



# Association for Agency-based Counselling in Ireland

## Newsletter

November 2015

### Welcome

Welcome to the AACI newsletter. 2015 has been a very busy year for the AACI in terms of company development, expanding membership, advocacy and providing training events.

Last November 2014, Minister James Reilly TD launched the AACI. This took place at the Mansion House. It was a very special event for us. Irish jazz singer Mary Coughlan spoke very deeply and passionately about her life experience and how counselling saved her.

I am working with the AACI as its employee for 1.5 years and have been enjoying the challenge of the post of National Coordinator. I would like to personally thank the AACI Board of Directors for their continued support and guidance over this time. I would also like to thank Tusla Child & Family Agency for their support and belief in the work of the AACI. Their funding of us is hugely important and valued.



**Ger Matthews**  
AACI National Coordinator

### IT Database & Finance Consultant

We are delighted to have **Michelle McCafferty** working with the AACI in a consultancy capacity. Having been in the role of AACI Treasurer and Database Manager on the AACI Board of Directors for several years, it has made her transition in to her new role seamless. She is more available to support our member agencies with the continued role out of our database. She is also working closely with Storm Technology in further developing our database to ensure we are collating statistics that accurately captures the work being done in the community-counselling sector. Michelle is also a great support to our National Coordinator in the areas of governance and finance.

### AACI National Counselling Conference

This is the AACI's first National Conference. We are delighted that Senator Mary Moran has taken time out of her busy schedule to open our national counselling conference.

We are equally delighted that Norah Gibbons the Chairperson of Tusla Child & Family Agency is also speaking on the day. As our conference is primarily about promoting the importance and value of community based counselling it is much appreciated by the AACI and its member agencies that Tusla are taking part on the day. We would also like to thank all of our guest speakers who are contributing on the day.

### AACI Development

#### AACI DATABASE:

We are currently developing our database to capture more accurate counselling statistics. The primary development is to broaden the range of referrers and to eliminate the number of unrecorded statistics. We will be capturing the number of Child Protection Cases, hours of work involved by the DLP and report writing. We are developing the system to capture the number of both individual and group supervision hours provided by our member agencies. This can be a cost that is over looked and yet a hugely important one. Michelle has been supporting our member agencies to sign up to using our database and we now have 20 member agencies feeding their data, this will really enhance our National Statistics Report in January 2016.

#### WEBSITE:

We are developing our website so that we can display our annual report and accounts, newsletter and events taking place throughout the year.



**REVENUE & GOVERNANCE:**

The AACI Board of Directors attended governance training during the year that was hugely helpful in identifying the key areas of development in terms of policies and procedures and in ensuring they have a healthy working relationship with their staff. Michelle McCafferty has been working with our accountant and solicitor to ensure we are compliant with Revenue and Governance.

**MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION:**

There are ten new member agencies. In 2014 we developed a new membership structure that facilitates a wider range of counselling services to become members. Our standards and criteria for membership are the same for all agencies to join. We would like to welcome the following agencies to the AACI:

1. An Cosan
2. Beacon of Light
3. Fingal Counselling Service
4. Family Life Service Ferns
5. Oasis Counselling Service
6. The Village Centre( IICP)
7. Limerick Social Service Council
8. Irish Childhood Bereavement Network
9. Rainbows Ireland
10. Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service

**TRAINING & NETWORKING EVENTS 2015**

1. Database Training & User Feedback:
2. Governance Training
3. AGM followed by members network discussion
4. Database Training for our new members.
5. 1st National Counselling Conference

**AACI POSITION PAPER:**

This paper is currently being worked on and will be complete by early December 2015. The objective of this Position Paper is to highlight the vast range of services, value and benefits of Community-Based Counselling. The paper has evolved out of years of under valuing and very little recognition and understanding of what community based counselling actual is. How despite a 46% cut in funding still manages to provide a professional counselling service that meets the needs and demands of the community locally and nationally. The paper also aims to demonstrate how Community-Based Counselling Psychotherapy is the solution to the gap in Mental Health Services within Tusla Child & Family Agency. It will show that counselling and psychotherapy are recognised responses to Mental Health.

**Commissioning Tusla Child & Family Agency:**

Is a strategic approach to leverage best outcomes from all Tusla resources – internal and external.

- About understanding future demand
- An understanding of future balance of market
- Getting national consistency in service costs and approaches
- Incentivising market innovation balanced with budgetary costs
- Meeting and identifying current & future demands & needs
- Reducing gaps in service
- Value for money, spend in a strategic way
- Interagency collaboration
- Evidenced based services
- Reduce duplication
- Outcomes, future goals
- Ability to provide a service

**List of AACI Members**

Aim Family Services	Limerick Social Service Council
An Cosan	Northside Counselling Service
Beacon of Light	Oasis Counselling Service
Boyle Counselling & Psychotherapy	Pro-Consult
CARI Foundation	Relationships Ireland
Clanwilliam Institute	Southwest Counselling Service
Cork Counselling Centre	St Brigid's FCC
Crosscare Teen Counselling	Family Life Services Ferns
Cork Marriage	Target Counselling Service
Dublin Counselling Centre	Turning Point
Dundalk Counselling Centre	The Village Centre IICP
Fingal Counselling Services	Vita House
Family Life Castlebar	Rainbows Ireland
Genesis	Irish Childhood Bereavement Network
Hesed House	
Knock Counselling Service	
Liberties Counselling Service	Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service

**AACI Board of Management**

We would like to thank **Michelle McCafferty** for the huge work and commitment she gave during her time on the AACI Board of Directors.

We would like to welcome **Gerry Linnane** on to the AACI Board of Directors. He joined the board in June this year. He has many years experience in this sector that is invaluable to supporting us in our future development.