



# ST MICHAEL'S HOUSE

ANNUAL REPORT  
2023





# St. Michael's House

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# Message from The Chairperson

2023 was again a very busy year for all the staff and service users of St. Michael's House. The on-going struggle to recruit staff continued throughout the year. As usual the existing staff did their very best to maintain and deliver quality services throughout the organisation. It was vital at times to use the services of agencies to fill crucial gaps which is never the preferred option, due to the extra costs involved along with the resulting change in routine for some service users who find that transition difficult. My fellow Board of Directors and the subcommittees worked very closely with the Executive Management Team (EMT), providing guidance and support in line with the Strategic Plan 2022-2026 to ensure quality service delivery throughout the year. As an organisation with professional staff, where Directors have no role in the day to-day running of the company, the Board of St. Michael's House operates by devolving responsibility for the conduct of its business to a CEO and in turn through him/her to other staff. The Board is responsible for setting the strategic objectives of the organisation and for assessing the performance of management against those strategic objectives.



There were some significant developments in relation to the work of the Properties and Estates committee. The Seatown day service building was sold which will enable us to develop a state-of-the-art replacement building in a more suitable location in Swords. The Board also approved the sale of another day service building, Castle Industries which was no longer fit for purpose. This sale generated much needed resources which enabled the upgrading of other buildings which required attention.

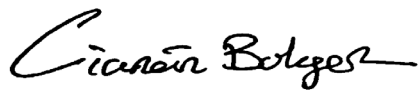


Two Directors stepped down during 2023 as their term had come to an end. I would like to take the opportunity to thank both Dr. Ailis Quinlan and Pat Cullen for their tireless contributions while serving as Board members. The Board were very lucky to recruit Dr. Jean Lane and Denis O' Connor who bring particular skill sets to enhance the work of the Board and the subcommittees they sit on.

COVID continues to have an impact on staff and service users alike but despite this many of the services are back to full-service provision which is down to the hard work and dedication of all staff involved. Despite all the challenges the staff of St. Michael's House encounter they continue to inspire by going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure service users are looked after and get their individuals needs met as much as possible.

As ever financial pressures were felt during 2023, despite the organisation adhering to the Public Spending Code, due in no short measure to the ongoing cost of living crisis and service users ever changing needs. St. Michael's House is in on-going dialogue with the HSE to address annual shortfall in funding and the accumulated deficit of the organization.

Finally, on behalf of myself and the Board of management, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the CEO, Liz Reynolds and her Executive Management Team who continue to deliver significant outcomes for the organization. We look forward to continuing to improve our services for the benefit of all our service users and their families into 2024.



Ciarán Bolger  
Chairperson

Your life, your rights, your choices  
Towards a rights-based model of service delivery



**Goal 01:**

**A Rights Based  
Service for Service Users**

**Goal 02:**

**Participation of Service Users &  
Families/Supporters**

**Goal 03:**

**Valuing & Investing in Staff**

**Goal 04:**

**Learning from and Influencing  
Government and Society**

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**Vision:**

A society in which people of every ability can live the life of their choosing.

**Mission:**

SMH works with Services Users to understand their needs and wishes and help them achieve their goals -

*"Your Life, Your Rights, Your Choices".*

**Values:**

Respect, Kindness, Honesty,  
Excellence, Creativity.

# Chief Executive's Review

The Annual Report for 2023 provides a comprehensive report of our activities throughout 2023, capturing moments of triumph, collaboration, and innovation. In 2023, we encountered significant challenges in areas such as funding, recruitment and retention of staff, transportation, infrastructure and ICT. These challenges tested our resilience but, despite these hurdles, our commitment to service users and their families never wavered. One of the greatest strengths of St. Michael's House is our ability to adapt and innovate in the face of adversity and as you turn the pages of this report, you will discover the story of our journey - a journey of overcoming obstacles, seizing opportunities, and, above all, staying true to our Strategy and mission of providing rights-based services.



To all the dedicated staff in St. Michael's House, the heart and soul of this organisation, I extend my deepest thanks. Your tireless efforts, day in and day out, ensure that we not only meet but exceed the needs of those who rely on us as you continue to deliver services with unparalleled compassion and professionalism.

Our achievements in 2023 would not have been possible without the leadership and vision of our Executive Team, who have guided their directorates with wisdom, integrity, and a shared commitment to excellence. Their leadership has been instrumental in navigating the complexities of our work and steering us toward new opportunities for growth and improvement.

In 2023, we took important steps to further strengthen our governance and accountability. This Annual Report reflects our dedication to transparency in all our operations, offering a clear and honest account of our financial performance. We remain steadfast in our commitment to the highest standards of governance, ensuring that decisions made are linked to our Strategic Plan and detailed annual performance indicators



I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the Chair, Mr Ciarán Bolger, the vice-Chair, Mr Ray McKenna, and all the Board of Directors. Their guidance, expertise, and selfless dedication have been invaluable. They have given generously of their time, ensuring that St. Michael's House remains a sustainable and resilience organisation.

As I look toward the future, I am acutely aware that our work is not just about providing services, it is about the rights of the individuals who use these services and their right to a suite of services at every stage of life. It is about creating a community where every person is valued, included, and treated with dignity and respect. Together, we are building a future where St. Michael's House continues to be a place of compassion, innovation, and excellence.

In closing, I want to thank each of you - service users, families, supporters, advocates and our colleagues in the HSE. You are the reason St. Michael's House is what it is today, and the reason we will continue to grow and will thrive in the years to come.



**Liz Reynolds**

**Chief Executive of St Michael's House**

# Annual Report 2023

As we embark on the journey of recounting our endeavors throughout the past year, it is with great pride and enthusiasm that we present the annual report of St. Michael's House (SMH) for the year 2023. At the core of our operations lies a commitment to excellence and integrity that runs through every facet of our organisation. Through the intricacies of an ever-evolving landscape, we have remained steadfast in our dedication to serving our community with compassion, respect, and innovation.

Our strategic goals, crafted to align with our mission, serve as the guiding principles that underpin our actions and initiatives. Each goal represents a cornerstone of our commitment to creating a better future for those we serve. From championing a rights-based service that upholds the dignity of every individual, to fostering meaningful partnerships with our service users, families, and supporters, our goals encapsulate the essence of inclusivity, empowerment, and collaboration. Furthermore, our dedication to valuing and investing in our staff and our unwavering commitment to continuous learning and improvement underscore our holistic approach to organisational success.

Throughout this 2023 Annual Report, we have structured our narrative around each of our strategic goals, providing a comprehensive overview of our achievements, challenges, and future aspirations. Through the lens of these goals, we aim to showcase the collective efforts of every department within our organisation, highlighting the integral role each one plays in advancing our mission. By breaking down our report into distinct sections aligned with our strategic goals, we hope to provide you with a detailed understanding of our organisational priorities and the strategies employed to achieve them. As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, we extend our gratitude to our dedicated service users, families, staff, volunteers, and supporters who have contributed to our continued growth and impact. Together, we remain committed to our mission of working with service users to understand their needs and wishes, while helping them to achieve their goals. As we delve deeper into each goal, we invite you to join us on a journey of reflection, celebration, and commitment to excellence.





# Leinster Rugby Partnership

St. Michael's House were thrilled to announce partnership with Leinster Rugby as their charity partner for the months of November and December 2023. SMH were nominated by long-time charity partner, Aircoach.

SMH were invited out to Leinster Rugby HQ for a photoshoot and an opportunity to pass the rugby ball around with Leinster players Josh van de Flier and Jimmy O'Brien. Leinster Rugby then paid a visit to our Ballymun HQ with Head Coach Leo Cullen, who took time to chat with and take photos with everyone. During the event, Leinster Rugby even presented some lucky service users with tickets to a rugby match!

Eamon de Búrca, Commercial & Partnerships Manager with Leinster Rugby said, "It's been hugely rewarding working with our commercial partners and our players and supporters to help bring our charity programme alive and this is another great example of this."

Karen Connolly on behalf of Aircoach, also commented, "We are truly honoured to be associated with St Michael's House and are delighted to be the link that joins them with Leinster Rugby."



# Goal 1: A Rights Based Service for Service Users

A first and primary goal of this Strategy is to build on our person-centred work and continue to move the organisation toward the delivery of services based on service users' rights. Since 2018 the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is the legal and overarching framework within which all services for people with disabilities are bound to operate.

## Adult Services

### Day Services

We are fully committed to providing high-quality day services aligned with the New Directions framework. To achieve this, we work collaboratively with the day opportunities office in the HSE. A cornerstone of our work is to deliver person centered services and supports, emphasising the importance of service user choice. We do this by implementing our Person-Centered Planning system.

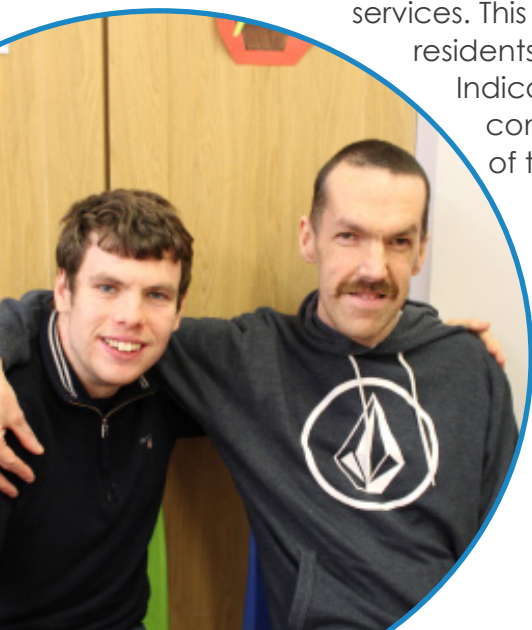
During 2023, a key priority was to continue to support service users to return to day services following the pandemic. A focus on staff recruitment, access to transport services, and upgrades to the built environment enabled more service users to receive their full contracted hours. We set a target to increase the number of individuals who were offered their full contracted hours by 15%. This target was achieved.

As part of our commitment to improving day services a focused review of the large day service locations was undertaken. This identified the need for upgrades to the built environment to better suit the needs of the service users. This commitment to periodic reviews and adjustments highlights our dedication to maintaining service excellence and responsiveness to the evolving needs of our service users.

In 2023 we also established two steering groups to implement the recommendations from two key SMH reports relating to day services. The *Abhainn Service's Steering Group* focuses on implementing recommendations relating to day services providing support to adults with an ASD diagnosis. The *Local Centre Review Steering Group* focus on providing high quality services and supports within small locations in communities all over the greater Dublin area.

### Transport

In our ongoing commitment to enhancing service delivery, a pilot transport initiative was launched to review transport arrangements for service users from within our residential services. This initiative was designed to manage and address complaints from residents who rely on transport to access their day service. Key Performance Indicators were established, including the resolution of 50% of transport complaints that were open in January 2023 and a targeted reduction of taxi costs by 20%. Each of these targets were achieved.





## Children & Young Persons Services

### Family Support

Continuing to enhance support for families was a primary focus in 2023, with 1,313 out of a total of 1,379 open families being assigned a dedicated keyworker. This initiative aims to support families in relation to their Individual Family Support Plan and to be a key point of contact for families. Staff development was a priority in this initiative, as evidenced by SMH's commitment to knowledge enhancement through the provision of a number of training sessions to staff in 2023. To gauge the impact of these efforts, a survey will be disseminated among a select pilot of families early in 2024, reflecting the organisation's dedication to continuous improvement and responsiveness to the evolving needs of the community.

### Independent Living

With a focus on independence skills, comprehensive strategies were implemented to empower service users. Information dissemination was a key component, marked by the delivery of four information sessions by the close of 2023. The Community Support Team played a pivotal role in fostering independent living, with 38 service users benefitting from their support. Moreover, the Training Unit/Marsfield witnessed active engagement, with 29 service users participating four to six nights per week, emphasising the commitment to consistent and tailored assistance. The production of our Horizons brochure and promotional video highlighted the effectiveness of the programme to date. Additionally, efforts extended to future planning and goal-setting, with the *My Life My Way* programme. The agreement to explore potential service expansion by the end of 2023 highlighted a planning approach to meet the evolving needs of those seeking independence skills development.

