



Loreto Centre Crumlin Annual Report

Community Adult Education & Counselling Service

September 2017- August 2018

Registered Charity: Reg No. 20042011 Chy no. 13464

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2017-2018

The past twelve months spanning 2017 – 2018, has once again, been a very busy and productive year for the Loreto Centre. Aside from all the hard work and productivity, 2017 – 2018 has also marked the very significant twentieth Anniversary of Loreto Centre. During the past year, the Centre, with the support of all involved, has continued to fulfil its mission of enabling and empowering those who attend, to make positive changes in their ways of living, bringing attendant benefits to their personal lives and the lives of their families and communities.

None of this could be done without the continued commitment of the staff, workers and volunteers, who ensure standards that see the consistent provision of a professional and dedicated service for all those who attend the Loreto Centre. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your on-going support.

I would also like to take this opportunity, to say a very sincere thank you to Sr. Brede Quirke, Loreto Centre Manager, for her continued and unwavering commitment, to both the Centre and all those who attend the service to avail of its various services.

The two elements of service provided by Loreto Centre, the educational programmes and the counselling, demand differing skill sets, and as Chairperson, I would like to acknowledge how professionally the Manager, Staff and Volunteers meet and manage the differing sets of needs that running the centre involves.

With regard to education, we had on offer in 2017– 2018 a broad programme, ranging from an array of non accredited classes to a course with a third level qualification. Sincere thank you to all the teachers, tutors, staff and students who made this possible.

The second strand of the work carried out in Loreto Centre, is the counselling service, which, due to its growing reputation, is seeing demand for the service increase annually. Loreto Centre has developed into a trusted counselling service within the locality, with referrals coming from a broad spectrum of sources across the community. This service would not be possible were it not for the many Counsellors, who volunteer their time, to provide a highly professional service to those attending the Centre. Thank you to you all for your continued commitment to the provision of counselling in the Loreto Centre.

My thanks also to the Board Members, many of who are serving their first term on the Board, who have shown considerable commitment and who share their expertise and advice, to ensure the continued smooth running of Loreto Centre. Their hard work and perseverance with the development and refining of our Governance Policies is particularly appreciated. We have made great progress over the past year on this very important aspect of the responsibilities and accountability of Loreto Centre.

The support of the trustees, the Loreto Sisters, is crucial to the continued success of the Loreto Centre. Their support, financial and otherwise, is very much appreciated. They have been the mainstay of the Centre since its establishment and we are very grateful for their ongoing support.

While much of this great work has taken place with limited resources, the Board is very conscious of the need for a reliable and constant funding stream, a task that is to the forefront of our strategic plan for the coming years. For a relatively small organisation, the Board is conscious of the need to constantly engage with the different funders to promote our service and raise awareness regarding the value of the Loreto Centre to the local community. This challenge has become increasingly difficult for small charitable organisations in recent times, with rising demands in terms of governance and accountability. However, the Board will continue to provide as much support as possible, to ensure that the resources required to ensure the effective running of the Centre remain in place.

Loreto Centre is conscious of the value of its services to the local community. Our counselling service, in particular, is recognised as a critical community service. The fact that many medical practitioners based in the area refer their patients to the Loreto Centre for support is an important vote of confidence in the quality of the service. It is our mission to continue to provide the service at an affordable rate to a local community that is sometimes challenged by the demands of an unequal society. While confidentiality underpins all the services provided in Loreto Centre, it is a tribute to the professionalism and quality of the service providers, when positive feedback is given to the Centre for all the services that it provides.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our various funders for their financial support over the past year. It is very much appreciated and the work of Loreto Centre would be severely compromised without your continued support.

Finally, I would like to thank, most sincerely, all those who avail of the services in the Loreto Centre. Your trust in Loreto Centre, your continued support for the Centre and the many ways in which you give back to the Centre, is very much appreciated. We could not go on without your continued support and involvement.

It has been my privilege to Chair the Board of Management over the past year. I have received unwavering support from the Board Members, whose advice, commitment and support is essential to the smooth running of Loreto Centre.

Beatrice Hughes

February 2019

HISTORY OF LORETO CENTRE

The Loreto Centre was initially established by the Loreto Sisters in 1998 for the purpose of providing low-cost adult community education and a back-up counselling service to people in the Dublin 12 and surrounding areas. The Trustees of the Loreto Centre are the Provincial Leadership Team of the Loreto Sisters (IBVM), Irish Province. The provision of community education in the Loreto Centre is provided from the perspective of the Loreto educational philosophy.

VISION AND VALUES

Loreto Education communities are animated by the spirit of Mary Ward, foundress of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto). They are centred in God, rooted in Christ and based on Gospel values. Our vision is that they will be educational communities where each person has the experience of being valued; where all who participate in the learning process enjoy a liberating education that helps them grow into the fullness of life and empowers them to be men and women of courage who are alive to the needs of humanity and committed to making a difference in our world.

Based on this fundamental belief in the uniqueness of each person, the Loreto Centre has as its main object to inspire and encourage all participants in its programmes to recognise and find their full potential. The aim stems from the conviction that, given the right support, respect and encouragement, individuals are enabled to develop and become empowered so that they feel better about themselves, become more tolerant of others, form better relationships and thereby contribute to the well-being of families, communities and the society in which they live.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to enable and empower people to develop their own resources for more creative and effective living within the context of their personal lives and within their families and to participate in building a supportive personal and community network.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main object of the Centre is to advance education through the provision of adult Community education and pastoral care, of both men and women in Dublin 12 and surrounding areas, which in turn will benefit themselves, their families and the community in which they live, in accordance with the educational philosophy of the Loreto Sisters (IBVM), Irish Province.

In furtherance of the aforementioned main objective, the Centre has the following subsidiary / ancillary objectives:

- To provide adults in the community with appropriate education and counselling services;
- To enable and empower men and women to develop their own resources for more creative and effective living and to participate in building a supportive community network;
- To respond to the needs of the local community by providing course opportunities to promote healthy living, healing, growth and development of skills relevant to both personal and community needs;
- To provide an atmosphere of welcome and hospitality, a place where men and women can come to share, listen, or find space for quiet and reflection;
- To establish co-operative links with agencies and networks in both statutory and voluntary sectors at local level.

GOVERNANCE

The Board of Management is governed by its Constitution as amended and approved by the Trustees and Board of Management on the 17th day of September 2012.

Methods used to recruit and appoint new Board Members

The members of the Board are appointed, according to the procedures outlined in Paragraph 6 of the Constitution, as follows:

The Trustees will appoint the members of the Board of Management following appropriate consultation.

The Board of Management shall consist of at least six persons, not fewer than half of whom shall be nominated by the Trustees. The remaining persons shall be nominated by the Board of Management.

The term of office of the current Board of Management, as at the 1st day of February 2018, shall be deemed expired on the 31st January 2021.

Thereafter the term of office for a member of the Board of Management shall be for three years but shall extend until the annual meeting subsequent to the lapse of these three years. Any member of the Board may be reappointed for one successive term if the Trustees see fit.

The nomination and appointment of members of an incoming Board shall be made and done at least one month before the date of expiry of the term of office of the then existing Board, and the Board so constituted shall assume office forthwith on that expiry date.

The Trustees shall fill any vacancy which occurs in the Board of Management. A member of the Board of Management appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy shall hold office for the same period as the member replaced.

