



Annual Report 2020



Chairperson's Introduction

So many phrases have been used to describe how unprecedented the challenges were for all of us throughout 2020. It truly was a year like no other. The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the wellbeing of survivors of sexual violence and abuse cannot be underestimated. Indeed the impact on services like Rape Crisis Centres cannot be overlooked either. The need to move all services including counseling onto an online world proved both challenging and to some degree successful for both survivors and rape crisis counsellors.

For me it was my first year as Chairperson of the RCNI and the Annual Report is a good moment to pause and reflect on the significant moments for the RCNI throughout the past year and to acknowledge the achievements and successes in that time.

Our year started with looking forward with hope as we launched the RCNI Election Manifesto, Towards Freedom from Sexual Violence, in January. This was in recognition of the fact that sexual violence erodes everyone's freedom – girls' and women's freedom in particular. It mapped for government the steps that would make a difference and asked for a commitment to a substantial and significant national response. Under four headings – Transforming Sexual Violence Together, Justice Matters, Dignity for All Survivors of Sexual Violence and Family Law Supporting and Protecting Victims – the manifesto sought coordinated action to turn the tide on sexual violence.

But by then the pandemic was already on the horizon and by March 2020 we focussed all our

energy on transforming our models of service delivery and capacity under the conditions of the crisis in order to understand survivors' rapidly changing needs and be there when and how they needed us. It was a particularly difficult time for sexual violence survivors with the sixteen Rape Crisis Centres nationwide having to adjust their operations to maintain services to clients and other users of their services, while observing best practice to combat infection. The sector responded with creativity and extraordinary agility and managed to maintain services online to the majority of survivors as well as being available for those who reached out to us for the first time in 2020.

We were not alone in this. The strong partnership of our statutory allies was critical to us. This support for our work was led by government's inclusion of sexual violence services as essential services during Covid. The strong recognition of government and the whole of society to the particular vulnerability of those experiencing domestic and sexual violence during lockdown was an important signal to survivors. For Rape Crisis Centres and the RCNI what we heard from survivors daily was the added strain and vulnerability on survivors as they tried to hold their trauma in the midst of the global crisis.

For RCNI the work turned to rapidly building standards, systems, guidance and protocols with the managers of centres in order to support this work and protect survivors in this new landscape. To support these intensive new demands we increased capacity in policy, privacy, data collection and communications with the support of Department of Justice funding.

By July we were producing data that helped in understanding and planning need. Drawing on a snapshot during the pandemic stay-at-home period (March-June 2020) compared to the same period in 2019, we could document the significant increases and changes in survivor engagement and significant increases in contacts made to Rape Crisis Centre Help Lines. Overall there was a 23% increase in helpline contact during the three months of lockdown measures, with the largest increase of 63% being in March.

Later that year when the Programme for Government was agreed, RCNI was encouraged to see commitment to much-needed, ambitious and transformative measures. In particular, RCNI was pleased to see that the urgent need for an immediate audit on governmental responsibility for Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based violence had been recognised and that Family Law, supporting and protecting victims, online safety, sex education in schools and the embedding of the Consent Framework in Higher Education Institutes were included as action points.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of RCNI I would like to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of our Executive Director Clóna Saidlear, who once again has proven tireless in her work in this area and continues to encourage us all to look for other ways to ensure the voice and experience of all victims of sexual violence is heard and valued in Ireland and beyond. Thank you Cliona for all you give to the role. It is also important to honour and thank those who work alongside the CEO on a daily basis, Caroline Counihan, our Legal and Policy Officer whose legal knowledge and insight into the victim's journey continues to amaze us. To Lorraine Quigley, our capable and willing Administrator who keeps us all alert and updated on so many levels, it is so appreciated. Elaine Mears, our Privacy and Data Support Co-ordinator who despite many years in the sector still brings such passion and hard work to her role and to the sector. Her use of data as a way of communicating the story of survivors of sexual

violence is inspiring. Michelle Walsh who has come on board as the Clinic Lead for our Clinical Innovation Project Programme and has put so much time and work into helping us develop and improve the standard of training available to those working in the area of sexual violence as a way of ensuring that when victims do contact a Rape Crisis Centre they get the best possible standard of service.

