



Wexford
Rape
Crisis | Services for
Domestic, Sexual
and Gender-based
Violence **Est. 1995**

Annual Report 2019

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

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Chairperson's Foreword

2019 was yet another great year for Wexford Rape Crisis. Under the baton of our very capable Manager, Clare Williams, we again excelled in our client interactions, reduction of waiting lists, awareness building, continuation of the Manuela Riedo programme and fund-raising!

Drawing again from our strategic plan 2017-2020, I made new premises, awareness building through fundraising and governance our priorities for 2019. They were on every monthly agenda.

Thanks to Wexford GAA and Croke Park we interacted with 1000's fellow county men and women and collected thousands of euros over the course of three match days. Many thanks to our fundraising committee volunteers and board members who shook buckets at these events and also at our countywide White Christmas appeal which helped raise our profile and funds even more!

Our ongoing need for new premises saw us meet with Tom Enright, Wexford County Manager and his team of Shay Howell and Sean Savage in planning and together they got planning permission for our 2000sq foot new build in June 19. A fantastic result! Many thanks to Wexford County Council for their hard work to make this happen. Special thanks to Johnny Moylan, Engineer for his voluntary work on our behalf on this project.

Our governance code is getting a make-over in line with new national regulations from the Charities regulator. Thanks to our audit committee for this work.

Waiting lists and demand on our services are up again in 2019. Catherine, Jessica, Bernadette, Siobhán, Ciara, and Carolyn take a bow! Thank you.

My board members John, Laura, Damien, Moira, Breda, Kate, thank you for the selfless work you do to help people who you will never meet.

The highlight of 2019 had to be our Strategic Plan launch. Our staff, counsellors, volunteers, board members and supporters came together that day with our VIP Rosanna Davison and the palpable feeling of empathy, enthusiasm and energy for Wexford Rape Crisis has carried us all through the rest of the year. What a feeling!

Le gach dea ghui agus Comhghairdeas!

Máiréad



Manager's Report:

2019 was yet another significant year in the development of Wexford Rape Crisis. With an additional 10% funding provided by Tulsa, Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence, the service invested in the development of its Adolescent Counselling Service. This was due to the need and demand from young people in Co. Wexford for support with Sexual Abuse, Domestic Abuse and Gender-based violence. As a result of increased referrals from families and local child protection agencies it became apparent that more young people are being affected by Sexual abuse, from within the family unit as well as from older perpetrators and with abuse arising from on-line contact with perpetrators.

Working with young people is an area that requires expertise and Wexford Rape Crisis recruited an appropriately qualified and experienced Adolescent Counsellor who could meet the needs of those young people in a safe and secure manner. This service is now in operation on a 3-day week. The demand is high for the service and further funding ideally is required to meet the demand of young people and families in the county.

Our service to Adult survivors of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based violence continued in 2019 with a further 11% increase in new referrals to the service. Working with trauma is a highly complex area and again requires experience and knowledge that our highly experienced Adult Counsellors provide day in and day out. Working with trauma and vicarious trauma is not easy and one which our team do extremely well. As such, self-care is a high priority for all our team and in 2019 dedicated self-care days were allocated for the team to rest, review and recuperate. This continues in 2020.

Wexford Rape Crisis Education and Prevention Service completed its last full year delivering the Manuela Riedo Programme. This programme ceased in March 2020. Attempting to address the issue of Sexual violence in society is futile, unless the education side of matters is in place. The outcomes achieved with the delivery of WRC's Education programme have been immense and it is vital that this continues in the long term.

Due to the demand for our service the current funding allocation from Tusla unfortunately does not meet the need. As such, we continuously need to plan fundraising events to help those access counselling on our waiting lists. We are indebted to each one of the volunteers who helped us throughout 2019 in our various bucket collections both in Dublin and in Wexford. A thank you to Freda Quinn who is an all year-round volunteer in the centre and who is vital to the day to day running of operations.

Significant progress was made in 2019 regarding new premises. Several meetings took place with Tom Enright (CEO Wexford County Council) and his team. A dedicated site was allocated by WCC and plans were drawn up for a new fit for purpose building. Planning permission was granted in June 2019 and developments are on-going. It is hoped that a new building will be in place in early 2021.

The launch of our rebranding and our strategic plan took place in March 2019 in Murphy's Barn. We are indebted to Sinead Quirke for 'lending' us her beautiful building which was the perfect environment for celebrating the work of the centre and the courage and bravery of our clients. We are also indebted to Rosanna Davison for formally launching the event and who has done so much for the centre in raising awareness to those who need the service.

In Wexford Rape Crisis there is an amazing team in place who work at the front-line and who continuously keep our clients 'at the Centre' of all that we do. I would like to thank all our Counsellors, our Education Worker, our Volunteers, and our newly appointed Finance & Administration Worker.

Finally, without the expertise, support and knowledge of our voluntary board of management none of the work we do would be possible. I would like to thank each one of them. In particular, I would like to thank our Chairperson, Mairead Sinnott who is pivotal to progress and development of a best practice Rape Crisis Service.

Clare Williams, Manager Wexford Rape Crisis.

Section 1: Overview of the Organisation

In 1995, Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Service was established as an indirect result of the Kilkenny Incest Investigation, providing a free counselling service for survivors of Sexual violence and their families in the Co. Wexford area. The service quickly expanded as more and more survivors sought counselling. With the increased numbers, outreach services were developed in Gorey, Enniscorthy and New Ross.

In 2019, the service was rebranded as Wexford Rape Crisis. The service also formally expanded their remit to providing Counselling support to those who also experienced domestic and Gender-Based Violence.

Wexford Rape Crisis became the designated Counselling service for clients of Wexford Women's Refuge. Strong links operate between both services to help our community in Co Wexford. All our counsellors are professionally qualified and accredited to relevant recognized Accreditation Bodies such as the IACP and IAHIP.

Our Vision

Is for a society free from sexual violence.

Wexford Rape Crisis Mission Statement

"Wexford Rape Crisis is a client-centred support service for those who may have been affected by domestic, sexual or gender-based violence, including women, men, young people and all persons of different sexual or gender identities".

Core values underpinning Wexford Rape Crisis

Violence and sexual abuse in relationships must always be viewed as an abuse of Human Rights. It should not be rationalised or minimised and there must never be an acceptable or tolerable level of violence. Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, irrespective of age, race, income or employment status. Underpinning all aspects of the work of Wexford Rape Crisis is an ethos which offers support, empathy and understanding. We provide a non-judgemental, empowering and compassionate service which facilitates healing and recovery.

I. Aims & Objectives:

Through our counselling service, advocacy and awareness-raising work, we aim to support our clients by:

- Implementing best practice in all we do with survivors of domestic, sexual or gender-based violence.
- Supporting partners, families and friends of those who have been affected by DSGBV.
- Developing therapeutic relationships.
- Ensuring survivors have access to services which are responsive and appropriate to their needs.
- Supporting clients to make informed choices
- Providing accessible, sensitive, confidential and quality services.
- Working on behalf of our clientele with other organisations and agencies when appropriate.
- Working preventatively in communities through education, media campaigns and public awareness strategies.
- Monitoring and evaluating our service provision.
- Ensuring the safeguarding of children in situations of domestic, sexual or gender-based violence.

II. Current Management/Committee Membership:

Board of Directors:

Mairead Sinnott (Chairperson), John Cuddihy (Secretary), Laura Lawlor (Vice Chairperson), Dr Moira Slevin, Damien Jordan, Christine Hore, Breda Cogley and Kate O'Donnell.

Audit Sub-Committee:

John Cuddihy, Annette O'Neill, Damien Jordan, Kate O' Donnell.

Director Biographies:

Ms. Máireád Sinnott: Máireád has over thirty years of experience in the Retail Banking network, and currently manages a busy medical centre in Co. Wexford. Máireád has considerable experience of the Voluntary Sector having served on numerous boards. Máireád has been Chairperson of the Board since 2017.

