

Wexford
Rape
Crisis

Services for
Domestic, Sexual
and Gender-based
Violence Est. 1995

ANNUAL REPORT 2024
(and STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT
2022-2024)



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



CUAN

An Ghníomhaireacht um Fhoréigean Bail
Gnéasach agus Inscnebhunaithe

The Domestic, Sexual and
Gender-Based Violence Agency

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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

In light of the more prevalent sexual assault and sexual abuse cases before the Irish Courts at present, it is reassuring to all victims to know that Wexford Rape Crisis is a highly specialised and professional quality service which is available in Wexford town and in Enniscorthy, Gorey and New Ross.

In 2024 we experienced a further increase in sexual and domestic violence referrals and were challenged to reduce waiting times for new clients as quickly as possible. New Counsellors were recruited and a new role of Clinical Support Worker was devised to manage the waiting list.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Tusla DSGBV (core services) Tusla (Waterford/Wexford) and Dept of Justice (Victims of Crime funding) for providing our funding in 2024 and responding where possible to our need for extra resources.



During the year, all Rape Crisis organisations nationally were transferred from Tusla DSGBV to a new agency called Cuan which is under the remit of the Department of Justice. Cuan was set up to coordinate and drive the Zero Tolerance strategy in tackling and reducing domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. Within Cuan, Wexford Rape Crisis looks forward in 2025 and subsequent years to engaging and contributing where possible to the development of a National Services Development plan for the DSGBV sector.

As we approach the completion of our Strategic Plan 2022 -2024, I would like to highly commend our Manager, Clare, Clinical team Leader, Alison and all Counsellors for the wonderful outcomes achieved in the past 3 years; including the implementation of a new staff structure to respond to the growth and development of the organisation, completion of training and subsequent implementation of new counselling models and options for clients and a continuous review of policies and procedures for a best practice and quality service. All this work was skilfully supported by our Administrator and Finance Officer. The new Chairperson will begin the process of devising the next Strategic Plan for 2025 - 2028 in September 2025.

In relation to our Consent Education programme, our Consent Education Project worker within the national Consent Ed team continues to actively train teachers to deliver this programme. She and the Consent Ed team have been piloting and refining parts of the programme for the Teacher's Handbook & Resources, approved for inclusion in future SPHE modules.

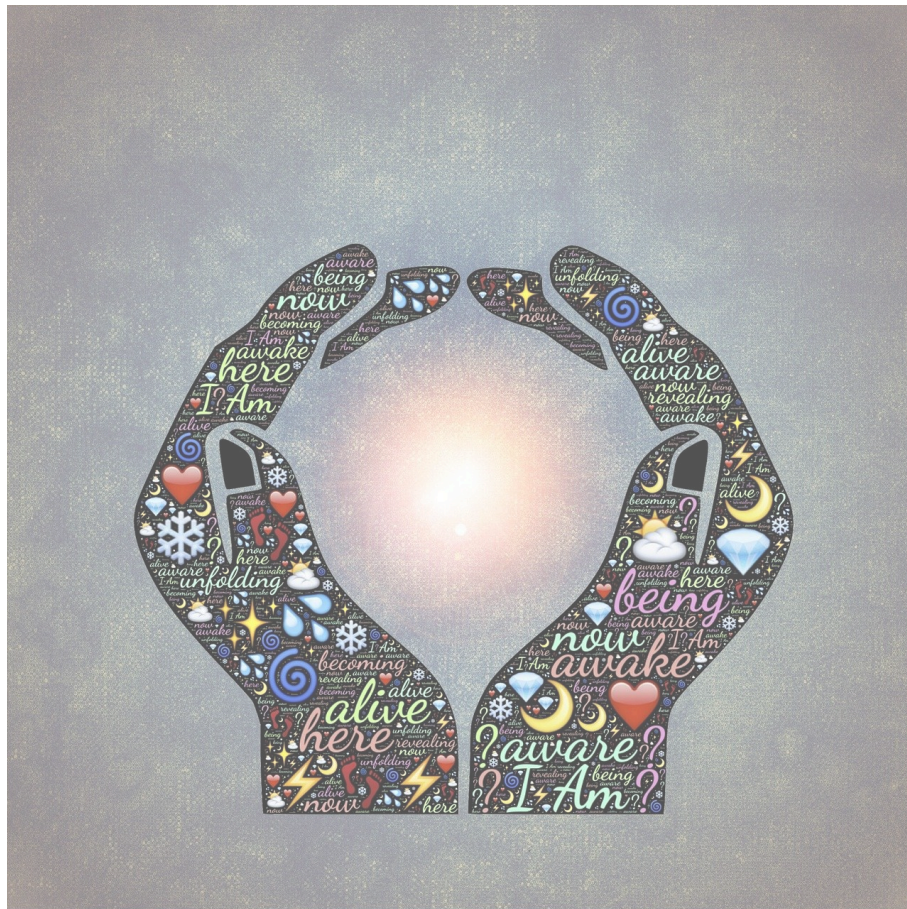
On behalf of Wexford Rape Crisis, I want to extend my sincere thanks to those who so generously organised fundraising events for us, in particular the Coalbunker Fashion Show and Rosslare Golf Classic. We are also very grateful to be a recipient organisation from the Parish Christmas Fast collection. I would like to express our gratitude to those who made personal contributions throughout the year and contributed to our annual bucket collection in December. You have enabled us to directly fund extra counselling hours to reduce our waiting times for the service.

Our annual bucket collection requires a lot of time and effort to organise each year and I would like to thank all those volunteers who assisted us throughout the county and in particular, our key volunteer, Freda Quinn who co-ordinated it with huge energy and dedication.

Finally, as I am move towards the completion of my four-year term as Chairperson and also my term of service on the Board of Directors, in June 2025, I would like to sincerely thank the Board members for their continuous support and their unwavering commitment to the organisation.

The Board volunteer their time and expertise so generously to ensure excellent governance of Wexford Rape Crisis and to promoting and upholding its valued and professional reputation. It has been a privilege for me to serve as a member of this Board for the past 10 years.

Laura Lawlor
Chairperson



MANAGERS REPORT

2024 began with a challenging start for Wexford Rape Crisis (WEXRC). There were 73 individuals on the waiting list for counselling with the longest waiting time of more than 8 months. The service had to respond rapidly with a plan to ensure clients' needs were met and in a responsive manner. The waiting list itself needed a dedicated worker to oversee and support clients whilst they were waiting for counselling. As such, in March of the year, the service recruited a dedicated counsellor (Clinical Support Worker) to carry out initial calls/assessments and provide any on-going necessary support to clients on the waiting list, where needed. This role is now a core part of the service and thanks to a private benefactor will be funded in 2025.



Other measures to respond to the demand included the training of the counselling team in Compassion-Focused therapy and Polyvagal theory. This 18-session counselling model was piloted from June to December and is proving to be very beneficial to clients in offering an additional approach to presenting needs. Development work on this model is on-going into 2025.

The service also recruited additional counsellors to help address the need for counselling and a further 5 counsellors were taken on to provide more hours (including evening hours). By October the waiting time had reduced to 1 month. However, by year end the figures had increased to 45 on the waiting list with the longest waiting time of 3 months. WEXRC continues to fundraise and allocate further resources to help reduce waiting times for clients.

In addition to our counselling service, the number of queries in relation to reporting DSGBV crimes to An Garda Síochána significantly increased. Clients wanted to find out more about how to report, the implications and potential outcomes. As such, WEXRC set up a new initiative of monthly Garda 'clinics' on site with the Community Garda. Clients attended with support from WEXRC. Interest and attendance for this service was high with many positive outcomes. Funding for a dedicated worker as a Garda Liaison Worker is urgently needed to develop this role further. I would like to thank Garda Denise Kane who led this service in conjunction with WEXRC. Further information is available on this service later in this report.

In 2024, Cuan, the new agency dedicated to the reduction of DSGBV was set up and took over from Tusla as our core funder. I would like to acknowledge the support from Tusla over the past number of years. Further resources were allocated to WEXRC in the latter part of the year from Cuan to help with the ever-increasing demand. We are grateful for this support and look forward to a positive collaboration between the 2 organisations to help reduce DSGBV both locally and nationally.

Further work and collaboration is required to address the issue of DSGBV. WEXRC cannot do this alone. The work of Carolyn Brohan (Consent Education Project Worker) and her colleagues is pivotal to the strategic direction of Cuan. So too are the Rape Crisis Centres. We look forward to on-going collaboration in a joint effort to tackle this scourge in our society.

Very importantly I would like to acknowledge the work of the team in WEXRC, Clinical Team Leader, Counsellors, Clinical Support Worker, Admin worker, Finance worker and all our front-line volunteers. The hard work, enthusiasm and dedication of these people has created a best practice centre of excellence for trauma survivors in their journey to recovery.

To the board of WEXRC, I sincerely thank each and every one for their expertise, knowledge and guidance throughout the year. In particular I would like to acknowledge our chairperson, Laura Lawlor as her term comes to an end. Laura has volunteered over 10 years of her time to WEXRC. She has led the organisation over the past 4 years and has kept client welfare at the fore-front of the work. She has also 'held' the welfare of the team and the importance of self-care as a priority in the work. We thank her and wish her well in the next chapter of her life.

Clare Williams
Manager

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 2017, the service was rebranded as Wexford Rape Crisis (WEXRC). The service also formally expanded its 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, IAHIP and APCP.

Our Vision

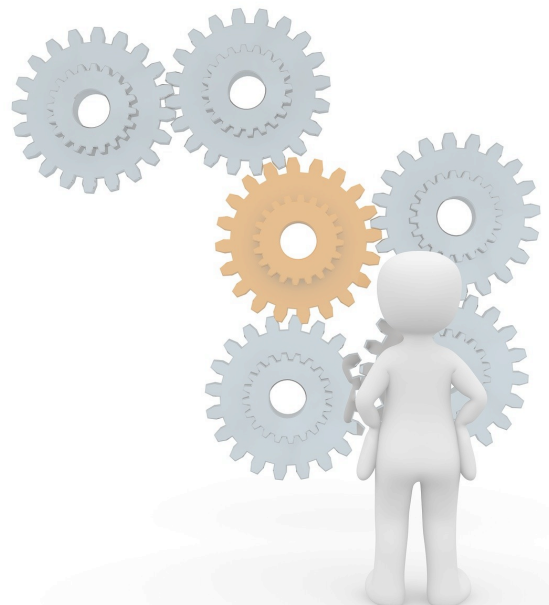
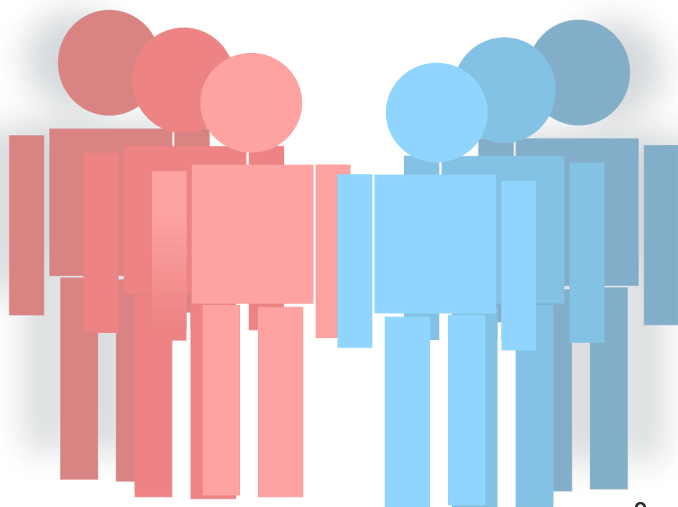
Is for a society free from sexual violence.

Wexford Rape Crisis Mission Statement

"Wexford Rape Crisis is a client-centred support service for those who 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.



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 (DSGBV).
- 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 organizations 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.

Current Board of Management

Board of Directors:

Laura Lawlor (Chairperson) Kate O'Donnell (Secretary), Dr. Moira Slevin, Joan Roche, Kate O'Donnell, Rob Callaghan and Sean Mernagh.

Audit Sub-Committee:

John Cuddihy, Annette O'Neill and Lorene Crowley.

Director Biographies:

Ms. Laura Lawlor: With extensive experience in community development initiatives for over thirty years, Laura worked 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.

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.

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.

Ms. Joan Roche: Joan trained in St. Vincent's Hospital, Elm Park, Dublin as a registered General Nurse. Joan has extensive nursing experience in both medical and surgical nursing cases having worked in St. Vincent's, Blackrock Clinic, The National Rehabilitation Centre and The Emergency Department, Wexford General Hospital. Joan retired from nursing in 2017.

Mr. Rob O'Callaghan: Rob has a lifetime spent in education, culminating in 24 years in St Peter's College, Wexford, the final 10 years as Principal. Rob completed a Masters of Arts in Management in Education in 2011. Retired in 2020 but continuing his involvement in education, as a Physical Education Tutor with Dublin City University and a Regional Ambassador with the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals.

