clothing voucher from the Carer Assistance Fund (CAF), funded by Lidl Ireland

Lidl Ireland Partnership

Launched in November 2024, the partnership between Lidl Ireland and Family Carers Ireland has been a powerful force for positive change, dedicated to enhancing the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of family carers and the individuals they care for. At its core, this collaboration aims to raise awareness about the often-overlooked realities faced by family carers, shift public perceptions of who family carers are, and ensure they are recognised, supported, and valued within society.

As awareness grows, Family Carers Ireland is becoming an increasingly recognised name in households across the country. This greater understanding of the challenges family carers face is inspiring more people to engage with our cause - whether through donations, fundraising efforts, or volunteering their time and skills. Such actions not only amplify the prominence of family carers but also contribute to the vital income needed to support our work. This partnership is also strengthening our advocacy efforts, ensuring that we continue to engage with key policy and decision-makers to advance carer policy and secure a better future for all carers in Ireland.

Lidl's values of performance, respect, trust, and belonging strongly align with Family Carers



Pictured from left to right are Maeve McCleane, Chief People Officer, Lidl Ireland; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications, Family Carers Ireland, beside a specially commissioned striking temporary mural at Lidl's store in Glenageary, created by graffiti artist Brutto, at the launch of Lidl's 'We Care Back' campaign.

Ireland's mission to highlight the essential contributions family carers make to Irish society and to improve their lives. Rooted in the belief that no one should have to care alone, this shared vision has created a partnership that is both strategic and deeply meaningful for all involved. By combining Lidl's corporate responsibility ethos with Family Carers Ireland's grassroots outreach and advocacy, this partnership has fostered carer-centred initiatives that uplift family carers, engage Lidl staff, and strengthen community networks. Each activity reflects our mutual commitment to dignity, inclusion, and making a tangible impact on the lives of family carers.

This collaboration has delivered significant, tangible benefits for family carers, including



increased visibility, enhanced practical supports (such as counselling and financial aid during times of crisis), and moments of recognition that alleviate isolation and reaffirm their vital role. For Family Carers Ireland staff, it has opened new doors for collaboration, innovation, and cross-sector learning. Lidl staff, in turn, have experienced the power of community engagement and witnessed firsthand the deep resilience of Ireland's caring families. Together, we have embraced the first year of this collaboration, and we are committed to building on its success in the years ahead.

A major highlight of 2025 was the launch of Lidl's 'We Care Back' advertising campaign, which aligned with Family Carers Ireland's 'Heart of Gold Day' during National Carers Week on 12 June. This week-long campaign, with a substantial presence on national TV and radio, significantly elevated the profile of Family Carers Ireland, bringing greater public recognition to family carers and reinforcing the message that they are not alone. The campaign also

encouraged more family carers to self-identify, fostering a sense of connection and support within the wider community. This collaborative effort marked a pivotal moment in our ongoing work to raise awareness and drive meaningful change for family carers across Ireland.



Pictured at the launch of Lidl Ireland's Trolley Dash in aid of Family Carers Ireland are, from left to right, Una Healy, Irish singer and TV personality; and Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland.



Standard Life Partnership

At the end of 2025, Family Carers Ireland was delighted to launch a new charity partnership with Standard Life, marking a meaningful step in their commitment to supporting people on their journey to and through retirement. The partnership launched with a hybrid event featuring powerful personal stories from Standard Life colleagues, a joint session with Family Carers Ireland, and a fundraising lunch served by the leadership team – raising almost €7,500 in the first day to kick-start their support.

As part of the partnership, Standard Life is funding counselling for family carers and will host a series of fundraising events throughout 2026. We are deeply grateful for their enthusiasm, compassion and commitment to making a real difference in the lives of family carers across Ireland.





Collaboration with Lilly

In late 2024, Family Carers Ireland began a three-year collaboration with Eli Lilly and Company, combining corporate volunteering, strategic investment, and community engagement to support family carers nationwide. Just one year in, it has already delivered meaningful, measurable impact across multiple areas of our work.

The collaboration includes enhanced carer supports, increased volunteering, improved digital infrastructure, community engagement, and a national fundraising event. What has set this collaboration apart is the depth of commitment from Lilly employees and the strong governance structure that ensures alignment, transparency and shared ownership.

The first year has demonstrated what is possible when a corporate partner invests not only funding, but time, skills and heart. We are deeply

grateful to the Lilly teams who have embraced this collaboration with such enthusiasm and compassion, and look forward to continuing this important work together.

Garden Clean-Ups

Garden clean-ups quickly became one of the most valued elements of the collaboration. For family carers who simply cannot maintain outdoor spaces due to the demands of caring, these clean-ups provided immediate relief and restored dignity and safety in the home environment.

Over 300 Lilly volunteers approached each one with kindness, respect and enthusiasm. Family carers described the experience as “life-changing” and “a weight lifted”. For volunteers, the work offered a direct, human connection to the caring role and a powerful sense of purpose.



Pictured from left to right are Ruth Rodgers, Lilly; Sharon Foley, CEO, Family Carers Ireland; and Rebecca Guilfoyle, Lilly.



Respite Retreat – A Rare And Transformative Break

The collaboration also enabled the delivery of a Respite Retreat, offering carers a rare opportunity to step away from their responsibilities and focus on their own wellbeing. The retreat, held in September at the Clayton Hotel Silver Springs in Co. Cork, provided rest, connection, peer support and emotional space, which carers consistently identify as essential but difficult to access.

Lilly volunteers supported the retreat throughout, helping to create a warm, welcoming environment. Many family carers described the retreat as a turning point, giving them renewed energy and a sense of being valued.





Step Up – A National Fundraising Event With Community Reach

As part of the collaboration's fundraising goal, 2025 saw the introduction of Step Up, a national 5km walk encouraging people to step out in solidarity with family carers. With Lilly's support, Step Up walks took place in ten locations across the country, bringing together family carers, families, volunteers and local communities.

The event raised vital funds for essential services while also increasing public understanding of the caring role. The visibility and community spirit generated through Step Up have laid strong foundations for expansion in 2026 to both an in-person and hybrid event.



Art Exhibition – A Textile Journey Into Self-Expression

This project was an exemplar of Lilly employees' engagement with the collaboration. Family carers were given the opportunity to dive into the world of textiles with an art facilitator as they worked on their own individual pieces, which were then framed by the art facilitator and Lilly volunteers.

Family carers and their loved ones were warmly welcomed to Lilly Kinsale, where their masterpieces and skills were celebrated. For many, the art exhibition and workshops gave them recognition and acknowledgement, while also supporting them to connect with their peers.



Lidl Family Carer of the Year Awards



“As proud partners of Family Carers Ireland, these awards are an important way for us to shine a light on their inspiring work and show how Lidl cares back. With a pledge to fundraise €1 million over the course of our 3-year partnership, we are committed to continuing to use our platform and our network of stores to champion this vital cause, ensuring that carers like Angie receive the recognition and support they so richly deserve.”

Robert Ryan, CEO, Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland



Pictured from left to right are Miriam O'Callaghan, Charity Ambassador and awards host; Robert Ryan, CEO, Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland; Sharon Foley, CEO, Family Carers Ireland; and Angie Benhaff, Lidl Family Carer of the Year.

In September 2025, Family Carers Ireland launched the 18th annual Lidl Family Carer of the Year Awards, a prestigious initiative dedicated to recognising the unwavering commitment and selflessness of family carers across Ireland.

2025 marked a significant milestone as Lidl joined as the title sponsor of the awards, following the company's announcement in 2024 of Family Carers Ireland as its official charity partner. As part of this three-year partnership, Lidl has pledged to raise €1,000,000 to support the vital work of family carers in Ireland. While the awards honour just a small few, they shine a bright light on the vital role of family carers in homes and communities all across Ireland and the urgent need to improve access to vital supports and services.