Mr. John Cuddihy: John is a retired Regional Director with AIB Bank having served in excess of forty years in the Retail Banking Sector in Ireland. John is a member of several Audit Committees both private and Semi State and is the Company Secretary.

Ms. Laura Lawlor: With extensive experience in community development initiatives for over thirty years, Laura currently works as a Career Guidance Professional. Laura has previously served with boards of management in the education, community and communications sectors and from 2009-2018 she assumed the role of Safeguarding Representative for the Parish of Wexford. Laura has also engaged in voluntary work in the PR, Local Radio and publications areas, and has a particular interest in supporting the wellbeing, personal progression and development of the people with whom she works.

Dr. Moira Slevin: Dr Moira Slevin, now retired, has been a GP for over 30 years and has had a special interest in Women’s Health including Mental Health issues in the community throughout her career.

Mr. Damien Jordan: Damien was Educated at FCJ Secondary School, Bunclody, Griffith College Dublin and the Law Society of Ireland. He is currently a Partner with the legal firm Redmond & Co. Solicitors Enniscorthy, a member of the Probate, Administration and Trusts Committee of the Law Society of Ireland, and a former Secretary of the Wexford Solicitors Association.

Ms. Breda Cogley: Breda is a retired Secondary School Principal and served as a member of the teaching staff in Presentation Secondary School, Wexford for over thirty years. During her time in Presentation she was appointed to several senior positions where she gained significant management experience, until her retirement in 2015. Breda joined the Board of Wexford Rape Crisis in 2019.

Ms. Kate O’Donnell: Kate O’Donnell is a Certified Bank Director. She served as Bank of Ireland’s Regional Director for South Leinster and has over 37 years in Financial Services, retiring in 2016. Having previously been a member of the Audit Committee, Kate joined the Board of Wexford Rape Crisis in 2019 and serves on a number of Boards in the Arts and Culture Sector.

Ms. Christine Hore (Resigned Sept 2019) Started her career as Legal Secretary at Huggard & Brennan Solicitors, Wexford for 6 years. She then lived in London for one year and worked as a Secretary before moving to Kinsale, where she worked for 5 years with Elanco S.A. Pharmaceuticals, as Secretary to the Financial Manager. She returned home to Wexford and worked in Retail for 20 years as Manager/Buyer. She has also worked in a voluntary capacity with ISPCC as a mentor with vulnerable teenagers.

III. Board Meetings 2019:

January 29th, March 5th, April 9th, May 14th, July 2nd AGM, September 3rd, October 1st
November 5th, December 10th, 2019.



IV. Front Line Team :

Clare Williams, Manager Wexford Rape Crisis MSc, BSc, B.A., Dip Mgt, Dip Addictions, Dip Group Work.

Clare commenced as Manager with WRC in Nov 2014. Her working background includes work as a counsellor supporting and helping clients with addiction, depression, anxiety, and trauma. Clare has also held a range of senior managerial roles, mainly in Dublin in a variety of work settings. These include managing an Residential Alcohol & Drug Detox Unit, an emergency Shelter for homeless people with mental health challenges, a Transitional Housing Project for people exiting prison and a residential service for women affected by Domestic & Sexual Violence. She worked mainly with organisations such as Dublin Simon Community, De Paul Trust and The Vincentian Housing Partnership.

Catherine Murphy, Staff Counsellor B.Sc., Dip. MIACP.

Catherine has worked with Wexford Rape Crisis since 2000. She has many years' experience working with adults, both men and women, who have experienced all types of sexual violence (including childhood sexual abuse,) domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Her therapeutic approach is humanistic/integrative with person-centred values. At the core of therapy is the bond that develops between client and therapist. This facilitates the establishment of a strong foundation of trust and care. Catherine recognises that every client is unique, and she tailors her approach based on the needs of the individual.

She facilitates a safe, supportive, nurturing environment which helps clients work toward self-healing and recovery from their trauma. She is currently training to be a Reiki Practitioner.



Jessica Du Bois, Staff Counsellor, Dip. Counselling MIACP.

Jessica has been a counsellor for Wexford Rape Crisis since 2004. She is a fully accredited Humanistic Integrative Therapist who began her career as a Rape Crisis counsellor at Portsmouth Area Rape Crisis Services in the south of England in 1998. She is also a fully qualified and certified Equine

Assisted Mental Health Professional. As a humanistic counsellor, she believes, that through deepening self-awareness, we can all connect with the counsellor within ourselves, and strive to fulfil our true potential in life. For Jessica, being a counsellor is a great honour and privilege.

Siobhan Cooper, Adolescent Counsellor, M.A., B.A. MIACP.

Siobhan is a Child, Adolescent & Adult Psychotherapist and Play Therapist and holds a BA (Hons) in Person Centred Counselling and first-class MA in Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy & Play Therapy. Her role within the organisation is specific to providing a specialised psychotherapeutic support to adolescents and young adults who have experienced or been impacted by sexual, domestic or gender-based violence. Her work is underpinned by the core conditions of the Person-Centred Approach, Empathy, Congruence and Unconditional Positive Regard. Alongside the 'talk therapy' aspect in the counselling relationship, she uses creative mediums and play therapy which provide additional/alternative dimensions in the therapy process for clients in their healing journey.

Bernadette Lacey, Panel Counsellor, Dip Gestalt, Dip HE, RGN, MIACP

Bernadette is a Gestalt Psychotherapist. She works very much on a holistic level encompassing mind body and spirit of clients. She has a deep interest in working with childhood trauma and its effects in adulthood. She also has an abiding love of nature and a passionate belief in the healing and therapeutic powers of the connection with our natural environment and in particular, trees, and feels this to be a very valuable and profound resource which forms an intrinsic part of her work with clients. Bernadette feels the earth has a very forgiving, soothing and calming effect on our system when we spend time with nature, and helps us to regulate our physical, emotional and psychological selves in order to manage life's challenges better. She believes that sometimes there just aren't words for what has been suffered and the earth doesn't need them in order to heal us.

Ciara Murray, Panel Counsellor, Dip Psychotherapy MIAHIP

Ciara Murray is a qualified accredited Psychotherapist and she currently work part time with Wexford Rape Crisis since 2018. She also has a private practise based in Ferns for over five years, working with clients suffering with depression, anxiety, trauma, loss & bereavement. Before this she worked on a voluntary basis in Living Life Counselling & Enniscorthy Vocational College. She also has experience as working as a social care worker in a residential setting working with adolescents in care. Ciara trained in the Tivoli Institute, and qualified from the 'Professional Training Course in Psychotherapy & Counselling' (2010-2014). She continues to do professional development workshops varying from different topics such as mindfulness, children's play therapy to suicide prevention. Ciara offers a safe, non-judgemental space for her clients. She works in a humanistic and integrative way. She likes to focus on helping the client recognise their own capabilities through personal growth and choice.

Carolyn Brohan, Education Project Worker, M.A., B.A., Dip

Carolyn has been a member of the team since Sept 2017. She delivers Wexford Rape Crisis Consent & Sexual Violence Prevention Programme along with workshops, programmes and training to young people, and professionals, throughout County Wexford. She formerly delivered the EU funded pilot of the Manuela Programme with Wexford Rape Crisis who was one of four centers in the country providing this initiative. For the past twenty years she has worked as a Senior Youth Worker in a myriad of settings and diversity of roles including youth work services, working with minority groups, in residential care and a Tutor in adult education. She also works part-time as an Associate Lecturer in the third level sector.

