EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Sunbeam House Services

SHS

Annual Report 2013/14

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Sunbeam House Services Ltd.
Cedar Estate, Killarney Rd., Bray, Co. Wicklow

Chairman's Summary

I am honoured and pleased and to introduce our report for 2014. In particular to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers, the heroic efforts of families and friends and the financial support from the HSE. Despite the severe constraints on funding and recruitment we have managed to maintain and in some cases improve our level of service to an increased number of users.

These are changing times for the sector. The State is taking a closer interest in enforcing standards of service and standards of governance.

HIQA began audits on standards of service in our sector for all Section 38 Organisations. The first audits on Sunbeam began in February 2014.

The HSE introduced new requirements for standards of governance. For the present this is being monitored under a form of self-certification however we have been told that external audits will be introduced in the near future.

The new Charities Regulator began operations in October 2014 (the underpinning legislation having been passed in 2009).

HIQA reports are published on their website and generate a degree of media attention. We anticipate that governance audits will also be published. We welcome this increase in transparency and public accountability and hope that at national and local level it will be used to foster the improvement of quality of services to clients.

In March 2014 Sunbeam formally offered to engage with St Catherine's Children's Service with the intention of creating a seamless service for adults and children in Wicklow. The subsequent discussions between us and with HSE support has led to an initiative where, since September 2014, Sunbeam is now assisting St Catherine's by providing management support services. It is hoped that this will lead to a consolidation of the two organisations.

In a parallel initiative, KARE and Sunbeam agreed, in October 2014, to engage in a joint process with a view to identifying the benefits of closer collaboration. Both organisations are mindful of the need to respond to the increased complexity of administration and to the national agenda of promoting rationalisation of the large number of agencies.

All these areas of change are a heavy drain on a small management team. However it is vital to engage to ensure that the service is best placed for the future. We are very fortunate to have John Hannigan and his team who are so willing to embrace this uncertainty and fully committed to doing what is best to help people live empowered lives.

A special word of thanks to George Knaggs who retired from the Board after serving 35 years many of them as chairman, ably abetted by Verna, his wife. A person of deep religious conviction he has left an inspiring legacy both in the organization he helped found and guide and in the example he shows for the care of others.

Mary Cronin and Caroline Lambert also retired from the board, both of whom made selfless contributions over many years to support the work of Sunbeam and to campaign for improvements for our clients.

I welcome three new directors Elizabeth Flynn, Fintan Sheerin and Michael Sheil – who are quickly making their presence felt on the workings of the board.

We can look back on the achievements in 2014 with pride while acknowledging that there is still unfinished business and look forward to 2015 with enthusiasm.

Donal O' Brien
Chairperson Board of Directors
Sunbeam House Services

START / Bray RT and Links (Post RT)

START

START is a training service that was set up in September 2014 for service users who require extra support to help meet their goals. START training services offers individuals flexible and tailored supports to meet their identified needs. We work with the individual service users to explore opportunities within their communities and engage in activities that meet their needs and desires. The Service Users are currently accessing a range of community activities from puter courses and leisure activities in local training in and around Bray offers our Service Users increased independence as they become increasingly familiar and confident in their surroundings and discover more community based activities with the support of enthusiastic and creative staff.

We are highly focused on Active Citizenship and Community Integration, working towards the New Directions standards for day services. Individuals in START develop their communication and social skills in conjunction with other learning experiences through a range of Gaisce Awards, FETAC, OCR, and ASDAN courses.

The Service Users in START are encouraged and promoted to discover their full capability and work towards their identified goals. Self-advocacy and the creation and promotion of social roles are integral elements of the START program and each individual is given opportunity to grow and develop in a range of domains.

START currently have 16 Service users attending on a daily basis. We have nine full time staff and five part time staff. We have a great mix of staff who are all very experienced and highly motivated.

Links

Links is a new Post RT service that opened up in November of this year. Links was developed to help support the Service Users whom have graduated from the RT programme to become more independent and more involved in the local community. Links is now located on the Florence Road in Bray. Those service users availing of Links can also drop in to the premises on the Florence road in between their work or training courses to meet up with friends or have lunch.

Links currently has eleven service users involved in various external courses and community driven projects. We currently have service users involved full time in DDLETB (Dublin & Dun Laoghaire Education & Training Board) L.I.F.E. Programme (Leading Into Further Education). The programme last a duration of 2 years. We also have a Service User attending the 'Contemporary living' course in Trinity College Dublin and this is also a two year course.

This year four service users finished the L.I.F.E. programme in June 2015. They now attend the new Links service on the Florence road in Bray. The Links service is about encouraging community involvement and creating valued social roles.

The service users are already accessing various external part time courses such as ECDL with Bray Trade Union Centre, Bray Adult education centre, and art classes in signal arts centre. They are also involved and developed a Bray Coast Care group who meet up once a week. This year three of the service users attained both their Bronze & Silver Gaisce awards and will be attending a ceremony to receive their silver award on November 30th.