Sincerest thanks to my fellow board members for their continued support and efforts on behalf of the RCNI. The challenges of the past year for us as a board were many but the work and dedication of the people serving on it never faltered and for that I am truly grateful.

As we look to the future for the RCNI we know there will be many challenges and indeed the continued unknown aspect of this pandemic will be one of them. However I am confident that we as Directors and the staff of RCNI will rise to these challenges. All in all 2020 was challenging and exhausting. But underlining the 2020 crisis always was the firm commitment, the building of interagency collaboration and new insights that, if we can maintain this focus, can give us hope for the future.

Loretta McDonagh MA SIAHIP
Chairperson
Rape Crisis Network Ireland



Director's Foreword

2020 was a year of adaption, innovation in crisis, expansion and development. 2020 began with the hopes of modest expansion for the RCNI with a small increase on our Justice funding to further secure our team. However, by May we had in fact more than doubled our team. Government prioritisation and previous investment in domestic and sexual violence meant that when the Covid crisis hit DSGBV was afforded visibility and consideration within the national response. It was also the case that this national response demonstrated starkly the chronic underfunding across the issue, the lack of critical infrastructure, and gaps and fragmentation of response. While RCNI expanded rapidly to meet needs there was a limit to how much we could safely grow. The same was true for rape crisis centres where existing infrastructure could only allow for the absorption of so much funding. At a certain point more funding could simply not be spent without an investment in governance, management and administrative capacity. Overall, the Covid crisis in 2020 was marked by significant levels of collaboration across agencies.

The Covid response took priority. RCNI prioritised supporting the adaption of services online for survivors and engaging on access to justice during the pandemic. RCNI adapted our outputs, focusing on the change necessary to support remote working across the sector and to understand how best to reach and support survivors in this time. Networking, policy and guidance development, new standards, IT systems and privacy and technology considerations were rapidly facilitated. In 2020 we held over 50 networking meetings with managers

and specialist staff and volunteers in centres to share, learn, adapt and support the changes needed and to sustain the workforce. We also engaged extensively with other professionals and agencies in ensuring best outcomes for survivors and prevention.

In the formation of government in June 2020 sexual and domestic violence yet again did not get a seat at the cabinet table. This was disappointing however, reassuringly the Programme for Government did focus on these issues with concrete commitments, principally to Audit the government response to DSGBV.

There was a promise to advance a heavy workload of legislative reform for six different Ministers. These included measures to tackle delay in rape cases, to protect the community from known sex offenders, to build a fit for purpose family law system as part of fixing our child protection system, to ensure the internet is a safer place including establishing an Online Safety Commissioner and to leave no gaps in our laws that gives impunity to those who would harass and harm others through sexual violence, by creating additional offences of distributing and publishing intimate images without consent.

In terms of protecting witnesses in criminal cases as the EU Victims' Directive and to a lesser extent the Istanbul Convention oblige, the Tom O'Malley Review of the protections for vulnerable witnesses in the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences was published in the Autumn. This report laid out a roadmap following the Belfast trial. The RCNI 'Hearing Every Voice' Report on vulnerable witnesses (2018), in which

we put together 33 recommendations with multi-agency partners and legal professionals, was part of the terms of reference for the O'Malley Review. The comprehensive NI report on serious sexual offences by Sir John Gillen, commenced about the same time, was published in May 2019. The government responded rapidly to the O'Malley report with an ambitious implementation plan, 'Supporting a Victim's Journey', with root and branch reform and change set in motion for the justice system. The first subcommittee began its work towards the end of the year. The government also promised to undertake an audit of its infrastructure on the issue and the national strategy needed renewal.

The government then ran two national campaigns, one a continuation of the sexual violence prevention campaign and the second a Covid related message to survivors and perpetrators. The preparation for the national prevalence study continued and the Higher Education Authority prepared for its monitoring role of the Framework for Consent for Higher Education Institutes.