Ann Whelan, Finance & Administer Worker LLB, AAT

Ann joined the team in February 2020 and is the financial administrator for Wexford Rape Crisis. She has worked in accounts, book-keeping, and administration for the last 30 years and has gained valuable experience in a number of areas during that time. She enjoys upskilling and has participated in several courses over the years, and in 2017 achieved an LLB in Law. She also works for a number of different organisations looking after the accounts/ HR and implementing policies and procedures to best practise.

Freda Quinn, Volunteer.

Freda began volunteering for WRC in 2012. She has been volunteering in many different capacities over the years but mainly as a fundraising volunteer and assisting with the day to day running of the premises in Clifford Street. Freda travels between her native Dublin and her home in Wexford on a regular basis and as such volunteers any free time she has when she is back in Wexford. Freda also volunteers for many other large organisations throughout Ireland. When a job needs to be done, Freda is the person to call.

V. Group Management & Governance Code

The Organisation is a registered charity CHY 12420. It is registered as Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Service DAC but was rebranded as Wexford Rape Crisis in 2019.

The Organisation is governed by a voluntary board of management, currently of 7 Directors. 9 Board meetings take place per annum including an AGM.

Corporate Governance and Compliance:

Wexford Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre is a fully incorporated limited Company governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The Organisation is also registered as a charity with the Charities Regulator of Ireland, Charity No. CHY 12420



Each Board member receives a Board of Directors Handbook when joining the Board which they sign up to and must adhere to during their time on the board.

In 2016 the Board of Directors sought to strengthen its overall governance structures and approved a Governance Code and Risk Management Policy for the Organisation.

The 2016 Governance Code was been replaced in 2019 by the Charities Regulator Code of Governance in order to comply with the Charities Act 2009 and the Organisation is ready to commence the required reporting from January 2021 in compliance with the new legislation.

Our Risk Management Policy provides the Board of Directors with a detailed overview of potential risk areas pertaining and mitigating actions.

An Audit Sub Committee was implemented in 2017 in line with best practice for Organisations of this type and continue to support the Board of Directors advising on Policy and Legislation such as Data Protection, Employment, and Health and Safety.

Each employee is issued an employment contract which outlines all relevant policies and procedures consistent with employment law. All employees receive one-to-one line management support and supervision every 4-6 weeks and an annual appraisal, all documented. All Counsellors working for the Organisation also receive both group and one to one clinical supervision on a monthly basis. All team members attend monthly Team Meetings facilitated by the Manager.

A Counsellor Handbook has also been devised and is reviewed on an annual basis which outlines all operational policies and procedures for the core work of the service. All Counsellors sign up to this handbook. All policies adhere to guidelines issued by the IACP (Irish Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy).

A Volunteer Handbook has also been devised which outlines the role and responsibilities of Volunteers. All Volunteers assisting in the operational side of the Organisation also attend team meetings and receive one to one support from Management.

A Health & Safety Statement is also in place which has recently been reviewed (January 2020).

An annual training plan is also devised by the Team and Management to include First Aid and Child Protection along with counselling specific continuous professional development.

VI. Current Active Projects

Wexford Rape Crisis Services

Helpline:

Free Telephone Counselling & Support is available for survivors who can speak confidentially to a trained counsellor, set up an appointment, have their questions answered or get any information needed on counselling.

One to One Counselling:

Wexford Rape Crisis offers long and/or short-term counselling to female and male survivors of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. Support counselling is also available to a partner, family member or friend who often feels powerless when someone close to them has been raped or sexually abused.

Adolescent Counselling:

Adolescent counselling to boys and girls aged 12 and upwards is available to young people who have experienced sexual, domestic or gender-based violence in their lives. The service offers a familial approach involving parents and guardians.

Court Accompaniment:

Wexford Rape Crisis offers court accompaniment and help with victim impact statements for those who are going through the legal process.

Garda Accompaniment:

The Service provides Garda accompaniment to clients who wish to make a Statement reporting their abuse.

Manuela Riedo Programme/Consent & Sexual Violence Education & Prevention Programme for Young People:

This is an educational interactive programme offered to young people in schools aimed to reduce levels of sexual violence in Ireland by the engagement of young people 13-17 years.

Domestic Violence

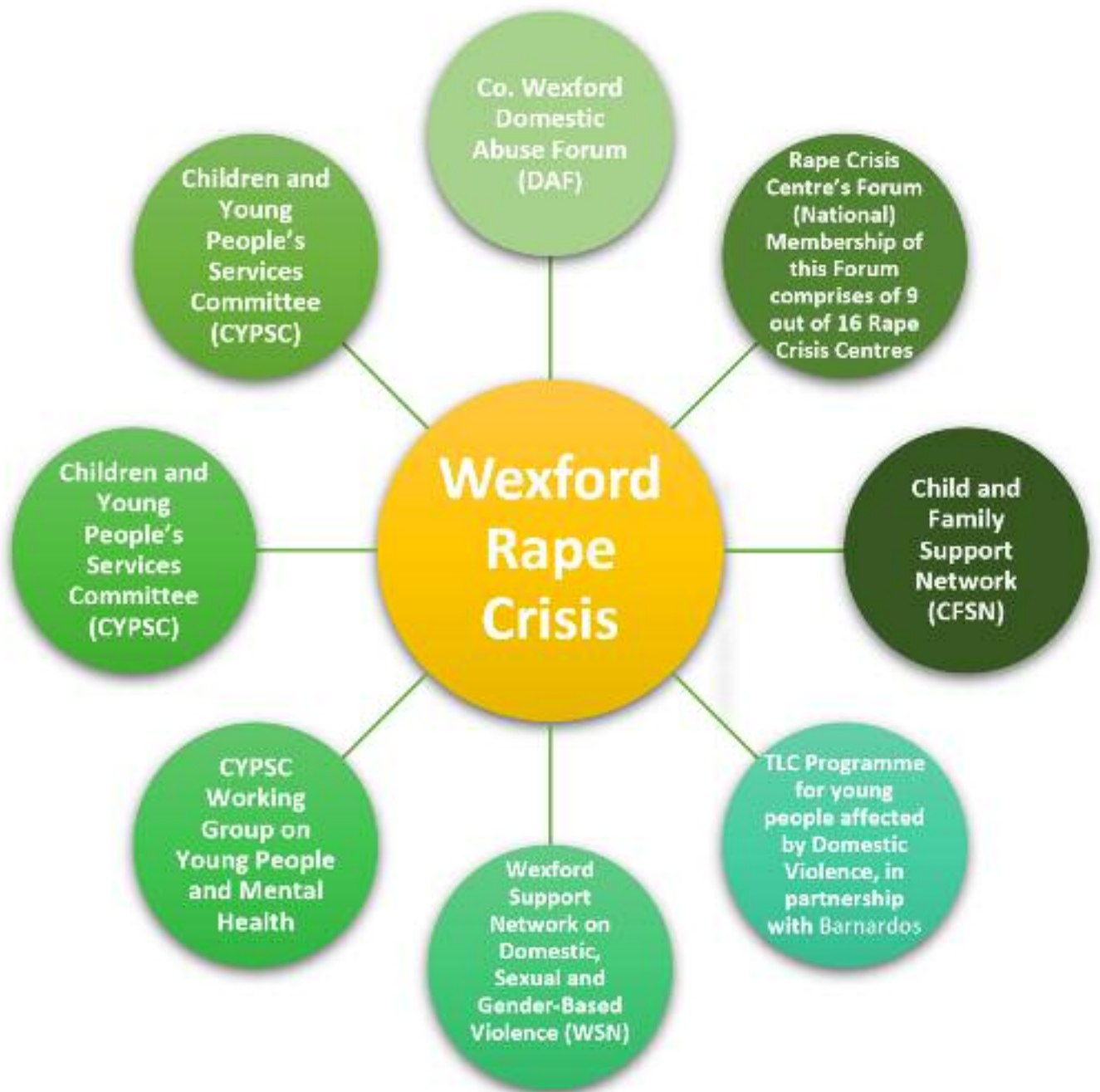
Wexford Rape Crisis is the designated one-to-one counselling service for clients of Wexford Women's Refuge.