Mr. Sean Mernagh: Sean is a retired Accountant who worked in practice for 40 years. He has been involved and a member of various voluntary organisations.

Mr. John Cuddihy: Chair of our Audit Committee is a former Regional Director with AIB Bank and is a compliance specialist who has over forty years' business experience. As a former member of the Board (2014-2022) he was involved in implementing strong governance structures, risk management processes, and public accountability for the organisation. John is a Trustee of The Irish National Heritage Park, and is a member of Waterford Wexford Educational Training Board Audit and Risk Committee (WWETB). He holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Trinity College Dublin, Professional qualification in Data Protection from University College Dublin, and is a member of the Compliance Institute of Ireland.

Ms. Annette O'Neill: Annette is now retired after 45 years of experience in financial roles. She has worked in industry and practice and acted as a paying agent for members of the European Parliament for many years. Annette has worked with local community development boards over the years in her role as Human Resources Manager with a focus on Adult Learning.

Lorene Crowley: Lorene has over 34 years' experience in the world of business. A graduate of DCU she has extensive experience working with multinational, semi state and SME organisations. Since 2007 Lorene has played an integral role in running a family business. She also serves as an audit committee member for a voluntary sporting organisation.

Frontline Team

Clare Williams, Manager, Wexford Rape Crisis, MSc in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, BSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy, Bachelor of Arts., Dip in Front-line Management, Dip Addiction Studies, Dip Group Work. MIACP, M.T.A.I.

Clare commenced as Manager with WEXRC 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 a 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.

Alison Barry, Clinical Team Leader

Alison is a psychotherapist who has been working in the field of mental health and wellness for 13 years. She is fully accredited with the Irish Council of Psychotherapy (ICP) and with APPI (Association for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in Ireland). She has worked for the HSE for the last 10 years, as well as in private practice and with charities. She has worked with clients of all ages and backgrounds. Alison is passionate about people and her mission is to provide a safe space for all to come and find healing

Pauline Lawlor, Clinical Support Worker

Pauline joined the team at Wexford Rape Crisis as Clinical Support Worker in March 2024, having worked as an Adult Counsellor since 2010. Pauline obtained a BSc (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy from Middlesex University and is a fully accredited therapist with the IACP. Pauline has extensive experience working with trauma using CBT, Solution Focussed and Humanistic modalities.

Catherine Murphy, Adult 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 completed training to be a Reiki Practitioner.

Jessica Du Bois, Adult 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.

Bernadette Lacey, Adult 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, Adult Counsellor, Dip Psychotherapy MIAHIP

Ciara Murray is a qualified accredited Psychotherapist and she currently works 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 and 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-judgmental 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.

Sarah Farrell, Adult Counsellor. BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy MIACP

Sarah joined the team at Wexford Rape Crisis in June 2022, having worked as an Adult Counsellor since 2018. Sarah has a BSc (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy from PCI college and is a fully accredited therapist with the IACP. Sarah likes to incorporate a Humanistic and integrative approach to her work, combining Psychodynamic theory, CBT skills, Mindfulness and Trauma informed practices with clients. Fundamentally, she maintains a person-centered approach to her work and strongly believes that the establishment of a safe, trustworthy relationship is central to the healing process. Sarah completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Palliative care from UCC in 2016, incorporating the knowledge and theory gained in relation to grief and bereavement, into her Counselling practice also. Sarah considers it a privilege to be a part of each individuals unique healing journey and is very pleased at the opportunity to be a part of the team at Wexford Rape Crisis.

Fiona Clancy, Adolescent and Adult Counsellor, BSoc Sc, Diploma in Psychotherapy, MIACP.

Fiona is a fully accredited Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapist and has worked as a Psychotherapist with adults who have experienced trauma since 2005. Fiona has also gained post-graduate qualifications in Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy and Therapeutic Play and has been working therapeutically with children and adolescents since 2007. Fiona's work experience also includes working in family centres, in homeless services and in a residential setting for adolescents in care. Fiona's role in Wexford Rape Crisis is to provide psychotherapy to adolescents and young adults who have been impacted by sexual, domestic or gender-based violence. Fiona believes that at the core of therapy is the therapeutic relationship and that the relationship or bond between client and therapist is central to healing. Fiona uses a variety of therapeutic approaches and creative mediums to support clients to begin to heal physically, emotionally, cognitively and spiritually from their trauma.

Claudia Blaess, Adolescent and Adult Counsellor, MSc Child and Adolescent Mental Wellbeing, B.A. (Hons) in Psychology, Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy

Claudia is a fully accredited Psychotherapist and has been working with adults since 2014. Being passionate about working with young people, she has continuously engaged in training in this area, including how to care for vulnerable children, and has been working with adolescents since 2018. Claudia completed her degree in Psychology in 2021 with Dublin City University and completed her MSc in Child and Adolescent Mental Wellbeing with Anglia Ruskin University in 2023.

In Wexford Rape Crisis, Claudia provides Psychotherapy for young people that have been impacted by sexual, domestic or gender-based violence. Claudia feels that a trusting and compassionate therapeutic relationship is the most important part of therapy to help the client to engage and face their emotions, a difficult and challenging process for any survivor of trauma. She uses a person-centred approach, as well as tools from cognitive behavioural therapy or creative mediums to give the young person a safe space to heal. Claudia also provides parenting support for parents looking to gain tools in supporting their children during these difficult times and after.

Kit Kenny, Adolescent and Adult Counsellor, Counselling Psychologist. BA (Hons) Psychology, MSc in Counselling Psychology, Certificate in CBT, Cert in Sand Therapy MIACP

Kit is a Counselling Psychologist and works therapeutically with children, adolescents, and adults. Using a person-centered approach, she explores clients issues and goals and offers appropriate evidence based therapy. Her experience has included working with primary and secondary school students. Therapy for children includes the use of play therapy techniques as appropriate. Conditions treated include loss, through death or separation, anxiety, anger management, adhd, and Asperger's to name a few.

As a contract worker for the HSE for 10+ years she worked with Adult clients; In Wexford Self Harm Intervention Programme – Counselling for suicidal thoughts and self-harm.

Counselling in Primary care; Issues included working with Depression & anxiety, panic attacks stress, low self-esteem and relationship problems

Kit is a member of the Psychological Society of Ireland and abides by its Code and practice

Lorraine Horrell, Adolescent and Adult Counsellor Counsellor, MIACP Dip Counselling & Psychotherapy, BSc. Counselling & Psychotherapy, MSc Adolescent Psychotherapy. Cert in play therapy skills.

Lorraine is a qualified and accredited adolescent and adult Psychotherapist and has been working for Wexford Rape Crisis since 2023 providing counselling to people affected by Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence. Lorraine works in a humanistic and integrative way, using gestalt, person centred therapy and creative approaches when working with clients. She trained with Bronagh Starrs, where she completed an MSc. in adolescent psychotherapy, she also trained with the Irish Gestalt Centre, Cork Counselling Centre and ICPPD where she started her training. Lorraine has had experience in many different organizations and settings, including Pieta House, Families First in Dublin, residential care, where she worked as in house psychotherapist for children in care ages 11-18. She also has extensive experience working with children in care and their families. Lorraine worked in Pieta house as a psychotherapist and as interim lead therapist. She recognizes that every client is unique, and that the importance of the therapeutic relationship is paramount to working with clients and their families.

Billie-Jean Byrne, Adolescent and Adult Counsellor, MSc in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy, MSc in Counselling & Psychotherapy, Cert in Telephone and Online Counselling, Cert in Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Skills, MIACP

Billie-Jean is a fully qualified and accredited adult and adolescent psychotherapist and has been working with the Wexford Rape Crisis Centre since 2023. She works from a humanistic and integrative perspective drawing on a range of theories and creative mediums to meet the unique and individual needs of each client and their families. She believes the therapeutic relationship is paramount for healing and therefore aims to provide a collaborative, supportive and compassionate space to her clients.

Kevin Sludds, Adult Counsellor, B.A. (Hons.), Cert., H. Cert., M.A. (Counselling & Psychotherapy), M.Phil, Ph.D, APCP

Kevin is fully accredited psychotherapist specialising in the area of humanistic and existential therapeutic engagement. His approach to counselling and psychotherapy is deeply compassionate, ethical, and confidential. He has been a guest and keynote speaker in Europe, Africa, and India on topics related to depression, bereavement, ethics, emotion analysis, anxiety, and has contributed to Government strategies on mental health and suicide prevention since 2005. He joined Wexford Rape Crisis in March of 2024.

Ruth Lambert, Adult Counsellor, MSc in Pluralistic Counselling and Psychotherapy

Ruth is a fully qualified, fully accredited psychotherapist working with adults at the Wexford Rape Crisis Centre and in her own private practice. Ruth has an MSc in Pluralistic Counselling & Psychotherapy and continues to grow her knowledge and practice through completion of various CPD training, including ASIST suicide intervention, Brief Solution Focused Therapy and currently Somatic breathwork. She has a keen interest in trauma-informed practice and hopes to further expand her professional development in this area in the future. She has additionally worked as a tutor on both the BSc and MSc courses in IICP College and enjoys supporting student therapists on their educational path. As a Pluralistically trained therapist, Ruth works from an integrative, collaborative and compassionate perspective, drawing on a range of theoretical modalities and interventions in order to support and empower clients on their healing journey.

Niamh Fleming, Adult Counsellor, MSc. Integrative Counsellor & Psychotherapist, NAPCP, BSc. Social Care, Cert. Addiction Studies

Niamh Fleming is an accredited Psychotherapist with APCP. She has been working with the Wexford Rape Crisis Centre since March 2024. She supports & empowers adults by creating a safe, caring and non-judgmental space to aid them along their therapeutic journey. Her previous work has been within social care, as part of a multidisciplinary team in supporting adults, children and their families throughout a range of adversity. She has also worked in disability services supporting Adults within their communities. Niamh has a keen interest & practice in mindfulness and expanding her learning on trauma-informed care.

Anne Eustace, Adult Counsellor, MSc. in Organisational Psychology. BSc. in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy

Anne trained as an organisational psychologist and has worked for many years, in private practice, supporting organisations to deliver optimal health, wellbeing, community education and social care services to people in Ireland. In 2022 Anne completed an MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy. She is currently preparing for full accreditation as a psychotherapist. Anne is with the Wexford Rape Crisis team on a part time basis providing counselling and psychotherapy to adult clients. Anne has trained as a reiki practitioner and yin yoga teacher and blends this awareness into her work with clients. Anne is a member of Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and a chartered member of the British Psychological Society.

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

Carolyn joined us in September 2017 delivering the EU funded pilot of the Manuela Programme with Wexford Rape Crisis which was one of four centres in the country providing this initiative. She then delivered the Wexford Rape Crisis Consent & Sexual Violence Prevention Programme along with workshops, programmes and training to young people, and professionals, throughout County Wexford and now is part of the Consent Ed Project whose strategic partners are Cuan and GRCC. For the past twenty-six years she has worked in myriad settings and diversity of roles including her current role, as a Senior Youth Worker in youth work services, working with minority groups, in residential care and part time in adult education as a Tutor and an Associate Lecturer in the third level sector.

Joanne O'Leary, Administrator, Dip Legal Studies

Joanne joined the Team in June 2022 as the full time Administrator. Joanne has a long history of working in administration and worked in Law Firms as a Legal Secretary for almost twenty years. Joanne carries out all the administration work within WEXRC and provides administration support to management and staff.

Kathleen Atkinson, Finance Worker, FCA

Kathleen joined the team as Finance Worker in November 2022. She qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1987. Having worked in Industry for 34 years, she decided to pursue part time work in a non-profit organisation. She provides expertise to the role which is very busy as numbers in the Centre increase. She believes that it is an honour to work with such dedicated staff in amazing premises.

Freda Quinn, Volunteer

Freda began volunteering for WEXRC in 2012. She has been volunteering in many different capacities over the years but mainly as a fundraising volunteer and assisting with the day today running of the premises. 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.

A Staff Profile

Niamh Fleming, MSc. Integrative Counsellor & Psychotherapist, BSc. Social Care, Cert. Addiction Studies, Cert. Mindfulness.

"My name is Niamh Fleming. I am an accredited Psychotherapist with APCP. I have been working with the Wexford Rape Crisis Centre since March 2024 providing counselling and psychotherapy to people who have been affected by domestic, sexual & gender-based violence. I support & empower adults by creating a safe, caring and non-judgmental space to aid them along their therapeutic journey.

I am an Integrative Psychotherapist which allows me to meet the unique and individual needs of the client. I believe the relationship between a client and therapist is paramount to enable the client to heal. Throughout the process, I create safety and support for the client to trust in their own unique skills & capabilities. I work collaboratively with the client to explore underlying issues, develop coping strategies, and cultivate greater self-awareness and resilience.