We were called upon regularly by Government, the Oireachtas and state bodies to deliver expert testimony and submissions towards understanding and solving complex issues around sexual violence. 2020, despite an extended period to form a government after the election and the Covid crisis, was no different in that regard. In 2020 we responded to demands for our expertise and input from nine different government departments and agencies. We made ten substantive submissions on national policy and legislative matters. We were specialist advisors on eight different government or Departmental working groups or committees. In addition, we were engaged with Oireachtas members and political parties on their work on private members bills, parliamentary questions and party policy formation. We partnered and collaborated in eleven ongoing NGO working groups or coalitions on various specialist topics here in Ireland and internationally. We provided

bespoke resources here and internationally.

All of this work continues to be informed and rooted in survivors experience and rape crisis knowledge. In 2020 RCNI provided direct expert support and advice to 67 survivors and their supporters referred from Rape Crisis Centres and elsewhere. We developed shared resources to support RCC work as well provided ongoing advice to their advocates in Rape Crisis Centres and other professionals engaged with survivors, addressing at least one query a week on emerging matters.

RCNI oversees the administration and delivery of **national specialist training** including the specialist sexual violence Court & Garda Accompaniment programme and are also responsible for internal legal training and for Garda liaison. In addition, we provide a Vetting Liaison Service for the sector. All training moved online and Court and Garda accompaniment and indeed SATU accompaniment was limited and often remote rather than in person. We also supported 4 training sessions for Data collection officers and users. In 2020 we trained 122 specialists. Court dates were rare and delays extended throughout 2020. This resulted in more demand on our support work as survivors found themselves having to hold their nerve all throughout 2020 as little moved forward.

As far as possible, our recommendations are evidence-based. They are informed by consultation with other relevant professionals, sometimes also by models adapted from other jurisdictions, and they are grounded in our daily experience of the issues faced by our clients; survivors of sexual violence, as they negotiate their trauma, identify their needs, and engage with the criminal justice system, with their hopes for safety, restitution and recovery. In 2020 the RCNI National Database had funded support for the first time since 2015, with this support we rapidly rebuilt long neglected infrastructure to improve and assure data and to produce closer to real time Covid data. By July 2020, we were able

to track and publish the extraordinary changes in survivor needs and rape crisis centre responses in the first six months of Covid. While these were disseminated nationally, they also informed international fora responding to Covid with the Irish RCC data being presented on the main panel of the WAVE annual conference alongside Italian and Grevio colleagues.

One of the key questions we identified in our ongoing close collaboration with centres and counsellors was the significant unknowns around moving sexual violence trauma counselling responses online. We were grateful to be awarded funding from Rethink Ireland to undertake research and a co-creation project on this question. The Clinical Innovation Project began in October 2020 and will run into 2021.

Although independent, we worked collaboratively and accountably in order to ensure the various interests of survivors, services, agencies and professions, are informed by survivors' needs and rights. We aimed for the highest standard of governance and are fully compliant with our existing obligations as well as the Code of Governance.

We engaged with the media regularly to inform public debate. We also created briefings,

guidance and advised relevant actors as matters arose, disseminating them to relevant stakeholders including other NGOs, members of the Oireachtas, public servants, and the public.

The staff team throughout 2020 have been supported by a dedicated and experienced board of specialists in their own right, and the staff and volunteers in member Rape Crisis Centres throughout the country. In 2020 our work continued to be grounded in the lived experiences of survivors who continue to trust us to support them and to hear their truth and to drive change.

Dr Cliona Saidlear
Executive Director
RCNI

Supporting Survivors' Access to Justice

RCNI continue to provide excellence in responding to, understanding and advising on access to justice for survivors. This encompasses the work of providing direct legal services to survivors and their supporters, equipping the sexual violence sector to provide Court and Garda accompaniment to survivors and to stay up to date with the law as well as analysing and advising on changes to the law, practice and policy.