Board of Management 1 September 2017 - 31 January 2018

Chairperson: Mary Upton	Anne O' Dwyer, Treasurer	Catherine Lynch
Suzanne Doyle	Jane Bailey	Louise Clarke
Beatrice Hughes	Marie Celine Clegg	

Board of Management 1 February 2018 - 31 August 2018

<i>Chairperson:</i> Beatrice Hughes	<i>Treasurer:</i> Tom Scott	
Emily Banville	Marie Celine Clegg	Eugene Banks
Catherine Lynch	Suzanne Doyle	Barbara Murphy

Four members of the Board completed their term of office on the Board on the 31st January 2018 and four new members were appointed by the Trustees.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 2023

It is envisaged that a new Strategic Plan will be developed during the course of the coming year. The Board had to focus its attention during the past year on the requirements of being compliant with GDPR regulations and as a result had to postpone the development of the Strategic Plan. The main focus of the policy work involved preparing the centre for GDPR. Some Board members along with the Manager and Administrative staff attended training sessions with The Wheel and Carmichael House. The Board appointed a sub committee to draft the following documents:

- Data Breach Policy & Procedures
- Data Protection Policy

- Data Protection Guidelines
- Data Consent Forms
- Centre Privacy Notices
- Records Management Policy
- Loreto Centre Records Retention Schedule
- Data Subject Access Request Forms & Procedures

Given the complexity of GDPR the Board agreed to provide training for all Board members, staff and volunteers. Following the work at meetings on the draft policies the Board referred some of the proposed documents to a Data Protection solicitor.

The following Policies were updated during the past year:

Annual Leave Policy Jan 2018

Conflict of Interest and Loyalty Policy Jan 2018

Counselling Complaints Procedures Feb 2018

Counselling Service Policy and Procedures Feb 2018

LORETO CENTRE CRUMLIN BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 2017— June 2018

Board Members	11th Sept	13th- Nov	11th Dec	22nd Jan	13th Mar	24th Apr	18th June	Total
Jane Bailey	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	4/4
Louise Clarke	x	√	√	√	-	-	-	4/4
Marie Celine Clegg	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	6/7
Suzanne Doyle	√	√	x	√	√	√	x	5/7
Catherine Lynch	√	√	x	x	√	x	x	3/7
Beatrice Hughes	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	7/7
Anne O' Dwyer	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	4/4
Mary Upton	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	4/4
Tom Scott	-	-	-	-	√	√	√	3/3
Barbara Murphy	-	-	-	-	√	√	√	3/3
Emily Banville	-	-	-	-	√	√	√	3/3
Eugene Banks	-	-	-	-	√	√	√	3/3

ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The Loreto Centre organises and provides course opportunities to build confidence and self-esteem, develop new skills, build up accreditation and to help people become more actively involved in their local community: In reviewing and evaluating the responses from the learners over the past few years we have noticed an increasing demand for classes in psycho-education. Learners have asked for classes in issues that are relevant to their relationships in the home and in the workplace. Issues such as self-esteem, bullying, grief, loss and ability to cope with change are just some of the issues learners want to explore. We are developing short courses to respond to these requests. There is still demand for classes in holistic education. These are particularly valuable to learners who find themselves living alone and somewhat isolated.

What we offer

The Loreto Centre runs a variety of courses each morning between 10am-1pm:

Psycho-education

- ◆ Making Sense of Life's Changes
- ◆ Laughing Your Way to Health & Happiness
- ◆ Learn How To Improve Your Self-Esteem For a Happier Life
- ◆ Seeking Self Compassion

Holistic Education

- ◆ Tai Chi
- ◆ Mindfulness Meditation
- ◆ Flower Arranging
- ◆ Introduction to Art
- ◆ Art
- ◆ Yoga
- ◆ Generations Together Crochet & Yarn Club

Academic Education

Certificate in Women, Gender and Social Justice Studies. Third level education for early school leavers.



COURSES DELIVERED

From 1st September 2017 to 31st August 2018, 443 people attended classes in the Loreto Centre. The breakdown for each class is as follows:

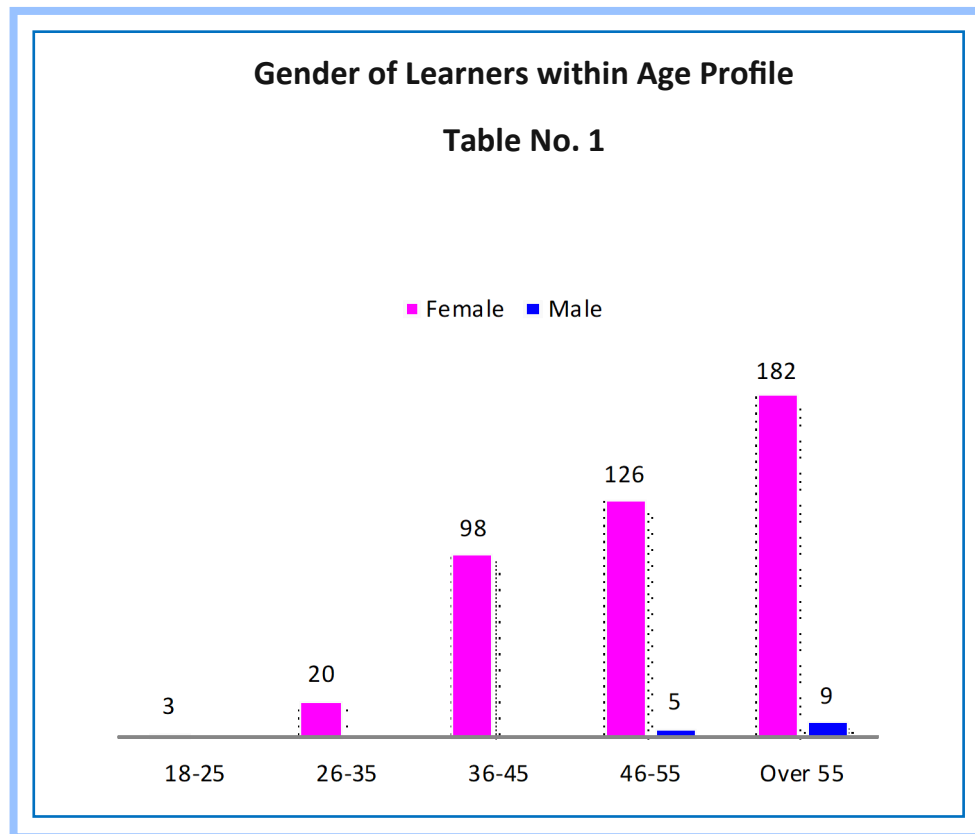
Class	Autumn 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018
Tai Chi	17	15	16
Mindfulness Meditation I	8	cancelled	6
Mindfulness Meditation II	13	16	10
Flower Arranging	15	15	15
Making Sense of Life's Changes	N/A	6	N/A
Introduction to Art	13	10	11
Art	12	11	8
Certificate in Women, Gender & Social Justice	29	26	26
Seeking Self Compassion	17	N/A	N/A
Yoga I	16	12	10
Yoga II	14	10	12
Crochet	6	9	8
Laughing Your Way to Health & Happiness	18	N/A	N/A
Learn How to Improve Your Self-Esteem for a Happier Life	N/A	N/A	13
Total	178	130	135
Overall Total	443		

COURSE TERMS:

Courses run from: September - December - 10 weeks
 January - April - 8weeks
 May - June - 8weeks

STATISTICS OF LEARNER POPULATION - 443 LEARNERS

Tables 1 describes the age profile and the gender of the learners. This is similar to the trend noted in the last Annual Report.



To ensure that our classes meet the needs of the learners the Loreto Centre uses a measuring instrument designed by the Limerick City Adult Education Service to capture the benefits of adult community based learning. This pilot initiative entitled “Capturing the Wider Benefits of Learning” sets out to devise simple tools and methodologies around two elements of non-formal learning:

1. Learning outcomes which learners used to access their skill level ‘before and after participating in uncertified courses.
2. Evidence about the wider benefits of learning, specifically the impact of community education on key areas of peoples’ lives, families and wider community.



COURSE OUTCOMES

In each Annual Report we offer an insight into the outcomes of a selection of the courses which have been delivered over the past year from the point of view of the learners.

“The Loreto Centre is a fantastic Adult Education location for Learning. The staff are warm and welcoming. Tutors are excellent. It has enabled me to enhance my confidence, self-esteem and creative skills set. It is a great place in which to learn and meet lovely like-minded people - a Centre in which one can thrive at one's own pace. Social interaction is an integral component of most of the courses facilitated at the Loreto Centre. Obviously, there are a multitude of benefits to social interaction in a learning environment. Personally speaking, the most notable benefit has been the drastic diminishment of previously experienced levels of Anxiety. What was once a dominant and debilitating issue is now a miniscule component of my current experience. The Loreto Centre is a beautiful space where education happens, friendships can blossom and life enhancing aspirations can be realised”.