Cost of Service:

Counselling sessions are 50 mins and usually take place once a week. The first 10 sessions of one to one counselling are free of charge. After which time a donation is requested.

Interagency:

Wexford Rape Crisis is an active member of networks both nationally and in County Wexford (see chart below). Wexford Rape Crisis advocates on a National and local level for survivors of Sexual, Domestic and Gender-based violence via the Rape Crisis Centers Form.



Section 2: Adult Counselling Services 2019

Wexford Rape Crisis offers a one to one counselling service to women and men who have been affected by any kind of Domestic, Sexual or Gender-based violence. Services are also provided to any supporter of someone who has been affected e.g. a partner or friend.



In 2019, overall referrals to the Adult Service for counselling increased by approximately 11% on the previous year. The graph 1.0 below shows the new client referral rate from 2013 to 2019.

WRC see adults presenting with a wide range of issues relating to all kinds of sexual violence ranging from the most minor to the very extreme of rape. In more recent times the Service has broadened its remit to include domestic and gender-based violence.

Some of the issues that clients bring and common effects are flashbacks, recurring nightmares and post-traumatic stress (reliving the experience). The long-term psychological effects are low self-esteem, repressed anger, self-harming, depression and a high level of guilt.

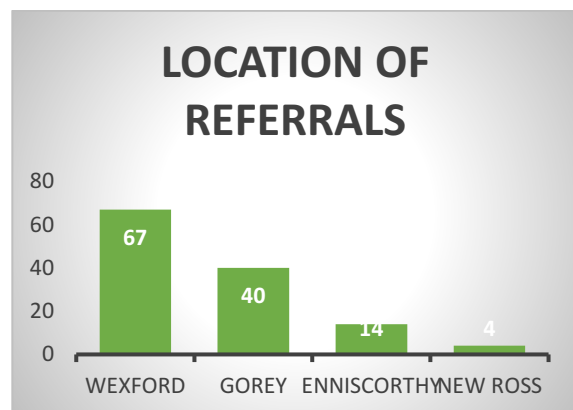
Difficulties in adult relationships, sexual intimacy with partners, or when something significant occurs in their lives (starting college, having a baby) triggers the traumatic experience and they find themselves unable to cope, which lead them to contacting WRC.

The focus of therapy is working with the client to process the damage that has been done to them and to re-establish firstly a trusting relationship with the self and secondly with others. A broad set of therapeutic skills and a holistic approach is essential to working with clients so that their needs are being met. As a result, they feel safe in exploring the impact of their trauma. Clients express themselves in various ways ranging from talk therapy to art, to drawing, or writing poetry for example.

An essential piece of work is to help clients separate the abuse from the self so that they can go on to identify their true potential and take control of their lives in a healthier way. The counselling team at WRC are very experienced, equipped and resourced to manage these very challenging and complex issues.



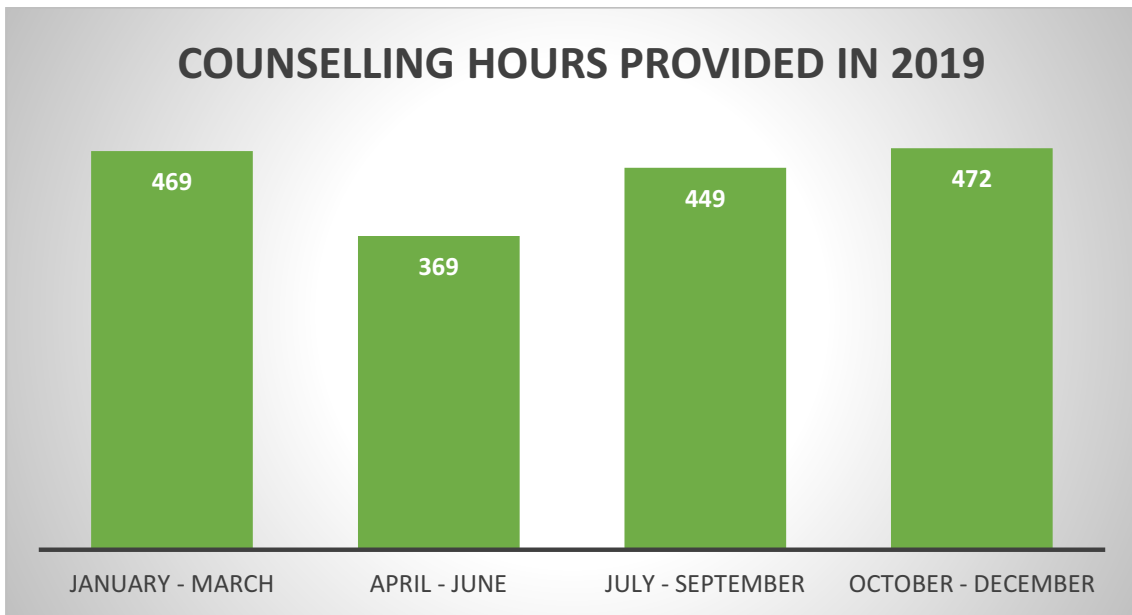
Graph 1.0



Graph 2.0

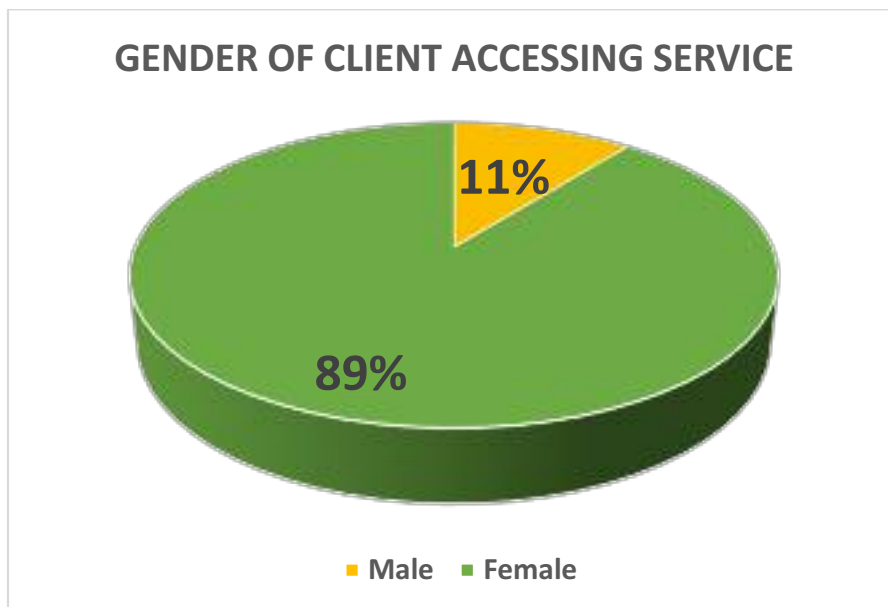
From a County-wide perspective, Wexford town has the highest referral rate, followed by Gorey, Enniscorthy and then New Ross. See Graph 2.0.

In 2019, Counselling hours provided were consistent through the year with a slight fall in the summer months. This is a trend that the service has seen in recent years that is attributed by Adult Parent clients not having the time to attend counselling as schools are closed. Also, a number of clients cease counselling for the summer months.



Graph 3.0

Women consist of the highest cohort of clients who present having been affected by Sexual & Domestic Violence. In general, men who present to the service tend to have been sexually abused as children and tend to seek counselling later in life.



Graph 4.0

Wexford Rape Crisis Adult Client Case Study 1:

'Anne Marie' first presented to the Centre in her early forties. She was a survivor of child sexual abuse perpetrated by a close family relative. The abuse started when she was around eight years of age and continued until she was seventeen. During this period of her life her mother died, leaving her alone with an emotionally unavailable father and her abuser.