Legal advice for survivors

In 2020 RCNI provided expert legal advice directly to **57** survivors and responded to **52** legal queries arising in **14** different Rape Crisis Centres.

Election Manifesto

The RCNI Manifesto for the Election set out RCNI priorities for legal change for which we advocated. We were pleased to see so many included in the programme for Government.

Advocacy and Submissions

In addition, in 2020 RCNI made a number of submissions to various Ministers, government departments and public consultations on a range of issues. These included advocacy with and submissions to:

- Citizen's Assembly on Gender Equality;
- UN Rapporteur on Sexual Violence;
- Law Reform Commission on Adult Safeguarding,
- Department of Justice on Criminal Justice Strategy and on the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017;
- Department of Justice on the General Scheme of the Family Court Bill,
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs on Review of Child Care Act 1991;
- Department for Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sports and the Gaeltacht on the General Scheme of the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill 2019;
- Public Consultation on the Review of the existing legislation on spent convictions set out in the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016;
- Department of Justice on the review of Part 4 of Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017;
- Minister for Justice on survivors of sexual violence living in Direct Provision's access to services, with privacy and dignity;
- Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, with regard to vulnerability assessments (of applicants for international protection shortly after their arrival in this country);
- Minister for Justice on matters regarding complainant anonymity;
- RCNI also provided substantial commentary on the Tom O'Malley Review in August 2020.

RCNI also campaigned on the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Bill, now enacted throughout 2020, making a number of detailed representations to Oireachtas members and to the Minister for Justice directly on possible amendments.

Briefings

In addition, RCNI followed the progress of the Criminal and Civil Procedure Bill through the Oireachtas and briefed Rape Crisis Centres on its main provisions (as far as relevant) once it had been enacted. RCNI provided regular briefings to the sector and other relevant stakeholders on changes and impacts on their work and for their clients.

Collaborations

RCNI also continued to build the case with our partners for the professionalisation of advocacy services for survivors accessing justice through the RCNI-led National Advocacy Project.

In direct response to the Covid crisis, RCNI liaised with the relevant authorities and regularly updated RCCs on arrangements for remote court hearings, Covid related changes in venues, practices, etc, as far as relevant. We also advocated on behalf of survivors in Direct Provision and their continued access to services.

Dignity for All Survivors of Sexual Violence

RCNI continue to pay close attention to the rights and dignity of survivors in all aspects of their disclosure, receiving responses and engaging with a range of professionals and institutions as well as with their families, circles of trust, communities, workplaces and places of study and leisure. This focus involves both changing culture and changing systems and so we engage in public discourse, public awareness campaigns, education as well as understanding the relevant bureaucratic processes and representing survivors' interests to the professionals and institutions they will likely encounter.

Data Protection and Privacy

One of the critical areas we have focused on in recent years has been data protection and privacy. In 2020 this work involved a strong alliance of the NGO and professional bodies within the counselling sector. This group brought our collective voice together to advocate for robust survivor-focused and data protection compliant processes within Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, in its handling of retrospective reporting of child sexual abuse. This initiative

saw a range of meetings with our partners and with the CEO and senior official within Tusla throughout 2020.

Public Engagement

In terms of the public discourse and effecting the public debate and culture, we continued to manage and develop our engagement through the media and our online presence and social media channels as well as monthly newsletters to stakeholders. A very visible example of RCNI engaging with the public discourse was around the final stages of the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act where considerable public interest generated a need to inform the debate to ensure clarity, appropriate handling of criminal evidence and the protection of survivors. Alongside the public sphere work was a considerable engagement across the Oireachtas to inform and support legislators in their work.

We also worked with the Department of Justice on the national campaigns on services during Covid and on sexual violence prevention #stillhere and #noexcuses.



Education Initiatives

We continued our engagement on education across a range of areas, in training professionals, in being successful applicants to Rethink Ireland to look at our specialist skills in meeting trauma needs online, in the education rollouts through Foróige Real U and Active Consent with whom we continue to partner. We worked alongside partners old and new in the development of policy, guidance and resources for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in their taking responsibility for safe learning environments, and in advising the Higher Education Authority in its establishment of a baseline and indicators to assess the HEIs' compliance with the Framework for Consent.