SD Adult Learner

INTRODUCTION

TO ART (Through a learner's eyes) (Tutor Angela Shiven)

“I joined the Introductory Art Group last term and enjoyed it so much I returned. I was a little nervous when I first joined wondering if I would be embarrassed or if I was good enough, however, all these fears quickly” washed away.

“I have really enjoyed doing this course, and would like to continue learning about Art and to further my skills. Angela our tutor was excellent at explaining techniques and helping students on an individual level”.

“The tutor Angela is engaging, welcoming, warm and witty. The table in the room is set up in such a way that allows everyone to interact in one big group, no one feels isolated standing off individually behind an easel or sitting solo at a desk. The class has a relaxed and fun atmosphere and is very friendly and enjoyable, music plays in the background and there is a lot of interaction. Mid-way there is a coffee break. Here people further engage with each other and with Angela. You hear lots of chat and laughter; it is a very social group.

What I love most, however, is that there is no pressure. There are no mistakes in this class, if you have created something you are not happy with, you use it as a stepping stone and learn from it. You are told at the beginning “it is not a competition”. Angela shows the class how to constantly improve, providing instruction in great detail on how to create a piece or master a technique, plus she provides individual attention, sharing her artistic knowledge, tricks of the trade and useful tips.

I have learned so much from attending this class, it has benefited me on both a personal and social level. I enjoy the laughs, expressing myself creatively and learning new skills. I look forward to attending every week”. (Nicola Fogarty, participant).

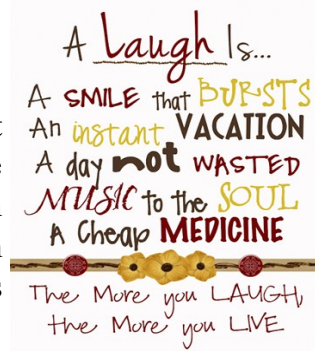
“This is the best class I have ever been to. Angela is a fantastic teacher. I have learnt so much, and she creates such a warm and friendly atmosphere, where people interact and get to know each other. I look forward to coming here every week”.

“In my early years I had a chance to study Art in school. However it was not a positive experience. This time the class was very positive, enjoyable and fun. I think I now have a new personal attitude to Art. I now have a can do attitude”.

LAUGHING YOUR WAY TO HEALTH & HAPPINESS

(Tutor Therese Larkin)

Laughter is a powerful medicine for soothing both body and mind. It can boost your immune system, reduce pain, and serves as a protective factor against the ravages of stress. It boosts physical and mental health. It can strengthen relationships and foster emotional connections with others. Having fun is an essential part of self-care, helps you to feel good about yourself and strengthens you for the daily grind.



What the Participants said:



“Never realised how difficult it can be not to complain/ be negative on issues, hopefully I will do less from now on. Importance of positivity more aware of same. I now try to make other people aware of the importance of laughter and I try to avoid negative people. All in all really enjoyed the experience”.

“I found the course helped me to be aware of negativity and how it can drag one down. How fun and laughter relaxes both mind and body. Good group willing to let go and have fun. Enjoyed comedy films and TV programmes, very positive”.

“Initially I was confused as I thought the class was about laughter as the weeks went by I began to realise how good it would be to get people out of themselves. More about communication I enjoyed the games and exercise”.

SEEKING SELF COMPASSION (Tutor Angela Amirault)

The Seeking Self Compassion course is an eight week course designed to help participants learn how to be kinder to themselves. In general, most people speak of themselves in very negative, dismissive and impatient tones. This leads to them feeling unhappy and allowing treatment that shouldn't be accepted.

My goal was to bring awareness to the impact of this negativity. Having the awareness means that there is now a choice as to whether they want to believe it.

Course Outcomes:

Participants have recognised that this negative voice has often been shaped by painful events and others. This gives them the space to connect to how they really feel about who they are. Allowing more kindness and compassion for their life - past and present.

What the Participants said:

“I would like to say thank you for everything Angela has taught me. I feel I worked through a lot of personal issues and it will definitely help me move forward. It was really enjoyable”.

“At first I thought like seek and self-compassion “yeah right” but as the weeks went by, I started to take and do some of the suggestions on board, for the first time in a long time. I actually feel content, happy with my life, enjoy the kids, really opened my mind and will be sad for it to finish”.

Table 2, 3 & 4 captures the feedback from learners over two terms.

Table no. 2

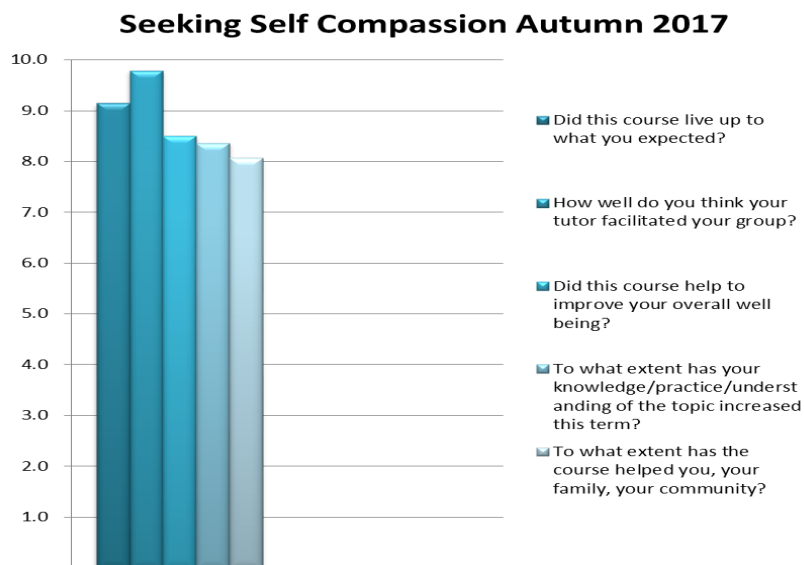


Table no. 3

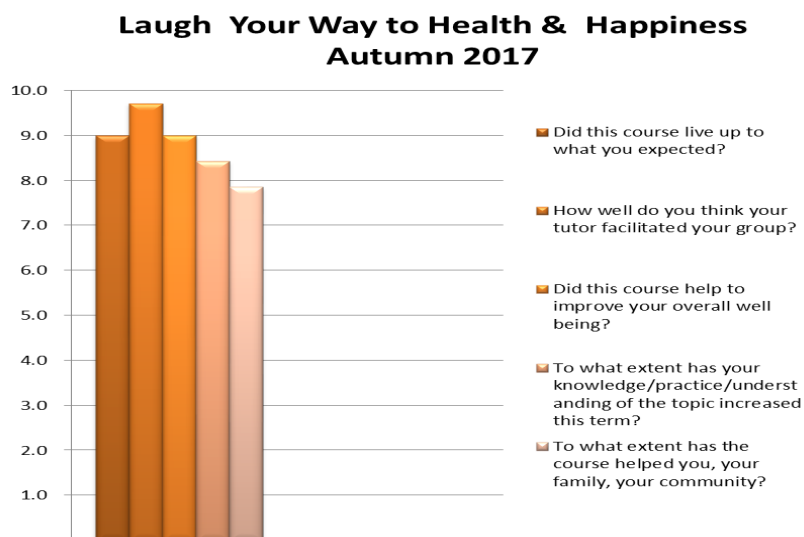
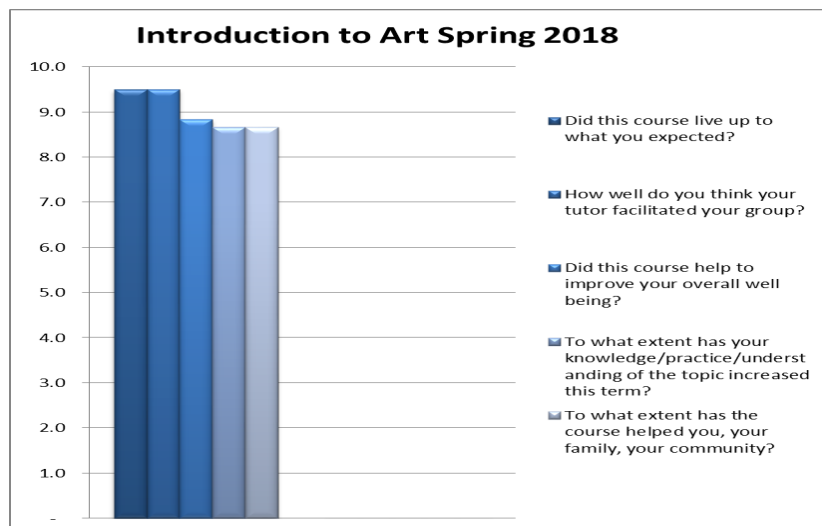