### Special National Schools

SMH is a patron for six Special National Schools across the greater Dublin area. The board of SMH has established a patron committee chaired by a member of the Board of Directors Máirtín Mac Aodha. A significant amount of work is ongoing at Patron level to support the development of robust and sustainable governance across the six schools through the development of each schools Boards of Management. The SMH Education Officer has supported the Patron and the School Principals throughout 2023. Some of the key areas of engagement have been in relation to the schools capital development plans for four of the SMH schools in response to the significant demands for school placements in the greater Dublin area. Each of the SMH schools have been engaged in a wide range of innovative and creative projects and activities throughout the year.

### Respite

SMH continued to provide a range of residential respite to adults and children across three centres throughout 2023 and also provided a range of supports services in the community. Our summer support project offered services to a number of school-going children during July and August 2023. Conscious of increasing demand, SMH has advocated for increased capacity in this area and in response to the HSE tendering for expressions of Interest for the provision of additional respite, SMH made three applications in 2023.



## Adult Clinical Services

### Assisted Decision Making and Consent

In 2023, the organisation focused on the development and implementation of an *Assisted Decision Making (ADM) Implementation Plan*, with a targeted approach towards a number of key areas. This included the provision of information and training/education to staff, service users and families. Additionally, a critical aspect of this goal involves the thorough review of structures, committees, and policies to ensure their alignment with and support for ADM implementation. Please see our feature piece on the Assisted Decision Making Act on page 20.

## Psychiatry

### Rights Based Services

In SMH, the primary goal revolves around establishing a rights-based service for our service users. The *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Intellectual Disability and Mental Health Intellectual Disability* (CAMHS ID/MHID) teams are dedicated to upholding the principles of consent by consistently seeking approval from service users and their families before initiating assessments and treatments. Beyond individual interactions, both teams actively engage in advocacy efforts to champion the rights of service users within the HSE and SMH, ensuring their voices are heard and respected. A key aspect of our commitment involves the continuous discussion of service user goals during weekly *Individual Care Plan* (ICP) meetings, particularly when these objectives align with the treatment goals. Despite our aspiration to provide equitable access to MHID and CAMHS ID, the realisation of this goal is contingent upon the availability of current resources. In navigating these challenges, our focus remains unwavering on delivering a service that not only meets the clinical needs of our service users but also upholds their fundamental rights and aspirations.

## Nursing

### Ageing

Significant achievements have been made in respect to the Ageing initiatives at SMH from 2020 to 2023. By the fourth quarter of 2023, our first objective to collate SMH Ageing initiatives had been successfully realised, with the initiatives collected and listed for comprehensive documentation. Moving forward, our goal for 2024 is to define ageing and changing needs among individuals with intellectual disabilities. The completion of a literature search is an integral part of this process, with a steering group actively engaged in reaching a consensus on the most suitable definition.





Additionally, we aim to identify relevant data groups within this workstream, including Emergency Department (ED) presentations, Flu and Covid screening, Falls, and other pertinent factors. This initiative involves the monthly sharing of ED presentation data with the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the annual collation of data on Covid and Flu vaccinations. These practices contribute to a robust understanding of the evolving healthcare needs within this demographic.

Lastly, our commitment extends to a comprehensive 5-year plan addressing changing needs, with the objective to develop this plan achieved by the end of 2024. This completed plan has been relayed to our staff, reflecting our dedication to proactive planning and responsiveness to the dynamic nature of the ageing initiatives and changing needs within our community.

## Quality, Safety, and Service Improvement

### Person-Centred Planning

In our ongoing commitment to process improvement, we set out to identify enhancements in our Person-Centered Planning (PCP) process. The achievement of this objective is marked by a comprehensive review of the Assessment of Need, a pivotal component in ensuring the efficacy of our planning procedures. Additionally, we have taken strides towards inclusivity and collaboration by establishing PCP stakeholder groups, fostering active engagement among various contributors. The establishment of a dedicated PCP Steering Group further enhances our commitment to refining and optimising our planning processes.

### New Directions

*New Directions* is the HSE's approach to supporting adults with disabilities who use day services in Ireland. A key strategic objective revolves around the implementation of *New Directions*, with a focus on achieving outcomes defined by the HSE. Our achievements in this area are significant, as evidenced by the reinvigoration of the *New Directions Support Group* through a series of initiatives, including webinars, workshops, and service-level support. The consistent support provided throughout 2023, coupled with the remarkable submission of approximately 98% of EASI reports in 2022, reflects our dedication to realising the objectives outlined in *New Directions*.

In aligning ourselves with national bodies, our objective to create a position paper outlining how SMH will collaborate with these entities has seen notable progress. We initiated an exploration of Quality of Life measures as part of this process and are currently in the development phase of the position paper. This forward-looking approach highlights our commitment to transparent and effective collaboration with national bodies, positioning ourselves strategically to contribute meaningfully to the broader healthcare landscape.





# World Autism Awareness Day 2024 Celebrations

On 2 April, 2023 the team held a vibrant and inclusive event to mark World Autism Awareness Day, inviting individuals of all abilities to participate. One of the highlights of the day included a visit from the Dublin Fire Brigade. Throughout the event, various activities catered to multiple interests and sensory needs. Attendees had the opportunity to engage in calming yoga sessions, explore a soothing sensory room designed to stimulate the senses gently, and immerse themselves in a room filled with video games. Additionally, an art exhibition showcased creative talents, fostering appreciation and understanding. This day of celebration not only raised awareness but also provided a welcoming space for everyone to come together and celebrate diversity.



# STRENGTHENING DISABILITIES

PROJECT UPDATE | 2023

In 2022, St Michael's House secured funding from the HSE under the governments "Transforming Lives" reform process with St Michael's House receiving a one-off grant to fund their Strengthening Disabilities Project 2022-2024.

Aligning with the SMH Strategic Plan 2022-2026, the Strengthening Disabilities project aim to create an active rights-based culture within St Michael's House (with a particular focus on the UNCRPD Articles 12 and 19) and the necessary supporting structures to implement and sustain these successfully.



## TOTAL COMMUNICATION STRAND

Using a Total Communication approach the SLT team have developed & implemented a staff training package to support our service users.



## STRENGTHENING RIGHTS STRAND

Collaborating with OTC, the team have developed & implemented a rights-based training programme for all staff to develop a rights-based culture in SMH



## VOLUNTEER STRAND

Led by the Volunteer Co-Ordinator, the team have developed & implemented a robust volunteer network within SMH that can support service users achieve their goals

## TOTAL COMMUNICATION

**60%**

Day Services  
completed training

An online Total Communication training module was developed and is available to all staff

**262**

SU Communication  
Styles returned to SLT

An adapted training was developed for staff support adults with autism. This was piloted with Abhainn Edenmore.

## STRENGTHENING RIGHTS

A rights-based training module was developed & implemented for staff. This training is supporting structures & supports to roll-out training to families and service users.

**40%**

Overall staff target  
training completed

## VOLUNTEERING

A comprehensive volunteer policy was developed & implemented within SMH.

Over 30 volunteers have enrolled in our volunteer programme.

From May to October 2023, 30 corporates volunteered to complete over 30 projects for our residential & day services worth over €47,000 in donations.



**30**  
volunteers



**30**  
projects

## STRENGTHENING DISABILITIES PROJECT TEAM

Tara Molloy | Director of Support  
Services & SD Project Manager

Connie Madden | Total Communication  
Laura Dowling | Strengthening Rights  
Rhoda Judge | Volunteer Coordinator

 [strengtheningdisabilities@smh.ie](mailto:strengtheningdisabilities@smh.ie)

# Volunteering in St Michael's House

## Step Forward and Volunteer Programme

Led by a dedicated Volunteer Co-ordinator and taking a community network approach, the "Step Forward and Volunteer Programme" was established as part of the St Michael's House Strengthening Disabilities Project.

By involving local people as volunteers, a robust volunteer network was created to support service users achieve their goals. Many volunteers from different backgrounds using their own skills and interests applied to the programme and have developed meaningful friendships and worked together to achieve the goals of the people we support.

Meet Jenny and Gretta who met in February 2023 and have developed a supportive and positive friendship.

### Gretta

#### **Tell me a little about yourself and why you like to volunteer**

I was always interested in volunteering, When I retired, I began volunteering with several different organisations. I really enjoyed it but then Covid came and sadly put a stop to that.

I really missed volunteering after Covid and I wanted to volunteer closer to home with someone who enjoyed the same things that I enjoyed, like knitting and crafting.

#### **What drew you to volunteer as part in St Michael's House Step Forward programme?**

What drew me to volunteer with SMH was the person that I was going to be linked with, we liked the same things and thought we would be a great fit.





## **Tell us about your volunteer experience in St Michael's House**

It was a very different experience to the volunteering I did before as this was the first time I volunteered on a one-to-one basis.

Jenny and I meet every week, we have completed a lot of different craft projects such as scarves, tote bags and Christmas wreaths. We are always doing something different. I really look forward to my days with Jenny.

## **What have you gained personally from becoming part of St Michael's House befriending programme?**

I have made a new friend and I am very happy – I just really enjoy the time we spend together. I love visiting with Jenny.

## **What would you say to people who are thinking about volunteering with St Michael's House?**

Go for it – the application process is very detailed and can take time as you have to be garda vetted (rightly so). There is an online training course to complete and Rhoda was a great support with that. I love volunteering with Jenny so I say just go for it!

## **Jenny**

### **Tell us about the first time you met with Gretta**

I love when Gretta comes here, it is great fun.

### **What do you do together when you meet up?**

We knit and we chat. Gretta made matching bags for our knitting and I love it. I have made loads of things. I wear the scarf I made on the cold mornings, and I made a Christmas wreath for my brother and I. I also made a cushion and a blanket. I'm very happy

### **What is the best thing about your new friendship with Gretta?**

I just love when Gretta comes over and we watch the soaps too. We are now knitting squares and going to make a blanket for the hospice.

To find out more about the Step Forward Volunteer Programme contact Rhoda at [rhoda.judge@smh.ie](mailto:rhoda.judge@smh.ie)



# Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2015 was amended and signed into law by the President on 17 December 2022.

## What is it about?

This Act establishes a modern legal framework to assist decision-making by adults who may have difficulty making decisions without support.

## St Michael's House & the Act

To prepare for the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022, St Michael's House established a multi-disciplinary steering group to support the understanding and implementation of the Act across the organisation for the people we support, our staff, families, and carers.

An ongoing process for successful implementation of the Act across the organisation has been a commitment to ensure the principles of Assisted Decision-Making (ADM) are incorporated into all St Michael's House policies. To begin, a particular focus was placed on updating our Service User Money Policy to provide the people we support with increased choice and control relating to their personal finances. This policy review was successfully completed in consultation with our service users who were instrumental in ensuring the updated Service User Money Policy focussed on individualised supports rather than a blanket protection model.

## Staff Preparation

The ADM Steering Group facilitated and hosted a series of webinars for our staff members including

- Information webinar with Áine Flynn (Director of Decision Support Services)
- What do the Principles of ADM mean for me as a staff member?
- How does the Person-Centred-Planning (PCP) process support Will and Preference?
- Building Decision-Making Capacity and what does this mean?
- In addition to the information webinar series for staff, the ADM Steering Group, in consultation with service users, created a suite of Easy Read documentation that was distributed to all centres and residential houses to provide information on the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022.