Collaboration

A priority area for RCNI has been to understand and make visible the victims of child sexual abuse as they become known to and move through our systems of child protection, criminal justice and family law. Since mapping what we know and the gaps in our data and knowledge in 2018, research we shared with the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice in early 2019, RCNI have been engaging in collaboration with relevant charities and individuals to bring together our disparate expertise to form a more complete picture. We were therefore very pleased to be part of the Children living with domestic and sexual violence NGO group as it formed in 2020 alongside our partners. RCNI took up the role of chairing the group by close of 2020.

Knowledge, Data and Privacy - Platforming Survivors' Stories

A significant focus at the start of the Covid crisis for RCNI was to develop the knowledge and skills of Centres and frontline workers and guide them as they moved to remote working. This would ensure privacy and confidentiality as well as access to survivors to the supports being made available from centres throughout the country. Our shared concern was facilitating the efficacy of this work in a manner that was fully cognisant that sexual violence supports are engaging with victims or crime where their cases are or may in future be subject to investigation and prosecution. We produced briefings which we distributed to all NGOs specialising in delivering counselling to these victims of crime mid-April. These remain under review within the rapidly evolving technological landscape. We also produced a return to work induction training presentation for those centres opening back up in June 2020.

RCNI Data System

The RCNI data system facilitates the telling of survivors' stories and bringing their voice into the public domain through data. We do this through ensuring quality governance and processing of survivor data in the first instance and the capacity to translate this data into an evidence base to inform policy and public discourse. Commencing with new funded by the Dept. of Justice in March the priority was to rapidly assess, support and upskill frontline data collection officers and the processes within centres to ensure reliable and comparable survivor data.

The RCNI were able to produce Covid data for the first 4 months of the crisis by June. From July onwards we focused on bringing real time

data insights closer with monthly reports for use by Centres and others as helpful. We also researched and commissioned a Database Dashboard to provide Centres with the capacity to generate this insight for themselves using the RCNI systems in a very efficient and accessible manner. Consultation, training and updating with the Data Collection Officers (DCOs) from each of the participating Centres facilitating ongoing insight critical in evidencing changing patterns of survivor needs and to understand how these were to be interpreted and how the evidence needed to be best used in the interest of survivors. Ongoing technical commissioning and liaison to ensure the data system can make visible the 'as is' as it evolves and emerges and continues.



Data Protection

In tandem with data processing capacity, RCNI continue to place high value on data protection as the enabler of all data collection. We initiated a review process of our Data Protection practices and suite of policies and standards which were initially developed in the GDPR 2018 compliance process. We also began gathering information about specific data and information processes within RCCs, with a view to improvement and standardization through shared learning.

New Data

RCNI published new data in July that showed Rape Crisis Centres rapidly adapting to changing survivors' needs and capacity to reach out. It also suggested both increased need due to the additional trauma of the pandemic and unmet needs due to those who had put their contact with Rape Crisis Centres on hold until they could feel safe enough and have the privacy to attend to their trauma.

Disseminating Information

RCNI also continues to support internal, sectoral, collaborative and third party research through publishing statistical data, facilitating secure access to research materials, advising on fit for purpose research systems and standards.

Another milestone for us was that in May, the publication of the Central Statistics Office's Statistics on Victims and Suspected Offenders of Recorded Crimes by An Garda Síochána provided, for the first time, data about the suspected sexual offenders, their sex and age and the age difference between them and the people they are suspected of abusing. The development of information on the relationship between victims and perpetrators was most welcome and something we had advocated directly for with the CSO. This built on the previous releases and on our knowledge about victims reporting and found that in approximately 90% of cases, perpetrators are known to the person they abuse.