Table no. 4



THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION FOR EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

CERTIFICATE IN WOMEN, GENDER AND SOCIAL JUSTICE STUDIES

Community-based adult education is not just a means to an economic end, but rather a community based adult education experience that benefits the learner, their family and the wider society. It has a positive influence on children's education, improving family communication, mental health and changing family dynamics. Community education has also resulted in an increased social awareness of issues in the community and encourages opportunities for cross-community activities.

In Loreto Centre we are passionate about promoting access to higher education by under-represented groups. Our commitment to promoting education for disadvantaged or socially excluded groups is based on the benefits that the learners can derive from a third level qualification. These range from the personal through to social and economic.



Loreto Centre has offered a Certificate in Women, Gender and Social Justice Education in conjunction with the Department of Social Science, Social Policy and Social Justice University College Dublin (UCD) over the past eighteen years. While finding funding for this course represents a challenge for the centre many agencies help to pay for modules and along with the contribution from the learners themselves we continue to prioritise the delivery of the certificate course over two years.

As returning to education or beginning college can be a big step for adult learners, the centre with the financial assistance of Dublin South City Partnership offers an introduction to Women, Gender and Social Justice studies. This course not only introduces the learners to the concept of Social Justice Studies but it prepares them to overcome many of the psychological and social obstacles they may encounter as they return to education. To do this Beatrice Hughes, the facilitator, offers a wide curriculum which includes the following topics:

- What is Women, Gender and Social Justice Studies
- Feminist Philosophy
- An introduction to study and how to do critical thinking and analysis
- Learning how to read, analyse, summarise and deconstruct academic texts
- Exploring the basics of writing a university level paper.

In September 2017 twenty nine women began the UCD Outreach Programme in Women, Gender & Social Justice Studies (level 7)

Learners attended the centre in Crumlin for three hours every Wednesday morning. The women completed three modules over the year covering the following topics:

- Module 1: Introducing Women, Gender & Social Justice facilitated by Dr Aideen Quilty
- Module 2: Introducing Feminist & Gender Theory facilitated by Dr Rebecca Phelan
- Module 3: Care Matters facilitated by Dr Anne Hegarty and Dr Maggie Feeley

What the learners said about the course:

"This course has made me more aware of many different issues that I never knew much about. It has opened my mind, and hopefully I can continue my journey in education. I found all the modules very interesting, and I can only describe it as being asleep for the last few years and am now having a huge awaking".

"Doing this course over the two years is the absolute single best thing I have done for myself. As a busy working mum of 6, it has opened my eyes and mind to thinking, questioning and investigating facts in a different way. As an individual I can't wait to study more and in turn educate my children for the future".

"This course helped me to see, listen and critique what is happening in society. It is part of my journey and was the most enjoyable part of my life. It has left me with a thirst for more education. The tutors were total professionals and led me on a path that I would not have an opportunity otherwise and my fellow students were from all ages and life styles. I have become very interested in Social Justice and Women's Studies. Essay writing has forced me to be more precise and consistent in my researching the subject".

"I enjoyed doing this course because I learned about Irish History which I had no knowledge about, even though my own grandparents had been active in the 1916 rising. I learned the importance of using my voice and how to use it with regard to making people listen to what I had to say".

"This course has allowed me to be aware of issues in our community and given me the voice and courage to help improve how we live".



I gained so much from the women and gender studies course. Friendship, a sense of solidifying my own beliefs through information. I never knew how much I could achieve through doing the course or how well I could do essay writing. I've learned so much about feminist and social justice. I looked forward to my class each week. It's a time for me to step out of the stress of everyday life and learn and reflect in a very supportive and nurturing space. I couldn't recommend the course enough".

"I have enjoyed coming to the course every week. It has been so knowledgeable and interesting. It has awakened my interest in learning and listening. It has made me realize how bad my education was when I was younger. I would love for my children's education to be changed to what I have experienced in this Women's Studies course. It's a new way of learning and engaging".

Woman of 49 with 3 children.

COMMUNITY COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICE

In the public interest and in response to increasing demands the Centre offers a low-cost counselling/ psychotherapy service to adult learners attending courses in the Centre, as well as people over eighteen years from the local Dublin 12 community and surrounding area. Local agencies and many GPs in the local area make referrals. Table no 5 below illustrates the activity of the counselling/ psychotherapy over the past year. The service is only possible because of the generosity of so many therapists who volunteer their time and professional skills to the Centre. The commitment and expertise of the Director of Counselling in assigning clients to therapists is reflected in the high attendance of clients in therapy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY ON COUNSELLING/PSYCHOTHERAPY

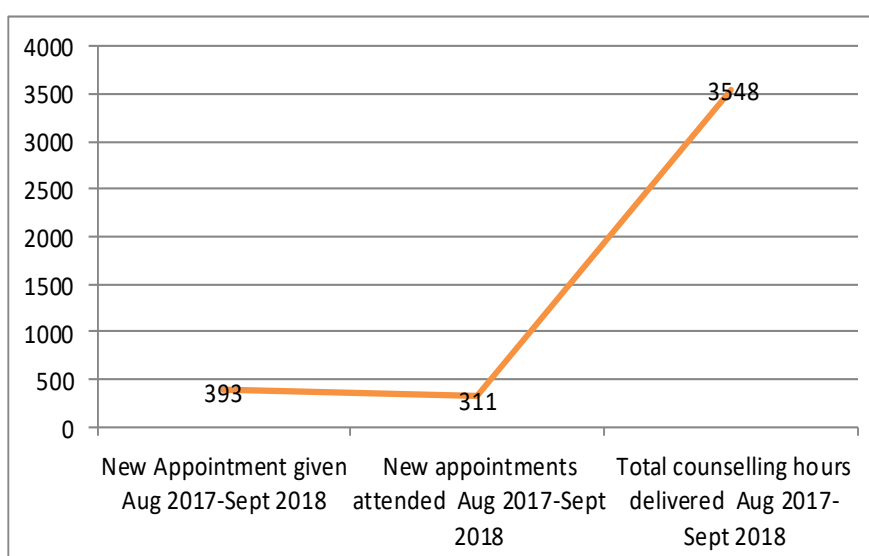
From the beginning our counselling/psychotherapy service was focused on the local community and its needs. Many of the women attending the initial courses, in personal development and community education, began to talk about personal and family problems and crises. We soon realised that many needed supportive and person-centred counselling and psychotherapy.

Once we became aware of this need we set out to provide a professional level of counselling and support for the wide variety of personal problems endemic in our local catchment area. Over the past twenty-one years we have liaised with many of the colleges and centres that provide courses for the emerging professional counsellors and psychotherapists in Ireland. As a result we now have a team of forty therapists working with our growing client base and providing a professional standard low-cost service.

Overall, we aim to maintain an atmosphere of community values, team-building and support for the people who need our courses and counselling services. The profile of our clients and their problems within our emerging society validates our policy of low-cost person-centred psychotherapy.

New Appointments made, new appointments attended & Counselling hours delivered in Loreto Centre

Table 5



COUNSELLING TEAM

Our team of forty volunteer therapists provide integrative humanistic psychotherapy to the clients. As well as a core team of fully accredited therapists the Centre has qualified therapists working towards the requirements of professional accreditation and third and fourth year therapy students.