My previous work has been within social care, as part of a multidisciplinary team in supporting adults, children and their families throughout a range of adversity. I have also worked in disability services supporting Adults within their communities. I have a keen interest & practice in mindfulness and expanding my learning on trauma-informed care. I also provide therapy in my private practice and attend trainings and workshops to further my skills. Training to be a Psychotherapist has been my biggest academic achievement to date as the need for mental health support in Ireland is crucial. Being able to provide mental health support in WEXRC makes me incredibly proud".



Current Active Projects



- **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.
- **Adult 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 available to any young person from age 12 who has been impacted by sexual, domestic or gender-based violence in their lives. The service offers a familial model involving parents and guardians in the counselling process.
- **Parental/Carer Support:** Parental/Carer support is offered in WEXRC's Adolescent Counselling service, to any parent/carers who needs support in helping their adolescent through the trauma they have suffered. The parent/carers' adolescent may or may/not be attending counselling with WEXRC.
- **Court Accompaniment:** Wexford Rape Crisis offers court accompaniment through Victims Support at Court (VSAC) 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. The service also holds a monthly Garda 'Clinic' on site for those who wish to meet informally with the Community Garda.
- **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. WEXRC also provides counselling to anyone aged 12 years and upwards who has been impacted by Domestic Violence.
- **Cost of Service:** Counselling sessions are 50 mins and usually take place once per week. Counselling sessions are charged at €20 per session. Clients will not be denied counselling due to financial challenges. A receipt will be issued for all fees.



Wexford Rape Crisis Strategic Priorities

**Responding to the demand for
WEXRC services**

**PRIORITY
ONE**

**PRIORITY
TWO**

Creating and cultivating relationships

**Strengthening Organisational Structure
and Systems**

**PRIORITY
THREE**

PRIORITY ONE

Responding to the demand of WEXRC Services

Wexford Rape Crisis Adult Counselling Service

Wexford Rape Crisis (WEXRC) Adult Counselling Service provides one to one counselling for anyone who has been impacted in any way by Domestic, Sexual or Gender-based violence (DSGBV). Services are available in Wexford town, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey.

WEXRC provides a range of therapeutic interventions tailored to the individual's needs. Different approaches are available, short, medium and long-term.

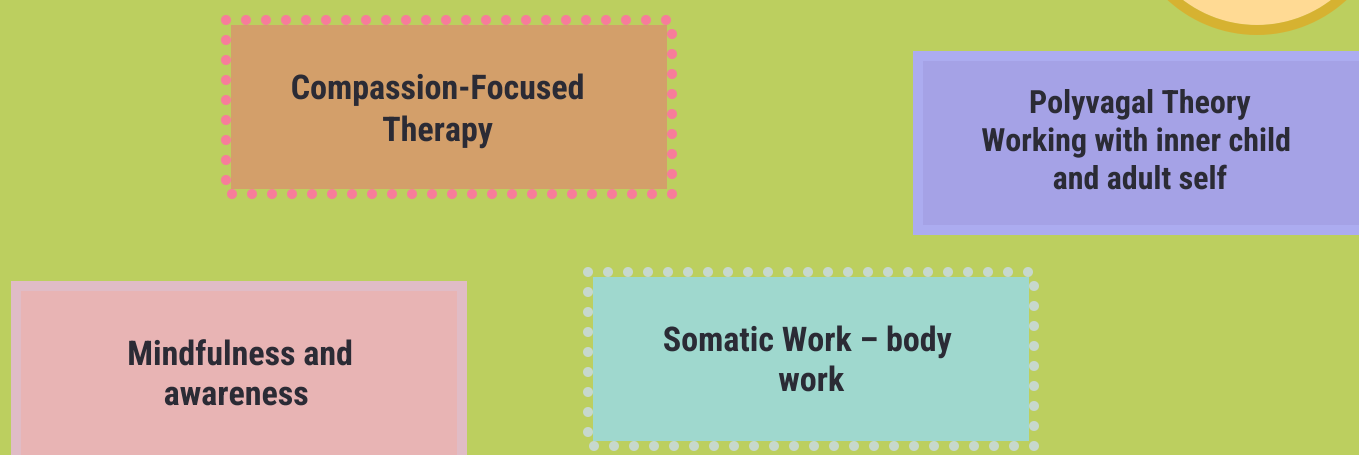
Short-term counselling:

If a client is looking for support for a specific issue or event but would prefer not to delve deep into the past, then short-term therapy may be suitable. Short-term therapy might help the client to develop new ways of viewing their situation, work through it, process it, and find ways of dealing with the challenge. Sometimes short-term therapy is also referred to as brief therapy, or counselling. It can last between 6 and 18 sessions and it is often focused on the specific goal that is agreed on with the therapist.

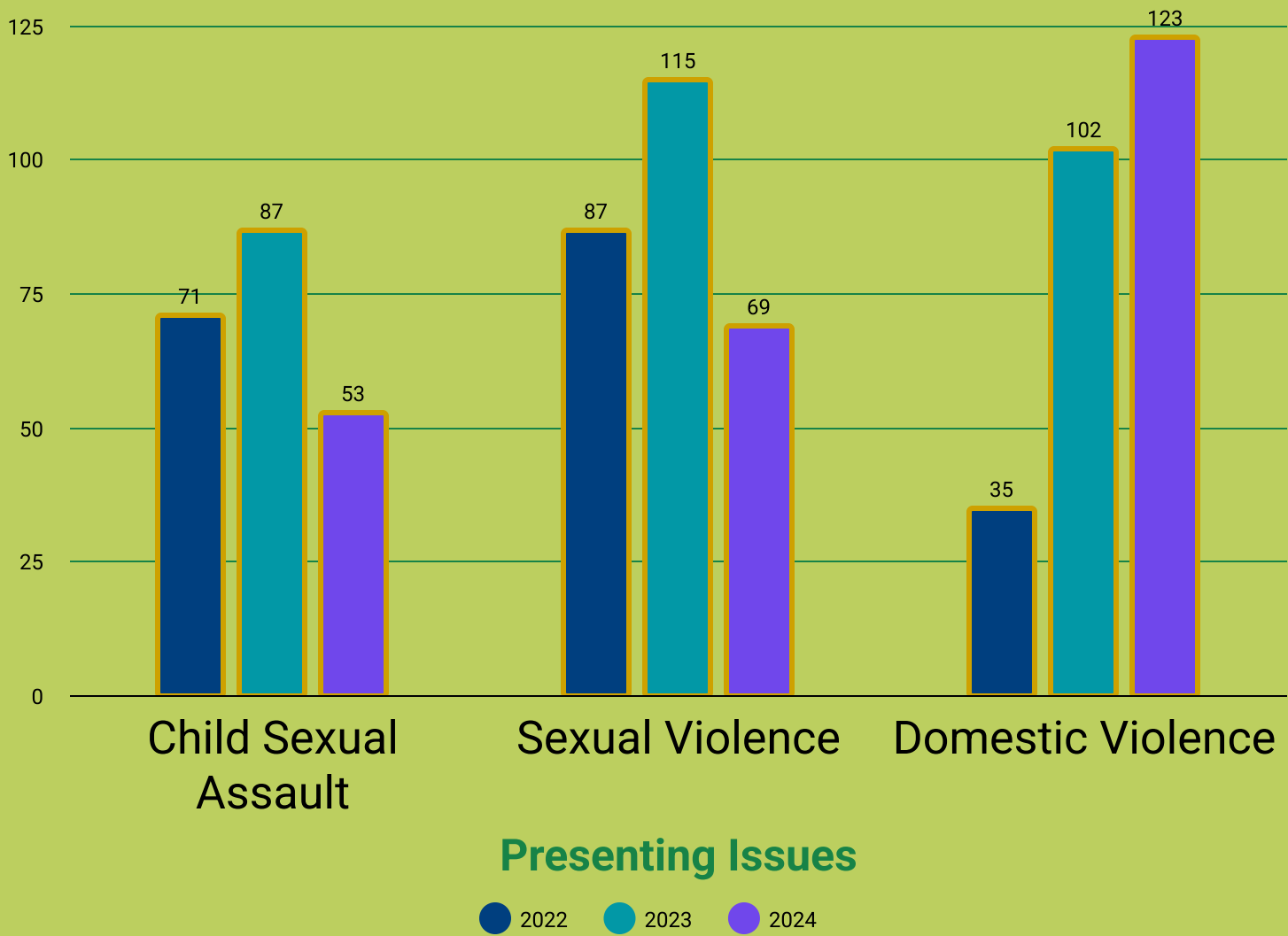
Presenting Issues:



Interventions:



Adult Statistics 2022, 2023 and 2024



Trends over the past 3 years:

- Ref Graph Domestic Violence referrals increased by 191% from 2022 to 2023. They increased by a further 21% from 2023 to 2024. This makes an overall increase of 251% from 2022 to 2024. It is understood the interagency work with Wexford Women’s Refuge has contributed to this as Wexford Rape Crisis is the designated counselling service. Having more of a ‘presence’ with the WEXRC’s new building (2020), and as such more awareness of the service has also contributed to an increase in referrals.
- More people considering making a statement to the Gardaí due to more public awareness and support from services.

Age profile:

- Average age 45 years however, has mostly been in age range of late 20’s to mid-50’s.
- Average number of sessions per client: 56 sessions

Counselling Statistics 2022, 2023 and 2024

2022

2,679



2023

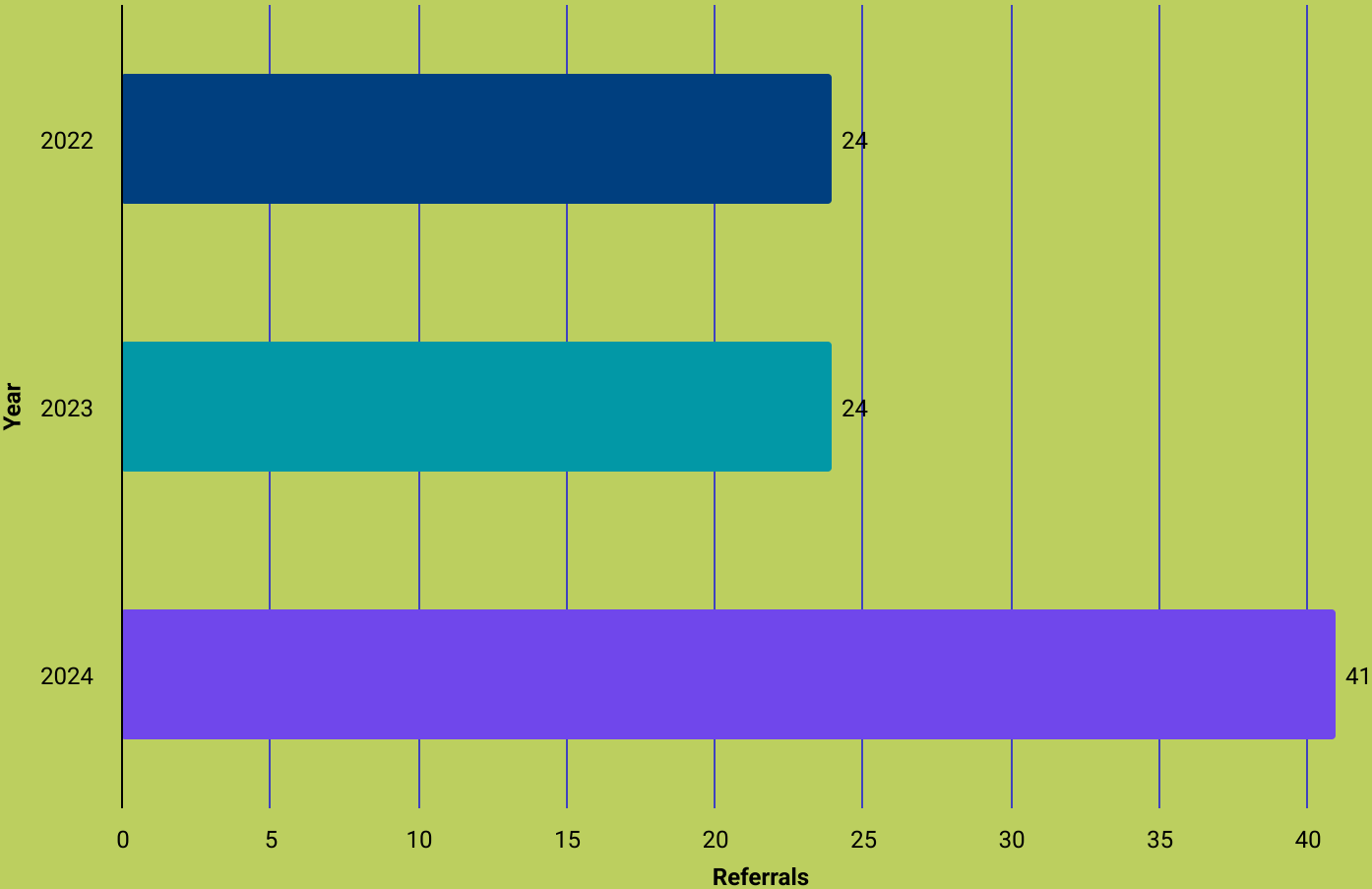
3,321

2024

4,164

Adult Statistics 2022, 2023 and 2024

Referrals from Wexford Women's Refuge (that proceeded to Assessment)



Adult Case Study

During 2024 I started working with Mary, a woman in her 30s. Mary was a survivor of Child Sexual Abuse and more recently she was sexually assaulted when out with some of her friends one night. Shortly after the sexual assault she was gang raped at the home of an acquaintance. She presented with several symptoms of Complex Post Traumatic Stress. She was having difficulty sleeping at night and when she did sleep, she had terrible nightmares. She was unable to focus at work. Her anxiety was inhibiting her from being able to socialise or to even go outside alone. Mary fully engaged in the counselling process and worked well with Compassion Focused Therapy and Polyvagal Theory Programme. Mary learned how regulate her nervous system and she developed a deeper understanding of how her mind and body had interpreted her experiences. We used imagery and visualisation to help her calm her mind before sleeping and her nightmares completely disappeared. Half way through the programme, she started making outside day trips on her own. She became very familiar with her own states of being and used the PV exercises very effectively. Towards the end of the programme, she went out socialising with friends one night which was a huge milestone for her. Over the course of our time together her self-confidence and self-care blossomed beautifully. Mary finally feels she has the awareness and the coping mechanisms to live a fully functioning life.