About three years later another family relative took advantage of her and raped her. She married in her early twenties and became a mother. Her husband emotionally abused her for years, but she focused on her children and motherhood was her greatest solace.

As the years went by the marriage became more and more abusive. By the time she came to the Wexford Rape Crisis she was emotionally exhausted and had very little, if any self-esteem. She was very confused as to how to perceive and respond to her environment. She was nervous and found it difficult to make eye contact or even to make it from her house to the counselling session.

Through counselling she was able to realise that what was happening in her marriage was not her fault and was not acceptable. She gradually began to take steps to strengthen her sense of self-worth and to assert herself. After two years of counselling she was able to end her marriage and start a new life for her and her children. It was a slow process. There was a lot of trauma to work through and a lot of deep wounds to heal, going all the way back to early childhood.

It is highly likely that if Anne Marie hadn't attended counselling she would still be living in an emotionally abusive marriage, feeling worthless and just slowly 'fading away'. However, she was brave enough to seek counselling and build herself back up again. As a result of her great courage and the counselling she received from Wexford Rape Crisis she is now living a full and happy life with her children.

Wexford Rape Crisis Adult Client Case Study 2:

'Anne' came to Wexford Rape Crisis for support counselling. Her daughter had recently disclosed that she had been sexually abused as a child by a close family relative. The disclosure had come as a terrible shock to the family and to Anne. She was struggling to process the reality that her only daughter had been abused by someone she had entrusted to care for her.

Support counselling helps mothers like Anne come to terms with the fact, that despite their efforts and deepest intentions to protect their children, things happen that could never have been known. This is very difficult for any loving parent to process as it is their deepest desire to protect their children and to give them a childhood full of happy memories.

Support counselling involves a lot of emotional healing as a person like Anne comes to understand that it was not their fault and that their children that have been victimised by sexual abuse need their support as opposed to trying to make them feel better.

Anne's counselling journey took her from the first disclosure all the way through the court system to the conviction of the family member who raped her daughter. The process was long and painful for her and her daughter but having the support counselling gave Anne a space to lay out her feelings and thoughts, freeing her to be emotionally more available to support her daughter.

Anne was ready to support her daughter through the court system because of the counselling she received from the Centre. The process was a lengthy one but it ended with a conviction and a three year custodial sentence.

Section 3: Adolescent Counselling Service 2019

Historically, Wexford Rape Crisis client base was pre-dominantly made-up of *adult* service users however with an increase in young people seeking counselling from the service a need was identified to provide a specialized therapeutic support to child and adolescent survivors of child sexual abuse.



In 2018, an Adolescent Psychotherapist was initially recruited on a one-day per week basis. Due to the huge demand for counselling for adolescents impacted by sexual, gender and domestic violence, Wexford Rape Crisis increased the provision of service to young people. In September 2019, the Adolescent Psychotherapist commenced in a new role permanent 3-day per week role with Wexford Rape Crisis. Despite the extra capacity, a waiting list continues to operate within the Adolescent Counselling Service.



WRC Adolescent Service is a specialized counselling service for young people aged between 12 – 18 years in County Wexford, who are survivors of sexual, domestic and gender-based violence. Adolescent clients engage with mediums of creative arts, sand and play alongside traditional “talk therapy” modalities. Adolescent psychotherapy can support a young person who may have a lack of education and/or awareness regarding their own personal boundaries. The process of therapy supports young people in healing from these traumatic life events along with providing psycho-educational components such as building self-confidence and self-esteem and teaching young clients that it is their right and it is okay to say ‘no’.

Following traumatic experiences, if children and young people can have access to the correct supports and psychotherapy in a timely fashion, not only does it help that young person during the recovery and healing process it also provides an opportunity in a safe environment for them to work through these negative life experiences in such a way that they do not become *defining* events in that young person’s life thus allowing them to move forward and return to the path of normal development and reach their full potentials in life. This has certainly been true for the multiple young people and their families that have been supported by Wexford Rape Crisis over the last two years.



When a young person has experienced sexual, domestic or gender-based violence, it can impact on their wider family system. Parents, carers, and siblings can also find themselves struggling to manage their own feelings and emotions and may not know how best to support or respond to the young person. WRC not only works with young people directly impacted by sexual, domestic or gender-based violence, but also offer a psychotherapeutic service to the young person’s supporters and other family members. Research has found that when a whole family system is supported rather than just a young person themselves then the opportunity for healing and recovery for the whole family unit is greatly increased.

Additional Service Activity

TLC Kidz Programme – The Adolescent Counsellor undertook TLC Kidz facilitator training with Barnardos. This evidence-based initiative is an interagency collaborative healing programme for mothers and children who have experienced domestic violence. Depending on availability of resources, Wexford Rape Crisis hope to co-facilitate the delivery of this programme to families across County Wexford in 2020.

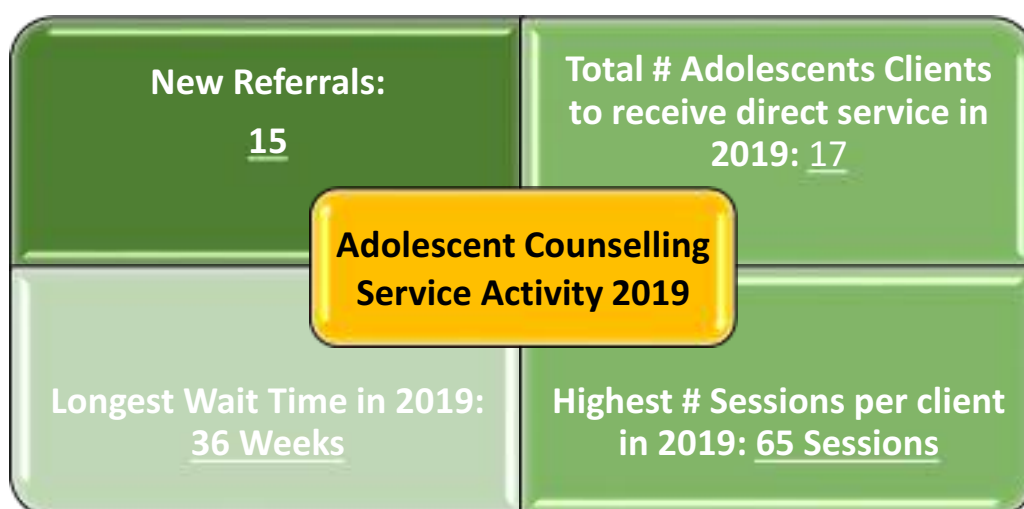
Leader Funding – In 2019, the Adolescent Service made an initial application to Leader for funding under the category of *Youth Services* for the fit-out and procurement of resources relevant to the adolescent service in the new premises. This grant application created an opportunity to consider the space in the new building, resources that will be required, alterations to be made to the design along with helping to identify additional opportunities that may exist for the organisation to extend the service e.g. therapeutic group work.

Interagency Relations – WRC continues to foster positive working relationships with external agencies, particularly services that frequently make referrals to the Adolescent Counselling Service and those who continue to support young clients alongside their counselling journey. During 2019, the WRC Manager and Adolescent Psychotherapist met with colleagues from CAMHS, SATU, Barnardos, Child Garda Specialist Interviewers and Gardai.

Case Conferences – In 2019, WRC supported adolescent clients in alternative ways (and in addition to counselling) when they experienced breakdowns in relations with other services. Case conferences were facilitated by WRC with adolescent clients, their parents and other agencies which enabled reconciliation and created opportunities for healing and increased support.

