

**Interim SHS Family & Friends Group - April 2023**  
**[“Families@Sunbeam.ie”](mailto:Families@Sunbeam.ie)**

*To all family members and friends of client users in Sunbeam,*

*As you know, back in January a few of us answered the call to volunteer to help set up a new family group for Sunbeam House Services.*

*Over the last few months, we have been working hard behind the scenes and we wanted to take a minute to let you all know how we're getting on.*

*We have been very well received by both Sunbeam House Services and the HSE and we are setting the foundations for a collaborative, engaging future with all of the stakeholders who are important in the lives of our loved ones.*

*With that in mind, we have established a tripartite quarterly forum where we sit around the table with high level managers in both Sunbeam House services and the HSE's Disability team. We set the agenda for this meeting and we're looking forward to tackling the issues that are commonly faced by all of us in our roles as family members, eg. transport, respite, housing. We also plan to help to steer the way things are done into the future.*

*We are also in the process of setting up regular two-way briefings at various levels with SHS, including the Board, CEO and Senior Service Managers. These are a great way for us to learn about the plans and obstacles that SHS are dealing with in the key areas of concern to most families, and to give our views and recommendations, helping to steer improvements in the services provided by SHS, for the benefit of all our loved ones in Sunbeam.*

*At the same time, we have been putting together our Terms of Reference for a Family Group, so that all of you that are reading this can have the opportunity to be part of our Committee, or to have a say in which family members you want to represent you and your loved one on any Committee. We want to ensure that we are an independent but integral part of all the stakeholders that make decisions affecting our loved ones.*

*Finally, we reached out to the Decision Making Service about the Assisted Decision Making legislation that's coming into force at the end of this month. Sunbeam has already run two information sessions on this, but now that it's imminent, we thought it timely to provide you with a short summary that the Decision Making Service put together for us:*

## **The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015: information for families and carers**

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth has confirmed that the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 (as amended) will be commenced on 26 April 2023.

The Director of the Decision Support Service (DSS), Áine Flynn, has outlined in a short video message for families what the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act, 2015 might mean for them. The link to the video is available on the DSS website [here](#)

Family carers should be reassured that the framework of supports available under the Act is not imposed on anyone. The DSS will be directly involved with individual families only in relation to formal arrangements that are made under the Act.

The level of formal support that is appropriate will depend on a person's circumstances and the decisions that they need to make. There is no obligation on a person to appoint a decision-making assistant, or co-decision-maker. It is not expected that families will have to apply to court to become decision-making representatives to manage the practicalities of everyday decision-making.

Particular decisions may arise that require the formal support that can be provided under the Act. Such decisions could relate to a person's money, their property, or their personal welfare, including decision-making about healthcare.

*If you have any queries on Assisted Decision Making, or if you would like us to arrange another briefing for families, please email us at [families@sunbeam.ie](mailto:families@sunbeam.ie).*

*So, for now, please email us at [families@sunbeam.ie](mailto:families@sunbeam.ie) if you'd like to get involved or if you have any queries or suggestions for us. Most of our group attend the small support groups that were set up by SHS (through Omra) last year, and we will keep you updated on developments each month through those meetings and in further emails. If you have received this newsletter by post and would like to receive future updates by email, just send us an email to let us know.*

*Kind regards,*

*Gerard, Irene, Julie, Mary, Michael and Shirley*

*(Gerard O'Neill, Irene Langrell, Julie Bond, Mary Stacey, Michael Redmond, Shirley O'Dwyer)*

*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.*