## Key Achievements

- Staff and service users were invited to contribute to a nationwide HSE eLearning ADM module that is used widely across disability and health services.
- Staff members from the ADM Steering Group contributed and wrote three chapters of "The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015: Personal and Professional Reflections" published by HSE and Decision Support Services (DSS)
- Service users from our PCP Consultation Group completed training from NUIG "Getting to grips with the Assisted Decision-Making Act" and now provide peer-to-peer support.
- SMH ADM Policy and ADM online training is in place.
- We held a family information session with Áine Flynn (DSS) and completed two postal drops to families on the Act.
- We ran three face-to-face ADM training events for staff across November 2023 - January 2024.
- An accessible webinar with key information was held with Service Users.
- We developed a support structure for staff to understand/implement the principles of ADM by creating and operationalising an escalation pathway via the ADM Steering Group
- Seven SMH staff took places on the National HSE ADM Mentorship Programme (one mentor and six mentees) and will continue this learning and development opportunity into 2024.





## Goal 2: Participation of Service Users & Families/Supporters

One of the major findings in our Strategic Plan research involved the process of speaking with service users and families/supporters. Both groups expressed their wishes to be involved in key planning and decision-making. It is logical and pragmatic and in the interest of service users to develop and adopt more participative models of service provision given the challenges services will face in meeting current and future need as highlighted by the Disability Capacity Review (2021).

### Adult Services

In our commitment to placing service users at the core of our service delivery, we emphasise a collaborative approach that respects their individual rights and experiences. Additionally, recognising the crucial role families and supporters play, we consider them essential contributors to our service delivery efforts.

#### Service User Forums

Firstly, we focused on establishing service user forums in day services to facilitate feedback on service provision. Key performance indicators (KPIs) include the development of support materials for these forums, with achievements encompassing the successful creation and circulation of materials such as terms of reference, consent forms, guidance, and posters. Additionally, the goal aimed for 25% of day services to host a forum in 2023, with an impressive achievement of 70% having conducted sharing meetings, forums, or chat sessions during the year.

Secondly, we aimed to strengthen residents' forums in residential houses. The KPIs include 80% of houses hosting six residents' forums, with the achievement reflecting that 80% of residential locations held formal residents' meetings in 2023, and an additional 10% had bespoke arrangements.

#### Families

We also focused on engaging families in decision-making. Our KPIs involve developing nine case studies on family engagement, with an achievement of 10 case studies. Additionally, an ongoing effort aims to include the voices of families in all annual reports in residential services.

#### Information Sharing

Lastly, we focused on creating opportunities for service users to participate in information sharing. The KPI of providing four opportunities for service users to share their stories and experiences saw achievements with four hosted sessions in 2023. The related goal of providing quarterly updates to service users and families achieved four updates for each quarter in 2023.

These initiatives collectively reflect our commitment to involving service users and families in decision-making processes, promoting transparency, and continuously improving our service delivery.



# Children and Young Person Services

## Family Forums

Over the span of November 2022 to April 2023, SMH successfully carried out a total of 10 facilitated open engagements with families marking a period of active involvement and collaboration to establish the Children and Young Persons Services Network Family Forums. An evaluation report for these engagements was completed, providing valuable insights and feedback in advance of launching the forums.

Following this period of engagement, a formal election process was enacted resulting in the election of eight Family Representatives. The eight family members represent a diverse range of perspectives from across our four Childrens Networks.

By the end of 2023, SMH conducted three Family Forums, with one outstanding event in the pipeline for early 2024. These Family Forums serve as a crucial platform for family participation and engagement fostering a sense of community and allowing for the exchange of ideas. Additionally, ongoing evaluation of these forums will contribute to their continuous improvement.

In line with our communication strategy, meetings with Family Representatives by the Childrens Directorate took place and will continue in 2024. This was complemented by the distribution of eight newsletters. Furthermore, we are actively working towards the development of a website for each Childrens Disability Network which will serve as user-friendly platforms for information dissemination and community engagement.

## Individualised Family Service Plans

As part of our ongoing commitment to service quality, we sought feedback on all new Individualised Family Service Plans (IFSPs). This initiative highlights our dedication to ensuring that the needs of families are accurately addressed and met through our services.

Recognizing the importance of direct engagement with families, we have organised frontline service events catering to families in Respite and Residential care. These events not only provide crucial support but also contribute to building a sense of community among those we serve.

## Create Project

Lastly, our commitment to inclusivity is evident in the engagement of service users and their families in the Create Project. This initiative seeks to involve the community in shaping and contributing to the development of our programmes and services, ensuring that the voices of those we serve play a central role in our organisational evolution.



# Adult Clinical Services

## Total Communication

One of our main objectives has been to develop and implement a comprehensive education package by the Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) department, designed to equip all staff with the skills necessary to support Service Users using a Total Communication approach.

In 2023, we were able to achieve the following:

- Online Total Communication (TC) Training content has been successfully developed and launched
- Face to Face Level 1 Training in TC content has been developed and successfully launched.
- Face to Face Level 2 Training in TC, supporting people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and Level 2 Training in TC supporting people with Complex Needs (PMLD) – content for both of these has been thoughtfully developed.
- Progress in staff training is notable, with 60% of units having completed their Face to Face Level 1 TC Training. Additionally, 8% are awaiting a training date from SLT, while 10% have opted for online training. As of end of 2023, 22% are yet to request this training.
- In support of these efforts, four Lámh Training sessions have been conducted, resulting in the training of 58 staff members, with more sessions planned for the future.



## Public and Patient Involvement

Our second aim has been to investigate what a service user and family-focused Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) framework looks like for SMH. An initial exploratory report has been successfully compiled, laying the foundation for further developments. A paper summarising this learning and outlining a recommended Service User and Family Focused PPI framework is currently in progress and will be developed by the newly appointed SMH PhD student this year.

## Workshops

We are also committed to promoting the role of individuals with Intellectual Disabilities in engaging in research at both local and national levels, influencing the research agenda at SMH. As part of the SMH/UCD PPI Ignite Project, adults in SMH have actively engaged in paid roles, with staff support, contributing to the planning and development of a series of accessible information and workshops focused on the theme of 'What is Research?' These researchers took the lead in a Research Study Day at the Hilton Hotel in November, showcasing their work and supporting their peers in gaining a deeper understanding. Furthermore, they will co-develop our project report for UCD in the New Year, further solidifying their role in shaping research initiatives.

## Psychiatry

Our commitment to the active involvement of service users in their treatment remains a priority, as we strive to ensure their participation in planning and decision-making processes. Recognising the integral role families and supporters play in the care of our service users, we emphasise their inclusion through various means. In the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for Intellectual Disabilities (CAMHS ID), this involvement is manifested through family therapy, providing a dedicated space for collaborative discussions. In other cases, a continuous and appropriate engagement of families and supporters is maintained, acknowledging their significance in the overall care framework.



In pursuit of holistic well-being, service users actively participate in both group and individual therapies. Empowering them to take charge of their mental health journey, we facilitate a process where individuals have the autonomy to articulate their mental health goals. Subsequently, we work collaboratively with them, providing support and guidance to help achieve these self-determined objectives. This approach not only fosters a sense of agency among service users but also strengthens the partnership between individuals and our mental health care team.

## Staff Education, Training, and Development

The commitment to making education and training on rights accessible to all service users, families, and staff is a multifaceted initiative with several key milestones.

### Staff

Firstly, in addressing staff, the training programme aimed at achieving a target completion rate of 80% for frontline staff and 20% for shared services staff is progressing successfully. The project has been meticulously scoped, with training modules developed and consultations completed. Notably, this comprehensive training is on track to be offered to approximately 700 staff members, positioning the project well to meet its target by the conclusion of the project period in 2024.

### Service Users

Secondly, in relation to service users, foundational work for training has been completed, and materials have been developed. The rollout is set to commence in November 2023, with the ambitious goal of offering training to 100% of service users and achieving a target uptake of 70%. This strategic approach ensures that service users are equipped with the knowledge and understanding of their rights.

### Families

Lastly, for families in the SMH database(s), the initiative is progressing with foundational work completed and materials currently in development. The rollout is planned for 2024, initiating with a pilot of face-to-face sessions and online sessions. This phased approach allows for a thoughtful and thorough introduction of training to 100% of families associated with SMH, reinforcing the organization's commitment to empowering both service users and their families through comprehensive rights education.

## Quality, Safety, and Improvement

### Service User Forums

The organisational objective focuses on achieving a service user representation and participative processes that are fit for purpose. In pursuit of this goal, the Service User EMT Forum was successfully established in 2022. The forum has held four meetings to date, which are described in further detail on the following page.

### Case Studies

Another one of our aims is to encourage participation through the development of case studies for sharing and learning. Noteworthy progress has been made in this regard, with service users actively participating in the Annual National Sharing Day held in 2022. This event provided a valuable opportunity for the sharing of experiences and insights, contributing to a culture of shared learning within SMH. Additionally, service users have actively engaged in the HSE Patient and Public Partnership Conference, further solidifying their role in shaping and influencing healthcare practices at a broader, national level. These achievements highlight SMH's commitment to fostering meaningful participation and collaboration with service users in various forums.



# Service User Forum Update

In 2021 St Michael's House sought to engage with all stakeholders in the development of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. It was recognised that consultation with service users was key to informing the four-year plan. Building on the success of the consultation process the Executive Management Team Service User Forum was established in 2022.

## Purpose of Forums

One of the main purposes for this forum was to ensure the views and voices of adults who use St Michael's House services are reflected in the organisation policies and how services are delivered. It also provided service users with a platform to raise issues that are important to them.



## Meetings

Three meetings were held online via St Michael's House Activity Hub from October 2022 to February 2023 with a move to in-person meetings from April 2023. The meeting themes are chosen in advance in collaboration with service users and have included;

- "Who are the Executive Management Team" hosted by CEO, Liz Reynolds
- "Day Services | What is working well and what is not working well"
- "Education & Learning | What is working well and what is not working well"



Meetings are hosted through a Total Communication approach (e.g.) Lámh, visual supports, easy to read supporting documents, staff support, assistive technology etc., to support all adults attending the meetings. Over 20 centres have met with the CEO and members of the Executive Management Team in person in 2023.

Issues and actions raised from these meetings include employment opportunities, active retirement and planning, access to transport and education and learning.

## Outcomes

Arising from discussions at the Service User EMT Forums, it was decided to create two new sub-groups, (i) Aging Sub-Group, and (ii) Buildings Sub-Group led by Director of Nursing and Director of Estates whereby service users and members of the EMT can discuss and collaborate on the delivery of services from 2024 and beyond.



## Going Forward

Further sub-groups are in the development process for 2024 to include Active Retirement Sub-Group and Day Service Sub-Group.

These forums are an important process in the implementation of St Michael's House Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 with reference to Goal 2 | Participation of Service Users and Families.

# ST MICHAEL'S HOUSE ACTIVITY HUB, SPORTS & LEISURE

## Activity Hub | Connect Engage & Learn



### 1 New Accessible Website

New Activity Hub Website officially launched by Minister Anne Rabbitte TD in 2023

28

Service users employed to co-design new website focussing on design, navigation, accessible information & improved digital literacy



2,552 Activity Hub Users 2023

73%

Attended Health & Wellbeing Classes

14%

Attended Social & Special Interest Events

13%

Attended Information & Education events

## Community Sport & Physical Activity Engagement, Health & Social Inclusion

4,745 Attendees to sport & physical activities in 2023

### Weekly Classes



Football



Multi-Sports



Bowling



Cara Dementia Group



Chair Activities



Gym Programming



Golf

### 2023 Initiatives



Soccer Tournament in Belfast with Shelbourne FC



European Week of Sport Participation



30 Day Movement Challenge



Older Adult Active Group for people with early signs of dementia & falls risk



DCU Adapted Physical Activity Student Programme

## Leisure Centre



2,881 Swims recorded for 2023



1

Fitness Studio Installed

## Partnerships



- ▶▶ Fingal Sports Partnership
- ▶▶ Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Partnership
- ▶▶ Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Sports Partnership
- ▶▶ Active Disability Ireland
- ▶▶ Active Cities



# Goal 3: Valuing and Investing in Staff

Goal 3 in our Strategic Plan requires building on our current excellent workforce and continuing to develop a values-driven, educated, skilled, committed and resilient workforce. This requires the continual development of strategies to value, support and invest in our employees to make St. Michael's House an Employer of Choice.