Our volunteer counsellors are all members of the main counselling and therapy accrediting bodies in Ireland, including The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) and the Irish Association for Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy (IAHIP). The volunteer counsellors are offered opportunities for continuous professional development either offered on the premises or by other agencies. During this past year the Centre management offered training to the therapists on the challenges of GDPR. This seminar was delivered by Marianne Matthews LL.B,TEP.

COUNSELLING STATISTICS FOR SEPTEMBER 2017- AUGUST 2018

After cancellations and non-attendance, three thousand five hundred and forty-eight counselling sessions were delivered in the Loreto Centre. Including clients who were continuing therapy from the previous year three hundred and forty-six clients attended for counselling/psychotherapy sessions between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018.

Three hundred and ninety three appointments were made to see the Director of Counselling. Out of that figure there were twenty-eight cancellations, fifty-four no shows which brought the number of intakes to three hundred eleven new clients.

Table no 6 describes the geographic area from which the clients come:

Loreto Centre Client Locations 2018

Table 6

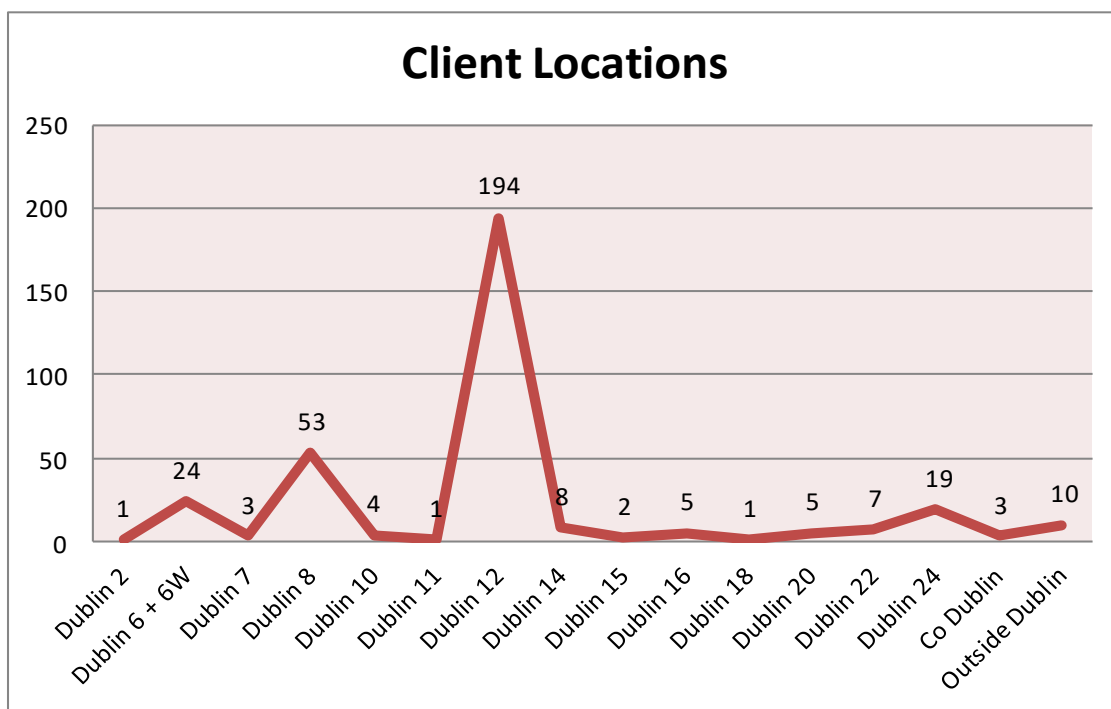


Table 7 shows the source of referrals for counselling during the year September 2017– August 2018.

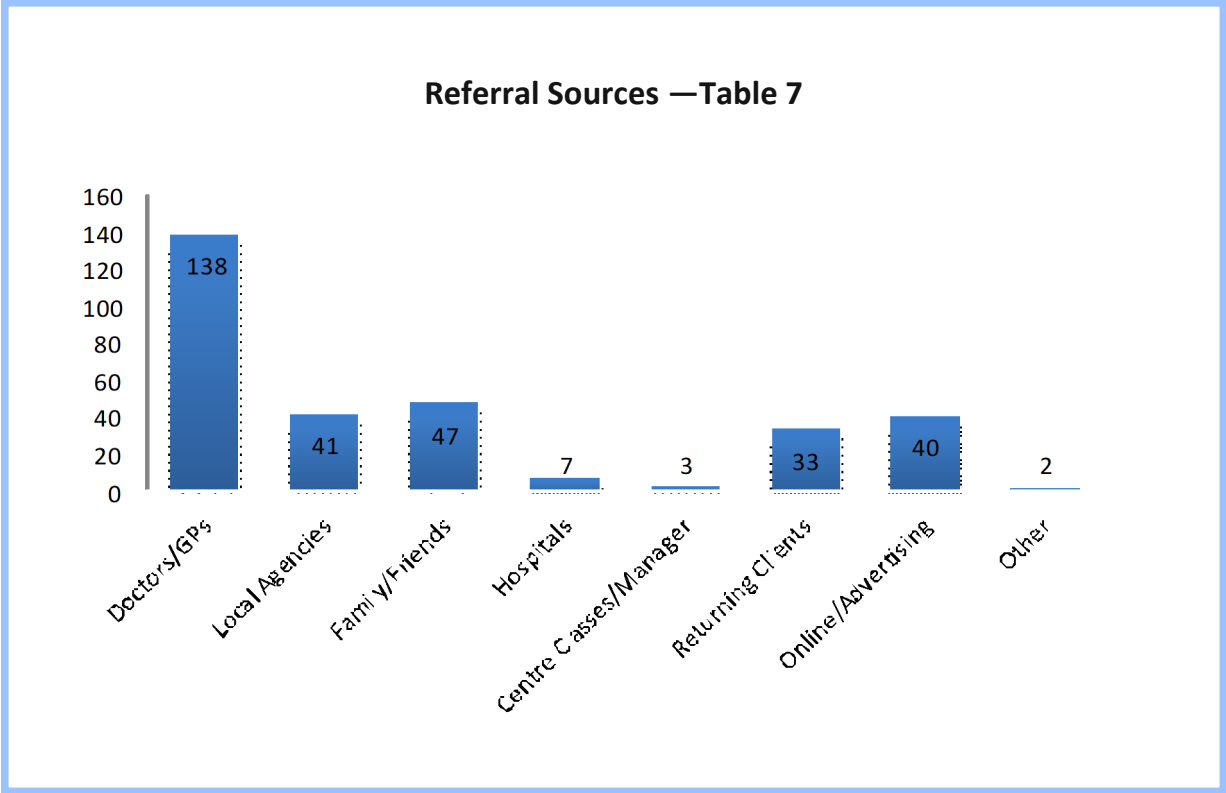


Table 8 describe the age and gender of clients for the same period.