Referral Process for Counselling with WEXRC

STEP 1:

Initial contact by client/agency (By telephone, email or referral from another Agency)

STEP 2:

Intake and initial assessment

STEP 3:

Assessment with assigned counsellor

STEP 4:

Counselling

STEP 5:

Review

STEP 6:

Ending



NEW COUNSELLING MODEL

Compassion Focused Therapy with Polyvagal Theory

Introduction of Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) and Polyvagal Theory (PVT) Counselling Model, 2024:

Wexford Rape Crisis continued the development of its counselling services in 2024 with the introduction of a new model of counselling, Compassion-Focused Therapy with Polyvagal Theory. This was in collaboration with THiNK Psychology (www.thinkpsychology.ie)

THiNK Psychology

THiNK Psychology was established in 2019 as a partnership between Clinical Psychologists, Tanya Harris and Nicole Kotras. Besides offering individual therapy, THiNK also provides community workshops and corporate interventions. THiNK Psychology has been working with Wexford Rape Crisis since 2022 and has provided a range of staff trainings since then. In November 2023 THiNK was contracted to develop a short-term therapeutic intervention for WRC clients; and to train the staff team in delivering this intervention to clients. The THiNK Psychologists developed an intervention based upon a combination of Compassion Focused Therapy and Polyvagal Theory, including a focus on managing trauma symptoms. The staff training was rolled out in a modular fashion between December 2023 and May 2024.

What is Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT)?

CFT is a psychological therapy developed by Paul Gilbert. CFT recognises that life is hard and having a compassionate approach towards others and ourselves, helps us to cope with this reality. In addition to helping develop a compassionate mind (via exercises, skills training & psychoeducation), CFT also helps with reducing distress, and psychological difficulties, including shame and self-criticism. Shame and self-criticism are often seen as the driving force that keep people stuck in depressive or anxious loops.

What is Polyvagal Theory (PVT)?

PVT is also known as “the science of feeling safe”. PVT was developed by Stephen Porges. This theory focuses on recognising what is happening inside the body and the nervous system. Learning about one’s nervous system is a helpful way to better understand why we behave in certain ways and why we hold certain beliefs/views of ourselves, others and the world we live in. Applying a PVT lens and strategies to our healing helps us change how we feel, think and connect to others. PVT gives us ways of creating a felt sense of safety within us.

The objectives of introducing this 18 week counselling model were as follows:

- Increase range of counselling models to clients
- Offer a shorter-term model for clients who would like to work in a shorter time frame
- Reduce waiting times for newly referred clients
- Offer an additional evidence-based therapeutic option to identified clients
- increase efficiency and effectiveness in therapeutic outcomes for clients and staff
- increase return on investment for funders, in terms of enhanced productivity
- Evaluate the potential for introducing future short-term therapeutic programmes for client cohorts with different needs

Compassion Focused Therapy and Polyvagal Theory Pilot commenced June 2024. Data gathered from counsellors in January 2025.

The following questions were posed to the team of counsellors who completed the training Data:

Q.1 How many clients were taken on for the 18-week CFT & PVT Pilot?

- 65 clients taken on by 10 counsellors ranging from 4 to 11 clients per counsellor

Q.2 How many of these finished the 18 weeks / any still in progress?

- 7 clients finished (11.3%)
- 31 clients still in progress (50%)

Q.3 Re Q.2 any outcomes either via measures or via client direct feedback?

- Client had a greater understanding of what compassion is, understood that life experience had shaped a negative mind-set and that, ultimately was not their fault
- Client had increased compassion for herself leading to being more emboldened and self-confident
- Client realised the value and importance of self-compassion
- Increase in self-trust and confidence to advocate for themselves
- Increase in self-agency and autonomy
- Regulation of feelings
- Benefits of self-kindness
- Some clients find immensely helpful in everyday situations,

Q.4 How many started the CFT & PVT Pilot but ceased and why?

- 24 started and then ceased (38.7%)
- Counsellor deemed 3 of the clients initially selected for this program to be unsuitable
- Some clients did not feel ready for this therapy, one attended for 3 weeks then dropped out, no reason given
- Other clients felt that the time was not right for counselling
- Childcare issues

Q.5 Current active clients doing the CFT & PVT 18-week model?

- 31 clients are currently doing the 18-week model
-

Q.6 Anything else of note to add?

- Some challenges around implementing this therapy with adolescents
- Challenges re introducing paperwork/measurement tools at the beginning of therapy.
- Interested in knowing the tools and working with worksheets.
- Excellent program, tools are of immense benefit and can be interwoven into the longer-term therapy model. Longer term clients very receptive to the exercises and giving them a lot of the CFT tools is a very effective way of preparing for the therapy to end.
- One counsellor found that the measures interfered with the relationship bonding and needed to be introduced a bit later on and not in the initial sessions.

Introduction of Clinical Team

Support Worker Role

The Clinical Support (CSW) worker role at Wexford Rape Crisis is the first point of contact for all clients who require one to one counselling. Clients are offered an initial phone call with the CSW. During this call an initial assessment is made to ascertain what the client’s needs are, and as such what type of counselling is required and for how long.

When required, the CSW provides short term focused counselling to clients who need it, whilst they are on the wait list, awaiting longer term counselling. The CSW liaises with any relevant external stakeholder to support client’s needs and also assists in collecting and collating statistics to ensure a true reflection of the client from initial call to end of therapy.

The typical daily tasks for the CSW consist of:

Intake Calls:

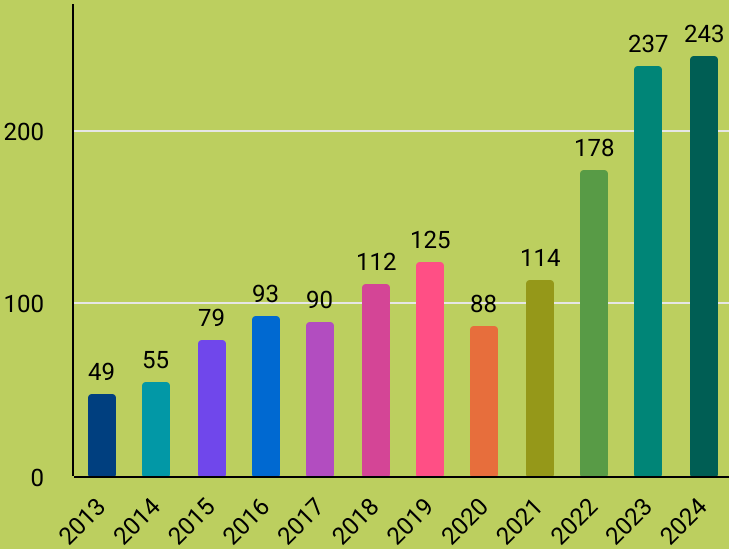
One of the daily tasks for the CSW is attending to all pre-scheduled Intake Calls. The calls are appointment only. The purpose of these calls is to assess the client’s level of priority based on such factors as the client’s risk to self, and/or need for stabilisation. During this call every effort is made to bring the clients awareness to the type of counselling modalities available to them as part of our service e.g. Compassion Focussed Therapy, Goal/Solution Focussed Therapy, long term therapy or stabilisation work. Children First Policy and terms of confidentiality are explored and agreed during this call.

Gaining a clear understanding of the clients’ immediate needs allows for appropriate information sharing and referral around other services such as Victim Support at Court, Wexford Women’s Refuge, Pieta House, parental advocacy, engagement with Tusla, Barnardos etc.

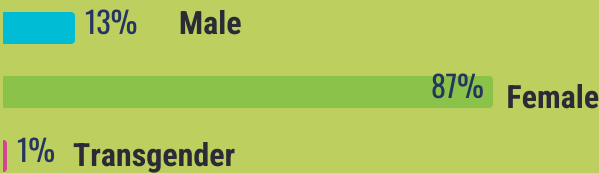


Pauline Lawlor, CSW

NEW REFERRALS



GENDER OF CLIENTS



If a client is already engaged with Adult Mental Health services, a standard letter will be sent to the relevant mental health service to ensure the client is at no risk of destabilisation in the work and also to determine if a diagnosis has been made and information on any medication which may have been prescribed.

The CSW is also responsible for submitting all Child Protection Concerns and/or any Retrospective Abuse claims. Where possible, this is agreed with the client at the Intake Call stage.

Stabilisation and Short Term/Goal Focussed Therapy

The CSW has capacity to offer short term stabilisation work to any client with an immediate need. Stabilisation or short term/goal focussed therapy may occur if the client is considered to be at risk, or, if there is a specific piece of work the client would like to engage in. Occasionally, a client may be offered “holding” sessions while they are on the waitlist for their permanent therapist.

In addition, the CSW offers a timely response to any other issues the client may be experiencing such as mental health issues, suicide ideation, self-harm or more practical challenges such as court appearances, or safety plans should a situation arise whereby the client and/or children may be at risk.

The CSW can also inform the client and bring awareness to WEXRC’s internal supports such as the monthly Garda Clinic and any Compassion Focused therapy group programme on offer.

External Stakeholders and Administration:

An integral part of the role requires the building of relationships with external stakeholders such as the Wexford mental health services, Tusla, Barnardos, WWR and others as required. As such, the CSW is responsible for ensuring all Tusla reports are submitted and recorded in a timely manner.

Following up on all correspondence to external stakeholders is crucial in order to ensure a smooth transition from Initial Call to one to one counselling.

Statistics

A key component of the Clinical Support Worker role is to assist in the collection and analysis of statistics on the demand for the service and the waiting list. Wexford Rape Crisis strives to be as responsive as possible to client’s needs and minimise waiting times for counselling.

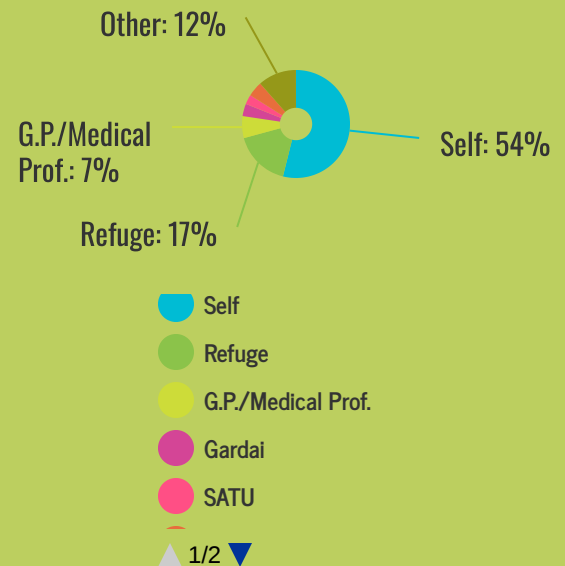
03 Mar 2024 – 17 Dec 2024 (Introduction of new role began)

Initial Calls carried out: 147
Initial Calls Did Not Attend 26
Total Initial Calls : 173

03 Mar 2024 - 17 Dec 2024

Stabilisation/Short Term Therapy
Attended: 72
Did not attend 20
Total: 92 sessions

Referral Source



Education

The Consent Ed Project: Wexford Rape Crisis strongly supports the Consent Ed Project which is a sexual violence prevention resource aimed at young people in Ireland believing that meaningful cultural change, driven by education, is a key factor to ending sexual violence. The Project creates educational resources and materials aligned with NCCA SPHE learning outcomes also providing a hybrid training model for facilitator development and professional upskilling. We engage with professionals both within and beyond the formal education system. The Project continues our work through the joint CUAN and GRCC partnership supporting Ireland's Third National Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Strategy, which sets a clear goal of zero tolerance for DSGBV grounded in four pillars, 'Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Policy Coordination', whereby the Consent Ed Project sits firmly within the 'Prevention' pillar.