The awards ceremony, held in The College Green Hotel in Dublin on 27 November, was hosted by Charity Ambassador Miriam O'Callaghan, included an incredible performance from the Dublin Gospel Choir and culminated with the announcement of Angie Benhaffaf from Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork as the Lidl Family Carer of the Year 2025, recognising nearly 16 years of extraordinary care for her twin sons.

Born conjoined and facing lifelong medical challenges, Hassan and Hussein have undergone 75 surgeries and numerous medical emergencies, with Angie at their side every step of the way. Despite the relentless demands of caregiving, Angie has created a home full of warmth and joy for her family, and has raised more than €105,000 for children's charities, showing the same determination and generosity that define her life.

Angie's sons, now award-winning para-athletes, have represented Ireland internationally, bringing home multiple gold and silver medals in wheelchair basketball and athletics. Her story is a testament to the strength and resilience of family carers and their ability to inspire and empower the individuals they care for, even in the most challenging circumstances.



Pictured is Angie Benhaffaf, Lidl Family Carer of the Year 2025, and her twin sons Hassan and Hussein.

The awards also recognised outstanding regional carers, including Alison McManus from Dublin (Leinster), Brendan Dee from Leitrim (Connacht), and Mary O'Sullivan from Cavan (Ulster). Additionally, four Lidl Young Carers of the Year were honoured for their exceptional dedication and empathy in supporting their loved ones.

Regional Lidl Family Carers Of The Year

Leinster: Alison McManus from Saggart, Dublin cares for her two daughters, Holly and Kayla, who are autistic. A two-time cancer survivor, Alison always puts her girls first. She reduced her work hours to manage medical appointments and be there for them every step of the way. Alison also runs the Little Stars Arch Club in Citywest, which she founded to give autistic children a safe, fun space each week. Balancing work, recovery, and caring for her family, Alison's strength and compassion inspire everyone around her.



Alison McManus, Leinster Lidl Family Carer of the Year.

Connacht: Brendan Dee from Carrick-on-Shannon, Leitrim has spent more than 30 years caring for his wife Rachel, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis early in their marriage and now needs support with many aspects of daily life. When Rachel's mother Mary was later diagnosed with dementia, Brendan took early retirement to care for both women full time and completed a carer's course to ensure he could provide the best possible support. He continues to approach his responsibilities with patience, good humour and steady commitment, enabling both Rachel and Mary to remain at home surrounded by comfort and care.

Ulster: Mary O'Sullivan from Cavan Town, Co. Cavan cares for her son, who is autistic, and her mother, who lives with Alzheimer's. When her mother suffered a fall and a bleed on the brain, she moved to a nursing home, but Mary still visits every morning to help care for her, just as she always did at home. A devoted mother and grandmother, she faces each day's challenges with quiet strength, compassion and unwavering kindness.



Mary O'Sullivan, Ulster Lidl Family Carer of the Year, with her son Jayden.

Regional Lidl Young Carers Of The Year

Leinster: Mason and Kian Dooley (16 and 17) from Drogheda, Co. Louth, share the care of their brother Brogan (10), who is autistic and has global developmental delay and an intellectual disability. Nominated by their mother Abigail, she describes them as amazing, always stepping up to help by taking Brogan for walks, to the shop and giving her a few precious moments of rest. She says that they make the family so proud every day for everything that they do.

Munster: Scott Rungay (22) from Tralee, Co. Kerry, cares full time for his mother Aileen, who has terminal brain cancer. He manages her medication, meals and personal care and attends medical appointments with her, ensuring her comfort and dignity. Nominated by his girlfriend Jade Lawlor, Scott is described as selfless, courageous and deeply devoted, having set aside his own plans to be his mother's constant source of strength.

Connacht: Mia Doherty, aged 12 from Derryvode, Williamstown, Co. Galway, helps care for her brother Shaun (10) who has a rare overgrowth condition (PROS) and a rare, chronic inflammatory bone disease (CRMO). Always by his side, Mia helps him get ready for school, play and learn new skills, bringing joy and stability to his day. Her mother Áine says Mia shines with kindness and love and is her brother's best friend and greatest support.

Ulster: Caelen McVitty, aged 11 from Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan, supports his brother Oisín (15), who is autistic. Described by his mother Norma as "an amazingly kind and caring young person", Caelan is always there to offer a helping hand with Oisín's care needs, to love and protect his big brother and is ready to stand up for him in every way. She says he is "a truly inspirational young man".



Pictured from left to right are Mia Doherty, Lidl Connacht Young Carer of the Year, with her brother Shaun.



Pictured from left to right are Lidl Young Carers of the Year Mason (16) and Kian (17) Dooley from Louth (Leinster); Mia Doherty (12) from Galway (Connacht); Scott Rungay (22) from Kerry (Munster) and Caelen McVitty (11) from Cavan (Ulster).

“

This is not just an awards ceremony—it is a celebration of love, resilience, and the extraordinary commitment of family carers across Ireland. Behind every act of care is a story of sacrifice, strength, and compassion. Through these awards, we shine a light on those stories.”

Sharon Foley, CEO, Family Carers Ireland

Caring Employers

The Caring Employers (CE) programme, proudly funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) through Pobal, continues to deliver meaningful, measurable impact across the 15 member organisations it supports, embedding sustainable, carer-inclusive workplace practices nationwide.

In 2025, the programme demonstrated significant reach and engagement. A total of 83 CAREtalks were delivered, providing high-quality, evidence-based learning opportunities on a wide range of carer-centric topics, including dementia care, autism, end-of-life support (Last Aid), and

other practical caregiving challenges. These talks were offered across member organisations and attracted over 850 employee attendees, highlighting strong demand and relevance.

In addition, over 60 bespoke organisational sessions were delivered, including 20 targeted people manager workshops. These workshops are designed to equip leaders and line managers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to respond flexibly and empathetically to employees who are balancing caring responsibilities alongside their professional roles, directly supporting staff retention and wellbeing.



Caring Employers
Family Carers Ireland

Proudly funded by



An Roinn Caiteachais
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform



Irish Distillers
Pernod Ricard



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



A key development in 2025 was the introduction of carer peer networks (Carer Circles) within three large organisations, providing structured peer support to over 50 family carers nationwide. These networks create safe, supportive spaces where family carers can connect and share experiences and help to reduce isolation within the workplace.

The programme also maintains close and ongoing engagement with HR teams across member organisations. Throughout the year, CE supported the review and strengthening of internal carer policies and launched a Best Practice HR Working Document, offering a clear framework to help organisations adopt consistent, carer-inclusive approaches that enable family carers to remain and progress in employment.

Further innovation was demonstrated through the launch of the Carer Passport in two of the large multinational companies. This practical tool provides family carers with an official, confidential record of their caring role and agreed workplace accommodations, including flexible arrangements and special leave. The passport has already delivered greater clarity, stability and continuity for family carers, and plans are in place to expand its adoption across the membership in 2026.

Complementing group learning and organisational supports, CE also offers one-to-one assistance through the CAREclinic. This confidential service enables employees to book individual sessions with a CE Officer for emotional support, guidance and signposting. In 2025, 48 employees accessed this vital service, underlining the importance of personalised support alongside organisational change.

All programme activities are reinforced through comprehensive follow-up resources, including hyperlinked guidance documents and recorded virtual sessions. This ensures that employees can access information, supports and learning on demand, creating a growing 24/7 digital repository of trusted resources for member organisations.

Looking ahead to 2026, the programme will continue to build on this strong foundation, with the planned expansion of the Carer Passport, the rollout of a new suite of monthly CAREtalks, and the delivery of additional bespoke events to further strengthen carer-inclusive workplaces across Ireland.

CE Members

At the end of 2025, we had 15 active member organisations, spanning a variety of industries and Government departments, including Irish Life and Canada Life; Lidl; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Irish Distillers; Bank of Ireland; SETU; An Post; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Expleo; Irish Rail; Mercer; Tesco; AIB; HSBC; and PwC.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all our members for their ongoing and heartfelt commitment to the one in nine individuals who balance work with caring for a loved one, relative, friend, or neighbour at home. Their dedication to fostering inclusive, flexible, and supportive work environments for family carers is truly commendable.