## Adult Services

### Staff Engagement

Our commitment to the growth and success of our workforce is underscored by our goal to ensure that our employees are equipped with the necessary skills and education relevant to their respective roles. This initiative aims to foster a workforce that is not only proficient in their duties but also continuously evolving in alignment with their professional development.

In line with enhancing staff engagement, a key objective is the implementation of engaging and positively focused staff engagement initiatives. As a measurable target, we have set the KPI of hosting three Person in Charge (PIC) forums per year. This goal was successfully achieved in 2023, with three PIC forums conducted, providing a platform for meaningful discussions and collaborative problem-solving.

### Professional Development

Another pivotal goal in our strategic plan is the development of a talent framework that prioritises lifelong learning, offering substantial support to staff for their professional and personal growth. To gauge progress, our KPI involves creating opportunities and experiences for ten existing staff members to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for promotion within SMH.

The achievements in this aspect are noteworthy, with 20 additional staff members successfully trained and coached to conduct six-monthly audits. Additionally, six staff members have undergone training and coaching to carry out competency-based recruitment, contributing to our comprehensive talent development framework.

Furthermore, two staff members are actively engaged in providing Human Resource Information System (HRIS) support, showcasing our commitment to leveraging technology for efficient HR processes. Additionally, two staff members are actively participating in Staff Education and Training Forums, emphasising our dedication to continuous learning and knowledge-sharing within SMH.

These accomplishments highlight our commitment to fostering a skilled, engaged, and continually evolving workforce, ensuring that our employees are well-prepared for both current and future challenges in their professional journey.

## Children and Young Person Services

A substantial commitment has been made towards the enhancement of our network staff through a significant investment in Strengths Needs Analysis and training. This initiative, funded at the national level, demonstrates our dedication to providing tailored training programmes to address the specific needs of our network staff. As part of our strategic planning, a comprehensive business case is currently under development, with anticipated implementation in 2024.



## Leadership Training

In our pursuit of continuous improvement and learning, reflective practice pilots have been initiated with Clinical Directorate Nurse Managers (CDNMs) and frontline staff. Recognising the pivotal role played by Clinical Directorate Nurse Managers (CDNMs), a collaborative effort between the HSE and the Royal College of Surgeons has resulted in the implementation of leadership training specifically designed for CDNMs. This initiative aims to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their leadership roles within the healthcare system.

## Team Development

In fostering a positive and collaborative work environment, team development workshops are conducted biannually. These workshops serve as a platform for team members to enhance their collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills. By investing in these workshops, we aim to strengthen the bonds within our teams and cultivate a culture of continuous improvement.

To address the holistic well-being of our teams, monthly team-based well-being initiatives have been established. These initiatives are designed to promote a healthy work-life balance and create a supportive and positive workplace environment. By prioritising the well-being of our teams, we aim to enhance job satisfaction and overall performance within the organisation.

## Adult Clinical Services

During the first six months of 2023, the monitoring of key performance indicators was effectively conducted through fortnightly meetings between the Director of Adult Clinical Services (DoACS) and the Human Resources (HR) team. A report was produced as a result of these meetings, providing valuable insights into the onboarding of clinical staff during this period. This monitoring process is set to continue into 2024 ensuring ongoing assessment and improvement of organisational effectiveness.

Another strategic objective has focused on recording the numbers of students on placement across disciplines throughout the calendar year of 2023.. The Heads of Discipline submit this information to the DoACS on a monthly basis, contributing to our ongoing efforts in monitoring and improving student placement experiences. Additionally, the identification of barriers and enablers in student placements is a key aspect of this initiative. The DoACS actively engages in national-level discussions through the National Health and Social Care Professions (HSCP) Office, ensuring that insights from SMH contribute to broader discussions on optimising student placements across the country. This achievement aligns with our commitment to continuous improvement and collaboration within the broader healthcare community.



## Psychiatry

The significance of reflection and training in fostering team cohesion and staff retention cannot be overstated. Recognising the importance of ongoing development, both of our teams engage in external facilitation sessions every twelve weeks. These sessions serve as a dedicated space for collective reflection, collaboration, and skill-building. In addition to these team-wide initiatives, individual staff members benefit from monthly supervision, further ensuring their professional growth and well-being are prioritised.

A key focus of our commitment to continuous learning is evident in the training endeavors undertaken by our staff in Mental Health Intellectual Disability (MHID) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Intellectual Disability (CAMHS ID). Notably, staff members have actively participated in training programs such as PASSAD training, Psychopharmacology training, (British Association of Psychopharmacology) and ADM training throughout the year. This investment in training reflects our dedication to equipping our team with the latest knowledge and skills required for providing high-quality care to our service users.

Furthermore, our commitment extends to the staff in residential houses and day services who play a crucial role in caring for our service users. To ensure they are well-prepared, we provide comprehensive training on mental health conditions, their presentations, and various treatment modalities. In situations of complexity, we go a step further by offering staff formulations to enhance their understanding and decision-making. It is integral to our mission to support staff navigating complex situations, especially those advocating for the needs of the service users in their care. This multifaceted approach to staff support and training underscores our commitment to providing the best possible care to our service users and maintaining a resilient and well-equipped workforce.

## Staff Education, Training, and Development

### Training Delivery

In terms of training delivery in 2023 the SETDD provided 8,256 training modules/programmes to c2000 staff through YourOTC online training portal, in-person training and blended learning across 25 content areas. In addition, 259 new staff members were processed through the induction course (17 modules), training was made available to 239 school staff, both online training and in-person, 56 students on placements were trained through YourOTC, 178 relief staff were identified, and a training plan implemented, and 199 parents were enrolled through YourOTC for courses on transitioning service users to new schools. c3,300 queries were received and addressed the department helpdesk.

### Minimum Required Training

In our commitment to continuous improvement and staff development, one of our key goals has been the development and introduction of role-based Minimum Required Training (MRT). This initiative aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of our workforce, ensuring that each role receives the necessary training. To facilitate accessibility, information on role based MRT has been circulated to all staff and made available on the Intranet and Your OTC platform. The achievement for 2023 includes successfully attaining the target compliance rate of 70%, setting the stage for an increased target of 75% in 2024. To ensure the achievement and maintenance of compliance levels regular auditing is undertaken and communicated.





### Human Resource Information System

Another strategic goal revolves around supporting all staff in utilising the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to track their own MRT training. Despite the delay in the full roll-out of the HRIS, manual systems have been maintained to ensure continuity. Training inputs were scoped and developed during 2023 and are scheduled for roll-out by mid- 2024, marking progress toward achieving our goal of increased average compliance in MRT training across all roles.

### Department Review

The objective to review the capacity, activity, and planned activity of the Staff Education, Training, and Development Department (SETDD) aims to create a more robust and future proofed SETDD to accommodate planned growth. A significant body of work was undertaken in 2023 toward the production of a report and action-plan in 2024.

### SMH Preferred Education and Training Programmes

To bolster our commitment to education, another goal involves the availability of a database containing preferred education (undergraduate and postgraduate) and training for key roles by the end of 2026, with annual targets of 25%. Progress has been made, aligning with the established timeline and plan.

### Professional Development

Our dedication to fostering professional education and development is evident in our goal to increase funding applications and approvals by 10% annually. Encouragingly, we achieved the 10% target for 2023, underscoring our commitment to supporting the continuous growth and development of our workforce.

### Revision and Enhancement of Existing Training and Internal Trainer Panels

A number of significant reviews were completed and/or commenced in 2023 including procurement tender for First Aid training, re-development of SMH TIPS training (Training Interventions Promoting Safety), Manual Handling training (including person moving and using hoists) and Digital Literacy. Trainer panels in TIPS and Manual Handling were reaccredited and additional trainers recruited.

### Human Resource Information System

A key objective for St Michael's House Strategic Goal 3 is to continually develop strategies to value, support and invest in our staff. In 2023, our Director of Support Services, with the support of a multi-disciplinary project team, continued to project-manage the implementation of a complete workforce management software HRIS system for the organisation.

The organisation-wide rollout of HRIS in 2024/2025 will provide the tools and processes required to increase efficiencies, accommodate variable staffing needs, streamline internal processes, and encourage employee self-service (e.g.) training, annual leave.



# Nursing Posts 2023

The Nursing Department was successful in securing two nursing posts- Advanced Nurse Practitioner Children and Adolescent Mental Health of Intellectual Disability (ANP-CAMHS-ID) and Clinical Education Facilitator (CEF)

## Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)

The Department of Health recommend that the HSE maintain the target of 3% advanced practitioners in the nursing/midwifery workforce as an initial critical. In 2023, SMH secured a third ANP post - ANP CAMHS-ID. This post commenced in September 2023.

The ANP CAMHS-ID will provide specialist nursing supports to children and adolescents under the care of the CAMHS-ID in St. Michael's House. The CAMHS-ID team currently provide mental health services to children from 0-18 years that have a moderate, severe/profound intellectual disability. Under Progressing Disabilities Services and in line with A Vision for Change (2006) the team have a catchment area in CHO9 that supports young people under the Children's Network Disability Teams in Finglas (HSE), North Inner City (HSE), Clontarf (CRC), Swords (CRC), Balbriggan (CRC), Ballymun (SMH), Killbarrack (SMH), Coolock (SMH) and Coastal (HSE). The total young people in this catchment area as per the 2016 census was 458,401. The ANP will support the young person through their mental health journey from referral to discharge, providing care that is designed to improve safety, quality and is tailored to the needs of the individual and their families. The many facets of the role will include assessment, formulation, programme development, family psychoeducation, medication management, physical health monitoring and, consultation to other services. They will develop of a nurse led sleep support pathway that will be accessible to all children under the care of the CAMHS-ID team in St. Michael's House (CH09). This pathway will be from the point of referral to discharge. It will include assessment, development of an evidence

informed sleep programme and plan, medication treatment and monitoring, psychoeducation, liaison and collaborative work with the CDNT and alliance health care professionals, skills development, strategy development and implementation. This pathway can be completed in collaboration with or in isolation from other interventions being offered by the CAMHS-ID team. This is depending on the case formulation and the capacity of the child's support system at any given time.

Each nurse on a ANP pathway will take up to two years to qualify in their specialism after undergoing significant further study.





## Clinical Education Facilitator (CEF)

Through the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU) we were successful in our application for the post of CEF for one year. Service users with long term medical conditions such as epilepsy, osteoporosis, frequent aspiration pneumonia, constipation, scoliosis, poly pharmacy and many more conditions, experience a level of complexity that requires intensive nursing supports to meet such changes. This includes medical conditions; cancer, heart failure, mobility decline, urology conditions of older persons and deconditioning post hospital admission with recent statistics on SMH hospital admissions reflecting this change. Deconditioning and post hospital recovery required a MDT

group development to support service users of SMH in recent years, to ensure we meet our older service user needs. The time sensitive training requirements will reduce the service user's hospital admission as training needs of staff can be responded to quickly to ensure safe transition of care to community. The CEF will work in liaison with the *Nurse Practice Development Coordinator* to provide coordinated approach to clinical nurse education and the development of clinical skills for practice.

The role of *Clinical Education Facilitator* will enable registered nurses to understand their professional responsibilities for their clinical practice. This will be achieved through stronger focus on the framework of Policies, Education and Competency Development. The *Clinical Education Facilitator* (CEF) is a CNM2 graded post to focus solely on educational and support needs of nursing staff. The CEF has a pivotal role in fostering an atmosphere conducive to learning and coordinating and managing education. This coordinating of nursing education will ensure the provision of a quality clinical learning environment for post registration nurses and the undergraduate student nurses learning in practice.





# Student Nurse Placements & Partnership with DCU

St Michael's House established a partnership with DCU in 2021 to provide clinical placement and learning opportunities to their undergraduate student nurses.

Currently St Michael's House has three cohorts of student RNIDs, 28 in total. Each student is provided support from the CPC/SALO and also the NPDC.

St Michael's House also offers clinical placements to external disciplines of nursing and to seven external services. Annually we accommodate approximately 250 students with placements within our service.