667

Trained approx. 667 Educators and Professionals working with young people

"They were full of information we need as teens"



294

Worked with 294 schools/services across Ireland

bb I think it was all relevant and important qq



44,382

Achieved a projected reach of over 44,382 young people

"We did activities and didn't just take notes, it was fun"



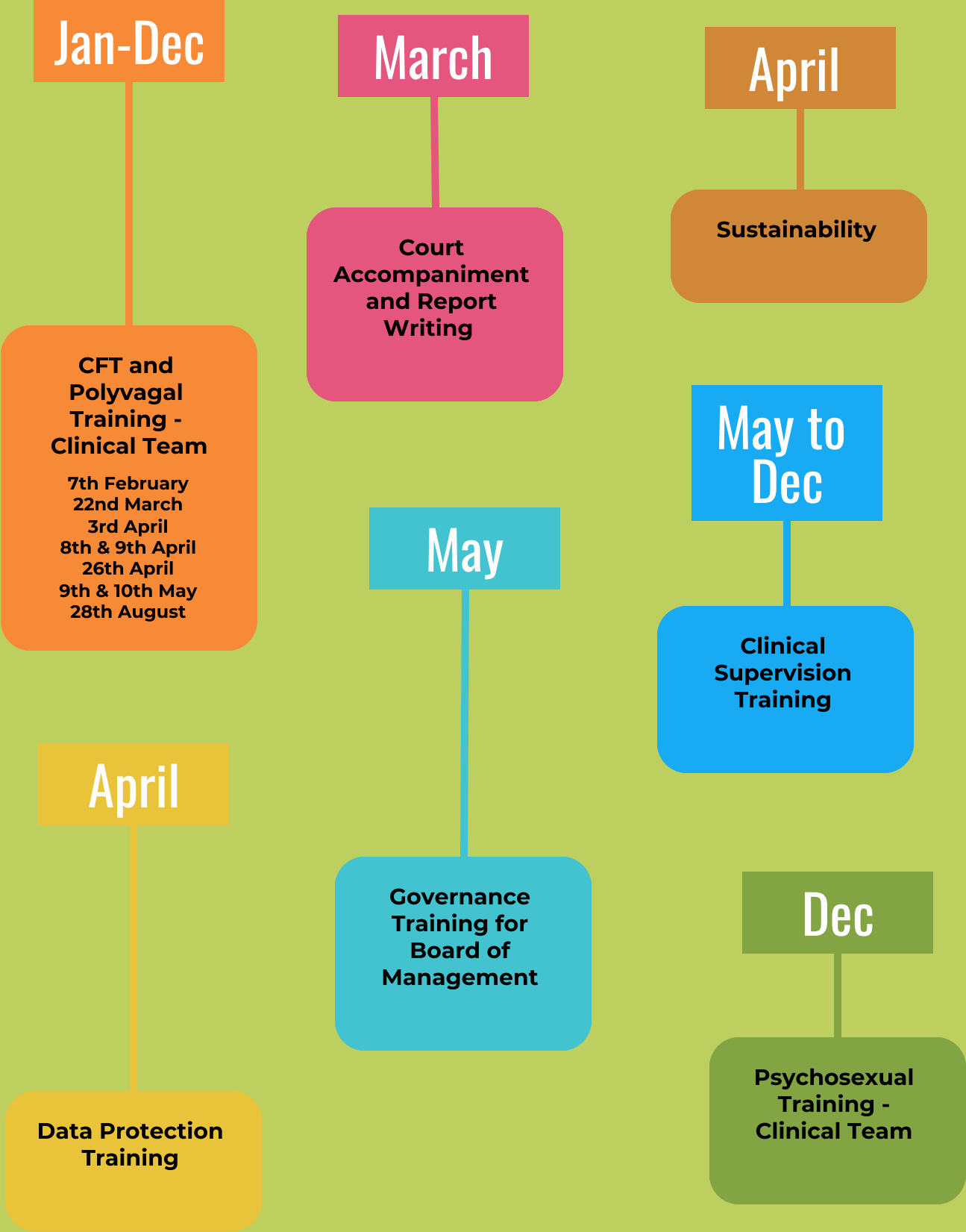
1,000

Piloted new and updated materials to over 1,000 young people across Ireland

The project also:

- Supported specific teacher-led pilots of the updated resources across Ireland
- Initiated exploratory processes into other strands of work progression in 2025
- Preliminary progress in the creation of additional senior cycle resources.

Staff Training 2024



PRIORITY TWO

Creating and Cultivating Relationships

Adolescent Counselling Service

Wexford Rape Crisis Adolescent Counselling Service:

Wexford Rape Crisis (WEXRC) Adolescent Service provides one to one counselling and parent support for any client over the age of 12 and their parent/ guardian, who has been impacted in any way by Domestic, Sexual or Gender-based violence (DSGBV). This service is available in Wexford town and Gorey.

WEXRC Adolescent Counselling Framework:

In 2017, WEXRC began the development of the current adolescent framework. A clear distinction between the provision of adult and adolescent counselling ensued with the recruitment of qualified and experienced adolescent counsellors. Policies and procedures were developed that encompassed the needs of the young person as an individual but also in the context of the wider family.

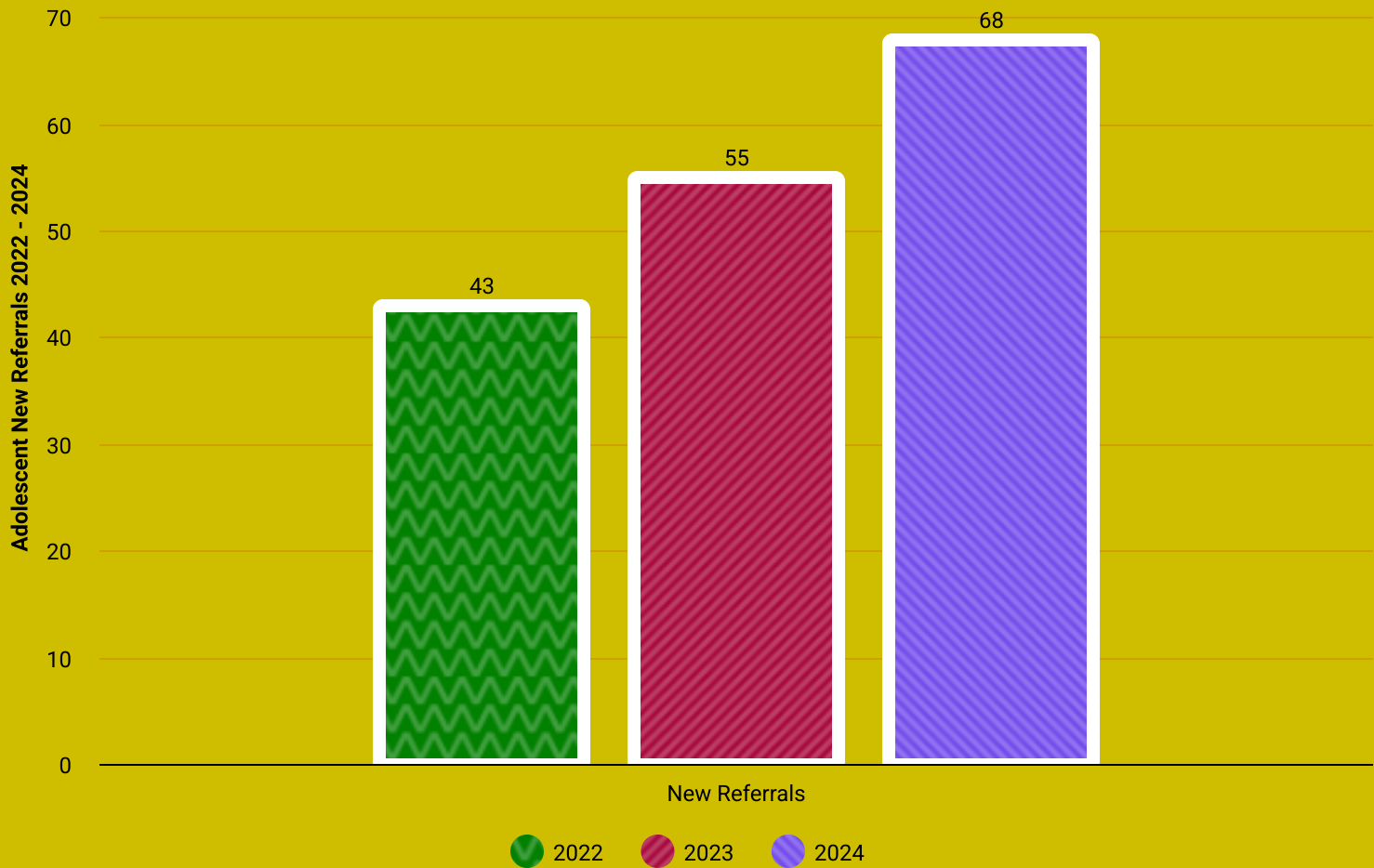
From 2019 to 2023, Tipperary and Kilkenny Rape Crisis' respectively joined WEXRC in the continued development of this model. This model been sanctioned as the best practice model by Tusla and subsequently by Cuan (Department of Justice) for the Rape Crisis sector.

In November 2023, Wexford, Kilkenny and Tipperary Rape Crisis along with the support of Tusla and Dr. Rosaleen McElvaney presented to the Rape Crisis Sector in Dublin on the adolescent frame work. This was a pivotal day for the sector with the sharing and collaboration of the work.

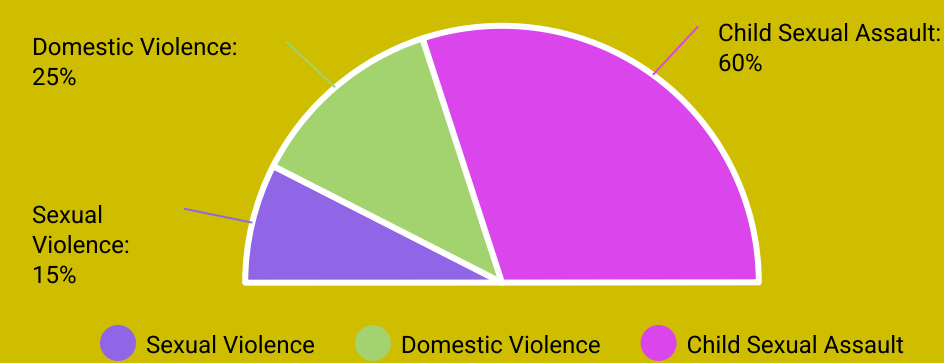


With the integration and development of the new adolescent counselling service, came the increase in demand for the service. With the demand also came the increase in the number of adolescent counsellors to help meet these needs. WEXRC now employs 5 Adolescent Counsellors with a new dedicated service available in Gorey (as well as Wexford town). Graph A shows the increase in new referrals for young people from 2022 to 2024. The service envisages a further growth in new referrals in 2025.

**NEW ADOLESCENT
REFERRALS 2022 - 2024**
(Graph A)



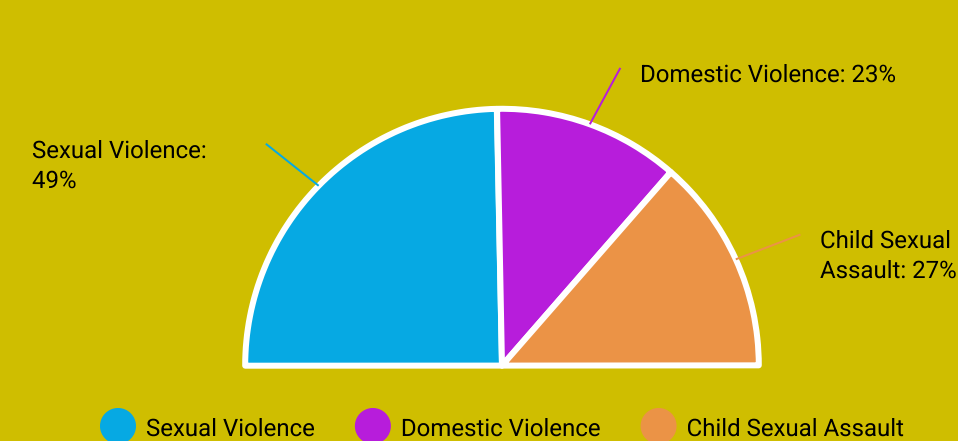
Presenting Issues 2022 (Graph B)



Graph B shows the breakdown in presenting issues for young people.