We are also excited to welcome An Bord Gáis, Eli Lilly and Company, and LauraLynn to the programme in January 2026 and look forward to the continued growth and impact of this important innovating initiative.

Fundraising

2025 was a year defined by commitment, collaboration and community support across Family Carers Ireland. Despite ongoing financial pressures for many households, people continued to show remarkable generosity towards family carers. Every pin purchased, every local fundraiser, every kilometre walked and every donation, large or small, helped us continue providing essential services to family carers nationwide.

The dedication of our staff and corporate partners played a central role in sustaining and growing our fundraising efforts throughout the year. Their hard work ensured that our campaigns reached more people, engaged new supporters and strengthened awareness of the caring role.



We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed in 2025. Your support enables us to continue standing with family carers and delivering the services they rely on every day.

Below are some of the key highlights from our national fundraising activity across the year.

Heart Of Gold

Heart of Gold, our flagship national fundraising and awareness campaign, returned in June 2025 raising an amazing €92,614. The campaign continues to shine a light on the daily realities of Ireland's family carers, people who often provide round-the-clock care with little recognition, limited support, and significant personal sacrifice.

The 2025 campaign was launched by Sarah Dooley, Family Carer of the Year 2024, who cares for her twins John and Patrick, who are autistic and non-verbal. Her older son Cathal previously underwent treatment for leukaemia. Sarah spoke openly about the exhaustion, advocacy and emotional strain that come with caring, reminding the public why Heart of Gold exists.

“ It's constant. You're tired, overwhelmed, and still left fighting for the basics. There's no break, no days off, and no support unless you fight for it. This campaign matters because no one should have to care alone and we, as a family, are so appreciative of the support we get from Family Carers Ireland.”

2025 also marked the first year of our three-year national partnership with Lidl, which began in November 2024. For the first time, Heart of Gold pins were available in all 187 Lidl stores nationwide, with Family Carers Ireland representatives present in selected stores to offer information and support. This partnership significantly expanded the campaign's visibility and accessibility, allowing us to reach new communities and engage with family carers who may not yet have recognised themselves in the role.

In addition to in-store support, our local staff carried out collections up and down the country, local fundraising events were held, and donations were made, with volunteers and staff working together to bring the campaign to every county.

Heart of Gold 2025 demonstrated the strength of community, the importance of visibility, and the impact of partnership. We are deeply grateful to Sarah, to Lidl, to our staff, our volunteers, and to everyone who supported the campaign. Planning is already underway for Heart of Gold 2026, with a renewed focus on a wider community reach and stronger volunteer engagement.





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

Care For Carers Christmas Campaign

Our 2025 Christmas campaign brought together communities, companies and individuals across Ireland in support of family carers at a time of year that can be especially challenging. The campaign combined our national Christmas raffle, corporate and individual donations, and a renewed focus on sharing the lived experience of caring.

The annual raffle continued to be a key part of our Christmas fundraising efforts, raising just over €20,000 to support essential services for family carers. The raffle offered a €1,000 cash prize along with nine hotel stays and experiences generously donated by businesses across the country. We are deeply grateful to the companies who contributed prizes and to the public for purchasing tickets and helping to make the raffle such a success.

Family Carers Ireland *Care for Carers this Christmas*
Together, we can make a difference this Christmas

Enter our fantastic
CHRISTMAS RAFFLE for a chance to
WIN one of **10 AMAZING PRIZES!**

Draw Date:
Thursday 18th
December

Tickets from €5

1st Prize
€1,000
CASH

2nd Prize
€500
SELECT
HOTELS
VOUCHER

3rd Prize
Luxury Overnight
IN KILRONAN
CASTLE

Plus more fantastic hotel
getaways across Ireland!



Sinead and Daniel Tighe pictured at their home in Tallaght.

A central part of the campaign was the powerful and honest story shared by Sinead Tighe, who cares for her teenage son Daniel who lives with Sotos syndrome and multiple complex needs, requiring round-the-clock care, constant vigilance and a highly structured routine. Sinead spoke openly about the physical and emotional demands of caring, the daily struggle of managing behaviours that challenge, and the ongoing fight to secure essential supports.

She also reflected on the reality of Christmas as a family carer – the grief, the loneliness, the pressure to keep going, and the small moments of joy that come from family, routine and Daniel's smile. Her words helped the public understand that while Christmas is a time of celebration for many, it can also be a time of deep strain for those who continue their caring responsibilities without pause.

Sinead's story resonated widely and brought a human, heartfelt dimension to the campaign. We are deeply grateful to her and to Daniel

for allowing us to share their experience and help corporates and individuals understand the importance of donating to Family Carers Ireland.

Our Christmas campaign also saw strong engagement from both corporate partners and individual donors. Many companies chose to make a seasonal donation in lieu of gifts, and for the first time, we introduced a digital Christmas e-card that organisations could share with staff and clients. This allowed companies to highlight their support for family carers and demonstrate the impact of their contribution in a simple, meaningful way. While many individual donors made donations in honour of a family carer in their own family or community.

The campaign once again demonstrated the generosity of the Irish public and the strength of community support for family carers. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who supported the campaign. Your kindness made a real difference.

Community Fundraising

Our fundraising activities in communities right across the country continued to play a vital role in 2025, with individuals, families and local groups coming together to support Family Carers Ireland and their local Carer Support Centres. These events not only raised essential funds, but they also helped strengthen awareness of family carers within towns, villages and workplaces nationwide.

Throughout the year, communities showed remarkable creativity and generosity, organising walks, climbs, raffles, charity runs, workplace challenges and events in honour of loved ones. Each fundraiser, no matter the size, has made a difference and we are deeply grateful to everyone who donated, volunteered, or organised an event in 2025.

Climb High for Nana

One of the most heartfelt community fundraisers this year was Climb High for Nana, a family-led challenge created in memory of a much-loved Clare grandmother, Nuala Cahill (Nana) who was cared for by her adoring husband Pierce (Papa) in her final years.



Climb High for Nana participants pictured at Cupidstown Hill in Co. Kildare.

Family and friends came together to climb in Nuala's honour and to recognise the respite care and support she received from Family Carers Ireland which allowed her the chance to spend the remaining years of her wonderful life in her own home, where she was most comfortable and most loved by all her family.

The event saw participants summit the highest point in every county of Ireland, starting with a climb of 757 metres in Kippure, Co. Dublin, taking in all 1,038 metres of Carrauntoohil in Co. Kerry, and ending with a 814 metre climb of Mweelrea, Co. Mayo.

The event raised vital funds for Family Carers Ireland and highlighted the powerful role that personal stories and community spirit play in supporting our work. We are deeply grateful to the family for choosing to honour their Nana in this way and for helping raise awareness of the caring role.

Charity Motorcycle Run

The Tribes MCC 4th Annual Charity Motorcycle Run once again brought incredible energy, colour and community spirit to the roads of Connacht in support of Family Carers Ireland.

Setting off from Eyre Square on 27 September and travelling through Tuam, Claremorris, Foxford, Ballina and on to Knockmore, bikers from across the region came together to raise awareness and vital funds for family carers. Led by long-time supporter Collette Barrett, alongside Chairperson Steve Mac, organiser Graham Hopkins, and with support from Michelle Moriarty, Support Manager, Family Carers Ireland, the event drew riders of all makes and models and generous contributions from communities along the route.

The run has grown year on year, becoming a much-loved tribute to the extraordinary work of family carers, and we are deeply grateful to Tribes MCC and everyone who took part, cheered from the roadside or donated on the day.



Tribes MCC presenting a cheque to Michelle Moriarty, Support Manager, Family Carers Ireland.