2020 Outputs

Publications

- 2019 annual [RCNI RCC Statistics](#) completed and launched by the Minister for Justice in December
- RCC Covid Data 1 March - 30 June 2020 statistical report
- RCNI Guidance Covid Briefing 1 - Confidentiality
- RCNI Guidance Covid Briefing 2 - Remote Counselling ICT and Office

Specialist training and briefings delivered

- Four training sessions provided to RCNI Data Collection Officers and users
- 3 x Training Podcasts for RCCs on the court and Garda accompaniment related matters.
- Court Accompaniment: 62
- Garda Accompaniment: 47
- Victim Impact Statement: 23
- Return to work induction training Power Point
- Briefings for RCCs on the incoming Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act, on the General Scheme of the Family Court Bill, and on complainant anonymity issues (on foot of a Court of Appeal judgement).
- Law Society FETAC 8 for Charities trustees on Data Protection
- Victims' Rights to the Law Society's Criminal Law Diploma Course students,
- Vulnerable Witnesses lecture to the Law Society Diploma Course students.
- Briefing for RCCs on retrospective reporting obligations, balancing the various legal obligations, rights and multiagency practice.

RCNI Contributions to Research:

- Central Statistics Office liaison group on the Sexual Violence Survey
- RAND European Institute on Gender Equality (EIGE) research report on European countries Covid responses.
- RCNI also completed a number of European and international monitoring surveys with regard to Ireland's status on sexual violence responses.
- WAVE sexual violence working group developing shared definitions and categories for the pan-European NGO Istanbul Convention monitoring process.
- Commencement of RCNI Clinical Innovation Project
- Supported HEI working groups on data gathering development to track sexual harassment and violence and responses.
- Developed a standardised definition of forms of online sexual violence for the purposes of RCNI data collection in collaboration with RCCs using the RCNI Database.



- Sexual violence perpetrated during lockdown survey - June 2020
- The European Inclusion Summit (EIS) disability research,
- EIGE
- European Parliament survey on Covid Impact on DSGBV and Istanbul Convention
- Delivering data for RCNI engagement with GNPSB.

Presentations included:

- Presented Ireland's RCC Covid data as a keynote speaker at the annual 2020 WAVE conference.
- the Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children Victims of Violence, Ljubljana, Slovenia, on Irish law on consent to sexual activity, on measures taken in Ireland in order to enable ratification of the Istanbul Convention and on the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on survivors of sexual violence.
- Including providing the keynote in their webinar on sexual violence as part of Alcohol Action Ireland series on alcohol harm.

Collaborations included:

- Children Living with Domestic and Sexual Violence (RCNI Chair)
- Victims' Rights Alliance (board and ordinary member)
- NGO campaign on Online Safety (Children's Right Alliance led)
- The Sector Bodies group on Data Protection for Adult Survivors (Chaired by One in Four)
- Beyond Exploitation campaign (led by NWCI, ICI and Ruhama)
- NAPs development advisory (convened and chaired by RCNI)
- Worked with Fair Plé to develop guidelines regarding sexual harassment and sexual

violence relating to the traditional music sector;

- Worked with Student societies in third level to develop a guide to supporting survivor disclosure, peer groups and activism.

Advisory committees and fora:

- Meeting with DPP and other NGOs with regard to training for new DPP Sexual Offences Unit personnel and others within ODPP.
- Regular one on one meeting with An Garda Síochána, Head of GNPSB at which a wide range of issues was discussed;
- Meetings between RCNI and Policing Authority;
- Representation at the HSE SATU implementation meeting;
- Meeting with Rape Crisis Scotland and Scottish academics to launch their research on independent legal representation for "complainers" (complainants in criminal cases) which RCNI had helped to facilitate;
- RCNI meeting with Minister for Justice
- Approximately 10 x meetings between Minister for Justice/or Department of Justice officials and other NGOs, and some with other State agencies, related to the O'Malley Review, its Implementation Plan and three sub committees.
- Alcohol Forum: working group re: GBV webinars. Including providing the keynote in their webinar on sexual violence as part of their series on alcohol harm.
- Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and Hotline. ie on online safety and regulation.