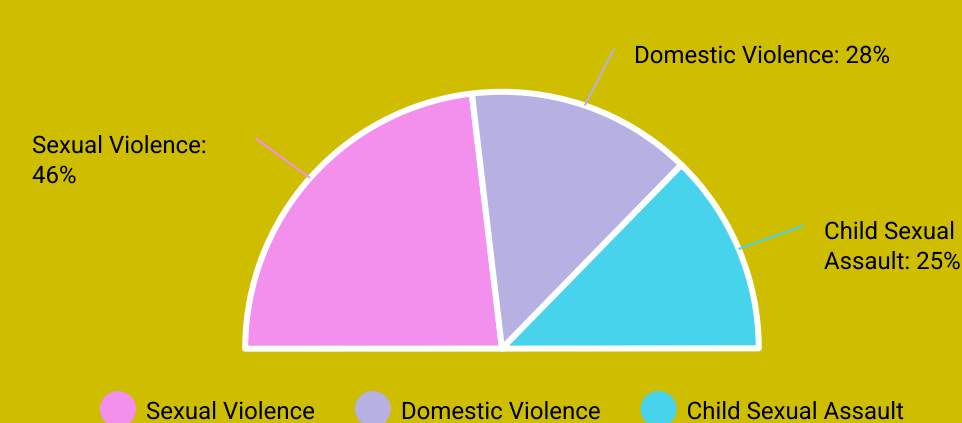
These can be wide-reaching and are becoming more and more complex. Young people present with high levels of anxiety. Many are diagnosed as neurodivergent or feel that they are, and need to be assessed.

Presenting Issues 2023



Many young people presenting to the service come with other complex needs, such as other mental health challenges, emotion-based school avoidance and additional diagnosis such as ADHD and ASD. Some also ‘fall’ between services in that they may not necessarily be serious enough for other mainstream mental health services, but at the same time, may be suicidal. Even if they meet the criteria, the waiting lists can be extremely lengthy.

Presenting Issues 2024



This can be challenging. Accessing a GP can also be difficult in the event of a young person being suicidal. Supports for both young people and their parents are difficult to access.

Social media poses a big challenge for young people (e.g. 'Catfishing' This means someone is using a fake identity to trick you into believing you're in a real online friendship or romance with them. Once you trust the catfish, they may: embarrass, humiliate or upset you by sharing your secrets online or revealing to others that you fell for their trick) and with parents not understanding this, it proves very difficult to then support their children.

Many cases involve family members as perpetrators. In some cases, parents can be the abusers and the young person still has to engage with them as the courts have ordered it. It also means that the environment may not be conducive to the work. This leaves the young person in a very difficult and confusing emotional state. As such it may be best for the young person to revert to counselling when a stable environment is in place

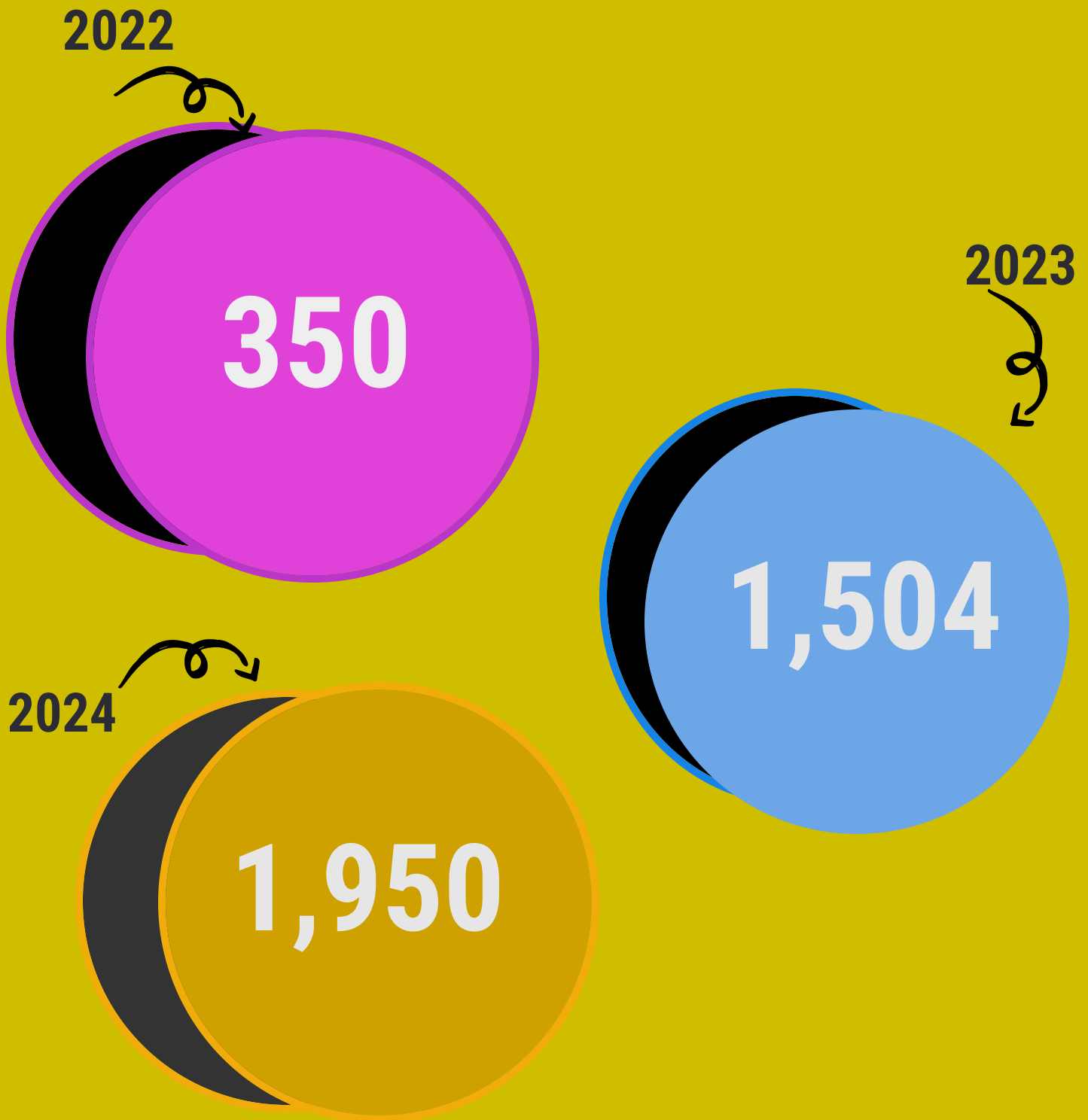
Reporting any type of DSGBV is an arduous and a lengthy process and in itself can be extremely challenging.

Using creative interventions, such as clay, art and sand trays prove very useful as many young people are not always able to express themselves in words. Using technology such as videos, apps and music in therapy has also proven very beneficial with young people in WEXRC. The use of polyvagal theory is also very helpful long with psychoeducational pieces on how the brain works, as it gives adolescents an insight into what's happening in their bodies.

The involvement of parents/guardians is 'key' to the young person's recovery from trauma. WEXRC provides parental support to parents and encourages on-going communication with parents to best support their child. Having an holistic approach with the involvement of other relevant services is also very helpful to give a 'wrap-around' support system to the young person and their family.

The number of sessions varies for each young person, ranging from anywhere between 18 to 50 + sessions.

Adolescent Counselling Hours 2022, 2023 and 2024

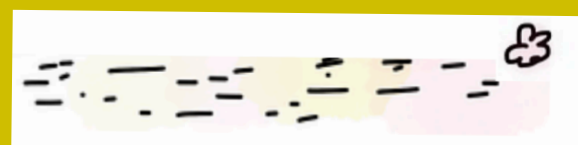
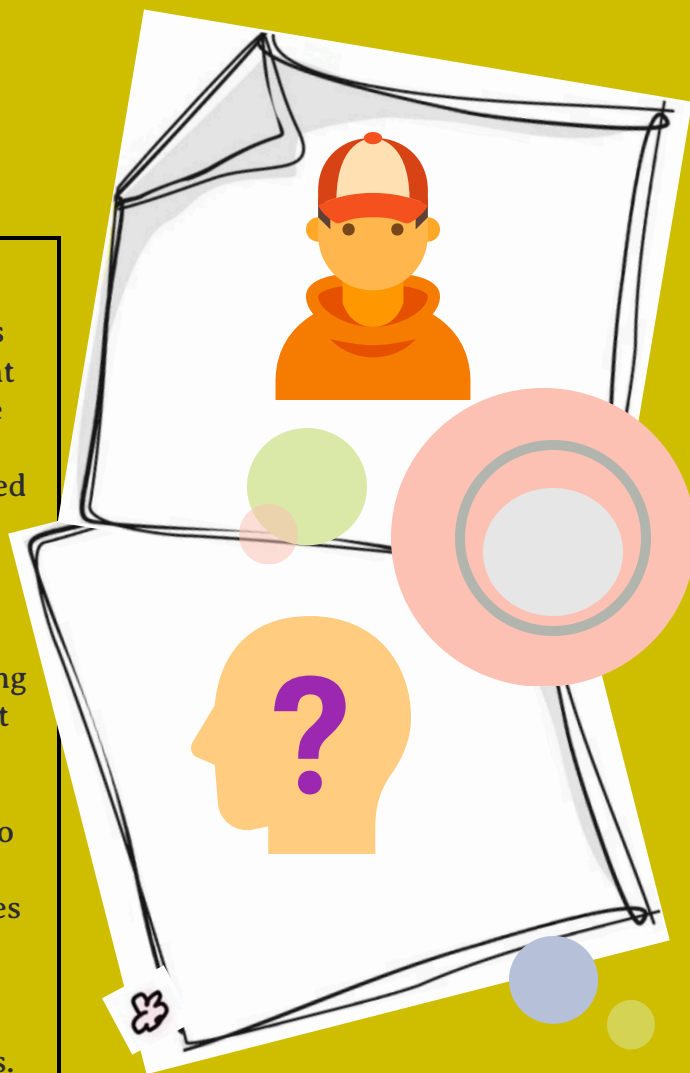


Adolescent Case Study

Dex, a 14-year-old boy, started coming to therapy a year ago and has attended 45 sessions to date. He was referred to this service due to experiencing significant trauma from childhood sexual abuse. On entering the service, he was described as anxious, nervous, and preoccupied with safety. His anxiety severely impacted his school attendance and friendships, leaving him isolated. However, despite this, Dex had good relationships with family members.

In therapy, Dex initially struggled to engage, tolerating only short sessions. Gradually, however, he built trust and began participating in longer, more involved sessions. The therapeutic approach focused on creating a safe and supportive environment for Dex to explore his trauma. Creative interventions such as fidgets, sensory tools, art, clay, and sand tray exercises were used to help him express his emotions non-verbally. Psychoeducation about his nervous system and regulation strategies were integrated into these activities to help Dex manage his anxiety and triggers. Dex responded particularly well to creative activities, which helped him reflect and regulate his emotions.

As therapy progressed, Dex began processing his trauma more directly, using both creative methods and talk therapy. Creative interventions helped him externalise his feelings and communicate indirectly about difficult emotions. His sense of safety grew, and he showed pride in his creative work. While therapy is still on going, Dex has made notable progress. He is growing in confidence, feels safer beyond his bedroom, has increased his friend group and is more socially engaged. The final phase of the work will be in supporting Dex around his court case.



Garda Support Clinic

Wexford Rape Crisis supports clients who have been impacted by Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based violence, in the main through our counselling services. Through the counselling process, clients can come to a decision as to whether or not they would like to report their abuse to An Garda Siochana. This is a very difficult decision to make, as the process is long, arduous and sometimes, can be re-traumatizing. If a client decides this is a 'step' they would like to take, the centre will support them through this process. It is unfortunate that there is currently no funding available for a dedicated role for this work (as it is urgently needed) and as such the Manager does this, as best she can with the time available to her.

As a result of increased referrals to the centre following the Covid pandemic, the centre has also been experiencing an increase in queries regarding the reporting process to An Garda Siochana. Due to this demand the Manager requested for a member of An Garda Siochana to be available to meet with clients in the centre so they can ask any queries or questions in relation to the reporting process.

In August of 2024, monthly Garda 'clinics' began in WEXRC. Any client who wishes to meet the Garda can book in to meet with her for a 30-minute slot. WEXRC's Manager is also available to attend these meetings as a support to the client.

- Six clinics were facilitated in 2024
- 14 clients attended the clinics for information relating to DSGBV.