Pictured at the 2025 Mullingar Carers Concert from left to right are Billy Mac, Chris Loughrey, Geraldine Delamere, Joe Cooney, and Camillus Egerton.

Mullingar Carers Concert

The 2025 Mullingar Carers Concert, inspired by rock legend and broadcaster Billy Mac and now delivered by musicians Chris Loughrey and Camillus Egerton, took place on 8 April at the Greville Arms Hotel in Mullingar. The concert is a long-running, popular event that welcomes around 400 music lovers every year and raises much needed funds for Family Carers Ireland.

The 19th edition was a particular success, with all the artists invited on to the stage for a rousing finale that included Billy Mac himself. There was a lovely warm atmosphere at the event with concert goers delighted to support a good cause.

It was an unforgettable night of music featuring Simon Casey; TR Dallas; Chris Loughrey; Dave Lawlor; Matt Leavy; Ciaran Rosney; The Rosneys; Camillus Egerton & Heads Up; Joe Connaire; Michaela Hogg; and Joe Cooney, all backed by The Tennessee Breakdown Band, while the MC on the night was John Corroon. Family Carers Ireland staff from all sections of the organisation were on hand to support the event.

Our People



Being A Good Employer

Staff are at the heart of everything we do at Family Carers Ireland. By valuing, supporting, and listening to our people, we strengthen our ability to support family carers and those they care for. We are committed to creating a positive and inclusive workplace built on mutual respect, openness, honesty, integrity, and sustainability, where everyone feels empowered to contribute and grow.

In 2025, supported by the receipt of additional funding, we achieved a significant increase in active headcount, reflecting sustained organisational growth and strategic investment in workforce capacity. This growth supports the organisation's ability to deliver high-quality, person-centred services to family carers nationwide and aligns with our commitment to long-term sustainability.

Across the year, Family Carers Ireland maintained a strong employee retention rate of 86.8%, indicating a stable and engaged workforce during a period of organisational growth. The implementation of our Reward Strategy 2024-2026 has proved an important tool in our efforts to attract, retain and motivate quality candidates and employees. This reflects ongoing investment in staff wellbeing, supportive management practices, and a values-led organisational culture, all of which underpin sustainable service delivery to family carers.

Continuous improvement and development remained focal points of our bespoke training, with programmes rolled out in 2025 encompassing discipline and grievance, interviewing skills, onboarding and induction, probation and line manager supervision.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

The gender pay gap represents the difference in average gross hourly earnings between women and men across all paid employees in an organisation.

Family Carers Ireland published its fourth gender pay gap report in 2025. Based on data from the 30 June 2025 snapshot date, our mean gender pay gap stands at 7.55%, with a median gap of 6.53%, both in favour of male employees.

While this represents a modest increase compared to previous years, the results continue to be heavily influenced by the small number of male employees within the organisation, particularly those occupying higher-paid executive and office-based roles. It remains challenging to fully identify all contributing factors to the gender pay gap, especially within the caring and charitable sector, where workforce composition is shaped by long-standing societal and sectoral norms.

To drive meaningful and sustained progress, Family Carers Ireland remains committed to targeted and measurable actions to address the gender pay gap in 2026. However, it is important to acknowledge that many of the barriers to attracting a more gender-balanced workforce, particularly increased male participation across roles, are largely societal and sector-wide rather than specific to the organisation itself.

Long Service Awards

We recognised and celebrated the remarkable dedication, commitment and loyalty of colleagues who reached significant service milestones in 2025 with our inaugural Long Service Awards.

Twenty-two of our office-based colleagues and 63 home care workers received awards at celebratory events for over ten years of service. Their passion and perseverance are a vital part of our success story, and we are grateful for the impact they have made across the organisation.

Thank you to all our awardees for your exceptional service and unwavering commitment.



Pictured from left to right are Peter Cox, Support Manager; and Richie Molloy, Support Manager.



Pictured from left to right are John Dunne, former CEO, and Bernie Dowling, Support Manager.



Pictured are all the recipients of Long Service Awards.



Pictured from left to right are Mary Multaney, IT and Facilities Manager; Mary Conway, Head of Corporate Services; and Emma Murphy, Financial Controller.



Pictured from left to right are Natasha Byrne, Home Services Administrator; Denise Nolan, Home Services Manager; and Joan MacLeod, Home Services Coordinator.



Pictured from left to right are John Dunne, former CEO; and Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager.



Pictured from left to right are John Dunne, former CEO; and Carmel Moran, Information Officer.



Pictured from left to right are Mary Multaney, IT and Facilities Manager; Aoife Fitzgerald, HR Manager; and Bernie Dowling, Support Manager.



Pictured from left to right are John Dunne, former CEO; Richie Molloy, Support Manager; Karen McCullagh, Senior Manager, Carer Engagement; Sharon Foley, CEO; Peter Cox, Support Manager; Carmel Moran, Information Officer; and Danielle Dunne, Support Manager.



Pictured is Sharon Foley, CEO.

Quality And Safety



Quality and safety (Q&S) remain integral to all aspects of the work of Family Carers Ireland. Over the past year, we have continued to further embed quality in the organisation by strengthening our systems, culture, and practices to ensure that our family carers and the service users who rely on our services, receive care and support that is safe, effective, person-centred, and continuously improving.

Our approach focuses on continuous improvement through a working environment with learning, accountability, and collaboration at its core, in recognising that neither quality nor safety are stand-alone initiatives, but shared responsibilities across every team, every role, and every interaction. By listening to the experiences of those we support, our staff, and our partners, we ensure that our services evolve in response to real needs and emerging challenges.

Our quality management process provides us with key components and structure in managing and maintaining quality and safety in the organisation. The aim of a structured process is to empower our staff to achieve and exceed the

appropriate quality standards of what we deliver using the key components detailed below.

Training and compliance are monitored daily by the Q&S team through a centralised learning management system. A key development in 2025 was the transition to a new training and learning management system more aligned with our operational needs and long-term efficiency which supports our organisational training requirements. Following an in-depth trial and evaluation of two training systems, the One-Touch Learning Manager was chosen. One-Touch is a fully integrated ecosystem that supports a workforce in compliance, development and operational efficiency, purpose-built specifically for the care sector.

The Q&S department will continue to drive progressive improvements in quality, aligned with our quality management process. Our goal is to amplify and represent the shared expectations and experiences of both our service users and employees, ensuring their voices actively shape service delivery and continuous improvement.

Governance	Compliance	Control	Assurance	Continuous Improvement	Integration
<p>Board The board is committed to the delivery of quality supports and services. Quarterly meetings of the Quality and Safety Committee (a subcommittee of the board) serve as an essential platform for review and oversight of Q&S developments.</p> <p>Organisational Structure A clearly defined organisational structure with defined roles and responsibilities supports the embedding of quality across all levels in the organisation.</p>	<p>Standards & Regulatory Adherence Our adheres to specifications, standards and regulations relevant to the delivery supports and services.</p> <p>Training Management We utilise OneTouch Training Software to manage the scheduling and distribution of training to centrally monitor compliance with mandatory and supportive training programs. Induction training is also completed for all new staff to ensure compliance.</p> <p>Audit & Review The ViClarity audit module enables effective scheduling and completion of internal audits to review compliance.</p>	<p>Risk Management: Q&S risks are assessed, control measures identified and implemented. Any risks that cannot be reduced are added to the national risk register and monitored on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Documentation Management The use of ViClarity enables efficient and organised management of documentation, incident reporting and audit completion. A full suite of policies, procedures, processes, forms, and operational guidelines has been developed to provide a clear framework to support staff in each team/department.</p>	<p>Key Performance Metrics The Q&S department develops quarterly reports for the Quality and Safety Committee to monitor key performance metrics (e.g. incident and complaints trends, etc.) to measure Q&S outcomes.</p> <p>Regular Reviews Review and update of organisational documentation against current standards and best practice provides assurance with the quality of services provided.</p> <p>Internal Audits Ongoing audits are completed to assess the effectiveness of processes in place.</p>	<p>Incident, Feedback & Safeguarding Actions Actions identified are assigned with timelines for close out, resulting in continuous improvements in the quality of services provided.</p> <p>Audit Outcomes Implementation of quality improvement plans following completion of audits embeds our ethos of continuous improvement.</p> <p>Satisfaction Surveys Service user satisfaction surveys provide independent insight and support continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Q&S Meetings We establish effective communication methods to support Q&S practices. Regular Q&S internal meetings and one-on-one meetings support open dialogue about our practices and goals. These meetings provide an opportunity for staff to discuss ongoing quality initiatives, share Q&S issues encountered, and celebrate successes in service delivery.</p> <p>Embedding Q&S Practices Q&S practices are embedded through our Q&S framework to ensure practices are reflected in every aspect of operations and decision-making.</p>

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 organisation held an EGM in May 2025 to update its Constitution and provide for the establishment of a National Council of Family Carers having a President and Vice-President. The principal objective is to benefit the community by supporting and promoting the health, wellbeing and quality of life of family carers (being persons of any age who provide support to family, friends or members of the community who need support) in Ireland and the people they care for.