Over the last two years St Michael's House has audited and set up over 40 areas of placement opportunities and trained over 80 preceptors to support students.

Students undertaking the bachelor undergraduate programme in intellectual disability are offered a wide range of learning from St Michael's House. Areas of clinical learning are available to students are; child and adolescent, care of the adult and older person, preschool and special national school, specialist ID services, individualized services, CNS/ANP exposure and end of life care.

Students are provided with a vast array of placement opportunities within the four year programme to enrich their learning and development.

Our goal is to ensure students feel well supported, are offered a variety of learning opportunities and achieve competency to become registered nurses.

Currently we are planning our internship programme as we will have our first group of intern students come January 2025.

## Some feedback from students who are completing their training with St Michael's House:

*"Since I have started my studying as an intellectual disability student nurse with St Michaels House, I have had many learning opportunities and experiences that I have enjoyed. All placements within SMH have all been great and have helped me a lot in my nursing career so far" – Grainne Donohoe, 3rd year.*

*"As a nursing student in St Michael's House I feel I have gotten a well rounded amount of clinic experience in all areas, opportunities to gain experience in multiple nursing interventions and skills as well as being able to gain experience in working with a broad range of people with intellectual disabilities who I have learned a lot from and had a great experience supporting them. I have found the preceptors trained with St Michael's House to be incredibly knowledgeable and helpful in teaching me how to be an intellectual disability nurse. All of my placements have been positive environments with a high standard of care for the people they support and have been a positive learning environment for me. I have felt extremely supported by my CPC to speak openly to them about any negative/positive experiences I may have on placement and feel support and guidance is shown to me throughout placements. I have had a very good experience with St Michael's House as a student nurse" – Molly Anne Colledge, 3rd year.*

*"As a third intellectual disability student nurse in St Michael's House, I have enjoyed my different variety of placements across the service. I have had a pleasant experience with both staff and service users across the board. The units I have attended have been adequate for each stage of my learning and building my nursing skills and confidence across the board" – Amy Stevens, 3rd year.*

# Meet Eileen Farrelly

Our employees are one of our most valuable assets. It is this sense of value that has made St Michael's House one of Sunday Independent's Ireland's Best Employers in 2023.

As a leader in the development and provision of community-based services for people with disabilities, we support our staff's wellbeing, engagement, career development and celebrate their career achievements. Working in partnership with the Open Training College, St Michael's House provides staff with opportunities to continually upskill and develop new career paths.



Meet Eileen Farrelly. Eileen worked in St Michael's House Finance and Payroll Department for several years. Following the completion of a BA in Social Care through the Open Training College, Eileen is now a Social Care Worker in St Michael's House. Read her story below:

## **Eileen, you worked in our Finance and Payroll Department for many years, what drew you to the role of Social Care Worker in St Michael's House?**

Since leaving school, I always had a vision to work frontline but I fell into a finance role and ended up staying there. I had worked in the Finance Department up until 2014 and was then seconded to Coolock HQ on a special project. Working on this project provided me with more insight into the work our front-line workers do and while I was there the staff team encouraged me to look into the Social Care Degree with the Open Training College. In 2017 I bit the bullet and enrolled with the OTC.

## **You studied and graduated from our Open Training College with a BA in Social Care. Why did you choose Open Training College?**

I chose OTC as it came highly recommended by staff who had studied and completed their degree there. As an added bonus, I was able to apply for partial funding in Year 2 and Year 3 through St Michael's House *Staff Education and Training Department* which was a huge support to me to cover my overall college fees. The style of the course delivery also allowed me to continue to work and study which meant I could still support my family while working towards my degree.

## **How did you balance your time working full-time, studying and your home life?**

To be honest I don't know how I did it, but I did. I had great support within St Michael's House and my family helped me a lot and encouraged me all the way. There was a lot of juggling tasks between working, volunteering and study, and of course, family life.

## **Tell us what a typical workday is like for you now?**

Every day is different. You have certain jobs to do on a daily basis but no day is ever the same. I come to work to support service users live their best life and that could mean accompanying someone to college, to a social event or even on a holiday. I work in a residential house and with a team that supports each individual to be as independent as possible, and to make goals that motivate them to want more in life.

## **What advice would you have for anybody looking to change their career path to work in disability services?**

Do it! Don't wait around. Talk to your peers, talk to management, talk to frontline workers, talk to the training and college teams and tell them what you want. There is lots of advice and support in St Michael's House. Your colleagues and management team want the best for us and believe me you won't regret it. Life is for living and the people I support teach me that every day.

# Goal 4: Learning & Influencing Government & Society

## Adult Services

### National Federation of Voluntary Bodies

Central to our commitment to excellence in service delivery is the goal of actively supporting both staff and service users in engaging with research initiatives. An integral aspect of this commitment involves active participation in the development of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Regulatory Reform Report.

Our progress in contributing to this initiative is noteworthy. A St. Michael's House Director holds a key position on the National Federation Steering Group, allowing us to contribute to the strategic direction and development of the regulatory reform report. Moreover, our commitment extends to the inclusion of service users from St. Michael's House in service user focus groups, ensuring that their perspectives and experiences contribute directly to the shaping of the regulatory landscape.

### Research

In addition to these contributions, our Executive Management Team has played a crucial role in advancing the cause. EMT actively participated in surveys designed for Senior Management teams, providing valuable insights and feedback. Similarly, our Person in Charge personnel were actively involved in contributing to surveys tailored for persons in charge, further showcasing our dedication to ensuring that the voices and expertise within St. Michael's House are actively represented in the regulatory reform efforts.

Through these multifaceted contributions, we aim not only to actively engage with research that informs service delivery but also to play a proactive role in shaping national regulatory reforms. This commitment aligns with our broader mission of providing the highest standard of care and services, driven by a comprehensive and informed evidence base.

## Children and Young Person Services

### National Access Policy

In our commitment to enhancing healthcare services, active engagement and collaboration have been key focal points. One significant initiative involves our involvement in the implementation of the National Access Policy (NAP) across Community Healthcare Organisation 9 (CHO9) Primary Care, Networks, and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). By actively participating in this initiative, we contribute to the development and implementation of policies that aim to improve access to healthcare services for individuals within our community.

### Referrals

Furthermore, collaboration with CHO 9 extends to the development of a Central Referrals Office for Paediatrics. This joint effort aims to streamline and enhance an integrated approach to the referral process for pediatric services, ensuring efficient and timely access to the right service at the right time for children in need of services.

### Child Development Network Team

In addition to these regional initiatives, our commitment to collaboration is reflected in our engagement with the implementation of the Children's Disability Network Team Information Management System (CDNTIMS). By actively participating in the deployment of this system, we contribute to the enhancement of information management in children's disability services, ultimately improving the quality of care provided to children and their families.





## National Involvement

Moreover, our commitment extends beyond local initiatives as we actively influence policy at the national level. Our participation in various national groups, such as Pediatric Neuro- Disability cross regional working group, the National Steering group for Childrens Disability Services, the National Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) workforce planning group and our involvement in the review of critical National Policies underscores our dedication to shaping the direction of Service developments for children and young people with disabilities in Ireland. 2024 will see the beginning of the implementation of the roll out of the Governments three-year Roadmap for childrens disability services. The SMH CYP Directorate will have significant involvement in the Service Improvement Programme Board and working groups influencing the direction of travel.



## Open Training College

St. Michael's House is committed to supporting and investing in the Open Training College (OTC) as part of our broader efforts to enhance sectoral skill, competence, knowledge, and best practices within the organisation and the sector as a whole.

### Programmes Delivery 2023

In 2023, the College registered in excess of 700 students across all in programmes, with 158 successfully conferring with their award in November at the conferring ceremony. The College offers programmes in a diverse range of areas relevant to the disability and human service sectors including social care, management, advocacy, person-centredness, positive behaviour supports, patient safety complaints advocacy, supported employment and training and development. Most programmes carry QQI approval at Levels 5-8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

### Supporting the Internal Staff Education, Training and Development Function

The College supports the internal SMH staff education, training and development function, particularly in the area of online training and/ or online hosting. In 2023 this included development and delivery of online resources for frontline staff, managers, clinicians and families – examples include developing a programme on rostering with SMH staff managers; using the YourOTC platform to host online modules for Minimum Required Training (MRT), Organisational Orientation for new recruits and resources for teachers/ SNAs in SMH special national schools; and assisting clinic services with a range of online supports for staff and families including, design, building, testing and monitoring.

### Bachelor of Arts in Social Care

A significant achievement has been secured with the written confirmation



from the regulatory body CORU that the College's *Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Social Care* meets the required standards, ensuring its inclusion in the first tranche of nationally approved programmes. This accomplishment is complemented by a notable 35% increase in students commencing the first year of the degree programme in 2023.

### **Future-Planning**

Building on the success of the College over the last 30 years a decision had been taken to review the College current positioning and activity establishing future opportunities, challenges, benefits and risks for the coming years. To this end a feasibility study has been commissioned and will complete in 2024. To ensure the effectiveness of education and training support provided by the OTC to St.

Michael's House staff, the development of metrics will be undertaken as part of the work for the feasibility study.



### **Education and Training Forum**

The establishment of an internal St. Michael's House Education and Training Forum is another milestone, with the inaugural meeting completed. This forum will meet quarterly, including the Social, Education, Training, and Development Department (SETDD), the Open Training College and nominated staff representatives. The forum is an opportunity for SMH staff to provide feedback and input into the organisation's staff education and training function.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

In preparation for the onset of the regulation of social care workers from November 2023, SMH supported by the Open Training College has initiated planning for the required structures and resources for registration, including Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Engaging with CORU information, establishing a student helpline, conducting information sessions, and developing CPD opportunities are all part of the ongoing efforts, with reports scheduled for presentation to the EMT in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

### **Quality and Qualifications Ireland**

In line with the commitment to maintaining high standards, St. Michael's House continues to seek and maintain QQI approval for relevant OTC programs that meet both QQI criteria and sectoral/organisational needs. The ongoing accreditation efforts ensure that 100% QQI accreditations are in place for role-critical programmes, with plans in motion for the academic year 2023/24. This multifaceted approach reflects the dedication of SMH to fostering education, training, and best practices within the sector.

## **Psychiatry**

All psychiatrists are members of the College of Psychiatry Ireland and in St Michael's House are members of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, UK. Within both colleges there are specialist groups dedicated to Psychiatry of Learning Disabilities. The team are frequently involved in position papers to the Government from the College of Psychiatry in Ireland to advocate for service users.

# Community Sport & Physical Activity: Driving Engagement, Health, and Social Inclusion

In the past year, sports and physical activities have played a pivotal role in fostering engagement, promoting health, and nurturing social inclusion within our community. Led by our dedicated Community Sport & Physical Activity Manager, our initiatives have reached across the entire organisation.

## Participation & Engagement

In 2023, our activities saw a significant surge in participation, with a total of 4,745 attendees. From weekly classes that included football, multi-sports, bowling, and golf to specialised events such as the soccer tournament in Belfast, we were able to offer different activities to diverse interests and abilities. We embarked on adventures like the three-day trip with the SMH Shelbourne football team, promoting camaraderie and skill development. European Week of Sport encouraged trying new activities, while the 30 Day Movement Challenge spurred service users to embrace healthier lifestyles.

## Health & Wellbeing

The focus on health and wellbeing remained paramount throughout the year. Initiatives like Bone Health & Falls Awareness Week and Mind, Body, Soul workshops addressed holistic wellness, emphasising the intertwining of physical and mental health. Our collaboration with the Nursing department led to the establishment of the Cara Dementia group, providing tailored programs to support older adults with dementia, preventing deconditioning, and enhancing overall wellbeing. Pilot projects like the six-week programme aimed at adults with early signs of dementia underscored our commitment to proactive healthcare.

