

Interim SHS Families & Friends Group

Subject: Developing an organisation for families and friends of Sunbeam House Services

Date: 20th January 2023

Dear Families and Friends,

We are writing to ask you to volunteer in the process of developing a collaborative relationship between families and friends and Sunbeam House Services.

Two years ago, Sunbeam House Services engaged Omra to develop a program to foster good working relationships between families and the organisation. Since then, over 60 family members have engaged in the program. Open meetings were held via Zoom and in person at the Glenview Hotel, information sessions were held on topics like the Assisted Decision Making Act, and a number of small groups were formed based on different aspects of services. Some examples of the small groups include: employment and newer families, families of those with profound needs, day services and respite, and a location based residential group. The groups met by themselves and with Sunbeam House Services staff and management. A combined group met with Joe Lynch (CEO Sunbeam House Services) and Dawn Leane (Chairperson of the board of Sunbeam House Services) on a number of occasions.

So far the program has:

- Created connections and relationships between families of service users.
- Established and strengthened relationships between families and Sunbeam management and staff.
- Provided opportunities to participate in workshops and information sessions that led to greater knowledge and insight for families.
- Established meetings between representatives of the smaller groups and the Sunbeam chairperson and CEO.
- Built trust between representatives of the small family groups and Sunbeam chairperson, CEO and management.
- Provided group representatives with a better understanding of how Sunbeam works.

To encourage broader engagement with all friends and families a series of open meetings was held throughout 2021 in the Glenview Hotel and via Zoom. Last year open meetings occurred on 5th May 2022 and on 24th November 2022. Although attendance at the November meeting was low, it was decided that a families and friends organisation should be formed. An interim group of people volunteered to help establish the organisation. The interim group all have sons, daughters or siblings availing of some aspect of Sunbeam House Services. The members of the group are Shirley O'Dwyer, Julie Bond, Michael Redmond, Mary Stacey, Irene Langrell and Gerard O'Neill.

The objectives of the interim group are listed below:

- Encourage more broad participation by friends and families.
- Establish a permanent structure for the friends and families group.
- Develop a positive working relationship between friends and families of services users and Sunbeam House Services.
- Encourage development of improved communication between friends and families and Sunbeam House Services.



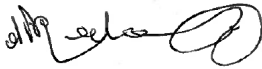
- Provide an opportunity for friends and families to meet, learn from each other's experiences and support each other.
- Advocate for friends and families with Sunbeam House Services, the HSE and other organisations as required on topics of common interest.

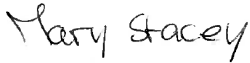


Joe Lynch (CEO of Sunbeam House Services) and Dawn Leane (Chairperson of the board of Sunbeam House Services) are enthusiastic about engaging with friends and families and are eager to have a meeting with the interim group as soon as possible. A regular meeting with the Families and Friends group would follow.

Throughout 2023, the interim group will work to establish an organisation for friends and families of Sunbeam House Services. Ideally we would like to have about 10 members on our interim group during this time, from as many of the Sunbeam services as possible, so that we can successfully represent every client and family.

Please consider engaging in the process by joining us. If you are willing to volunteer, please contact us using the email or postal address below. Alternatively, you could contact us with any topics that you would like the interim group to address in initial meetings.

Yours sincerely,

		
_____	_____	_____
Shirley O'Dwyer	Julie Bond	Michael Redmond

		
_____	_____	_____
Mary Stacey	Irene Langrell	Gerard O'Neill

Email address: families@sunbeam.ie

Postal Address: Interim SHS Family and Friends Group,
C/O Sunbeam House Services, Southern Cross House, Southern
Cross Business Park, Wurzburg Road, Bray,
Co. Wicklow, A98 RH93