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



Richard Hammond S.C. (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.



Barbara Carroll (Vice Chairperson)

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 Chief People Officer at Dublin Bus (Bus Átha Cliath), Barbara holds a Certificate in Company Direction from the Institute of Directors, a Master 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.

Barbara is a member of the Finance & Organisation Committee. She has personal experience as a family carer with the support of home care workers and respite care.



Robert Anderson

Robert Anderson was Head of the Social Policies unit at Eurofound, where he worked as research manager from 1988-2018 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 & 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, Angela's 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.



Wendy Hamilton

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



Dr John Healy

Dr John Healy is the Chief Executive Officer of Genio. Genio is a nonprofit organisation that works within complex, challenging systems to strengthen the voices of the marginalised and to scale effective solutions in

Ireland and Europe. Genio has played a central role in the scaling to a national level service models across mental health, homelessness, disability, Travellers, and migration.

John also acts as an expert on scaling and mainstreaming social innovations for the European Commission's Social Innovation+ Initiative. In addition, John is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Trinity Business School. His research and teaching interests focus on social innovation, institutional theory, complex systems reform, and co-design.

He has published in top ranking, peer-reviewed journals such as the Journal of Business Ethics and the Journal of International Management Reviews.



Gloria Kirwan

Gloria Kirwan is a registered social worker and academic, now based in the Graduate School of Healthcare Management at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland where she is Program Director of the MSc in Leadership and

Innovation in Healthcare.

Gloria is also the UN-Geneva Representative of the International Council on Social Welfare, an international NGO dedicated to supporting agencies and initiatives involved in social development work at country or international levels.



Hugh McGeown

Hugh is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, having qualified in 2004 following completion of an accounting degree at the University of Ulster. He has also completed the Executive Leadership Programme at Harvard Business School.

Programme at Harvard Business School.

He is an Audit Partner and senior leader at Moore, a top ten accounting firm, where he leads the firm's not-for-profit group. Hugh has developed extensive experience advising a wide range of clients.

An experienced audit professional, Hugh brings over 20 years of expertise gained from delivering audit and assurance services to clients ranging from owner-managed SMEs to large, multi-jurisdictional organisations with turnovers in excess of €2 billion.

Outside of work, Hugh has a keen interest in sport and competes as an age-group athlete

in running and cycling events. He lives in Dublin with his wife, Joanna, and their four children, and can often be found on the sidelines of a GAA or rugby pitch at weekends.



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 and 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 her behalf for the provision of services to cater for her needs.

Method of Appointment or Election of Directors

The Nominations and Succession Planning Committee will review any board nominations made by directors, groups or subcommittee 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 10 (and a minimum of three) directors made up as follows:

- Up to six Directors will be elected by the members at an annual general meeting or by resolution following selection and approval of candidates by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of a subcommittee established by the Board of Directors to deal with nominations for company director.
- Up to two Directors will be appointed by the Directors, the candidates having been recommended by the Nominations Committee.
- The President and Vice President of the National Council shall be ex officio Directors, that is each will serve as Director for so long as they are duly elected in that office.

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. The board shall have the power at any time, and from time to time, to appoint any person to be a Director, either to fill a casual vacancy or as an additional to the existing Directors, but so that the total number of Directors shall not at any time exceed ten.

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 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 subcommittees meet on a regular basis and the following outlines the board and subcommittee meetings during 2025. The first figure outlines the number of meetings the member attended, whilst the second figure outlines the number of actual meetings they were eligible to attend. Each board member is also a member of at least one board subcommittee and attendance is also outlined below.

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 €12,836 for 2025 (2024: €10,510).

Board Member			Board	ARC	FAO	QSC	CSE	NRC	RPC
Robert	Anderson	(Chair until Sep 25) (RPC Chair)	6/6	-	1/5	-	-	3/3	4/4
John	Healy		5/6	-	-	-	-	3/3	-
Wendy	Hamilton	(MFC Chair)	3/6	-	-	-	-	3/3	-
Richard	Hammond	(Vice Chair Jan-Sep 25/Chair from Sep 25)	5/6	-	4/5	-	-	3/3	-
Angela	Briggs		6/6	-	-	-	2/2	-	3/4
Barbara	Carroll	(Vice Chair from Sep 25)	4/6	-	3/5	-	-	3/3	-
Gloria	Kirwan	(QSC Chair)	1/1	-	2/2	3/3	-	-	-
Johanne	Powell	(CSE Chair)	6/6	-	-	-	2/2	3/3	4/4
Hugh	McGeown	(FAO Chair)	4/6	-	4/5	-	-	-	-
Other External Committee Members				ARC	FAO	QSC	CSE	NRC	RPC
Luke	Mooney		-	3/3	-	-	-	-	-
Frank	Goodwin		-	-	-	-	-	-	2/4
Shane	McCarthy	(ARC Chair)	-	3/3	-	-	-	-	-
Deirdre	O'Donnell		-	-	-	-	-	-	1/4
Ann	Vaughan		-	-	-	-	-	-	4/4
Cillian	McDohmnaill		-	3/3	-	-	-	-	-
Alison	Egan		-	-	1/5	-	-	-	-
Paddy	Hennessy		-	-	4/5	-	-	-	-
Pat	Montague		-	-	-	-	-	-	1/4
Lynsey	Donovan		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Patricia	O'Regan		5/5	-	-	-	2/2	-	-
Triona	Fortune		-	-	-	2/2	-	-	-
Kara	Madden		4/5	-	-	3/3	2/2	-	-
Marta	Soltys		2/2	-	-	-	0/2	-	-
Cora	Long		4/5	-	-	3/3	2/2	-	-
Virginia	Pye		-	-	-	1/3	-	-	-
Tracey	Carney		-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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

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. During 2025 following the EGM in May, the National Council of Family Carers was established. The Carer Support and Engagement subcommittee was disbanded with the members becoming the Steering Committee for the new national council.

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. The committee is chaired by an accountant, Hugh McGeown, who is also a director of the board.

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, Shane McCarthy, who is not a director 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 to advise on the development of quality and safety standards within the organisation. The committee is chaired by an experienced senior professional, Gloria Kirwan, who is also a director of the board.

Carer Support and Engagement Committee

The Carer Support and Engagement Committee operated until the establishment of the National Council of Family Carers whose primary role is to support and facilitate meaningful engagement and inclusion of carers' voices in Family Carers Ireland. The President Johanne Powell and Vice-President Angela Briggs are also directors of the board.

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. The subcommittee is currently chaired by Robert Anderson, who is also a director of the board.

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. The marketing aspect of the subcommittee guided and supported the external review of our brand with the fundraising aspect paused for the time being. Activity will be monitored, measured and reported upon to the board along with the streamlining of fundraising. The subcommittee is currently chaired by Wendy Hamilton, who is also a director of the board.