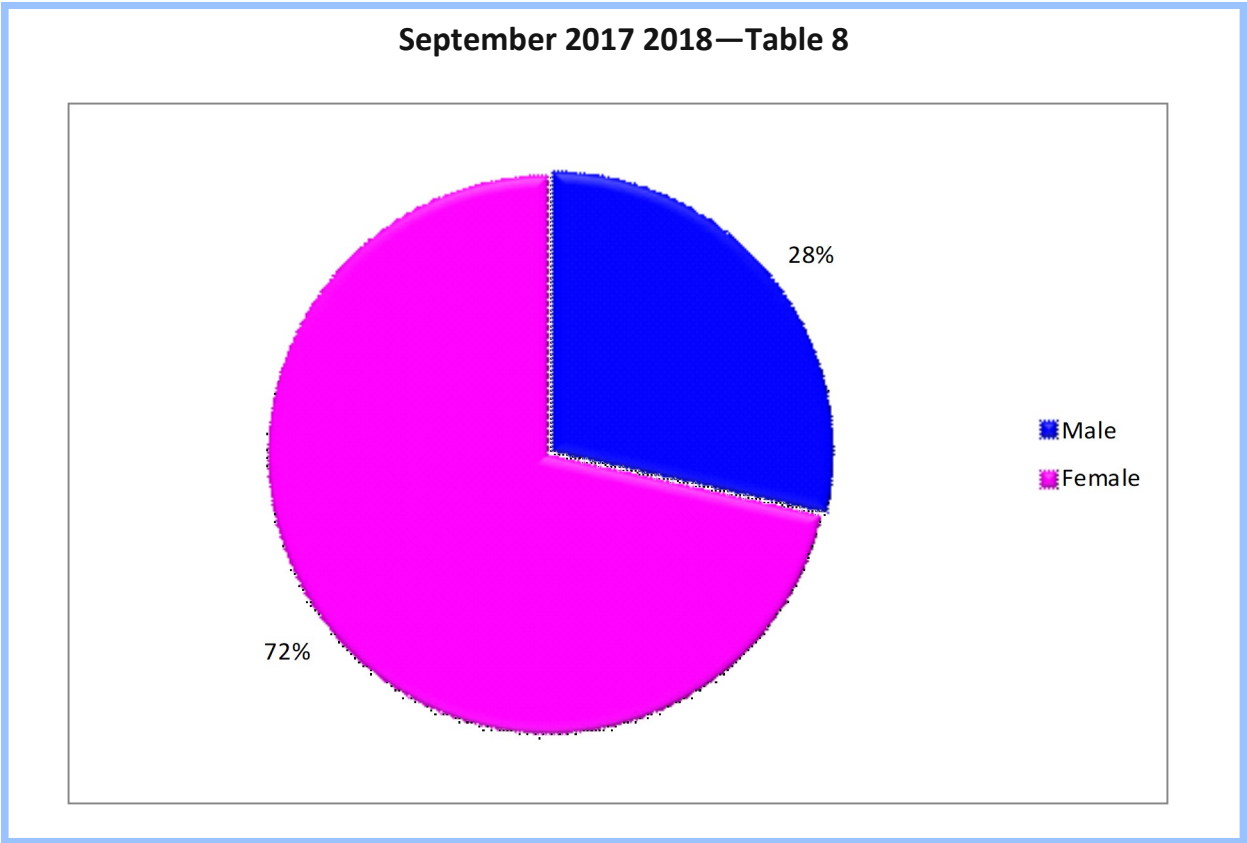
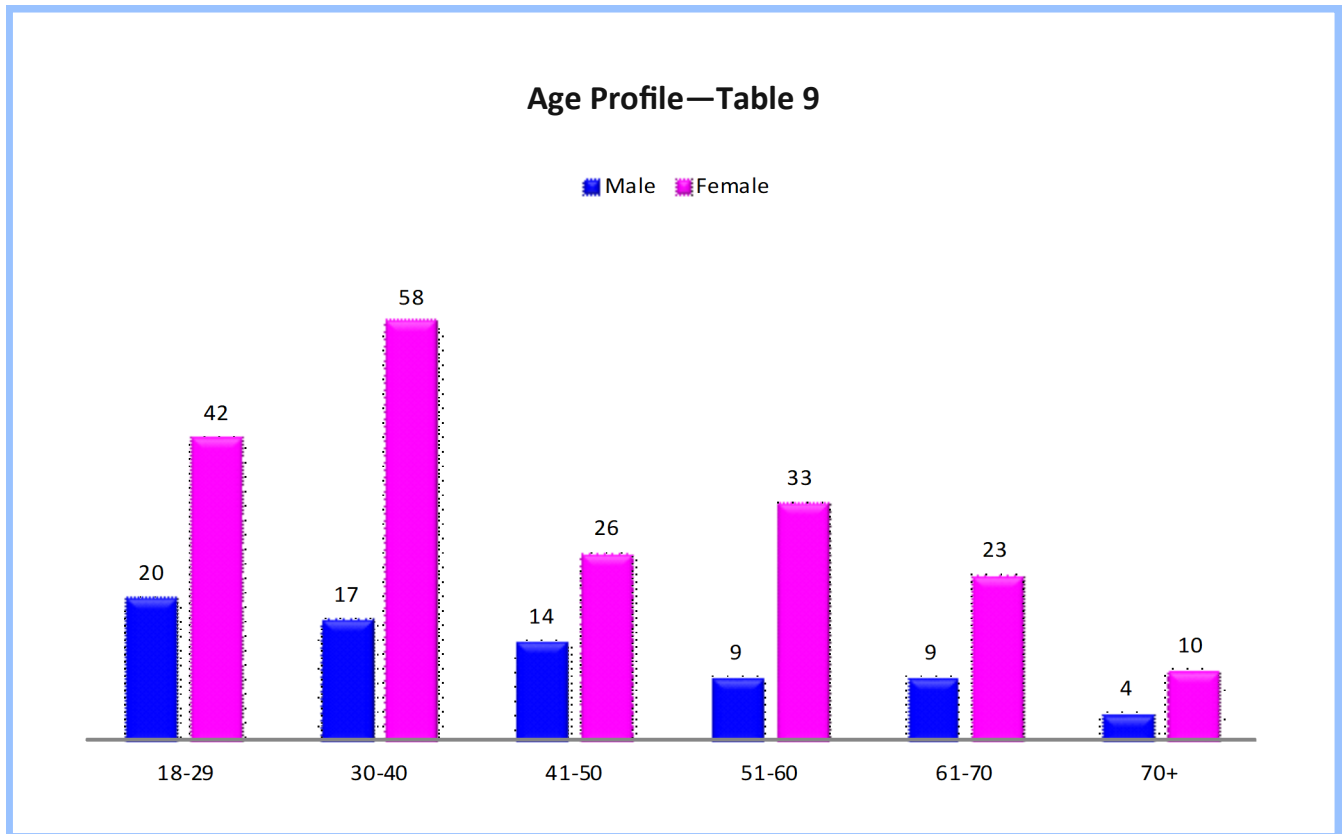


Table 9 describes the age and gender profile of clients.