## Social Inclusion

Inclusivity was at the heart of our endeavors, evident through initiatives like Supported Employment, offering placements for service users within the sport and leisure sector. Strategic partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders were forged to create pathways for social inclusion. Whether it was facilitating memberships at local sports clubs or advocating for improved accessibility in collaboration with councils, our efforts aimed to ensure that everyone felt valued and included. Collaborations with Age & Opportunity ensured that frontline staff received training to cater to older adult sexercise programs, further promoting inclusivity across generations.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, we are inspired to continue our journey towards a more inclusive and healthier community.





# SMH Research

St Michael's House has always been considered a leader in the delivery of services to people with disabilities. It continues to work in partnership with government and alongside other organisations contributing to national and international developments in the field.

St Michael's House Research Department represents the organisation's long-established commitment to research, service innovation and evaluation. Our Five-Year Strategic Plan (2022-2026) advocates the organisation's determination to lead in the development of excellent and innovative services.

## Research Conference

On 27 February 2023, St Michael's House, hosted its first Research Conference post COVID. This highly anticipated event was attended by staff, researchers, students, SMH Board Members and showcased high quality research projects in the disability sector including

- Transition from school to adult life
- Communication supports for people with ID in a local shopping centre
- Using action research to adapt complicated grief therapy for people with ID
- The use of a digital hub as a pathway to social inclusion for people with ID

Staff across St Michael's House are committed to developing and supporting applied research projects in disability services – which in turn positions us to inform the development of high-quality evidence-based practice and therapeutic interventions for individuals with disabilities and their families.

## SMH UCD PPI Ignite Project

In 2023, SMH were awarded seed funded under the UCD PPI Ignite Network for our project entitled 'What is Research?'. Seven adults from SMH, as co-researchers on the project, supported and guided the planning process, creating accessible workshop content and co-facilitating its delivery, thus enabling peer-to-peer learning culminating in a face-to-face event in the Hilton Airport, Dublin. Here the group's Easy to Read Guide on 'What is Research?' was launched. The workshop has contributed an important foundation for learners as they embark on thinking through how they can conduct their own research.



## SMH PhD Studentship

2023 saw the appointment of the first SMH PhD Scholar under the organisation's PhD Studentship programme. Eilín de Paor's studentship commenced with us in October 2023, running for 12 months, and will support several research activities of strategic importance including an initial focus on development of a Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Framework for use within adult services.

## Future Plans

St Michael's House Research Department continue to host and attend events in line with research KPI's outlined in the organisation's strategic plan and look forward to hosting another Research Conference in 2024.

For more information contact [research@smh.ie](mailto:research@smh.ie)



# Major milestone for the OTC

## BA in Social Care approved by CORU

St. Michaels House Open Training College (OTC) received approval from CORU in November 2022 with regard to the current B.A. in Social Care (Level 7). This means that the programme is included in the byelaw which allows for graduates of the degree to register as professional Social Care Workers (SCWs). The OTC is one of 14 colleges across Ireland listed on the byelaw.

CORU approval is the culmination of many years of hard work by the College as a whole, the Social Care department and College management, with the support of St. Michael's House, in particular. This process ensured that the programme meets all national academic and professional standards, including meeting all CORU criteria and Standards of Proficiency (SoPs) for social care work.

The register opened on 30 November 2023, and the title of Social Care Worker will become officially protected on 30 November 2025. This process will ensure that members of the public will now have greater confidence in the profession. They will know that any person registered as a Social Care Worker with CORU will have had their professional standing and qualifications independently verified.

CORU approval for the BA Social Care in the Open Training College has increased the number of applications. The College has been involved in the provision of social care education to the sector for over 30 years. The College is delighted to remain part of that process and ensure that the students who graduate with the OTC degree are professional and ensure the people they provide a service for keep striving to attain the best possible quality of life.

The College has been working with St Michael's House Human Resource Department in the provision of information sessions and a dedicated email address to support the staff in St. Michael's House who want to apply for social care work registration.

For more information contact Conor at [cmurray@opentrainingcollege.com](mailto:cmurray@opentrainingcollege.com)





# Enabler 1: Robust Structures and Resourcing

Structure and Resourcing (Finance) are key enablers in ensuring that SMH fulfills its Strategic Goals. Structure pertains to organisation management structures which require review and reconfiguration to accommodate the growing complexity and size. Resourcing (finance) has many facets - including multi-year budgeting, the accumulated deficit, the need to robustly manage costs and the need to continue to reconfigure as a creative and efficient response to service need.

## Children and Young Person Services

The Clinical Governance Policy for CYP has been successfully completed, providing a framework for ensuring the highest standards of clinical care and governance within CYP.

The policy addressing New Referrals and Discharges for CYP has been finalised, outlining procedures and guidelines for the seamless management of new admissions and discharges across CYP network and frontline respite and residential services.

The Supervision Policy and Standards, applicable to both Adults and Children and Young Persons, have been completed. This policy is critical in ensuring good clinical governance across clinical service to enhance the quality and safety of care provided.

Our Pediatric Medical Services consisting of Paediatricians, Dieticians, Clinical Nurse Specialist and Advanced Nurse Practitioner continue to see large numbers of children across our Networks. New clinical specialist posts have been established for Feeding, Eating, Drinking and Swallowing (FEDS), as well as for Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy (OT/PT) and Dietetics. These specialist roles contribute to the expansion and enrichment of clinical services, ensuring a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to patient care.

## Adult Clinical Services

In our ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards of clinical care, the Adult Services Clinical Governance policy was fully implemented in March 2023. As part of this process, compliance measures have been established, and audits will be commenced in 2024. The six pillars outlined in the policy encompass Clinical Effectiveness, Audit, Risk Management, Education and Training, Staff Management, and Information, Service User, and Public Involvement. The Clinical Management Team is actively engaged in ensuring the policy is successfully implemented - identifying and agreeing upon the first two areas for audit, demonstrating a proactive approach to ensuring ongoing compliance and improvement.

Further goals were set and achieved aimed at enhancing governance systems specifically tailored to identified areas of service provision, namely Multi-Agency Service Supports, Case Management, and Clinic-Only Services. Achievements in this regard include the establishment of clear Standard Operating Procedures, robust Risk Assessments, and well-defined Record Management procedures. Furthermore, a Case Management Staff Competency framework has been developed, contributing to a comprehensive governance framework in this emerging area of service delivery in SMH. These achievements underscore our commitment to not only meeting but exceeding standards in governance, ensuring that our service provision is underpinned by effective and transparent processes.





## Psychiatry

St. Michael's House, in collaboration with Community Healthcare Organisation 9 (CHO9) Mental Health (HSE), secures grants for training through applied finance discipline.

## Finance

The effective deployment of a new financial management system is underway to enhance budgeting, financial controls, and reporting, with a focus on implementing electronic processes wherever feasible. The implementation of the IFMS SAP system is provisionally scheduled for July 2024. Recent notifications have indicated a proposed go-live date of 1 May, 2024, prompting significant resourcing and planning efforts, with progress currently at 10%.

Demonstrating value for money in service delivery is a key priority, achieved through data analysis and agreed output indicators. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) per cost center and average per Service User Trend Reports are being produced, while opportunities to enhance financials and optimize balance position are continuously explored. Progress stands at 70%, with KPIs for 2022 completed and ongoing improvement opportunities being pursued.

A comprehensive program on financial management has been rolled out for all managers at PIC level and above. Efforts include drafting a program on financial management and procurement processes, optimizing the use of HRIS for electronic rostering and staff deployment by Operations, and embedding the New Household Expenditure Tool at units. Training sessions and policy updates on Household expenditure via webinar have been implemented, with a review of costs and budgets conducted at bi-monthly Service Manager/Finance meetings. Progress currently sits at 60%, with various finance processes updated, though significant work remains, and HRIS implementation ongoing.

Budget devolution to service area management is being pursued, with individualized budgets for each center in progress. However, there is currently no system in place to allow PICs to monitor their performance against budget, resulting in a completion status of 50%.

Efforts to strengthen the procurement function and demonstrate value for money include submitting compliance statistics annually to ARC and presenting a three-year plan. Significant progress has been made in this area, with a three-year plan submitted and compliance figures calculated, reaching an 80% completion status.



## Enabler 2: Highest Quality Homes and Premises

Service user homes, day services and administration premises are at the forefront of our priorities going forward. The quality of a number of our existing residential houses and premises and most immediate concerns are currently being addressed. Once these premises have been taken care of, there are number of properties that require upgrading and all properties require ongoing maintenance. The development and/or provision of new premises, particularly residential homes and the changing profile of our current service users and the growth in demographics indicate that new property (homes) will be required in a planned manner over the coming years. Some of our day service locations are no longer suitable and require decision and planning with regard to their future use and potential for leveraging. Excellence in service delivery requires that clinical inputs and administration backup services are well-resourced and operate from high quality, appropriate premises.

### Estates

St. Michael's House is dedicated to transparency and accountability in its housing initiatives. This is reflected in the commitment to publish a comprehensive five-year housing plan along with annual progress reports. Notably, the Housing Plan has been successfully developed and implemented, marking a significant milestone. Continuous updates on KPIs will be ongoing to ensure the effectiveness and progress of the plan.

In alignment with our commitment to responsible property management, we have also published a five- year properties plan, complemented by annual progress reports. The Properties Plan is currently in the implementation phase, and regular updates on KPIs are actively monitored to assess and enhance its effectiveness.

To recognise the importance of involving service users and their families in decision-making processes, mechanisms have been established to consider their will, preferences, and inputs regarding homes and premises. This includes quarterly meetings with the HSE and regular sessions with Service Directorates to review housing and property needs. Additionally, ongoing reviews of the Ballymun based congregated setting *The Glens* commenced to ensure alignment with service user preferences.

Our dedication to providing suitable and preferred housing options is evident in the progress made in obtaining new residential places through CAS applications and ongoing communication with Community Supports for independent living. The leveraging of existing properties has also been managed judiciously, with a condition register developed and properties identified for disposal and sale.

In our commitment to future-proofing all premises, Universal Design principles and assistive technologies are applied to new projects where feasible. The ongoing process of full decongregation in our institutional settings involves active engagement with the HSE, particularly regarding *The Glens*, and the design stage for a new residential unit in Baldoyle. In 2023, through this engagement with the HSE, *The Glens* is no longer prioritized for de-congregation, and there is a new house planned for the de-congregation of the Baldoyle Designated Centre.

Striving to provide additional respite opportunities, ongoing engagement with the HSE is maintained to explore and pursue available avenues, demonstrating our strategic positioning in alignment with national developments.

Environmental responsibility is a key focus, with annual reporting to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) on energy usage, showcasing year-on-year efficiencies and percentage changes in emissions generation. This commitment highlights our dedication to sustainability and responsible resource management.





## Adult Clinical Services

To enhance the efficiency of our equipment management systems and evaluate their performance in both financial management and the provision of quality care, a comprehensive review has been undertaken. As part of this initiative, significant achievements include the development of a clear pathway outlining the procurement process for all new or replacement medical devices. This structured approach ensures transparency and adherence to best practices in the acquisition of essential equipment. Additionally, efforts have been made to enhance the information captured within our current asset management system, further improving our ability to monitor and manage our equipment inventory. While these accomplishments mark substantial progress, ongoing efforts and refinements will be necessary to continuously optimize our equipment management systems for the dual goals of financial prudence and delivering high-quality care.





## Enabler 3: Effective Information, IT and Data Management

SMH faces a range of challenges in regards to information management and the necessary underpinning ICT infrastructure. An organisation the size and complexity of SMH cannot efficiently operate without these two basic components being addressed and so is identified as a key Enabler requiring focus. While significant work was completed during 2022/23, the ongoing generation of needed information and its management for a range of uses including the negotiation of new funds is required.

### Support Services

#### Information Technology

St. Michael's House is committed to strategic planning and technological advancement, as outlined in our three to five year plan with annual progress reports. The 2023 workplan encompasses several key initiatives aimed at enhancing our IT infrastructure and services. This includes the appointment of a new IT Manager, the rollout of Microsoft 365 with additional cloud-related costs, the migration from Zoom to Teams, implementation of the *National Ability Support System* (NASS) module on the *My Personal Information Online* (MPIO) platform, and the management of laptops, Chromebooks, phones, and their replacements. The Helpdesk, which handles approximately 400 calls per month, is a critical component, and a business case to the HSE for future funding (particularly in the realm of cybersecurity) is actively pursued.