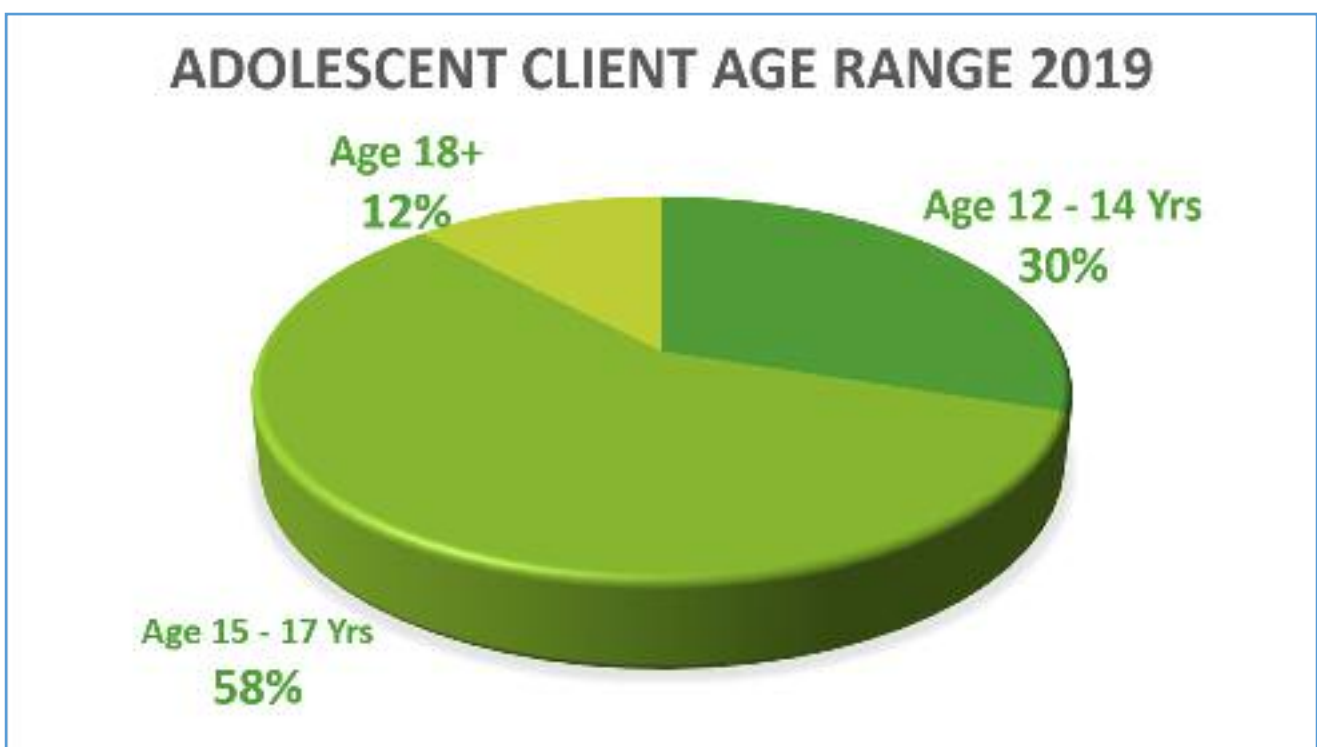
Policies & Procedures – As the Adolescent Counselling Service continues to develop and evolve, so too does the organisation's P&Ps regarding provision of service to young people.

Counselling Service Activity 2019



Client Profiles

Young people who have experienced or been impacted in any way by sexual, gender or domestic based violence often also require support in counselling with other issues/difficult life experiences in their past or current life. The table below provides a summary of issues our adolescent clients presented with during 2019 (and % of total clients).



Client Case Studies

Amy, Age 15*

Amy was sexually abused by her paternal grandfather from the age of 3 until she was 8 years of age. The abuse stopped when he died suddenly. Amy never told anyone about the abuse. That was until she turned 13 years of age. At this point she was really struggling with her mental health. Amy loathed herself and felt much confusion, shame and anger at what her grandfather had done to her. She felt too scared to tell anyone about the abuse, everyone had loved her grandfather so who would believe that he could do such awful thing. While her parents knew that Amy was not in a good place (she was very emotional, found it difficult to regulate her anger, in trouble a lot in school, struggling to maintain friendships etc..) they understandably put a lot of it down to it being a typical “teenage phase”. They had no idea or way of knowing about the painful secret that Amy had been holding for all of those years. They were unaware that Amy sat in her room cutting herself every night, she was actively self-harming – it was an unhealthy coping mechanism that she had learned. Amy’s mental health continued to decline to the point that she attempted to end her own life by suicide by taking an overdose. Luckily her brother found her in time. It was only after this suicide attempt that Amy very courageously disclosed the sexual abuse to her mother. Two months later Amy arrived at Wexford Rape Crisis Centre for her first psychotherapy session.

Amy has been under the care of Child Psychiatry in CAMHS alongside attending weekly counselling sessions for the past 18 months. It has been a tough road for her. In the earlier days of therapy there were periods of time that Amy expressed suicidal thoughts and plans to end her own life which resulted in her needing to be hospitalized for her own safety however over the past six months she has not had any further hospital admissions. Amy no longer self harms, therapy has equipped her with new coping mechanisms for when she feels overwhelmed. The confidential, empathic and non-judgmental qualities of the therapeutic relationship has provided a safe space for Amy to talk about her early traumatic childhood experiences and begin to process the range of emotions in relation to the abuse and violation by her grandfather. Amy is beginning to move towards a place of healing. This is parallel with the growth of the seedlings she sowed in earlier therapy sessions. The creative use of horticulture in the therapy process has been very significant and powerful for Amy in her therapeutic journey. It has helped her to re-ignite her own hope.

Life is starting to look a little different, there have been changes in Amy’s lived world too – for example she has made new friends and enjoys a strong friendship circle, she has recently taken up athletics and is excelling in competitions, and for the first time ever feels able to concentrate in school. Unlike ever before, she now cares about her grades and has set herself goals for her Junior Certificate. Amy continues to attend counselling but less frequently. She will continue to do so for the next few months. Unlike many other counselling organisations, Wexford Rape Crisis does not operate a time-limited service, WRC recognizes that clients who have a history of complex trauma and abuse often require a substantial length of time in therapy in order to fully process and heal.

** Names and specific details have been altered in order to anonymous the case studies and to respect the clients’ confidentiality.*

Client Case Studies

Nicola, Age 13*

Nicola was referred to WRC's Adolescent Counselling Service following-on from her being the victim of online sexual abuse. Feeling pressured by a boy she liked, she sent him nude photos of herself. He then threatened to send these images to his friends if Nicola did not have sex with him. When she did not agree to his demands he followed through on his threat. Within days the photos had been circulated among hundreds of young people all over the country.

The assessment phase with parents/guardians is a vital element of adolescent psychotherapy process. It is during this stage that the therapist begins to build a rapport with the young person's carers, and identifies if further support is needed for them individually (which is provided by WRC adult counsellors). The therapist's role is to empower, support and guide carers in supporting their son/daughter. Nicola's parents arrived to the initial assessment meeting with the Adolescent Psychotherapist in a distressed state exhibiting a range of overwhelming emotions. They were angry at their daughter, they were angry at the young person who had perpetrated this online sexual abuse against her, and they were worried for the longer-term impact. They blamed themselves for not being aware of what was going on and they expressed feelings of guilt at not having done more to protect Nicola from the dangers of the online world. But most of all, they felt helpless and devastated. The psychotherapist empathically acknowledged all of their feelings and gave them space to verbalise the range of emotions they were experiencing. She also explored with them the validity and uselessness of self-blame. The psychotherapist explored practical ways that Nicola's parents could support her. Nicola's mum accepted the invitation to engage in her own personal therapy with one of the adult therapists in the centre. Nicola's mum and dad also attended regular Parent Support meetings throughout Nicola's time in therapy.