Garda Denise Kane



Client Feedback:

'The meeting with the Garda has been so helpful to me as I now have a better idea as to what is involved in the reporting process'

'Having a member of WEXRC with me at this meeting and in an environment I am familiar with has made such a difference'.

'I was so glad I didn't have to go to the Garda station to have this meeting as it can be difficult when not in an environment I am used to'

'The Garda was so kind and friendly and she was so helpful in answering any questions I had, a great service!'

'I now have a much better idea as to what is involved to help make my decision'

Redesign and Development of Website

The goal was to bring support information and important contact information into the hands of the site visitors. This content includes information about the services offered by WEXRC, frequently asked questions, info on vacancies within the organisation, forms, documents, publications, news and probably most importantly phone numbers to contact at the touch of a button at whatever time the services of WRC are required.

A CMS (content management system) integrated into the site allows the content to be updated as required. WordPress was chosen as the CMS, not only a system on which around 44% of all websites on the internet are built, but one which allows for easy management of content.

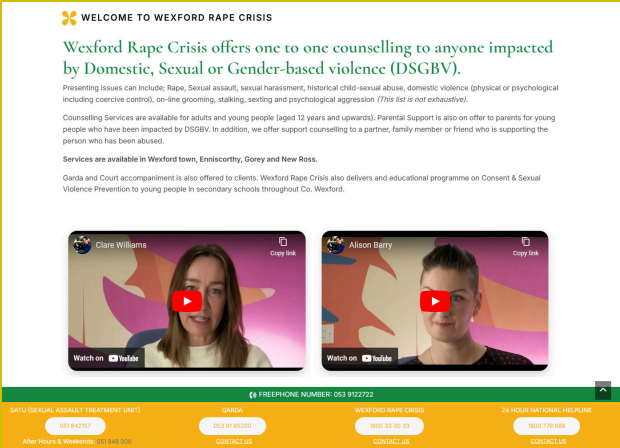
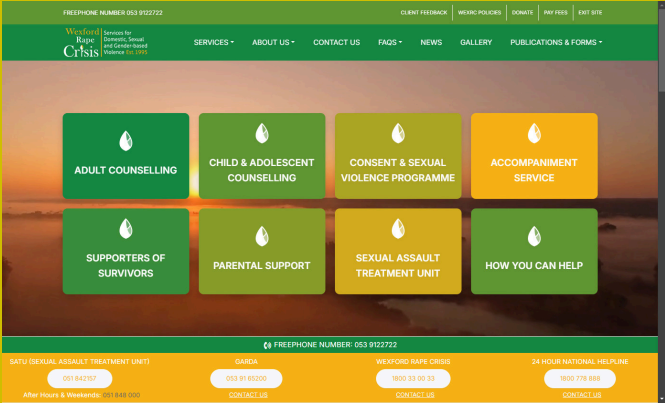
The site is a responsive website allowing for ease of use on large screens (laptops/desktops) and small screens (tablets/mobile phones).

Video content is incorporated throughout the site as this allows the visitor to gain information and understanding about the services available in an easily digestible way.

It was important that the website reflect the brand of WRC. The brand colours are prevalent throughout the website. This, along with soft features chosen for styling, relaxing/calming video content in the background and textures & colours that allow for ease of use by the site visitors, reflects the safe, calming, understanding nature of the WRC centre.

The tiles on the homepage front and centre on devices of all sizes making access to relevant information quick and easy.

The website has a “sticky” contact bar across all devices, giving quick access to important contact numbers including SATU, An Garda Siochana, WRC itself and the 24 Hour National Helpline. The website makes use of an SSL certificate to make sure it is safe and secure and also incorporates cookie and GDPR consent options in compliance with EU law.



Victim Support at Court

Wexford Rape Crisis, Court Accompaniment Service in conjunction with Victims Support at Court (V-SAC):

Since 1995, Wexford Rape Crisis has provided court accompaniment to clients who needed support navigating their way through a trial. Even though the service does not have a dedicated role for this, the Manager has done her best to make herself available to those who needed it over the past 10 years.

Due to the expansion and development of services in WEXRC, we now refer clients to Victim Support at Court (V-SAC).



Victim Support at Court, or V-SAC, is the only voluntary service in Ireland dedicated solely to court accompaniment for victims of crime, their families and witnesses. They are at the forefront of delivering a high-quality court accompaniment service within the Irish judicial system.

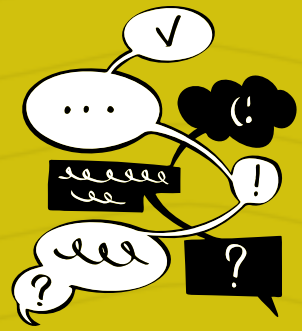
As well as supporting you emotionally, V-SAC provide lots of information before the trial, about what to expect. They can also facilitate clients to see a court room before a trial. This can help clients feel more confident when it's their time to attend court. Their specially trained volunteers will go into the courtroom with a client. In their experience, they find a lot of people find it reassuring just to know that someone is there, especially for them. It also means that if clients want to debrief about what happened afterwards, someone will have been through the process with you.

Niamh Lambert is a seasoned Regional Manager for Victim Support at Court, bringing over seven years of experience to her role. Based in the East and South East of Ireland, she leads and supports a team of more than 30 dedicated volunteers, ensuring compassionate and effective assistance to individuals navigating the criminal court system. With a strong commitment to victim support and a proven track record in volunteer management, Niamh plays a vital role in delivering essential support services to those in need.

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 Centres Forum.



Client Feedback



"I feel heard and understood.

Counselling has allowed me to see things differently. I use to bottle things up because I was never allowed to have a voice. This service allows me that. Because of counselling I am learning to love myself again and I'm learning how and where to put healthy boundaries into my life".

"Counselling has helped me come to terms with what has happened and I have improved massively since I started"

"I feel like a different person for the better"

"I have not enough words to express how I feel about the service you provide. I admire all of you who work in this area, it can't be easy and my experience in dealing with the service has been life-saving. You have my eternal gratitude and admiration"

"I am living out of the fog now. I can see straight. I am enjoying life again. My past is not driving me"

"I can finally see how and why my abuse as a child was not my fault"

"I felt completely understood"

PRIORITY THREE

Organisational Structure and Systems

Strategic Priority: To strengthen our organisational structure

Board of Directors worked with Manager to set up a new organisational structure to respond to an unprecedented demand for the Counselling service in 2022 & 2023. This included the appointment of a new Clinical Team Leader.

Strategic Priority: To review HR Policies & Procedures

Board of Directors reviewed new Health & Safety Statement and Health & Safety Policies Handbook in April 2023
New Employee Contract was produced & Employee Company Handbook reviewed in October 2024

Strategic Priority: To review Staff Terms & Conditions

A full review of staff salaries was completed in 2022 and each staff member placed on an appropriate point of a salary scale.

Annual leave for staff was increased from 20 to 25 days/year, effective from January 2025.

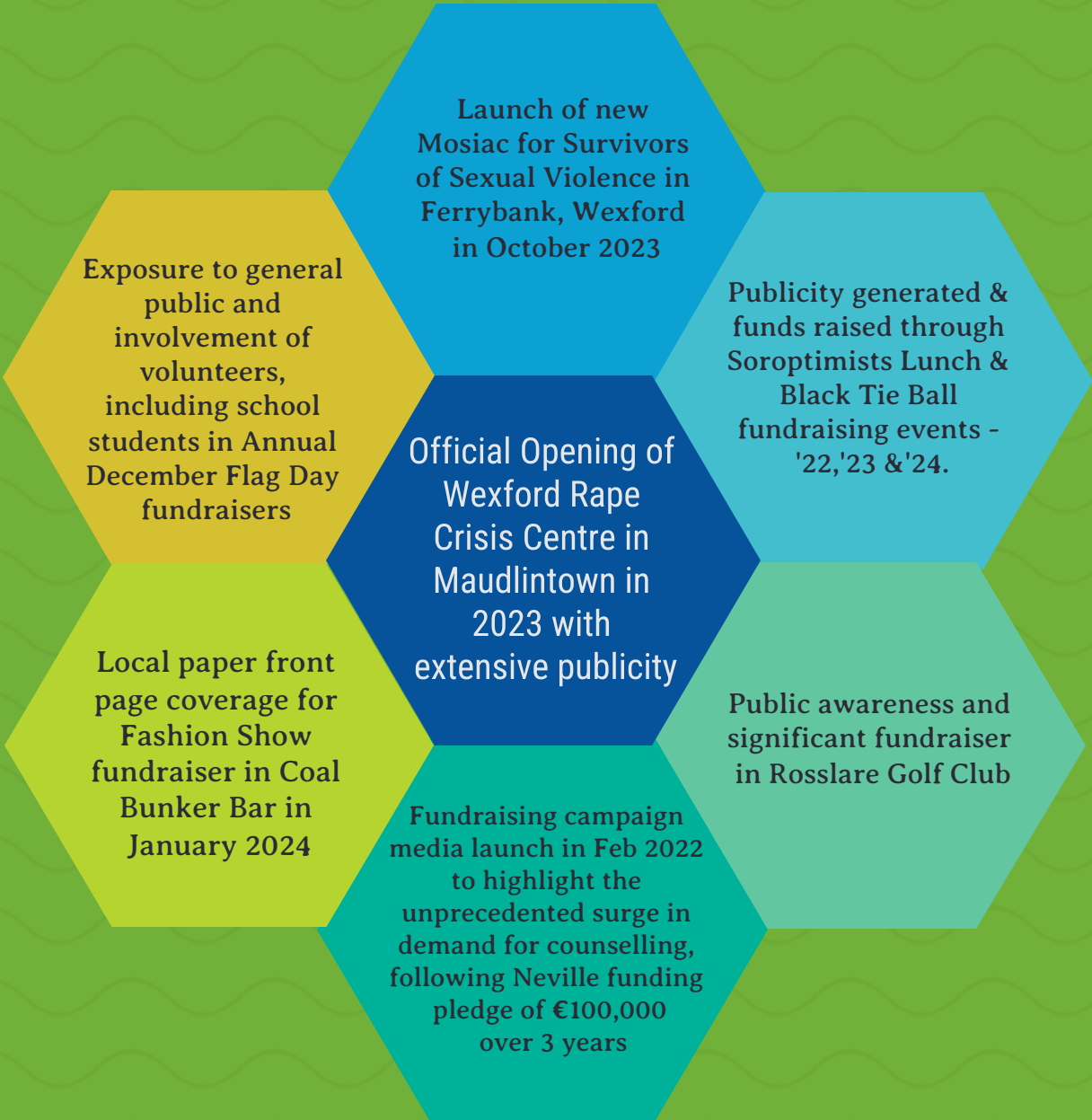
Strategic Priority: To recruit expertise for the Board

Through the addition of new Directors in 2023 and 2025, further expertise and professional experience was added to the Board in the areas of Accounting, Financial, Education, HR & Healthcare.

Strategic Priority: To provide opportunities for Board Directors to avail of Training

Board Directors availed of training from The Wheel in relation to Corporate Governance & SORP.
Directors receive a monthly notification of upcoming Board training from The Wheel

Service was highlighted with publicity and fundraising income generated





Wexford Rape Crisis

Board of Management

Board of Management

Laura Lawlor (Chairperson), Kate O'Donnell (Secretary), Dr. Moira Slevin, Joan Roche, Rob O'Callaghan and Sean Mernagh