Significant progress has already been achieved, with the appointment of a new Head of IT in May 2023 and the acquisition of over 100 new laptops, Chromebooks, and PCs. The CITRIX upgrade has been successfully completed, and an infrastructure review by Asperico has provided valuable insights. The ongoing rollout of the NASS module in collaboration with the Health Research Board (HRB) demonstrates our commitment to efficient data management and support for remote access.

In anticipation of future needs, the IT department is preparing for substantial funding requirements over the next one to two years. Prioritised areas include the replacement and introduction of high availability for the firewall, cybersecurity management, server upgrades, core network replacement, optimisation of Microsoft 365, and the management of laptops and devices. A comprehensive business case has been prepared for the HSE, outlining the significant expenditure required for hardware, managed services, and infrastructure upgrades.

The optimization of Microsoft 365, focusing on SharePoint, OneDrive, and Teams, is a key aspect of our plan, alongside the utilization of the MPIO platform to support NASS and Respite services. Efforts to expand remote access, update the intranet, and explore an information platform for staff information to enhance the intranet are also underway. With 250 E3 licenses already rolled out and plans to transition the remainder of the organization to E1 licenses, the introduction of Teams and SharePoint for file storage and sharing is in progress. Collaboration through OneDrive is being emphasized, and the construction of the NASS module is underway, demonstrating our dedication to staying at the forefront of technological advancements for the benefit of our organization and those we serve.

#### Digital Inclusion

The Digital Inclusion Committee at St. Michael's House is actively promoting digital inclusion through various initiatives. Notably, an accessible website has been launched as an Activity Hub, providing a user-friendly online platform. Emphasising the



importance of online safety, the committee organises tech evenings to educate and engage both staff and service users in the responsible and secure use of technology. Additionally, the committee oversees various projects aimed at enhancing digital literacy and ensuring equitable access to technology, furthering education and training opportunities for the benefit of the entire community at St. Michael's House. Through these diverse activities, the Digital Inclusion Committee is dedicated to fostering a digitally inclusive environment that empowers and enriches the experiences of both staff and service users.

## Fundraising

In 2023, SMH Fundraising department saw participation in two prominent golf tournaments, the Noel Hughes Golf Classic and the Jill Donnelly Golf Event. Leveraging these platforms, crucial funds were raised, allowing SMH to expand our network of supporters and advocates. Additionally, we made a significant impact by participating in the Vhi Women's Mini Marathon, further showcasing our commitment to community engagement and support. Looking ahead, we are excited to announce the inception of a new foundation set to commence in 2024, poised to broaden our scope of philanthropic endeavors and enhance our capacity to make a positive difference in the lives of our service users.





## Enabler 4: Quality Enhancement, Integrity and Regulatory Compliance

SMH is many entities – apart from the group structure and the companies in the group, the Section 38 to which this Strategy applies has a number of legal identities itself and is subject to a wide range of regulatory and compliance requirements. Meeting these requirements and keeping them up to date is a core aspect of the organisation and highlights its reliability, integrity, transparency and trustworthiness as a state funded entity. In addition, regulation of residential services and the introduction of standards for day services requires the building of a high quality culture, focused not just on compliance but on quality enhancement and excellence.

### Children and Young Persons Services

Several audit initiatives have been undertaken to ensure good clinical Governance and a high quality standard for our services. An audit of 5% of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) has been completed, providing valuable information to enhance of our service delivery. Additionally, a 2.5% audit of clinical files has been conducted, contributing to our commitment to maintaining high standards in documentation and record-keeping.

Looking ahead, there are plans for an audit of compliance with Supervision Standards across CYP services in the fourth quarter. Furthermore, an annual self-audit of the Childrens Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) is scheduled for the first quarter of 2024, aiming to assess and enhance the performance and processes within these teams.

In line with broader regulatory considerations, an audit of compliance with Children First Child Safeguarding Statements (CSS) is planned for the fourth quarter of 2023, reflecting our commitment to safeguarding the well-being of children in our care.

Additionally, the pilot phase 1 of the Online Training Center (OTC) which took place early in 2023 involved an audit of family engagement with online materials hosted by the Open Training College providing valuable insights into the effectiveness and utilization of this innovative training platform to inform future developments. These audits collectively contribute to our continuous improvement efforts in Childrens Services, ensuring that our services align with the highest standards and regulatory requirements.

### Adult Clinical Services

To enhance our approach to dementia care, St. Michael's House established a cross-organisational dementia working group. This group was tasked with conducting a comprehensive review of the existing dementia diagnostic pathway within our organization. In conjunction with this review, a staff education needs survey was undertaken.

In 2024, insights gathered from these initiatives will serve as a foundation for planning and hosting targeted education events tailored to the needs of both frontline and clinical staff.

This proactive and comprehensive approach underscores our commitment to continually improving dementia care through targeted education and refinement of our diagnostic processes.



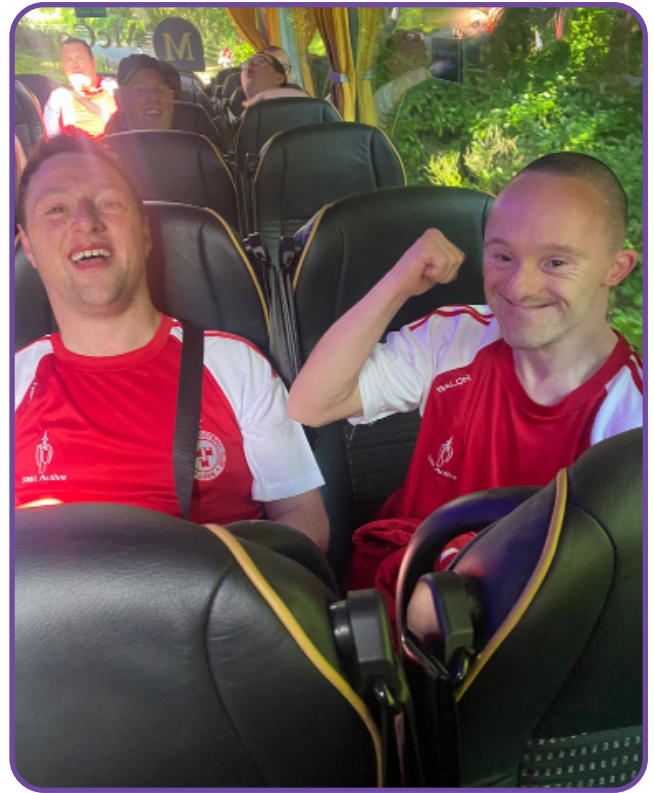


## Psychiatry

The MHID (Mental Health Intellectual Disability) Steering Group serves as a crucial component of our clinical governance framework, guiding and overseeing various aspects of our mental health and intellectual disability services. This multidisciplinary group plays a pivotal role in ensuring the highest standards of care, continuously evaluating and refining our practices to align with best clinical governance principles.

In addition to our internal governance through the MHID Steering Group, our services operate within a broader regulatory framework. We are regulated by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), which sets national standards for the safety and quality of health and social care services in Ireland. Compliance with HIQA standards is integral to our commitment to providing safe and effective mental health and intellectual disability services.

Looking ahead, we anticipate an additional layer of regulation from the Mental Health Commission. As a regulatory body, the Mental Health Commission is likely to play a significant role in overseeing and regulating mental health services, ensuring compliance with standards and advocating for the rights and well-being of service users. This future regulatory involvement aligns with our commitment to accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in delivering mental health and intellectual disability services of the highest quality.



## Estates

St. Michael's House is actively engaged in demonstrating to the Housing Regulator that our housing stock effectively meets the diverse needs of our residents. As an Approved Housing Body (AHB), we are committed to fulfilling our reporting obligations to the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority (AHBRA). Mandatory reports are consistently submitted, and we proudly maintain compliance with the performance standards set by the AHBRA. This commitment to ongoing reporting reflects our dedication to transparency and accountability in providing high-quality housing services, ensuring that the needs and well-being of our residents remain at the forefront of our operations.

## Quality, Safety, and Improvement

Ensuring ongoing compliance with the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) standards is a fundamental objective for St. Michael's House, with a targeted achievement of an 80% compliance rating. Progress toward this goal is actively monitored through monthly and quarterly reporting mechanisms, covering Incident Management Reports (IMR), Executive Management Team (EMT) incident assessments, complaints, and Health and Safety (HAS) evaluations. Additionally, efforts are underway to scope out the tracking of HIQA compliance, conducting quarterly policy reviews to align practices with evolving standards. As of January to August, the organisation has achieved an encouraging 89% HIQA compliance rate.

A commitment to continual quality enhancement is evident through various measures. The organisation conducts an annual Safety Statement and engages in HIQA analysis and learning notifications. A thorough analysis of incidents through the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Serious Complaints Analysis (SCA), and quarterly examination of complaints contribute to ongoing learning and improvement. The Corporate Risk Register is updated quarterly, and a dedicated Serious Incident Management Team is in place, with a specific focus on residential support in preparation for HIQA inspections.

## Finance

In addressing financial compliance, the organisation has set goals to conduct three Client Money & Household Expenditure Audits per month and to establish a process for demonstrating the implementation of internal audit recommendations, including Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) audit compliance. Progress towards these objectives indicates recent household audits, although not meeting the monthly target of three due to staffing challenges; however, efforts are ongoing to maximize unit visits. Additionally, the organization actively monitors the demonstration of internal audit recommendations through the use of the Teamwork tool, showing significant advancement. Currently, the completion status stands at 60%.





## Christmas Wreath Competition

In the festive spirit of Christmas, our Sports and Leisure department organised a Christmas wreath competition, inviting participation from all of our services. With creativity abounding, each entry was a testament to the unique talents within our SMH community. As anticipation mounted, we gathered in our Leisure Centre for the much-awaited announcement on who won first prize.

Glenamoy emerged triumphant, capturing first prize with their stunning creation. Looking ahead, we eagerly anticipate next year's contest, excited for not only the joy it will bring but also the possibility of sharing these beautifully crafted wreaths with the public, further spreading the warmth and spirit of the season.



Riverside



Glenamoy



Work Options



Castle



## Corporate Governance

Established in 1955 St. Michael's House is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

St. Michael's House and its activities have been granted charitable status by the Revenue Commissioners. St. Michael's House Company Registration Number is 27628. The Charity Registration Number is 20008932. The Registered Office for St. Michael's House and all the companies in the St. Michael's House Group is located at St. Michael's House, Ballymun Road, Dublin 9.

The constitution of St. Michael's House states that the Board must have at least three director's and no more than 13. The Board through the company secretary strive to ensure corporate governance practices are of the highest standard as there is a corporate governance committee in place to assist enhancing good practices.

St. Michael's House like the other Section 38 organisations operates in a very regulated environment and as a result we have a duty to ensure we work withing the regulations in place along with our statutory and funding obligations. Every year a Service Arrangement is signed between St. Michael's House and our main funder, the HSE. This arrangement sets out the HSE conditions attached to the funding. An Annual Compliance Statement is also submitted by St. Michael's House to the HSE in order to reassure our funders that we are accountable for all the areas set out in the Statement.

Every October we submit a Charities Governance Compliance return along with the various St. Michael's House Group audited financial statements and our annual report. Again, this is to prove that as an organisation we operate at a significantly high level as regards our compliance.

### Board overview

St. Michael's House is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors/members who ensure that the vision, mission and core values of the organisation as expressed in its 'constitutional documents are upheld and realised in practice through the adoption, implementation and regular oversight of the St. Michael's House Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026. There is no remuneration or fees for the services provided by the Board members. Board members are elected for an initial three-year term with the possibility of extending it for a further 3 years.