Funding and Staffing

Funding is and always will be central to the work and impact of our organisation. In 2020, more than ever specialist sexual violence services needed secure funding. We are very grateful to the Department of Justice for the increase to our core funding and allowing the RCNI to expand our team with the welcome addition of Elaine Mears to the Privacy and Data Support Coordinator role and Natalie Robinson to the role of Communications and Information Officer. In October with the funding received from Rethink Ireland under the Innovate Together Social Innovation Fund the RCNI also welcomed Dr Michelle Walsh as Clinical Lead to facilitate collaborative learning in order to engage with the transformation in clinical practice due to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector.

Rape Crisis and Specialist Sexual Violence Services in Ireland

Maps, links and locations

RAPE CRISIS HELP

SPECIALIST HELP AND SUPPORT ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

16 Rape Crisis Centres in Ireland



Rape Crisis Centres are independent charities that serve all survivors of sexual violence from 14 years upwards (with some variation). All run a helpline, provide face to face counselling, accompaniment and support engagement with an Garda Síochána and the Courts. All Centres will do a variety of awareness, prevention, outreach and community work too. They are primarily funded by Tusla the Child and Family Agency and the generous donations from their local communities. [Please click here for the live map to access each centre's own website](#)

Rape Crisis Centres rarely support survivors under 14. **CARI** is a Charity specialising in sexual violence services for children and their families. www.cari.ie/

One In Four are an Charity that provides a range of specialist services to adult survivors of childhood sexual violence. They also provide intervention for individuals who exhibit sexually harmful behaviour towards children. www.oneinfour.ie/

Sexual Assault Treatment services



SATUs provide for the emergency holistic needs of anyone over 14 who has experienced a recent sexual assault. At a SATU your immediate medical, justice and support needs are considered. You will have available to you medical, nursing, forensic, garda and rape crisis services and personnel. You do not have to make an immediate decision to report. The forensic material can be held for up to 6 months while you decide. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/sexhealth/satu/>

Child Onehouse or Barnahus services are being piloted in Galway at present. This is a medical, forensic and therapy service for children under 14.

The HSE National Counselling Service (NCS) is a free counselling service country-wide <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/national-counselling-service/>

RCNI, established in 1985, is a specialist sexual violence Charity representing survivors' interests and prevention and governed by member rape crisis centres who make up the RCNI board of Trustees. www.rcni.ie

RCNI work for an Ireland where everyone is free from sexual violence and the fear and threat of sexual violence. With freedom we can build our lives, families and communities to be the best they can be.

Yet Sexual Violence erodes everyone's freedom, girls' and women's freedom in particular. 69% of Irish women avoid places for fear of sexual assault. 59% of Irish women avoid being alone in a public space out of fear (FRA European survey 2012). And it can get much worse if you are the one in four who has experienced sexual violence. We are asking candidates and Political Parties to work for this freedom. We need a commitment to a substantial and significant national response to addressing sexual violence. This will see government at the highest level taking regular and coordinated action. This will mean they will show us what they are doing and answer our questions. This will mean, for the first time, an Irish government will commit a level of resources to match the scale of the challenge. This will mean they will respect and honour all survivors of sexual violence, equally.

The time is now to turn the tide on sexual violence and to finally commit the necessary resources to end sexual violence.

Transforming Sexual Violence Together

Build a national response. Fund and protect independent voices to participate and hold government to account. Repeat the national sexual violence survey every 5 years. Fund national data collection and development of working solutions from the frontline in Rape Crisis and specialist support organisations. Ensure every child has access to sex education that addresses the realities of gender inequality and discrimination.

Address the cause and effect of sexual and domestic violence on the homelessness crisis.

Justice Matters

Give victims support, protection and dignity in the justice system by reforming the justice process. Extend these protections to civil matters also. Fund a National Advocacy Service for survivors. Ensure specialisation across investigation, support and justice.