Audit Committee

Corporate Governance

Financial Controls

Monitored Monthly

Risk Management

Risk Register Review
Calendar

Governance

Operations & Compliance

Strategy

Environmental & Health

Board Meetings 2024

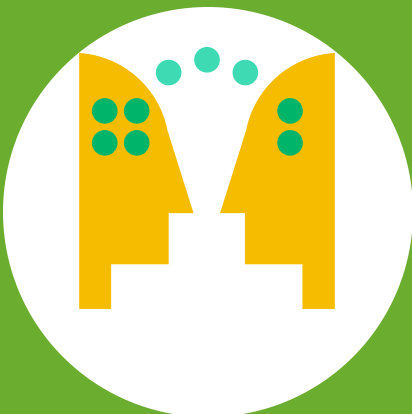
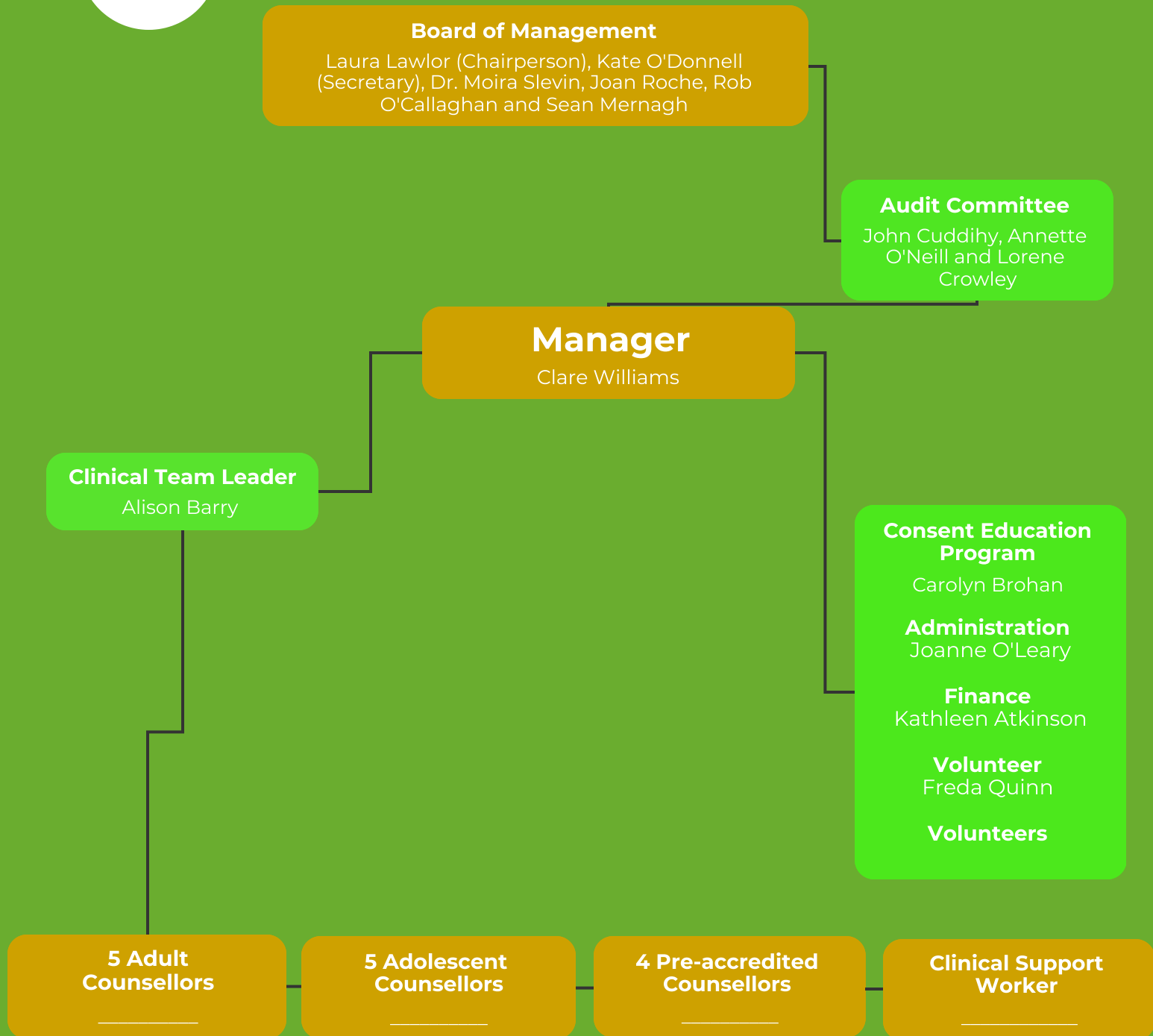
17th January
14th February
20th March
17th April
22nd May
AGM 26th June
3rd September
9th October
6th November
11th December

Audit Committee Meetings 2024

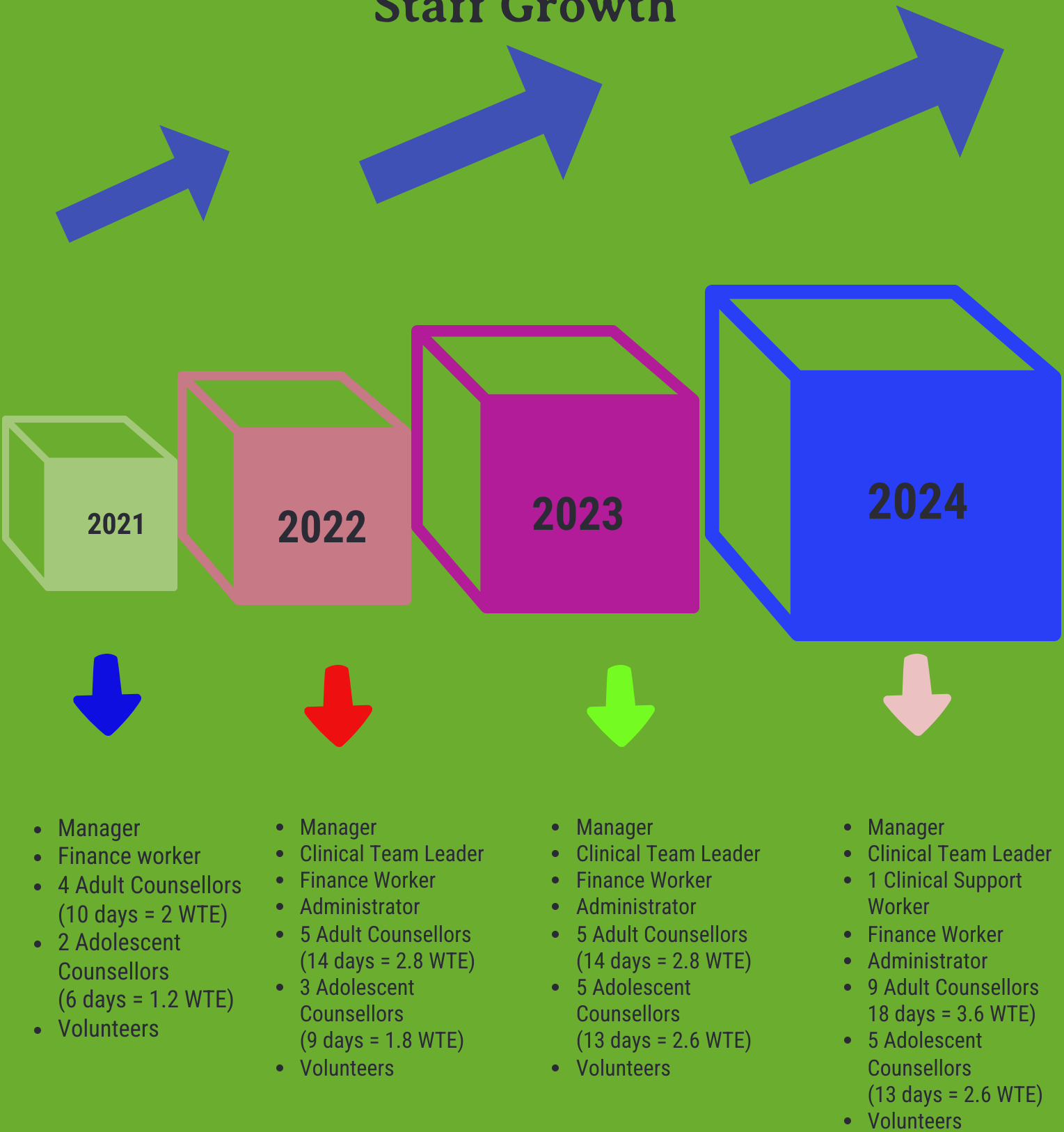
12th March
23rd October



ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Staff Growth



Volunteers

Wexford Rape Crisis have a number of volunteers who give up their time and expertise to benefit our service users. We are truly appreciative of the wonderful work they do for the organisation and we benefit enormously from their expertise and the effort they put into not only helping out from day to day in our centre but also the fundraising efforts.

Now lets meet some of our other wonderful Volunteers:



Shirley Cowan



I have been involved with crisis organisations as a volunteer for many years both in Dublin, where I'm from originally, and here in Wexford. I started volunteering with Womens Aid on their Helpline and also came across many female centred issues while volunteering with the Citizens Information Centre. I recently joined the team of the WEXRC and look forward to building up a strong relationship with everyone.

My current interests are hillwalking, being a member of the New Ross Ramblers, swimming and using the Sweaty Horsebox sauna in Ballinesker- when the weather is kinder!

I regularly attend shows at the Wexford Arts Centre and generally enjoy a good night out.

Thank you for inviting me to volunteer with you.

Shirley

Claire Walsh

I am married with two sons. I Worked in Quality in Danone for 34 years and Retired February 2022.

My hobbies include reading, walking and my dogs. I work 2 days a week in Murphys Barn Cafe and volunteer in WEXRC covering Reception when required and helping with various other projects including the annual Bucket Day Collection and curating the extensive book collection in the Centre.

Claire



Freda Quinn

I volunteer with many organisations nationwide and have been volunteering with WEXRC since 2012. It has been nice to see the Centre grow and expand over the years and that fortunately the public are more aware and open to using the service.

My hobbies include music, festivals and all things music!!!

Freda

Staff Self-Care

While helping and guiding our clients on their journey is always at the forefront, it is just as important that our wonderful staff engage in some self-care too. With this in mind the staff and volunteers are invited to take part in self-care days throughout the year. The self-care days are organised by staff members and are organised with self-care and team building in mind. Take a look at some of our self-care days which were organised throughout 2024:

13th March, 2024

Brunch in the local village of Rosslare Harbour, followed by a walk along the cliff (Cliff walk cancelled due to the ever unpredictable Irish weather).



12th June, 2024

A Walk through the Raven Forest and walk back along the beach. The team then met at a local hotel for a leisurely lunch.

Reflection Day 11th September, 2024



18th December, 2024

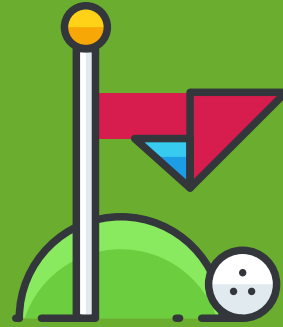
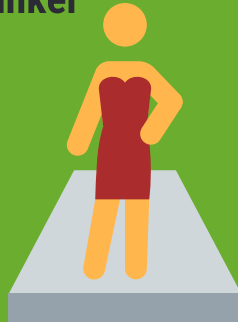


We had a lovely end to our year with a self-care day which consisted of the team meeting for yoga and reiki followed by a beautiful lunch where we all relaxed and soaked up the Christmas atmosphere.



Fund Raising Events 2024

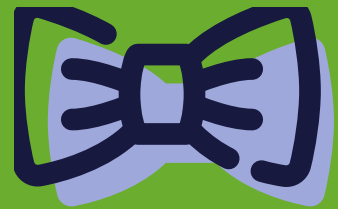
**Fashion Show February 2024
at The Coal Bunker**



**Rosslare Golf Club
Captains Four Ball
in aid of WEXRC,
July 2024**

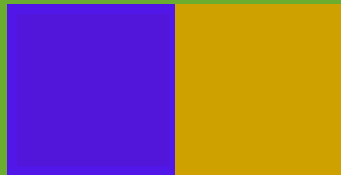


**WEXRC
Annual Bucket collection
13th December**



**Wexford Charity
Black Tie ball 13th
November**

**Fleadh Ceoil bucket
collection 7th
August**



**And thanks to all the
many local business
in Wexford Town who
kindly held
fundraisers on behalf
of WEXRC**



**Coffee morning held by Breeda
Dunne, September 2024**

Funders



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY



BNY MELLON



William Neville & Sons



Accounts

Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Services DAC

Profit and Loss Account

Financial year ended 31st December, 2024

	Note	2024 €	2023 €
Income		758,208	553,056
Gross Profit		758,208	553,056
Administrative expenses		(696,828)	(648,515)
Profit/(Loss)		61,380	(95,459)
Other interest receivable and similar income		155	39
Interest payable and similar expenses		-	(183)
Profit/(Loss) for the financial year		61,535	(95,603)

We are reporting a profit of €61,535 in 2024 compared to a loss of €95,603 in 2023. The loss in 2023 is covered by restricted reserves in 2022 of €100,368 (funds that were received in 2022 to spend on counselling services in 2023).

Taking this into account, the company would have a profit of €4,765 in 2023. Profits increased in 2024 due to increased funding from Tusla/Cuan (Dublin) and increased donations. The organisation is planning to spend this income in 2025 on more counselling hours to reduce our waiting lists.

Due to the demand for our services, we have significantly expanded our team, and not all our core roles are funded by the state. Each year WEXRC commences the year with a funding deficit, and has a continuing reliance on donations and fundraising to ensure core roles (not funded by the state) can continue to provide essential services to those impacted by domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



CUAN

An Ghníomhaireacht um Fhoréigean Baile,
Gnéasach agus Inscnebhunaithe

The Domestic, Sexual and
Gender-Based Violence Agency



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEES

Wexford



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY



William Neville & Sons

Wexford Rape Crisis,
The Rocks,
Maudlintown,
Wexford.

Free Phone: 1800 33 00 33

Office Phone: 053 9122722

Email: support@wexfordrapecrisis.com

Opening Hours: 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to
Friday (Some evening appointments available)



CHY Number 12420