OUTCOMES

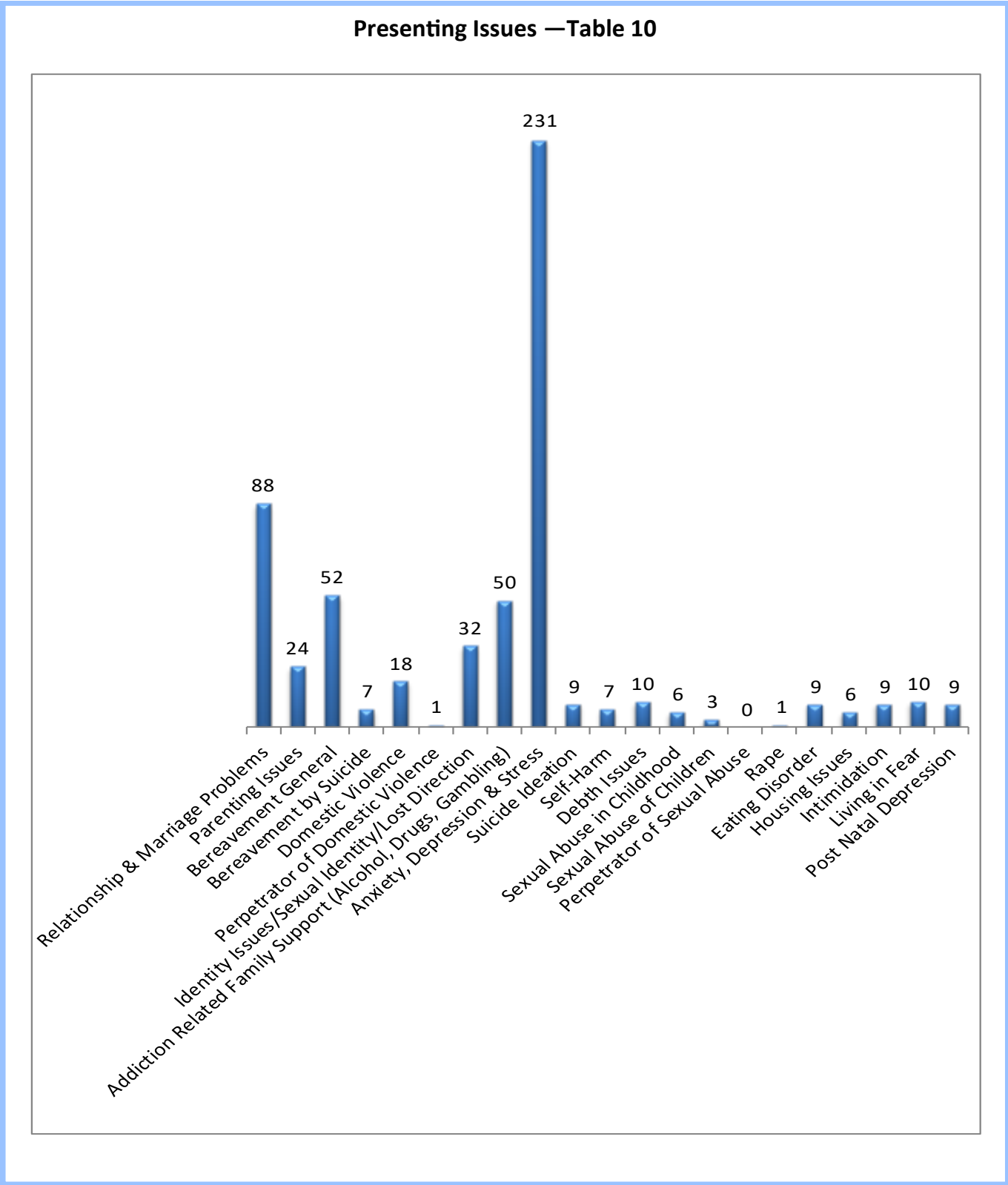
All our work is designed to enable our clients to heal and repair the damage that has become part of their personality as a result of their life experiences to date. We work in conjunction with GPs and other local services to enable people to depend on their own inner resources rather than on prescribed medication. Among the outcomes reported by clients and observed are as follows:

- Improved mental health which leads to freedom from the pain that has become a part of their daily lives.
- Healthier and more rewarding interpersonal interactions.
- Behavioural and cognitive changes which enables them to live richer personal and social lives.
- Greater involvement in new projects and new learning outside the home.
- Increased safety for their children and a healthier domestic environment.
- Healthier life choices.
- Increased positivity and hope for a better future.

Presenting Issues:

Throughout the counselling process a variety of problems may emerge. The following chart no. 10 illustrates the span of presenting issues that clients identified. An interesting development this year is the increase in anxiety, depression and stress identified in the initial interview. Clients who have been exposed to various forms of trauma in early childhood or who are experiencing trauma and fear because of violence and intimidation in the local area. As a result of this the management of the centre will provide funding for therapists to receive additional training in working with trauma.

Table 10 shows presenting issues of clients:



FEEDBACK FROM COUNSELLING CLIENTS



While therapists who work with clients can see the benefit of the therapy process this report does not give feedback on the confidential and private nature of the work being done. However, at times clients call in to the office or they write a note to say thanks. Below is some feedback from their comments.

One clients found the therapy so life changing for her that she decided to fundraise for the centre by painting fifty water colours and selling them. She presented a cheque to the Centre as a token of her gratitude

“My head was in such a mess, I couldn’t sort my problems out, everything was in a jumble and I didn’t know where to turn to. A friend encouraged me to make an appointment in the Loreto Centre and I haven’t looked back since. I’m in a much better place now and things are starting to come together in my life, I would hate to think what would have happened to me if I hadn’t taken my friends advice to come to the Centre”.

(Female, age 27)

“After I lost my job I felt so depressed and was unable to face the day. My marriage was starting to crumble because I couldn’t let my wife know how awful I felt and I could see no way out. My doctor suggested I try counselling. Everyone in the Centre was so helpful and made me feel so welcome. My counsellor was such a good listener and non-judgemental. Talking through my feelings about my current and past issues has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders, everything looks so differently now and I approach life’s challenges in a more positive way”. (Male, age 46)

“I felt so lonely and empty inside, there were issues in past that were eating away at me inside. It is only through coming to counselling that I have finely been able move on with my life and make the necessary changes to move forward and begin to enjoy life again”.

(Female, age 61).

“Before I came to the Centre, I hadn’t left my house during the day in over a year . I cut myself off from my friends. I felt such a failure because I had I had dropped out of college because I couldn’t cope with the pressure and the workload, it all just got too much for me. I was unsuccessful in getting a job and I just fell deeper and deeper into a depression. Things got so bad I eventually had to go to the doctor who referred me to the Centre. It hasn’t been easy but I’m getting myself back on track with the help of my therapist. I am in a much better place now and I am working on getting myself back into college”.

(Male, Age 22)

Reeling in The First Twenty Years

The JOURNEY – Carnclough House/Loreto Convent/Loreto Centre 1997—2008

On a cold, rather bleak day in early January, 1930, a small group of nuns pushed open the heavy iron gates leading into the avenue of Carnclough House on the Crumlin Road near Dolphin's Barn. As they trudged up the tree-lined avenue, they were endowed more with the virtues of Faith and Hope than with worldly wealth. They were on their way to establish a new education centre which was to become the pride of Dolphin's Barn. The sisters faced an enormous task. The place was in a shambles, with layers of dust and cobwebs everywhere, a basement that was infested with rats and no electricity. In spite of many difficulties, the Secondary and Junior Schools were opened without delay and on the 15th January 1930 fifteen pupils arrived for instruction. The first classes were held in the spacious parlours of the house off the entrance hall. From there the schools grew from strength to strength.

Some sixty-seven years later, the house was found to be unsuitable for small number of sisters that remained so in December 1997 the sisters moved to more suitable accommodation in the area. This was the end of an era but the beginning of something new. I had been given the task of setting up something in the house which would benefit the local area. Three months previously, I had set out on my journey, talking to people, visiting centres, attending meetings and generally keeping an ear to the ground. During those three months I learned much, heard much and was amazed at the amount that was already happening in the area. I made links with different organisations, which proved very helpful in getting the project off the ground. Gradually the way forward began emerging. The house was to be a place of healing and wholeness, an oasis where people would find rest, nourishment and support on their journey.



So the end of January '98 we began our first Personal Development course with a group of fifteen local women in the same spacious room where the first fifteen pupils were tutored in January 1930. Research showed there was a real need to provide something that would be uplifting for people, help them to feel good about themselves and grow in confidence and self esteem. Very soon it became evident that we needed to provide a counselling service for the participants of this course. From those humble beginnings the centre grew and began to take on a life of its own responding and

developing according as the needs arose. That same year the Centre was refurbished to suit the various services we hoped to offer and to make it a welcoming space for the participants.

In Sept '98 we had a full programme with backup services including a crèche in the basement of the Centre managed by the Home School Liaison and CE participants. All the courses were intended to promote healthier lifestyles and improve the general well-being of all who attended. Some courses available in the Centre in those early years were Stress Management, Women and Health, Co-Dependency, Psychology,

Therapeutic Art, Aromatherapy in the Home, Flower Arranging, Yoga, Tai Chi, Spirituality, Meditation, Loss and Bereavement, Creative Writing, Family Communications, Enneagram and Myers Briggs etc. A new addition to our Programme in Jan 2001 was a Men's Personal Development Course. The Programme covered such topics as Stress Management/Relaxation, Confidence Building, Communication and Listening Skills.

The Women and Health course was facilitated by a tutor from UCD and with her support and encouragement we began the first Certificate in Women's Studies 2000-2002 UCD Outreach Programme with approximately twenty participants. The course consisted of a core foundation and three option courses. Many of these women had completed other courses in the Centre so this was a natural progression for them. This Outreach Programme has grown from strength to strength over the years with some participants reaching Diploma and Masters Degree level.