Dignity for all Survivors of Sexual Violence

Ensure Survivors are treated with respect and listened to through transforming justice, child protection and support responses. Put Victims' Rights into practice across all statutory responses. Increase funding to Rape Crisis and other specialist services. Respect survivors' choice to engage with justice or services on their own terms and in their own time.

Family Law Supporting and Protecting Victims

23% of sexual violence happens within the family. Private Family Law must change to support and protect victims. Provide specialist Family Law Courts. Build fit for purpose courts in Hammond Lane and nationwide. Develop and fully fund a Courts Welfare Service. Ensure court experts are qualified, specialist, experienced and regulated.

RCNI in Numbers

- 50** networking meetings with managers and specialist staff and volunteers in centres
- 9** government departments and agencies requested RCNI expertise and input
- 10** substantive submissions on national policy and legislative matters were produced by RCNI
- 8** different government or Departmental working groups or committees welcomed RCNI as a specialist advisor
- 11** ongoing NGO working groups or coalitions on various specialist topics here in Ireland and internationally were partnered and collaborated with by RCNI
- 67** survivors and their supporters referred from Rape Crisis Centres and elsewhere were provided expert support and advice from RCNI
- 122** accompaniment specialists trained by RCNI

DIRECTORS AND OTHER

Directors	Ms. Miriam Duffy Ms. Vera O'Leary Ms. Grace McArdle Ms. Anne Scully Ms. Loretta Brosnan McDonagh
Secretary	Ms. Lorraine Quigley
Charity Number	13236
Company Number	363350
Registered Office	Carmichael Centre Brunswick Street North Dublin 7
Auditors	Loughlin & Company Unit 9a Howley Square Oranmore Co Galway
Bankers	Allied Irish Banks plc Lynch's Castle Galway

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2018

	2020 €	2019 €
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash generated from operations	112,112	2,774)
NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	112,112	2,774
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments to acquire fixed assets	(2,580)	-
NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(2,580)	-
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Interest paid	-	-
NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	-	-
NET (DECREASE)/INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	109,532	2,774
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	72,167	69,393
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	<u>181,699</u>	<u>72,167</u>

On behalf of the Board:

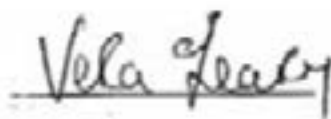
Director

Grace McArdle



Director

Vera O'Leary



ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

INCOME and EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2020

	2020	2019
	€	€
INCOME	399,802	216,123
Administrative Expenses	(322,793)	(214,395)
OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	<u>77,009</u>	<u>1,728</u>
DEFERRED (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME FOR THE YEAR	<u>77,009</u>	<u>1,728</u>

The income and excess of income over expenditure relate to continuing operations as no businesses were acquired or disposed of in 2020 or 2019.

A separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses is not required, as all gains or losses have been reflected above.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2020

	2020	2019
	€	€
FIXED ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	2,288	390
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	181,699	72,167
Trade and other receivables	<u>1,149</u>	<u>660</u>
	<u>182,848</u>	<u>72,827</u>
CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	<u>46,156</u>	<u>11,246</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>136,692</u>	<u>61,581</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>138,980</u>	<u>61,971</u>
REPRESENTED BY:		
Unrestricted funds	71,790	66,586
Restricted funds	<u>67,191</u>	<u>(4,615)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>138,980</u>	<u>61,971</u>

Record of RCNI Board Meetings and Attendance

Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Grace McArdle,

28th January 2020	Attending: Anne Scully, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Grace McArdle, Apologies: Vera O'Leary, Grace McArdle,
26th February 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle Apologies: Loretta McDonagh
16th April 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Loretta McDonagh Apologies NA
12th May 2019	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Loretta McDonagh Apologies NA
11th June 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Loretta McDonagh Apologies NA
22nd July 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle Apologies: Vera O'Leary, Loretta McDonagh
9th September 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Loretta McDonagh Apologies NA
21st October 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Loretta McDonagh Apologies NA
18th November 2020	Attending: Miriam Duffy, Vera O'Leary, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Loretta McDonagh Apologies NA



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



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November 2021