

CEO's Report 2017

It is the primary objective of Gheel Autism Services to ensure the best possible quality of support and service is delivered to the people supported. In pursuit of this objective, we utilise the following processes and supports to ensure compliance with evidence based best practice and regulation requirements:

- To provide a living environment that is most suitable to support individual needs;
- To ensure that people live in a comfortable, clean and safe environment;
- To produce the required audits throughout the year to ensure high quality service provision;
- To create personalised Support Plans with Multi-Disciplinary Team input where required;
- To respect and support each person's right to live as independently as desired, with privacy and dignity;
- To provide regular staff training to maintain a service delivery in line with best practice.

Gheel Autism Services is committed to delivering quality and safe services which embrace and support the unique individuality of persons with autism as valued members of society. Gheel is guided by the principle that the service is designed to give people with autism a life and not just a service. Gheel has a low arousal philosophy, which is used in supporting adults with autism during times of high stress. There are four key components central to the philosophy:

- Decreasing staff demands on the people we support and requests to reduce potential points of conflict around an individual;
- Avoiding potentially arousing triggers, such as direct eye contact, touch, and removal of spectators to the incident;
- Avoidance of non-verbal behaviours that may lead to conflict, such as aggressive postures and stances; and
- Challenging staff beliefs about the short-term management of behaviours of concern.

The values at Gheel Autism Services are:

- Dignity
- Integrity
- Respect
- Diversity
- Empowerment

Dunfirth

In May 2016 HSE requested Gheel to support their management of the Irish Society of Autism services in Dunfirth, Enfield Co. Meath. The Dunfirth service had two locations; one in Dunfirth and Cluain. Gheel supported the services under a memorandum of understanding. This memorandum allowed Gheel to provide specialist knowledge support to the Dunfirth and Cluain services. The agreement was initially for a period of 6 months while the service went to public tender. In August 2017 Dunfirth and Cluain services were publicly advertised for interested parties to tender. Gheel tendered for both Dunfirth and Cluain services. Unfortunately, Gheel was unsuccessful in this tender and the tender was given to two agencies. One agency will provide services to Dunfirth and another to Cluain. Gheel continues to support the services pending the transfer of services from HSE to the successful tendered agencies in 2018.

New management team

Three senior management team vacancies were successfully filled in 2017. Gheel successfully recruited in October an interim CEO Mr Paudie Galvin, in August Financial Director, Mr Michael Higgins and in September Director of Service, Ms Siobhan Bryan.

Up-grade of services

Gheel were possible continues an active programme of upgrading and reconfiguring to meet service demands. Gheel was granted €150,000 by the HSE for the upgrade of Fairview Day Services. €75,000 was received in December 2017. Works were undertaken and are planned to be completed in 2018. In Ballycurraghan a new training room was developed. Milltown Day Services was in receipt of a capital grant of €50,000 from the HSE and the driveway and car parking area were replaced, and new tarmac laid which greatly improves both the safety of the surface area for service. New gates were also installed in Milltown and all the doors and windows have been replaced. In Hortland's House, to ensure compliance with required fire regulations, the HSE (third party owner of property) have installed fire doors throughout the house and adjacent apartment. In our service in the North Circular Road a new boiler was installed by and the roof was completely replaced.

In Fairview residential bathroom/shower area was renovated.

New service

In 2017 the Acre Project in Celbridge opened and following consultation with people accessing services the team were named 'The Eden' project, named due to the beginning of this model of service for Gheel for the first time in Kildare region. It was also named after the beautiful sensory garden and horticulture facilities that the building offers. An open day was held for parents on opening inviting them all to be part of a presentation on the model of service as a transition model of support which supports individuals for as long as required toward independent or supported living.