Nicola attended one-to-one counselling sessions for approx. 6 months. Initially she appeared very shy and a little reluctant to engage in therapy. A turning point came when her therapist brought music into the therapy room and invited Nicola to put together a "Play List of Your Life". This allowed the therapist to work with a medium that was familiar and enjoyable for Nicola. She gradually felt more and more at ease and began to trust the confidential and non-judgemental nature of the therapeutic relationship. Sometimes Nicola used other creative mediums (e.g. art) to explore her sense of self & to communicate her emotions when it was too difficult to say it in words.

Nicola's relationship with her parents had become strained, she felt shame, embarrassment and guilt. But she also felt angry that they had reacted by confiscating all of her electronic devices and prohibiting her from communicating with her friends online. This left Nicola feeling very isolated from her friends. The psychotherapist worked together with Nicola and her parents to establish alternative rules and boundaries that enabled Nicola to feel connected to her friends online but in a way that reassured Nicola's parents that she was safe.

Over time, Nicola was able to talk more openly about what had happened. She recognised that her low self-esteem had contributed to her feeling pressured to send photos of herself. She acknowledged her own feelings of self-blame but began to recognise that it was not her fault that she had been violated, and that she need not feel shame. The psycho-educational element of the therapy process equipped Nicola with a better knowledge around consent and the potential legal implications of engaging in harmful sexualised activities. The healing process of therapy has given Nicola an opportunity to move forward with her life in such a way that the online sexual abuse perpetrated against her does not have to become a defining experience in her life.

** Names and specific details have been altered in order to anonymise the case studies and to respect the clients' confidentiality.*

Section 4: Manuela Riedo Education Programme

Background To The Programme

The Manuela Programme is an evidenced informed sexual violence prevention programme, available in Wexford, Dublin, Galway and Kerry facilitated by four part-time workers. It is a six-week initiative culminating into a sexual violence prevention toolkit for educators that encourages 15-17-year olds to think critically about healthy relationships, boundaries, consent, and sexual violence prevention. The programme is very interactive and includes activities, videos and presentations aimed at engaging young people in a dialogue that challenges attitudes, knowledge and skills in relation to sexual violence and harassment and consent and with the aim of reducing levels of sexual violence in Ireland. Presently it is a pilot initiative funded by the EU and commenced in October 2017 and will conclude 3rd March 2020. There are key targets to be achieved, overall 120 co-facilitated roll outs of the programme and 60 lead facilitators trained up. This translates per area and worker as 30 roll outs and 15 facilitators trained up. An external research process commenced in October 2018 and will continue throughout 2019 with its findings available in 2020.

Targets Attained in 2019-2020

In the Wexford area, from January 2019 and January 2020, 16 roll outs were achieved, a total of 35 completed roll outs exceeding the 30. The programme was delivered in four all male schools, one all-female school, four mixed gender schools and in one Youth Reach Centre. Average numbers engaging in programme were between 20-25 students. One Consent Workshop was delivered in a female specific school. Loreto Wexford and St. Peter's College placed the Manuela Programme from September 2019 as a TY and CBS Wexford continued to maintain its inclusion on their TY curriculum. Three other schools who engaged in an initial roll out would be delivering it to the members of their school communities, with two schools hoping it may be placed on their TY Curriculum in 2020.

Since January 2018 – February 2020, Wexford Rape Crisis and the Manuela Programme reached between 1,150-1,200 young people aged 15-17 years across county Wexford and Kilkenny in 23 different schools and organisations, completing 35 roll outs of the programme.

Approximately 800-850 young people engaged directly with the Manuela Project Worker and 335-350 in schools where the Manuela Programme has been included as part of their Curriculum.

Where The Programme Was Delivered

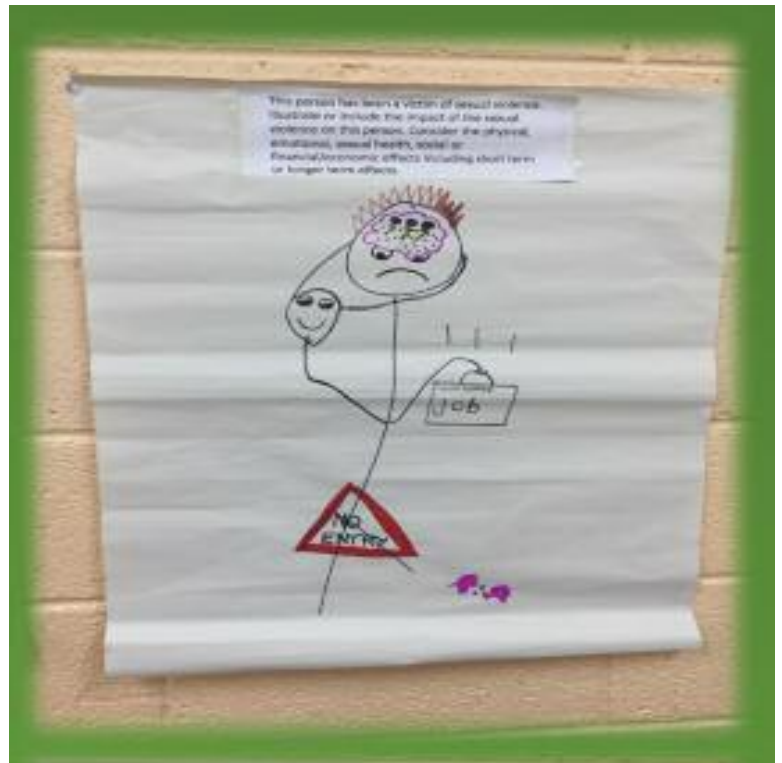
County Wexford is the general geographical remit of the Project and during this time frame it was co-facilitated in Wexford town, Enniscorthy, New Ross, Ramsgrange, Bunclody and Kilmuckridge.

Reactions & Responses From Both The Co-Facilitators & Participants

Throughout 2019-2020 the feedback for the programme continued to be extremely positive from both the young people and the Teachers/Tutors who were co-delivering the programme. A common theme was the opportunity to be able access the topic of sexual violence in an interactive and engaging way. Another common thread of feedback was the presence of an external person, the Manuela Project Worker, co-delivering and connecting young people to both the programme and its content. The programme was delivered in a fun, safe and open approach with requests from Wexford and surrounding counties for the programme to be co-delivered in schools, but unfortunately the timeline available was limited due to the pilot finishing.

Since January 2018- February 2020, Wexford Rape Crisis & the Manuela programme has reached between 1,150-1,200 young people, aged between 15-17 years across County Wexford & Kilkenny, in 23 different schools and organisations. Approximately 800-850 young people engaged directly with the Manuela project worker & 335-350 in schools where the Manuela programme has been included as part of their curriculum. Before the pilot ends in early March 2020, a total of 36 rolls outs of the Manuela programme will have occurred exceeding the target of 30 in this EU funded pilot.

Photos from Manuela School Programme



Section 5: Staff Counsellor Profile - Catherine Murphy

My path into counselling began with the WRC in 2000 having trained as a volunteer counsellor. Prior to this I travelled and lived overseas for a number of years, gaining vast experience meeting people from all walks of life. My own personal development enriched by my encounters during my travels, allowed me to develop a broad skill set and a greater empathetic understanding of people and their challenges.

I completed a four-year degree course in Counselling & Psychotherapy at PCI & Middlesex University. I was awarded a Diploma in 2005, and in 2006 progressed to a BSc Degree (Hons) in Counselling & Psychotherapy. During this time, I continued my voluntary work with Wexford Rape Crisis gaining invaluable, first-hand experience working with clients presenting with a wide range of issues relating to sexual violence trauma.