James Doyle
CSM START, RT & Links
Sunbeam House Services

SUF Service-User Forum

The Service Users Forum (SUF) is a group from north and south Wicklow that got together to help make our voices and our concerns heard, there are about ten of us. We are a group of adults who are part of Sunbeam House Services. We meet once a month to discuss issues that are of concern to us and our fellow colleagues. These are issues that affect our daily lives.

Below are some of the things that we have been doing:

•We are involved with a group called KARE and we are willing to join any other groups.

•We have had a bus shelter put up were we work we also got two doors to help people get through one at the main door and one going into the canteen.

•We have also been to see the TD's.

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•Our Chairperson is presenting to the Council for Quality and Leadership (CQL) during their visit in November.

•We have learned lots of new skills, built our confidence and supported each other to speak up about things that are important to us.

We asked some of the members what keeps them coming back to the SUF and here are their replies:

Ed: Being the Chairperson is important to me. I have learned how to listen to people and listen to their issues.

Tina: It helps me keep in touch with what is happening.

Paul: To learn new stuff and to learn how to work as a group.

Sam: Because I am a qualified person with a disability I find I am able to speak up for those who can't.

If you are interested in becoming a member why not come along to one of our meetings – we meet once a month in Killarney Road, Bray.
Get in touch with Ed on 089 491 8851 or Stephen on 087 614 7662 for more information.

Financial Report

Income and Expenditure Account	2014 €000's		2013 €000's	
Income				
HSE grant income	21,478	91.9%	20,585	91.8%
Rent	662	2.8%	652	2.9%
Capital Grants amortised	498	2.1%	498	2.2%
Other income	744	3.2%	680	3.0%
Total Income	23,382		22,415	

Expenditure				
Salaries	17,221	73.3%	16,582	74.0%
Pension	902	3.8%	952	4.2%
Agency staff	411	1.7%	400	1.8%
Transport, motor & travel	281	1.2%	243	1.1%
Trading units	133	0.6%	186	0.8%
Light,heat & power	353	1.5%	358	1.6%
Premises and equipment	1,311	5.6%	1062	4.7%
Communications	314	1.3%	336	1.5%
Professional, legal & finance	597	2.5%	459	2.0%
Medical and clinical	31	0.1%	36	0.2%
Other direct client costs	696	3.0%	595	2.7%
Other direct staff costs	400	1.7%	373	1.7%
Depreciation	836	3.6%	829	3.7%
Total Expenditure	23,486		22,411	
Deficit/surplus	(104)		4	

Nigel Locke,
General Manager,
Sunbeam House Services.

Managing Director's Report

2014 heralded in significant changes in our residential services. HIQA, already a watch word within the organisation in terms of training and internal audits, became a reality with a significant number of announced and unannounced visits right across Sunbeam House Services residential locations. Preparation was everything, and our staff and the people we support, were prepared for any and all eventualities. Our record with HIQA over the year has been excellent with all of our locations receiving notification of their pending registration. We still have room for improvement and we acknowledge that the years of cuts to our budgets have taken a toll on the environmental elements of our locations. However, there has been no criticism or areas of real concern in terms of the commitment, knowledge or systems within Sunbeam House Services from HIQA. This is testament to the staff that work across the whole of Sunbeam House Services.

It was also a year of change for our day services. The commencement of Start and the development of Eolas, the HUB, The Pod, Bri Nua and Ballyraine have led to a significant increase in the number of people we now support within their local communities. These changes and development of services has enabled Sunbeam House Services provide supports locally and with fewer miles for those we support to travel. All these attributes of our services and supports are indicators of the requirements of the soon to be interim standards for New Directions, the Governments new policy and strategy for group day services. We are fortunate to have commenced an approach called Supported Decision Making, through Laura Powell (an article on this is contained in this report) which adopts the process of individuals being supported appropriately, not just by Sunbeam House Services but by their Circle of Support, to deliver on what they want for their lives. This approach, allied to our Self Directed Living (SDL) approach will start the process of delivering individualised supports for people to take charge of their lives. This year we have increased the numbers of staff working in SDL and we will continue this investment over the coming years.

As the economy improves we will be seeking further investment in the provision of supports for the people associated with Sunbeam House Services from our Government. To date we have seen an increase in funding for young people coming out of school and we have managed to ensure that all our existing services continue. This has been a direct result of the dedication and commitment of the staff within Sunbeam House Services, who for the last five years have not had any increase in their pay. Over the same period we have seen significant change within Sunbeam House Services and we will continue to see change towards more individualised and community based supports. The Board, Management and the Unions associated with Sunbeam House Services have been working to try to secure an agreement with the HSE on the payment of increments. This work continues.

This year we have also engaged in a process of assessment on the potential closer working of Sunbeam House Services with St. Catherine's Association and KARE. We have established a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from each organisation who are considering the benefits of working closer and with the potential for a merger between the organisations at some time in the future.