People accessing services were involved in the design of what equipment they also required with the Regional Manager linking with the established outreach Service in Dublin to create a focus group of what needs they felt required to be met in the building for new referrals. This involved getting IT equipment for online training and building social networks along with resource material on Autism. Furniture that created a comfortable and homely environment were also purchased in consultation with people accessing services identifying the building as a 'home from home'. It also included a room for people to reduce stress for example with bean bags, noise blocking headphones and music devices. Individuals accessing services in Eden also continued to work with staff to decorate and personalise the building including the creation of a mural wall by the people accessing services. The Irish Independent wrote an article about the project in December 2016. Click on the link below to read:

<https://www.independent.ie/business/jobs/a-job-that-makes-a-difference-35272659.html>

Email Migration and I.T. Transformation Project:

This project commenced in September 2017. The first phase was to migrate all staff to the same email system and this has been successfully completed in 2017 and all Gheels email is now hosted in the Cloud using Microsoft 365. Along with the email, there is a separate project ongoing to move all documents to the Microsoft One Drive Cloud system. This project is nearing completion and is making the sharing and saving of documents much more efficient and secure. In tandem with these two projects, GC Technology have been reviewing the I.T. Infrastructure across Gheel sites. Significant improvements have been made in broadband access for most sites with the exception of Head Office in Ballycurraghan which, because of its location, continues to have a very poor standard of broadband. GC Technology is also conducting an audit of all Gheel's hardware and a number of computers have been upgraded or rebuilt and some have been identified as approaching the end of their life span. All computers have had a new anti-virus software installed and by the end of the project all computers will be running Windows 10 Pro.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) is a regulation by which the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission intend to strengthen and unify data protection for all individuals within the European Union (EU). With the generous assistance of resources from SQS (a world leader in Information Technology and management systems) GDPR project is underway in Gheel. A Data Protection Officer has been appointed. A project plan has been established and Data Protect Champions have been appointed for each part of the Service. The deadline for compliance is 25th May 2018 and the project timelines are extremely tight. This is really a cultural change and the need is to ensure that all staff are aware of the data that we collect, why it is collected and how we protect it. We collect some very sensitive data in Gheel and under this new legislation we need to be in a position to confirm to the Data Protection Commissioner that we are compliant.

Training

Staff undertook training in Children's first via HSE online training programme. Gheel provided training in Safe Administration in Medication (SAMs), Fire safety, Autism training. Manual Handling Food Safety (HACCP), Studio 3, Safeguarding, Dignity at Work, First Aid, Data Protection, Report Writing. In late 2017 the service developed a management development programme following engagement with a management development consultant to provide training. The programme is to maximise the potential of people working within Gheel, as people and managers, to ensure that the overall goals and values of the organisation are delivered, and that individuals get an excellent service. The management development programme will endeavour to ensure that people outside of the organisation also recognise it as being a leader in providing excellent services to people with Autism, and therefore be associated with a brand of excellence in delivery and innovation in services delivered to this sector. The plan is to roll out the training in 2018 and 2019.

Training is proving increasingly difficult to deliver as the number of vacancies unfilled in the service restrict availability of staff to attend training. In 2018 the service will endeavour to release staff to attend training.

Psychological services

Psychology services were enhanced with recruitment of psychological services of Dr. Mitchell Fleming. Mitchell supports Gheel's Clinical programme of supporting high quality Person Centred Plans (PCPs) and effective Positive Behaviour Support Plans (PBSPs) as required by statutory regulations and HIQA. Mitchell is an experienced Chartered Clinical and Educational Psychologist who, while working as a Consultant Psychologist with Gheel Autism Services, is also an Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology with University College Dublin and Honorary Tutor with the School of Psychology at Trinity College.

Changing needs

2017 has highlighted the complexity of maintaining the present level of services. Each year Gheel find that a proportion of the people accessing services, particularly those in residential services, emerge with additional support requirements. These changing needs recognise mobility issues and age-related medical requirements. While sometimes these additional support requirements can be absorbed within current staff levels, often additional support hours need to be allocated to support a person's immediate needs. While there is a general recognition that "changing needs" are a reality that requires addressing, this factor is not recognised as a cost driver in annual financial performance. Gheel is required to immediately respond with increased support levels while playing "catch up" in securing the necessary funding. The scale of cost associated with this factor in any given year can be significant. Moreover, as a residential population ages, the pace of "changing need" and the associated costs accelerate.