There were no instances or arrangements during 2022 whereby a director was materially interested in the company's activities. There is a Conflicts of-Interest Policy in place which outlines the procedure and process to deal with and manage all potential and actual conflicts, as and when they arise. Conflicts of interests are also a standing item on all Board and subcommittee meetings. In addition, all Board directors are requested by the company secretary to complete an annual return to the Standards in Public Office Committee (SIPO). SIPO oversees compliance, including receiving statutory returns from individuals and organisations which requires Statement of Interests for the purposes of Section 17 of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995.

As an organisation with professional staff, where Directors have no role in the day-to-day running of the company, the Board of St. Michael's House operates by devolving responsibility for the conduct of its business to the CEO and in turn through her to her Executive Management Team and other staff. These separations of duties are clearly set out in the organisations Corporate Governance manual. This manual is reviewed at least once a year by the Governance Committee. The purpose of the manual is to specify the internal written code of governance and conduct for the board. It also includes systems of internal controls and core governance standards to ensure compliance with all relevant statutory and regulatory obligations.

The Chairperson sets the agenda for each Board meeting in consultation with the CEO and Company Secretary. Executive management members attend Board meetings to update the Board members on the operational progress for their respective areas. The Board and

Management are committed to maintaining a high standard of corporate governance in accordance with the organisation's Corporate Governance Manual, the HSE Annual Compliance Statement for Section 38 Bodies and have used the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 as a guide in drawing up the Corporate Governance Manual.

### **Board/Committee appointments/resignations**

The Board is currently made up of 13 Directors. In May 2023 we were very sad to lose the wonderful service and contributions made by two of the Board directors, Dr. Ailis Quinlan and Mr. Pat Cullen. Ailis was also the chair of the Quality, Safety and Risk committee while Pat was the chair of the Audit and Finance committee. St. Michael's House owes them a sincere debt of gratitude for all the time and effort they put in to help support and guide the organisation during the six years they served on the Board. The board met on 10 occasions during the year, including seven scheduled board meetings and three additional ad-hoc board meetings. All board business continued, in accordance with the board diary and annual board plan throughout 2023. Board meetings were held via a hybrid model which will continue going forward to accommodate board members who are unable to attend in person for various reasons.

Dr. Jean Lane who was on the Quality and Safety committee put herself forward for election and was appointed on the Board at the end of May 2023. In July Mr. Denis O' Connor was the appointed to the position of Board director. St. Michael's House very much appreciates their willingness to enhance the skill set of the Board and wishes them well during their tenure.

When recruiting new Directors, the Nominations Committee ensures that they are selected in line with the criteria set out in the Competency Framework of the Corporate Governance Manual. The Framework aims to create a diverse Board which is in compliance with the Equal Status Act. As well as recruiting Directors with the required expertise the Nominations Committee also try to attract individuals who are familiar with and/or are sensitive to the works of St. Michael's House, understand its operating environment, and are familiar with the lived experience of service users. Currently the Board is made up of 70% males and 30% females. It is hoped that there will be a more balanced board when recruiting new Directors in 2024.

### **Board and Committee Evaluations and Review**

For the first time, both the 2023 board meetings and the 2023 committee meetings will be evaluated by the relevant chairs to identify and areas that can be developed or improved upon. The chairperson will also be completing one to one meetings with board members as part of the annual performance review.

### **Training**

A comprehensive on-line Directors Induction Training programme is available for all new Directors. The programme consists of an introduction video about St. Michael's House along with a variety of relevant reading material to assist them to carry out their functions in line with Corporate Governance. There are also a number of important training courses that Directors are requested to complete which include the following: Safeguarding, Children's First, Open Disclosure, Positive Behaviour Supports, GDPR, Person Centred and Rights training. St. Michael's House are members of the Institute of Public Administration and Directors can avail of any courses on their training calendar.

**Board Members (2023):** Mr. Ciarán Bolger (Chairperson), Mr. Ray Mc Kenna (Vice Chairperson), Professor Anthony, Mr. Pat Cullen (term expired in May 2023), Dr. Ailis Quinlan (term expired in May 2023), Dr. Susan Kent, Ms. Shahla Sabetnia, Mr. Liam O'Donohoe, Mr. Tom Casey, Mr. Máirtín Mac Aodha, Ms. Dee Moran, Mr. Ken Gormley, Mr. Eoin Mc Vey, Dr. Jean Lane and Mr. Denis O'Connor.

**Company Secretary during 2023:** Mr. Karl Wren (Interim)

# Review of Operations 2023

## Board Sub-Committees:

At the start of 2023 there were seven sub committees, Audit and Finance (previously Audit and Risk Committee), Quality, Safety and Risk Committee (previously Quality and Safety committee), Properties and Estates, Schools Patron committee. These committees meet regularly during the year. Each of these committees also report on operational progress at each board meeting. The committees establish their own terms of reference, which are regularly updated. Any recommendations for changing the Terms of Reference are brought to the Board for approval. In addition, there are three other sub-committees who meet as required, the Governance committee, the Nominations committee and the Executive Approvals committee.

**Quality, Safety and Risk Committee (Q,S&R):** The Quality, Safety and Risk Committee provides assurance to the Board that there are appropriate and effective systems, structures and processes in place that cover all aspects of clinical, social care and occupational safety, and sets and monitors the delivery of key performance indicators for the quality, safety and risk functions at executive and local levels. All risks are highlighted on the organisational risk register and discussed at each committee meeting. Red risks are brought to the attention of the Board at the scheduled Board meetings. The Committee ensures that St. Michael's House is operating within the provisions and standards set out in the legislation or regulation which is material to the work of the company.

**2023 Committee Members:** Dr. Ailis Quinlan (Chairperson), Dr. Jean Lane (Vice chairperson), Mr. Liam O'Donohoe (Board member), Mr. Ken Gorman (Board member), Professor Anthony Staines (Board member), Dr. Susan Kent (Board member), Dr. Regina McQuillan (committee member), Ms. Eileen O' Mahony Bowe (committee member), Ms. Liz Reynolds (CEO) and Ann O' Connor (Interim Director of Quality, Safety and Service Improvement).

The committee would like to thank Ms. Elaine Teague, who was the Director of Quality Improvement and Safety Development, for all her hard work and effort while reporting into this committee. Elaine stepped down to take up a different position in the organisation. Grainne Bourke, the Director of Nursing acted up in Elaine's absence until Ann O' Connor's appointment as the Interim Director of Quality, Safety and Service Improvement. Again, the committee would like to extend its sincere thanks to Grainne for her hard work and effort while she was acting up in this role. Dr. Jean Lane took over as chair of this committee following Dr. Ailis Quinlan's term end.

**Audit and Finance Committee (A&F):** The Audit and Finance Committee monitors and reviews all aspects of the financial performance of St. Michael's House. The Committee reviews and recommends for approval the annual overall operating budget for the company and keeps under review the management accounts including the cash flow position of the Company. All financial risks are brought to the attention of the Board at the scheduled Board meetings.

**2023 Committee Members:** Pat Cullen (Chairperson and Board member), Ms. Dee Moran (Vice-chairperson and Board member), Professor Anthony Staines (Board member), Mr. Eoin Mc Vey (Board member), Ms. Liz Reynolds (CEO), Mr. David Dunne (Director of Operations), Ms. Rose Creegan (Director of Finance), Ms. Debbie Byrne (Director of HR) and Laura Beausang (Committee member). Ms. Dee Moran took over as chair of this committee following Mr. Pat Cullen's term end.

**Governance Committee (Gov.):** The Governance Committee maintains the constitution of the company under regular review and provides recommendations to the Board as appropriate. It keeps under review the Competency Framework and ensures that the identification and nomination of candidates for approval by the Board for appointment as Directors is carried out in line with the Framework.

**2023 Committee Members:** Mr. Ciarán Bolger (Chair of committee and Chair of SMH), Mr. Tom Casey (Board member), Mr. Máirtín MacAodha (Board member), Mr. Ken Gormley (Board member), Ms. Liz Reynolds (CEO).



**Schools Patron Committee (Patron):** This committee was established to give guidance and support to the Boards of Management to the six Special National Schools that St. Michael's House is Patron to and to work with Boards of Management Chairs to ensure the schools operate in compliance with the Education Act 1998

**2023 Committee members:** Mr. Máirtín Mac Aodha (Chairperson and Board member), Mr. Pat Cullen (Board member), Mr. David Dunne (Director of Operations), Ms. Tracey Mc Kenna (Director of Children Services) and Ms. Paula O' Brien (Schools Liaison Officer).

**Properties and Estates Committee (P&E):** The Properties and Estates committee will support the Board in managing all property of St. Michaels House, including in particular those facilities that are occupied by service users under S. 38 of a Care Organisation and Approved Housing Bodies.

**2023 Committee members:** Mr. Ken Gormley (Chairperson and Board member), Mr Pat Cullen (Board member), Ms. Shahla Sabetnia (Board member), Mr. Diarmuid Devereux (Director of Properties and Estates), Ms. Liz Reynolds (CEO), Mr. Brian Butterly (Committee member), Mr. Noel Kelly (Committee member), Mr. Martin Heffernan (Committee member) and Mr. Ronan Baxter (Committee member).

	SMH Board Meetings	Quality, Safety, & Risk Committee	Audit & Finance Committee	Governance Committee	Patron Committee	Properties & Estates Committee
Mr Ciaran Bolger	10/10	N/A	N/A	2/2	N/A	N/A
Mr Ray McKenna	4/10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Prof. Anthony Staines	10/10	3/5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mr Tom Casey	8/10	N/A	N/A	2/2	N/A	N/A
Dr Ailis Quinlan	3/5 (Term ended in June)	2/2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mr Pat Cullen	3/5 (Term ended in June)	N/A	3/3	N/A	3/3	1/2 (Term ended in June)
Ms Shahla Sabentina	4/10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1/3
Dr Jean Lane	4/4 (Term started in June)	3/3 (Term started in June)	N/A		N/A	N/A
Mr Ken Gormley	5/10	4/5		2/2	N/A	3/3
Mr Denis O'Connor	4/4	N/A	3/3 (Term started in July)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mr Máirtín Mac Adhoda	9/10	N/A	N/A	2/2	7/7	N/A
Mr Liam O'Donohoe	10/10		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mr Eoin McVey	9/10	N/A	7/7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ms Dee Moran	9/10		7/7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dr Susan Kent	5/10	3/5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# Financial Year Ended 31 December 2025

## St Michael's House Group

### Consolidated Income Statement

For the Financial year ended 31 December 2023

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	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
Income	4	<b>133,126,505</b>	129,953,962
Expenditure		<b>(133,410,626)</b>	(128,699,634)
Surplus/(Deficit) on Ordinary Activities	6	<b>(284,121)</b>	1,254,328
Profit on Disposal of Fixed Assets		<b>2,453,489</b>	2,940
Surplus for the Year		<b>2,169,368</b>	1,257,268

# Review of Operations 2023

## St Michael's House Group

### Consolidated Balance Sheet

For the Financial year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible assets	11	<u>50,517,825</u>	51,785,350
		<u>50,517,825</u>	51,785,350
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Grants receivable and prepayments	13	<u>2,489,976</u>	2,644,902
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>4,992,339</u>	8,731,301
		<u>7,482,315</u>	11,376,203
<b>CREDITORS: (Amounts falling due within one year)</b>			
Creditors and accruals	14	<u>(14,132,934)</u>	(19,614,227)
Term loan	18	<u>(431,471)</u>	(365,291)
		<u>(14,564,405)</u>	(19,979,518)
<b>NET CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>(7,082,090)</u>	(8,603,315)
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>43,435,735</b>	43,182,035
<b>CREDITORS: (Amounts falling due after more than one year)</b>			
Term loan	18	<u>(851,167)</u>	(1,324,895)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>42,584,568</u>	41,857,140
<b>CAPITAL RESERVES</b>	19	<b>39,432,198</b>	40,704,945
<b>REVENUE SURPLUS</b>		<u>3,122,370</u>	1,152,195
		<u>42,584,568</u>	41,857,140



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Website: [www.smh.ie](http://www.smh.ie)