Another element in those early years was the Outdoor Community Education Programme where participants learned new skills through various outdoor physical activities, developed confidence and self-



esteem, increased personal effectiveness, built friendships and generally learned to deal more effectively with life and its many problems. This programme was run in conjunction with CDVEC and ran as an extension to the Personal Development Programme. We climbed hills and mountains, learned orienteering skills and even participated in Water Sports in Blessington where we faced our fears in allowing our canoes to be turned upside down and to trust we would come back up to the surface!! These activities gave all a real sense of

achievement and an ability to be less fearful of new situations and more trusting of facing new challenges.

One of the bigger challenges I faced over those first years was making sure we had enough funding to run the courses and this meant spending many long hours filling in application forms. Some were successful and others weren't, but we always managed to keep our heads above water!!

One of the first participants on the Personal Development Programme was Karen Hollowed who joined the staff of the Loreto Centre initially as a volunteer and later on through the Fás Scheme and the Jobs Initiative. Karen has developed her skills through participation on the Certificate, Diploma and eventually completing a Masters in Women's Studies in UCD. She simultaneously developed her creativity over the years and has contributed much to the Centre. One of her more recent projects was setting up the website for the Centre. The generosity of our volunteers over those years whether on the Management Committee

or helping in other ways was essential to the functioning of the Centre. Another person who helped in those early years was Deirdre Lawlor who later joined the Crumlin Domestic Violence organisation.

My most abiding memories from those first ten years were the many changes I saw taking place in the lives of the participants. This was especially evident on the nights of the celebrations that took place on the completion of the Personal Development course and the Women's Studies Programme where the women shared their experiences and the changes that had taken place for them. Some used symbols to show this, for example a dying plant at the beginning of the year had been nurtured back to life in the same way as their own life and spirit has been renewed. Those evenings were both delightful and emotional for all. For me the feeling was one of deep gratitude and a renewed belief in our efforts and somehow their sharing made it all worthwhile.

Ten years ago, Sr Brede Quirke replaced me as Manager of the Centre and has continued to develop and grow the Centre under her very capable management. The little grain of mustard seed sown that January day in 1997 has indeed grown beyond all possible imaginings. My hope is that it has been and will continue to be a source of growth, healing and joy for the many people who pass through its doors.

Anne O'Dwyer

TEN YEAR OVERVIEW 2008 — 2018

The second decade in the growth of the centre has been a very exciting time and has seen major changes in governance and structures. Building on the strong connections with the local community and organisations Loreto Centre found a niche where it can respond to the needs of the local people and continue to deliver non accredited informal education and third level second chance education. As the reputation for the privacy and confidentiality of the counselling service grew so too did the numbers wishing to avail of it.

Pat Colgan was attracted to the work of the centre and offered to volunteer as a psychotherapist. For the past eleven years he has overseen the clinical management and development of the psychotherapy service. The appointment of Pat to this role has enabled the centre to develop a professional low cost counselling/ psychotherapy service. Working with up to forty volunteer therapists annually Pat has developed a highly professional and person centred therapy for over three hundred clients annually.

The past eleven years saw an increase in numbers of adults attending classes. The learners still value the welcome and hospitality extended to them daily. While the crèche run by FAS was closed in 2009 we were fortunate to have been able to convert the basement and this enabled us to expand the range of classes on offer. We have also been very fortunate to have got an increased and very committed number of



administrative and housekeeping staff through the community employment scheme. This has enabled us to meet the increased demand for education and counselling during the economic recession. Over this time many different topics have been offered on the short term courses. The demand still exists for holistic and psychotherapeutic classes.

The centre has always had a strong commitment to liberatory adult education and continues to find the funding to commit to the delivery of the outreach programme in Women, Gender and Social Justice Studies from UCD. These courses attract a wide spectrum of women from the local community. We have observed that many of these women are already involved in bettering their local community before they begin. Others feel empowered to engage more fully with decision making in their community as they engage in the different modules. This course which carries a HETAC Level 7 award offers progression routes to further education in Third Level courses. However, there is still a major challenge in progressing due to the absence of grants to attend college on a part time basis and due to the absence of funding for childcare.



While the creative energy and vision present in the early years still continue to inspire all we do the centre has also had to turn its energy to developing good governance structures to ensure that it can exist in to the future. The national movement towards regulating the Charity Sector while very welcome has also been a major challenge for a small voluntary run local centre. Thankfully, the centre became a member of The Wheel and so its board and staff have availed of training in the ongoing changes in governance and policies. From 2008 it became very clear that changes in management structures would have to take place if the centre were to meet the new regulatory demands. This called for the development of a Board who would be committed to performing the duties of a governing body. Loreto Centre Trustees were very keen not to lose the voice of the local learner and so decided to ensure that learners would be trained and included on the Board. It is very gratifying to report that a former learner, Beatrice Hughes is now the Chairperson of the Board. As part of the preparation for the transition from having a management committee who were deeply rooted in the early development in the centre to appointing a Board, the trustees asked the Management Committee to work with a legal consultant on the development of a constitution. This was approved in 2012. It is now the governing instrument that guides the work of the Board of Management.

Two major challenges have been experienced in the past ten years. Firstly, the untimely death of our first chairperson, Marie Gill RIP in 2014. Marie's death was a major loss for the centre. Marie had just overseen the development of the Strategic Plan 2013-2017 and had been looking forward to seeing the fruits of this work. We were extremely fortunate that Mary Upton who was already a member of the Board agreed to taking on the role of chairperson. She put her vast experience of the local area at the service of the centre. Mary was not daunted by the demands of governance and guided the board as the members examined draft after raft of policies. During her period as chairperson the Centre signed up to the voluntary

Governance Code and implemented all procedures required by the Charity Regulator. Under Mary's guidance the Centre developed into an organisation with strong governance structures that support the daily work of the Centre.

The management work of the Centre over the past twelve months has been focused on meeting the demands of GDPR. This has been particularly demanding for a small organisation which does not enjoy the expertise of a legal or IT department. Having drafted all the required documents the board was cognisant of the need to get expert legal advice especially in the area of managing highly sensitive client data. This work caused the Board to pause the development of the Strategic Plan for 2019-2023.



However, outline work has begun on this and one major issue which is emerging is the need to find multi annual funding to ensure the future delivery of our services. I am deeply grateful to all who have enabled me and supported me in developing the centre over the past ten years. I have drawn insight and support from organisations such as Crosscare and Aontas. The local agencies such as the CDETB, DCC and local Partnerships agencies placed their trust in the service and have been so generous in funding education in the centre.

I am equally grateful to the large numbers of volunteer therapists who have worked with the counselling clients. I am so heartened by their willingness to accompany those in emotional pain and loss to enable them to find deeper meaning in their lives. These therapists have contributed more to the local community than can ever be acknowledged.



As we approach the twenty first birthday of the centre we plan to celebrate in some small way and honour all those who have made the centre what it is today. We hope to celebrate in July 2019.

Brede Quirke



FUNDING AND RESOURCE SUPPORTS

The Board wishes to acknowledge the contribution made by staff and volunteers who continue to make this Centre such a vibrant place.

In particular, the Board wishes to acknowledge the role played by the following :

- ♦ The Trustees, who are the Loreto Sisters.
- ♦ The Manager, Assistant Manager and the Director of Counselling.
- ♦ The tutoring, counselling, administration, housekeeping staff and volunteers, for their dedication, professional service and expertise in working with the learners and clients.
- ♦ The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DESP) for JI, CE and TUS schemes along with the CDETБ who commit personnel resources to the Centre and who make a significant contribution to the day to day running of the Centre.
- ♦ All funders (listed below), fundraisers and friends of the Centre.

The Board wishes to record appreciation for the professional support received from the other agencies at local and national level who inspire community education and the management of the counselling service in many diverse ways.

Finally the Board acknowledges the trust that learners and clients put in the Centre.

FUNDING TO THE SERVICE

September 2017—August 2018

Loreto Sisters, Ireland, Loreto Province Fund, Mary Ward Mission Fund and Loreto Past Pupils Union



The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection



City of Dublin Education and Training Board



Dublin South City Partnership



TUSLA



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