In 2008 I secured a permanent position as a part time therapist working with clients in Wexford. I also see clients in Gorey. My professional development is complimented by ongoing participation in workshops and training days in the area of domestic/sexual and gender-based violence. This, together with regular clinical supervision benefits me enormously in developing a self-reflective capacity and an increased self-awareness. It helps in exploring my thoughts and feelings so that I can work in a more meaningful way with my clients. I have further expanded my skillset to include training as a Reiki Practitioner, with the intention of offering this as an add-on alternative therapy to clients. A deep sense of wellbeing and relaxation can be experienced after a treatment and is known to reduce emotional pain and rebalance harmony in the mind and body.

My work encompasses dealing with all forms of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence with male and female clients. This involves facilitating them to identify and understand their emotions and to accompany them in their challenges as they journey through this process.

Sometimes clients experience feelings of powerlessness and helplessness when they explore their feelings. I work with them to re-establish a sense of safety and predictability in their world. Clients believe they are to blame and often carry the guilt of those who violated them. Therefore, I place great emphasis in my role to ensure that I am fully present with my clients while they work through their traumatic experiences. I find that this strengthens the therapeutic relationship.

My positive and supportive working relationship with WRC is central to my development as a therapist. My role as part of a proactive and progressive professional team, provides a valuable and essential service to clients and their supporters. The mission and ethos of Wexford Rape Crisis offers support, empathy and understanding. It provides a non-judgemental, empowering, and compassionate service which facilitates healing and recovery. This has become embedded in my professional philosophy and approach. I am indeed fortunate to belong to an organisation where I am afforded the opportunity to work in an ever-evolving environment.

Section 6: Re-Branding & Strategic Plan Launch



Wexford Rape Crisis Strategic Plan & Re-Branding Launch was held in the beautiful location of Murphy's Barn, just on the outskirts of Wexford town. The plan was launched by Rosanna Davison who very kindly gave her time to highlight the services provided by Wexford Rape Crisis. Even though the Strategic Plan had been in operation since 2017, it gave the service the opportunity to raise awareness to those who need the service. It also provided an opportunity to highlight the needs of clients in who are being affected by Sexual, Domestic and Gender-based violence.

Following a consultation in 2018 with key stakeholders, WRC formally re-launched its new name and logo in Murphy's Barn in March 2019.

Wexford Rape Crisis Strategic Plan Covers

1. Awareness-Raising
2. Branding
3. Relationships
4. Service & Supports
5. Human Resources Management & Development,
6. Premises
7. Social Media
8. Governance

Section 7: Premises

For the past 20 years the service has been delivered from a premises in Wexford town. Whilst the premises have served the centre well for many years, it has not been fit for purpose for quite some time. This is due to the increasing demand for the service and the introduction of the Adolescent Counselling Service.

For all clients, staged entry must be planned to try to ensure that client confidentiality is maintained. This is a struggle and is not always possible. There is no dedicated waiting-room for clients and if a client arrives early, the service has had to request they return at the time of their appointment, due to a lack of space. This cannot continue. Many clients arrive in an understandably anxious and vulnerable state and ensuring they are welcomed is vital.

Currently there is no dedicated adolescent room and no space for any adolescent therapeutic resources. There is also no facility to offer any form of group interventions to young people and/or their parents. The current premises does not even allow for us to provide parents with a waiting area – we have no option but to ask parents to wait outside the front door for their son/daughter during their appointment.

In 2019, Tom Enright, CEO of Wexford County Council met with the board and management of Wexford Rape Crisis to continue talks to help progress a dedicated site and new premises for the centre. A site was identified in Maudlintown. With tremendous support from Tom and his team, namely Shay Howell and Sean Savage in the architectural dept, plans were drawn up for the new premises. Many meetings took place to agree a fit for purpose design for Wexford Rape Crisis. Plans were submitted to the Planning Committee and were agreed by Wexford County Council in June of 2019.

Since June 2019, meetings have taken place to finalise the cost of the new building. Building was due to commence in Spring 2020, however with the offset of the current Covid-10 pandemic, it is now unclear exactly when construction will take place. It is hoped that it will be complete by early 2021.

The new premises will offer appropriate spaces for all elements of the service, including a dedicated adolescent counselling space which will allow for creative resources to be used to help young people in their healing journey. It will also include a small therapeutic outdoor space that will be used in a holistic approach in the therapy process e.g. use of a sandpit, sensory elements and horticulture. The new premises will have a Group/General Purpose Room which will allow us to facilitate and deliver a variety of programmes for young people and their parents. The wider community will be invited to use these spaces for other community group initiatives and events.

Other client groups of young people who will benefit from this designated space include the Consent & Sexual Violence Education Programme for young people, TLC Kidz (a healing programme specifically for children and mothers recovering from domestic abuse), Meditation and Mindfulness to name but a few.

Ground Floor Plan for New Premises



Section 8: Fundraising 2019

An amazing figure of €37,784 was collected through fundraising efforts and donations in 2019. Bucket collections were the focus of Wexford Rape Crisis's Fundraising Strategy for the year. Having planned and executed 2 'Best of Wexford from Head to Toe' events, the fundraising team decided to change approach and target sporting events. It was felt that not only could more money be raised but that awareness-raising of the service could be increased at the same time.



In July 2019, the team gathered at Wexford Park for a match between Wexford v Kilkenny. Unfortunately for Wexford the Kilkenny Cats won on the day however, there was an amazing win for Wexford Rape Crisis with funds of €1,839.31 being raised in a couple of hours. Both the Wexford and Kilkenny supporters were extremely generous to the service and the service is very grateful.

In late July, WRC fundraising volunteers headed northbound to Dublin and carried out bucket collections on the perimeter of Croke Park for 2 full days of GAA matches. Again, unfortunately Wexford supporters were disappointed with the loss of the match, but for WRC €6,632.08 was raised which was a 'win' for the centre.

Finally, in late December 2019, the service carried out its Annual Flag Day Christmas Appeal. An army of volunteers filled the streets of Wexford town, Gorey, Enniscorthy and New Ross and raised a gigantic €12,005 in 1 day.

WRC is eternally grateful to all the groups and individuals who volunteered throughout the year. Due to the number of people who gave of their time it would be impossible to name them all. WRC is eternally thankful. All monies raised will go towards reducing waiting times for survivors to access counselling along with the development of a fit for purpose building for clients of the centre.

Section 9: Accounts

Wexford Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Services Designated Activity Company

UNAUDITED DETAILED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT - TÚSLA

Year ended 31 December 2019

	2019		2018	
	€	€	€	€
Income				
Túsla - core funding	243,430		213,800	
Túsla - admin post funding	-		6,000	
	<u> </u>	243,430	<u> </u>	219,800
Administrative expenses				
Wages and salaries	127,566		113,792	
Social insurance costs	13,733		12,508	
Staff pension costs	2,400		2,400	
Travel and subsistence	14,562		10,157	
Insurance	1,705		1,689	
Rent	8,748		9,708	
Light and heat	2,279		2,529	
Repairs and maintenance	1,890		170	
Telephone	1,691		1,754	
Stationery and advertising	1,967		2,423	
Training	1,955		4,561	
Counselling	28,150		22,595	
Supervision	7,700		7,107	
Professional fees	1,218		2,311	
Audit and accountancy fees	3,383		6,458	
Canteen and cleaning	530		340	
Depreciation	4,487		5,323	
Sundry expenses	1,858		1,286	
IT costs	1,893		1,778	
Bank charges	369		269	
Amortisation of grant	(1,900)		(1,900)	
Subscription	150		300	
Security	193		316	
	<u> </u>	(226,527)	<u> </u>	(207,874)
		16,903		11,926
Interest receivable		-		-
Interest payable		-		-
Net surplus		<u>16,903</u>		<u>11,926</u>

Funders

*Manuela Riedo
Foundation*



Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Service,
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Office Phone: 053 9122722

Fax: 053 9152853

support@wexfordrapecrisis.com

Opening Hours: 10:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday



CHY Number 12420