Absorbed costs “savings”

In 2017 Gheel absorbed costs due to internal efficiency-generated “savings”. Gheel’s efficiency comes mainly in our management of residential services – the majority of Gheel residential service are staffed at night-time on a lone sleepover arrangement. Also, most of the “residential hours” (i.e. all hours other than those when people are attending day services) are covered by staffing based on a person’s identified needs. The management of these resources results in a high level of efficiency for which we are cost effective and budgeted for by the HSE. However, accordingly as the people we support needs change combined with requirements for regulatory compliance it will not be possible to sustain this level of efficiency. Some current lone staffing sleepover arrangements are likely to convert into significantly more expensive “waking night” cover and lone staffing hours are unlikely to be maintained.

Absenteeism

Another core element of over efficiency is managing absenteeism, notably paid absence. The management of absenteeism requires constant, active vigilance. The total number of staff employed in Gheel is 164 with whole-time equivalents for the services of 145 and in 2017 the service had absenteeism level of 5.84% – this is the equivalent of 8.5 WTE staff being out on any given week. The service continues to manage, and monitor absenteeism and the overall rate is slightly down on 2016 rate.

Staff turnover

Gheel is a section 39 agency and staff are not public servants which section 38 agencies are and, as such, were not subject to the provisions of FEMPI legislation and are not entitled to the pay restoration provided for in the public service agreements i.e. Lansdowne Road Agreement. Given this discrepancy Gheel is at a significant recruitment and retention deficit due to preponderance of large section 38 agencies in our geographical service delivery who can offer higher pay rates. Gheel’s staff annual turnover for 2017 including relief was 14.36%, taking relief staff out of the equation reduces the turnover down to 11.26%. (16 staff).

Complaints /Compliments

The service has 3 complaints recorded last year this was a sharp decrease from 2016 where 14 complaints were recorded. There were 6 compliments in 2017 and this was an increase from 2016 where there were 2 compliments. The service would also view many of the incidents from people accessing services as complaints especially incidents involving people who are non-verbal.

Charitable status

State-funded services providing services on behalf of the State are registered by the Revenue Commissioners as charities to simplify the payment of certain categories of tax. Gheel Autism Services falls into this category. As such we are exempt from corporation taxes and certain capital taxes. Gheel is a charity in this technical sense

– but not in the sense that we provide services on the back of publicly fund-raised money.

Service Regional Update

South Dublin and North Circular Road Service

Total number of people accessing services:
South Dublin Region. 26 plus 3 for New Outreach Programme.
New admissions 2017 - South Dublin Region: 5

NCR – North Circular Road

2017 facilitated the implementation of significant service improvements in line with the requirements of the New Directions model of service delivery. This new service creates opportunities for residents to become more confident and aware of the variety of social and leisure pursuits available within their local and wider community. The meaningful programme of activities has enhanced the variety of choices and options for residents, ensuring that each day is flexible and adaptable in meeting their changing healthcare needs.

Following full consultation and planning with the staff team, the 24-hour roster was implemented in NCR. A new boiler was installed by the HSE in 197 B and the roof was completely replaced by the HSE in 197B.

There are 8 residents who are supported to enjoy living in their home in NCR and there were no new admissions to NCR during 2017.

Hortlands House

An unannounced HIQA Inspection was carried out in August 2017, there is an action plan in place which addresses the required improvements both in service delivery and service development as recommended by the HIQA inspector.

To ensure compliance with required fire regulations, the HSE (third party owner of property) have installed fire doors throughout the house and adjacent apartment. One resident transferred from Hortland's House in May 2017. There are 5 residents living in the main house, and 2 residents living in the adjacent apartment.

There were no new admissions to Hortland's House during 2017.