Many people have raised concerns over the growing of the organisations and losing the personal, individual approach that all three organisations have been built on over the last 40 years. A commitment has been given by the Boards and the Senior Management Teams that a clear principle of continuation of the individualisation, personal and community based supports will be a priority with access and involvement by Families and the people we support. It is anticipated that the process will be completed sometime in early 2016, with regular feedback sessions for staff, families and the people we support in 2015 and 2016.

Finally, 2014 saw a number of initiatives to develop and strengthen the family input to Sunbeam House Services. Our Family and Friends Forum increased its membership to 14. We now have two family representatives on the Board with further potential to appoint a Family and Friends Forum representative to our Board the coming year. The intention over the coming years is to strengthen the relationship with families though the Family and Friends Forum and to increase the numbers of Families representatives to our Board.

2015 is shaping up to be a significant year for Sunbeam House Services and the disability sector with significant changes in the number of organisations providing supports and services reducing and a potential merger for Sunbeam House Services, KARE and St Catherine's Association. As ever we welcome input from all of the families and the people we support as well as from our staff teams. The more we take the opportunity to listen to you the more we learn what we are not doing well and the opportunity we have to improve. This process will be aided through a staff survey and the input from CQL as our external accreditation organisation, as well as HIQA and our collaborative work with the Family and Friends Forum.

John Hannigan
Managing Director
Sunbeam House Services

Family & Friends Forum

Our Committee of 14 members continues to hold evening meetings approximately every 6 weeks at different venues in North and South Wicklow.
Possible changes to our Terms of Reference were discussed recently by the FFF and it was agreed to work with the existing Terms until mid - 2016 because of possible amalgamation with KARE and St. Catherine's Association.

During the last 12 months the key issues and concerns we have been dealing with are as follows:

Transition from school to adult day services:
Cutbacks to respite and transport services:
These cutbacks remain a troubling concern for many families and the Family and Friends Forum continue to lobby Sunbeam House Services Management for special respite care and basic respite breaks for all.
Future planning for residential places:
The lack of funding in residential places and the lack of individual residential future planning continues to be a source of worry to parents as they approach an age where their ability to care is declining.
Psychology:
The Family and Friends Forum continue to lobby Sunbeam House Services/ HSE for provision of in-house psychology
Independent survey of families' satisfaction with disability services:
Family and Friends Forum have ongoing discussions with Dr. Fintan Sheerin, Asst. Professor of Nursing, Trinity College, Dublin, with a view to his facilitation of an anonymous survey of families independent of Sunbeam House Services Management.
Tenancy Agreements and Rent Subsidies:
For residential housing is one of the issues that the Family and Friends Forum will be exploring in the immediate future with SHS Senior Transport, Housing and Development Manager.
Input into Sunbeam House Services Policies and Plans:
The Family and Friends Forum are reviewing updates to Sunbeam House Services policies as they roll out. It is hoped that more involvement in policy making and Strategic Plan at committee level will be part of our future remit when our new Terms of Reference are agreed next year.
Rights Review and Safeguarding and Protection Committees:
The Family and Friends Forum members sit each month on both the Safeguarding and Protection Committee and also the Rights Review Committee providing an important family perspective and input into sensitive issues.

Elizabeth Flynn on behalf of Family & Friends Forum

Promoting self advocacy through supported decision making

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) says that all people should be able to make their own decisions and that if they need help to make decisions, they should get the support they need, instead of someone else making the decisions for them. If you think about it, most people seek support from people they know when they have a big decision to make. Thinking things through with people we trust, can help us all decide what is the best option for us to choose.

With the new Assisted Decision Making Bill making its way through the Irish legislative procedures, it is also a very timely opportunity to explore the practical application of formalised supported decision making (SDM) agreements. Such work can also help challenge and promote a change in traditional perceptions of capacity to make decisions, and further refine our understanding around the supports individuals need and seek.

A few years ago I began training as a facilitator of SDM agreements, based on a model pioneered in South Australia. It follows the principals of "will and preference" as distinct from the concept of "best interest", thus the process is driven by the decision maker's expressed wishes and values rather than what those around them consider to be the best option for them.

The SDM process invites people with disability who would like to make some decisions about what their life looks like to nominate one or more trusted supporters to help them make these decisions in a way that is individually tailored to suit them. Once all agreed, the decisions and support strategies are committed to paper as an Agreement. A team is then formed around each person consisting of family, friends, service providers and community connections who are in a position to uphold and progress the wishes of the decision maker. The Agreement is not intended to last indefinitely but instead to help establish a long term supportive environment in which the decision maker can continue to direct their own life.

Over the past number of months, we have begun to explore this model within Sunbeam and to consider more deeply what presumed capacity really means.

We have identified how easy it can be to slip into "rescue mode" rather than supporting someone to learn how they can decide what is bestfor them and develop their own unique identity, far beyond that of "service user".

It challenges the organisation to consider the nature of its relationships, but has the power to lead all those around the person to a more equitable place for self advocates.

Laura Powell
CSM Eolas & The Cube
Sunbeam House Services

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