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 2025, 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 13 to the accounts.



Future Plans: Consolidate, Build and Deliver



2026 will be a pivotal year as we build on the momentum of recent years and the foundations laid under the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan. Our focus will be on consolidating progress, strengthening organisational capacity and delivering measurable improvements for family carers nationwide.

A key strategic priority will be advancing the Carer Guarantee from policy ambition to sustainable implementation. Working with the Department of Health, HSE and the Department of Disability, Children and Equality, we will seek a three-year national funding framework that ends postcode-based disparities and embeds the Carer Guarantee within the wider health and social care system. This will be complemented by a renewed focus on respite—clarifying our organisational role, progressing targeted provision and advocating for a more coherent national approach.

Carer engagement will remain central to our mission. In 2026, we will support the continued development of the National Council of Family Carers and local assemblies, ensuring lived experience informs policy, service design and advocacy at every level. These structures will strengthen our ability to listen to, learn from and respond to the diverse realities of family carers.

Advocacy will continue to be a core organisational function. We will deepen engagement with key Government departments to progress commitments on income supports, respite and the recognition of family care. Our Scorecard publication, informed by assessments from the National Council of Family Carers, will provide a clear measure of how Government action is experienced by carers themselves.

Recognising the evolving policy environment, we will undertake a midterm review of the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan to assess progress and refine priorities, ensuring our strategy remains responsive and forward-looking.

Operationally, 2026 will focus on strengthening our delivery platforms. We will embed the new Carer Support Services structure across all services, enhancing consistency, quality and impact. Our Home Support Services and Emergency Respite provision will be reviewed within an updated delivery plan aligned to funding arrangements and emerging needs.

We will also implement three major commercial partnerships, Lidl, Standard Life and Lilly, bringing new opportunities and a significant scale of activity. Strong coordination and planning will ensure these partnerships deliver clear, shared value.

Supporting all of this will be targeted investment in our enabling functions. We will progress a brand and communications refresh, strengthen governance and risk management, advance internal audit and performance development processes, and plan for the introduction of a new CRM to improve impact measurement and reporting. Over the coming 18 months, we plan to redesign our website to serve carers better.

Together, these priorities set a clear and ambitious agenda for 2026: consolidating change, building capacity and delivering sustainable improvements in the lives of family carers.

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

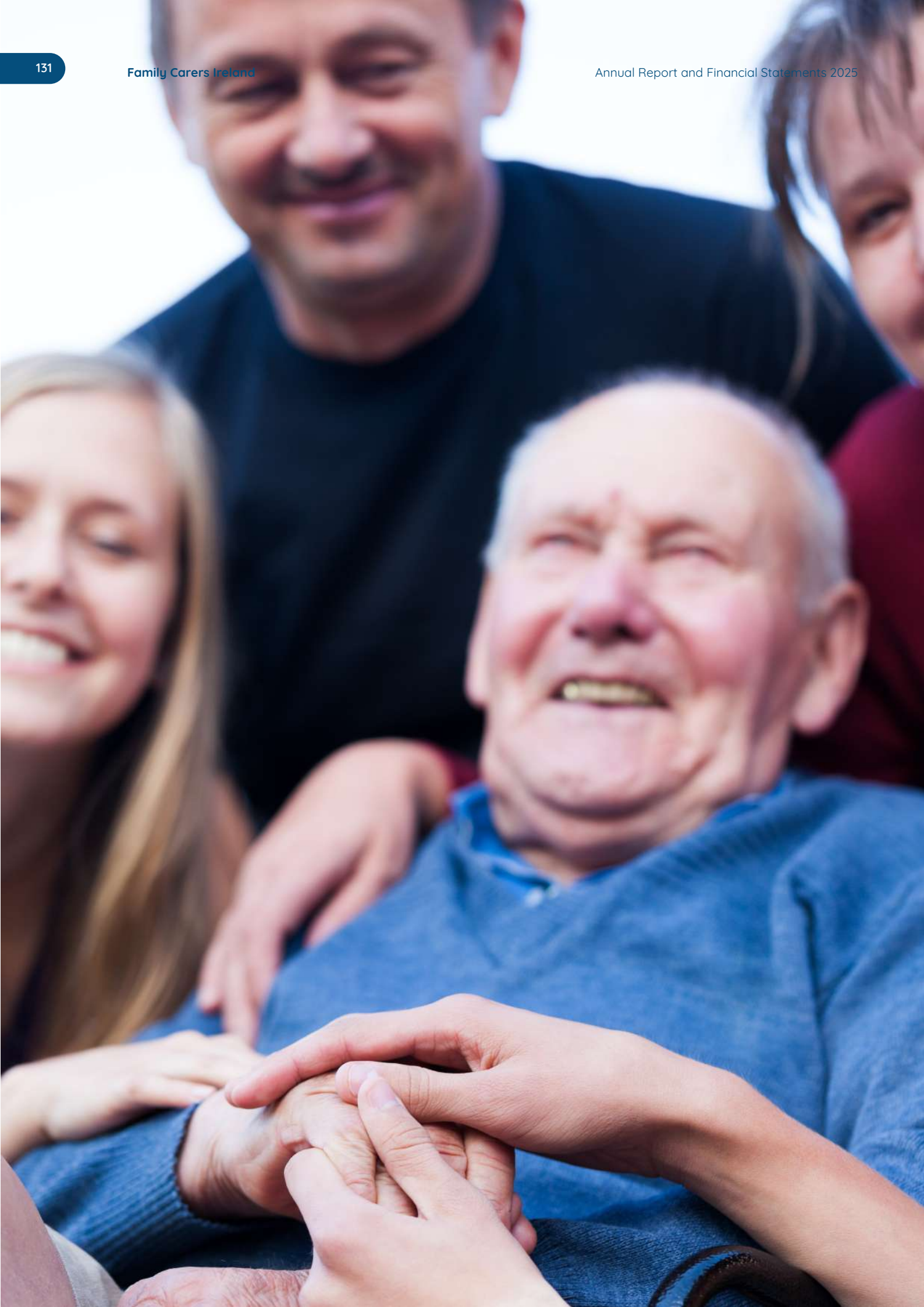
The charity has been granted charitable status under Sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.

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 142), the Balance Sheet (page 143), and the Statement of Cashflows (page 144) and further explained in the notes to the accounts (pages 145 to 160).

Income for the financial year was €14.555m 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 €6.740m 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 €6.238m 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 €97k to support family carers.

Expenditure for the year was €14.299m 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 €255,945 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
- Lidl Ireland
- Eli Lilly
- and various private and corporate donations and grants.

Income

Total income for 2025 was €14.555m which is an increase of 3% on the 2024 levels. This increase predominantly relates to charitable activities, the detail of which is outlined below.

Income From Donations And Legacies

Income from donations and legacies amounted to just over €97k which is an increase of just over 60% on 2024 levels.

Income from Charitable Activities

Income from Charitable Activities comprises of Service Arrangements 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 2025, income from charitable activities was €13.620m which is an increase of 2% on 2024

levels and predominantly relates to an increase in Section 39 Funding of €128k, a decrease in Home Support income of €34k and an increase in grants of €226k.

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 2025 was €810k which is an increase of 15% on 2024 levels and represents an increase in Fundraising and membership income to €554k and an increase in Other Trading Activity to €257k.

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 2025 saw membership continue to grow consistently throughout the year.

Income from Investments

Income from investments for 2025 was €28k which is in keeping with 2024 levels and comprises of rental income.

Expenditure

Expenditure for 2025 was €14.299m which is an increase of 3% on 2024 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 2025 was €101k which is a decrease of 61% on 2024 levels.

Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Expenditure on Charitable Activities comprises the fulfilment of the Healthcare Provider Specific Requirements (HPSR) 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 2025, expenditure on charitable activities was €14.199m which is an increase of 4% on 2024 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 zero and the unrestricted reserves are €3.714m at year end with these levels having been reviewed by the Board through the Finance and Organisation subcommittee. This is reviewed against our policy to hold six months reserves which equates to €3.753m and during the transitional growth period, the board considers the current reserves of €3.714m 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 organisations commitments.

Investments

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

Events since the balance sheet date

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

Statement On Relevant Audit Information

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

Auditors

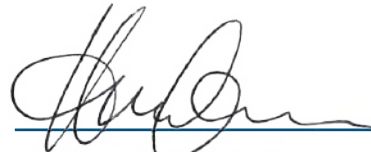
In accordance with Section 382(2) of the Companies Act 2014, the auditors, Forvis Mazars will continue in office having been re-appointed during 2025 following a competitive tender process.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors



Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 26 May 2026



Director: Hugh McGeown

Date: 26 May 2026

Family Carers Ireland

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

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

for the year ended 31 December 2025

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.

Family Carers Ireland

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

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

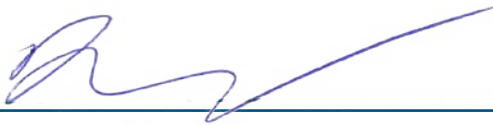
for the year ended 31 December 2025

(continued)

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: Richard Hammond

Date: 26 May 2026



Director: Hugh McGeown

Date: 26 May 2026

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 2025, 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 2025, 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.

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 137, 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.

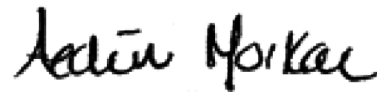
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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. 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.

**Aedin Morkan**

for and on behalf of Forvis Mazars
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm
Harcourt Centre, Block 3
Harcourt Road
Dublin 2

Date: 29 May 2026

Family Carers Ireland

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

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2025

For the year ended 31 December 2025	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2025 €	Restricted Funds 2025 €	Total Funds 2025 €	Unrestricted Funds 2024 €	Restricted Funds 2024 €	Total Funds 2024 €
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	4	93,213	3,891	97,104	60,525	-	60,525
Charitable activities	7	6,237,573	7,382,806	13,620,379	6,271,881	7,029,206	13,301,087
Trading activities	8	810,361	-	810,361	655,666	49,659	705,325
Investment income	9	27,545	-	27,545	27,520	-	27,520
Total income		7,168,692	7,386,697	14,555,389	7,015,592	7,078,865	14,094,457
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	10	100,608	-	100,608	198,430	59,658	258,088
Charitable activities	11	6,664,438	7,534,398	14,198,836	6,495,310	7,181,697	13,677,007
Total expenditure		6,765,046	7,534,398	14,299,444	6,693,740	7,241,355	13,935,095
Net income/ (expenditure) before transfers		403,646	(147,701)	255,945	321,852	(162,490)	159,362
Transfers between funds		(147,701)	147,701	-	(162,490)	162,490	-
Net movement in funds for the year		255,945	-	255,945	159,362	-	159,362
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward	22	3,458,218	-	3,458,218	3,298,856	-	3,298,856
Total funds carried forward	22	3,714,163	-	3,714,163	3,458,218	-	3,458,218

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. These notes on pages 145 to 160 form part of the financial statements.

Family Carers Ireland

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

Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 €	2024 €
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	17	280,941	263,916
Current Assets			
Debtors	18	2,132,992	1,570,104
Cash and cash equivalents	25	3,702,468	3,849,892
Total Current Assets		5,835,460	5,419,996
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	19	(2,402,238)	(2,225,694)
Net Current Assets		3,433,222	3,194,302
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		3,714,163	3,458,218
Funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted		3,714,163	3,458,218
Restricted		-	-
Total funds	22	3,714,163	3,458,218

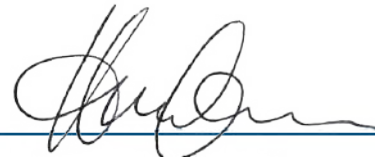
The notes on pages 145 to 160 form part of the financial statements.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 26 May 2026 and signed on its behalf by:



Director: Richard Hammond

Date: 26 May 2026



Director: Hugh McGeown

Date: 26 May 2026

Family Carers Ireland

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

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 December 2025

		2025	2024
	Notes	€	€
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	24	(109,056)	898,308
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	17	(38,368)	(8,806)
Cash used in investment activities		(38,368)	(8,806)
Net (decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents		(147,424)	889,502
Cash and cash equivalents at start of the year		3,849,892	2,960,390
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year	25	3,702,468	3,849,892

The notes on pages 145 to 160 form part of the financial statements.

Notes To The Financial Statements

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 2025.

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 9.

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:

Buildings	2%
Computer Equipment	33%
Office Equipment	33%

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.

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.

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 assets is €280,941 as at year end (2024: €263,916).

4. Donations And Legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 €	Restricted funds 2025 €	Total funds 2025 €	Total funds 2024 €
Donations	93,213	3,891	97,104	60,525

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.

6. Section 39 Income and Expenditure

	2025 Income €	2025 Expenditure €	2024 Income €	2024 Expenditure €
National	4,348,795	4,348,795	3,730,497	3,730,497
Dublin and Midlands	367,140	367,140	353,775	353,775
Dublin North East	339,735	339,735	374,238	374,238
Dublin South East	494,267	494,267	394,829	394,829
Mid West	752,540	752,540	697,404	697,404
West and North West	303,998	303,998	279,187	279,187
South West	133,679	133,679	129,734	129,734
WRC	-	-	496,435	496,435
Total	6,740,154	6,740,154	6,456,099	6,456,099

7. Charitable Activity Income

Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
€	€	€	€
6,237,573	7,382,806	13,620,379	13,301,087

Charitable Activity Income (breakdown below)

Charitable Activity Income Breakdown	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Section 39 Grant Income (note 6)	-	6,740,154	6,740,154	6,456,099
Group	-	8,232	8,232	7,679
Dementia Project	-	-	-	156,022
Fidelity	-	99,973	99,973	93,246
Strength and Disability	-	-	-	34,293
Other Grant Income	-	14,872	14,872	85,630
Dormant Account Income	-	77,859	77,859	59,268
SSNO Income	-	92,238	92,238	42,603
Community Foundation for Ireland	-	1,254	1,254	675
Home Support Services	6,237,573	-	6,237,573	6,271,881
National Lottery	-	27,155	27,155	63,547
Community and Voluntary Pillar	-	30,144	30,144	30,144
Lidl	-	151,359	151,359	-
Lilly	-	107,741	107,741	-
Womens Health	-	14,157	14,157	-
Standard Life	-	10,325	10,325	-
Shifting gears	-	7,343	7,343	-
Total	6,237,573	7,382,806	13,620,379	13,301,087

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

8. Trading Activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Charity Trading Income (breakdown below)	810,361	-	810,361	705,325
Charity Trading Income Breakdown				
	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Fundraising Income & Membership Income	553,772	-	553,772	473,054
Other Trading Income	256,589	-	256,589	232,271
Total	810,361	-	810,361	705,325

9. Investment Income

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Rental Income	27,545	-	27,545	27,520

10. Cost of Raising Funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Membership Costs	72,058	-	72,058	219,904
Other Costs of Raising Funds	28,550	-	28,550	38,449
Total	100,608	-	100,608	258,353

11. Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Summary of Charitable Activities				
Donation Expenditure	2,903	3,891	6,794	1,205
Other Grant Expenditure (Note A)	-	399,060	399,060	639,856
Wages and Salaries (Note B)	6,000,947	5,465,195	11,466,142	10,895,997
Overhead Expenditure (Note C)	660,588	1,666,252	2,326,840	2,139,949
Total	6,664,438	7,534,398	14,198,836	13,677,007

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

Note A - Other Grant Expenditure				
	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Dementia Programme	-	-	-	110,060
Dormant Accounts	-	77,859	77,859	51,424
Other Grant Expenditure	-	321,201	321,201	478,372
Total	-	399,060	399,060	639,856

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

Note B - Wages and Salaries				
	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Direct Wages	4,447,301	1,269,593	5,716,894	5,508,620
Indirect Wages	1,553,646	4,195,602	5,749,248	5,387,377
Total Wages	6,000,947	5,465,195	11,466,142	10,895,997

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.