Milltown Services

The restructuring of Milltown Day Service has continued to progress throughout 2017. In response to the changing profile of referrals to Milltown Services, a plan was outlined which facilitates the enhancement of the existing day service to include a flexibility Outreach programme. Service proposals were submitted to the HSE on an individual basis, and funding was successfully secured to commence an Outreach Model of Service which is commencing in February 2018.

The driveway and car parking area were replaced, and new tarmac laid which greatly improves both the safety of the surface area for people accessing services and enhances the visual impressions of the building. New gates were installed at the entrance to the service which also improves the security and appearance of the service. All doors and windows have been replaced windows in last quarter of 2016 and doors in 2017.

There are 11 Service Users currently using Milltown Day Service. There were 3 admissions in day service and 2 to Outreach (funding approved in last quarter of 2017). One new individual joined Milltown services in May 2017, and there were two new school leavers who joined Milltown Day Service in September 2017. Two new referrals were also received, and funding approved for both to join the new Outreach Service. Please note – funding was secured in January 2018 for the development of an evening Outreach programme for an existing day service client. In February the newly developing Outreach programme will be supporting 3 individuals.

Fairview Campus

Georges House

The main bathroom/ shower area was renovated. Total number of people in Georges House is:

5 residents and 1 respite. There were no new admissions to this house in 2017.

The Villa

In 2017 we commenced using i-pads and the Grace App for all people accessing services to build their capacity to make choices, engage with the residents forum and to enhance their scope to express themselves using this communication tool. We have added folders and a library of personalised photos to each individual I-pad and this process is ongoing. An individual discontinued using day services and now receives a 24hr service from Fairview Villa. An additional resource of .7 WTE was allocated to facilitate this change. In late 2017 the villa and Apt 107 were painted to maintain the residential homes. There are 5 people in Fairview Villa, 1 in Apartment 107, there were no new admissions in 2017.

Day Services

Day Service in Fairview is an active centre and focus on integration with the local community. In 2017 a person accessing services started to provide a local coffee shop with table flowers. He looks forward to meeting with the owners and has thereby become involved in his local community.

Funding was sought from the HSE for the refurbishment of the Day Service to the hives modular model. The Hives will meet the holistic needs of each individual and tailors the supports accordingly.

Another person accessing services has developed his independent travel skills and started travelling independently. This provides him with greater independence and reduces his reliance on taxis. The hive model helps individual to develop their own

interests and hobbies and offer a range of programmes and activities that are in line with these preferences.

A person accessing services has joined a local gym. He has also become known in his community through regularly shopping independently and going to a local coffee shop independently. Staff from Gheel meet with the business owners to ensure that the person is doing well and there is a real sense that he is part of their customer base and he is known to the staff and some of the other customers.

One person accessing services has shown greater independence while in the day service in such simple ways as making himself a cup of tea where he might have needed staff support and constant reassurance to do so.

Another person is continuing with his project work and cooking. People accessing services are making their lunches themselves, some are supported to make lasagnes, some make simple sandwiches, but the new Hub environment allows them to learn these skills.

There are 10 people accessing this service. There were no new admissions.

The Bungalow

On 10th August 2017 the layout of the Bungalow was reconfigured to accommodate supporting one person in her own place at one end of the Bungalow. This involved 2 residents changing bedrooms and relocating the staff sleepover room to the medication room. The reason for doing this was to improve the quality of life for all individuals in the house. One person had difficulty sharing the living accommodation.

There are 5 people living in the Bungalow. There were no new admissions in 2017

The Apartments

January 2017 the residential Hub started. The Hub was developed in conjunction with the apartments. This will be a one-year trial after issues in relation to the apartments and residential hub.

November 2017- School leavers hub began. This is currently being offered as an outreach service initially until the completion of buildings works in the Fairview Day Service.

The apartments support 3 residents and 2 respite and 3 school leavers, all 3 residents are supported through residential hub

There were no new admissions to the Apartment residential service.

Kildare Regional Services

In 2017 the Acre Project in Celbridge opened and following consultation with people accessing services the team were named 'The Eden' project, so named due to the beginning of this model of service for Gheel for the first time in Kildare region. It was also named after the beautiful sensory garden and horticulture facilities that the building offers. An open day was held for parents on opening inviting them all to be

part of a presentation on the model of service as a transition model of support which supports individuals for as long as required toward independent or supported living.

Refurbishments included application for a set up grant to the HSE to establish Eden project with items to meet individuals' needs. People accessing services were involved in the design of what equipment they also required with the Regional Manager linking with the established outreach service in Dublin to create a focus group of what needs they felt required to be met in the building for new referrals. This involved getting IT equipment for online training and building social networks along with resource material on Autism. Furniture that created a comfortable and homely environment were also purchased with some people accessing services identifying the building as a 'home from home'. It also included a room to reduce stress for example with bean bags, noise blocking headphones and music devises. The people accessing services in Eden also continued to work with staff to decorate and personalise the building including the creation of a mural wall.

A sensory room was refurbished by one of the staff members in Laragh services by painting a night sky mural across the walls and ceiling along with black out covering across its windows

A person accessing services began doing craft activities with a staff member which included the purchase of second hand furniture and its restoration with paint, material or new handles etc.

Railpark House put in application for a requirement of a new premises to the HSE. General repair and replacement of facilities and its contents are done on an ongoing basis also.

The service received new admissions with the opening of the Eden service to a total of 6 people facilitated over 20 sessions of support per week

The service facilitated individual needs in internal transfers from Kildare and Fairview to better meet their needs in the Maynooth area both in day and residential services

House	People supported
Celbridge	5 utilising support sessions
Railpark	4 Residential
Pauls House	1 Residential
Ballycurraghan House	3 Residential
Prosperous House	1 day and respite
Laragh House	2 Respite & 3 day

Outreach Service

In 2017, the Outreach Residential Support Team made application to HIQA to repurpose Phoenix House on Philipsburg Avenue, Dublin 3. One person was supported to move out of a group living environment and into their own home. Here, the Team supported the development of independent living skills and ongoing

community support. This person will be supported to move into a new house in early 2018. This will create the capacity for the commencement of a respite service.

At the end of 2017, the Residential Team split into two teams, thereby creating a second team called the Community Support Team. The Community Support Team supports people living in the community in their own homes, with the most appropriate amount of support required. The team supports individuals by scheduled sessions focused on specific community living or independent living orientated tasks. In 2018, it is hoped to further increase the support for new people that this team provides.

The Hives Day Centres are working tirelessly towards promoting independence and developing the service in line with New Directions guidance. Toward the end of 2017, the focus commenced working on developing groups and facilitating skills-based workshops. The people accessing services attended skills groups for pottery, cooking, karate, aerobics, gardening and more! The services are based in 4 locations across Dublin and Kildare – with sharing of facilities and resources across all areas.

The Transition Team continue to grow and further expand the capacity to support people with areas around social development, independence, employment, education and wellbeing. The Transition team links with people living in the family home and supports the integration into local community and building a solid social network.

In 2017 the outreach teams supported the following number of people.

- Hives – 10
- Transition Team – 23
- Residential Team – 2
- Community Support Team - 8

Gheel Staffing	
•	Current headcount = 211 employees or 143.59 WTE
•	91.4% of employees employed in front line services
•	Social Care Workers = 78
•	Care Assistants/Support Workers = 47
•	Relief Staff = 48
•	Location Managers = 15
•	Nurses = 2
•	Clerical (inc all support functions) = 18
•	Assistant Psychologists = 2
•	Occupational Therapist = 1
•	Ratio of female to male staff = 63:37
•	Age breakdown –
•	27% 20 - 30 yrs
•	33% 31 - 40 yrs
•	22% 41 – 50 yrs
•	12% 51 – 60 yrs
•	6% 61 – 70 yrs

Incident analysis for 2017