11. Charitable Activities (contd)

Note C - Overhead Expenditure				
	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	€	€	€	€
Establishment	56,630	435,036	491,666	485,209
IT and Administration	190,653	502,120	692,773	583,182
Training, PPE and Local Centre	142,898	140,321	283,219	253,322
Other Overheads	130,501	266,423	396,924	430,879
Group Expenditure	-	8,232	8,232	7,679
Programme Costs	139,906	314,120	454,026	379,678
Total	660,588	1,666,252	2,326,840	2,139,949

12. Employees and Remuneration

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

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Corporate Services	15	13
Communications and Policy	14	10
Carer Support	58	64
Home Support Services	25	26
Home Care Workers	259	287
Total	371	400

The staff costs comprise:

	2025 €	2024 €
Wages and salaries	9,356,205	9,382,304
Social security costs	2,489,563	2,513,707
Pension costs	170,716	148,096
Total	12,016,484	12,044,107

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.

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 €523,249 (2024: €483,875). 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):

	2025 Number	2024 Number
€70,000 to €80,000	10	11
€80,000 to €90,000	-	-
€90,000 to €100,000	3	3
€100,000 to €120,000	1	-
€120,000 to €140,000	1	1
Total	15	15

The salary (excluding employer PRSI) of the Chief Executive Officer in 2025 was €161,324 (2024: €134,155) 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 €12,836 (2024: €10,510) 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:

	2025 €	2024 €
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets (Note 17)	21,343	17,910
Auditor's remuneration – statutory audit	26,445	25,707
Auditor's remuneration – company secretarial	523	523

During the year, no Directors received any remuneration (2024 - €NIL).

During the year, no Directors received any benefits in kind (2024 - €NIL).

16. Auditor's Remuneration

The Auditor's remuneration amounts to an audit fee inclusive of VAT of €26,445 (2024: €25,707) in respect of statutory audit services.

17. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Computer Equipment €	Property, Plant & Equipment €	Total €
At 1 January 2025	92,996	267,500	360,496
Additions	38,368	-	38,368
At 31 December 2025	131,364	267,500	398,864
At 1 January 2025	68,083	28,497	96,580
Charge for the year	15,993	5,350	21,343
At 31 December 2025	84,076	33,847	117,923
At 31 December 2025	47,288	233,653	280,941
At 31 December 2024	24,913	239,003	263,916

18. Debtors

	2025 €	2024 €
Trade Debtors	1,936,099	1,379,485
Other Debtors	40,212	33,518
Prepayments and accrued income	156,681	157,101
Total	2,132,992	1,570,104

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.

19. Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year:

	2025 €	2024 €
Trade and other creditors	216,299	202,881
Other taxation and social security costs (Note 20)	294,879	193,707
Accruals	563,526	533,453
Deferred Income (Note 21)	1,327,534	1,295,653
Total	2,402,238	2,225,694

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

	2025 €	2024 €
PAYE/PRSI	294,879	193,707
Total	294,879	193,707

21. Deferred Income

	2025 €	2024 €
At beginning of year	1,295,653	607,015
Resources deferred during the year	1,338,816	977,920
Credited to Statement of Financial Activities	(1,306,935)	(289,282)
At end of year	1,327,534	1,295,653

22. Analysis of Movement of Funds

Prior 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

Current Year

	Unrestricted €	Designated €	Restricted €	Total €
Opening Balance at 1 January 2025	3,458,218	-	-	3,458,218
Income	7,168,692	-	7,386,697	14,555,389
Expenditure	(6,765,046)	-	(7,534,398)	(14,299,444)
Transfer Between Funds	(147,701)		147,701	
Closing Balance at 31 December 2025	3,714,163	-	-	3,714,163

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	263,916	-	-	263,916
Current Assets	5,419,996	-	-	5,419,996
Current Liabilities	(2,225,694)	-	-	(2,225,694)
Total	3,458,218	-	-	3,458,218

Current Year

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	€	€	€	€
Represented by:				
Fixed Assets	280,941	-	-	280,941
Current Assets	5,835,460	-	-	5,835,460
Current Liabilities	(2,402,238)	-	-	(2,402,238)
Total	3,714,163	-	-	3,714,163

24. Reconciliation of Net Movement in Funds to Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities

	2025 €	2024 €
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	255,945	159,362
Adjustment for:		
Depreciation charge	21,343	17,910
Increase in debtors	(562,889)	(74,487)
Decrease in creditors	176,545	795,523
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	(109,055)	898,308

25. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2025 €	2024 €
Cash and bank balances	3,702,468	3,849,892

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 €170,716 (2024: €148,096). No contributions were payable at year end.

27. Operating Lease Commitments

Amounts payable:	2025 €	2024 €
Within 1 year	86,000	72,842
Between 1 and 5 years	158,645	152,000
Greater than 5 years	38,000	66,500
Total	282,645	291,342

28. Related Party Transactions

No related party transactions took place during the year ended 31 December 2025 (2024: NIL), other than those noted in note 13 relating to key management personnel remuneration and note 14 directors' expenses.

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 26 May 2026.

APPENDIX

Details Of Statutory Funding Received In 2025

(The following do not form part of the audited accounts)

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	232,9600 - 3 years	92,238	60,800
Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government	Community and Voluntary Pillar	Assist the Organisation in its role as a contributor to Public Policy	30,144 - 1 year	30,144	0
Pobal, Department of Rural and Community Development (Lead) and Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (Sponsor)	Dormant Accounts Fund - Supporting Family Carers	Support and improve employment opportunities for Carers and persons with a disability - M1 and M2: Family Carers and Young Carers	249,800 - 2 years	77,859	0
Department of Health and National Lottery	Palliative Care Grant	Palliative Care Programme	50,000	0	6,644
Department of Health	Women's Health	Focus on the health of 'women at midlife and older living well and living longer' and also 'services and supports for marginalised women'	250,000 - 1 year	14,157	238,843

Reference and Administrative Details

CHARITY NAME:	Family Carers Ireland
COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER:	572819
CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER:	CHY 10962
CHARITIES REGULATOR NUMBER:	20029029
DIRECTORS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025:	Robert Anderson Angela Briggs Barbara Carroll (Vice Chair) Wendy Hamilton Richard Hammond (Chair) John Healy Gloria Kirwan Hugh McGeown Johanne Powell
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR:	Forvis Mazars Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm, Block 3, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Road, Dublin 2
PRINCIPAL BANKERS:	Bank of Ireland, 2 College Green, Dublin 2
SOLICITORS:	Byrne Wallace Shields LLP, 88 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2
CEO & EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM:	Sharon Foley Ingrid Colvin Mary Conway Catherine Cox Sean Dillon
SECRETARY & REGISTERED OFFICE:	Mary Conway Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Board Committees at 31 December 2025:

AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT

Shane McCarthy (Chair)
Cillian Mac Domhnaill
Graham Knowles

QUALITY & SAFETY

Gloria Kirwan (Chair)
Cora Long
Kara Madden
Triona Fortune

MARKETING & FUNDRAISING

Wendy Hamilton (Chair)
Tracey Carney
Lynsey O'Donovan
Pat Montague

FINANCE & ORGANISATION

Hugh McGeown (Chair)
Richard Hammond
Barbara Carroll
Fr. Paddy Hennessy
Alison Egan

CARER SUPPORT & ENGAGEMENT

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

RESEARCH & POLICY

Robert Anderson (Chair)
Frank Goodwin
Deirdre O'Donnell
Angela Briggs
Anne Vaughan
Pat Montague
Johanne Powell





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