



# Merry Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

December, 2023

Dear Parent/Family Member,

As we approach the festive season, I would like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas.

I want to take a moment to reflect on our journey over the past year. Our commitment to empowering individuals with disabilities remains steadfast, but we have faced challenges along the way.

Recruitment has been a main focus for us again throughout 2023 and continues to be a challenge although the level of dedication amongst staff is second to none, and we are committed to overcoming this hurdle and strengthening our team. We were very proud to see that St Michael's House was included in the top 150 best employers by the Sunday Independent earlier this year.

Budgeting has been another significant aspect of our journey. Navigating this landscape is never easy, yet your dedication and commitment has allowed us to make impactful strides. We've managed to have those vital conversations with those in government, ensuring our programmes and initiatives continue to make a positive difference in the lives of those we provide services to.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to share that we are continuing to align our efforts with the Strategic Plan for 2022-2026. This roadmap outlines our ambitious goals, and we are confident in our ability to achieve them. Together, we will continue to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals with disabilities.

As a reminder, the Assisted Decision Making Act was fully commenced earlier in 2023. The Decision Support Service oversees the ADM Act and they continue to make information available to people who use services and their families with regard to what the Act may mean to you. The DSS can be contacted with any queries related to the ADM Act at 01 2119750 or [www.decisionsupportservice.ie](http://www.decisionsupportservice.ie) or you can contact the SMH ADM Steering Group via [communications@smh.ie](mailto:communications@smh.ie).

You may have seen the recent government information campaign on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), "Disability Rights are Human Rights". At St. Michael's House we have been working to build an active rights-based culture through our Strengthening Disabilities Project. We have developed Rights training which looks at UNCRPD rights using realistic, everyday examples. We have been delivering Strengthening Rights training to the staff of St. Michael's House and we have begun delivering Strengthening Rights Training to service users - both groups have found the training very beneficial and enjoyable.

We would now like to offer Strengthening Rights Training to families and supporters. We are looking for families and supporters who can volunteer to attend our pilot Strengthening Rights Training. Commencing in January, this course will take place online and last 90 minutes. If you are interested in participating, please email us at [rightssmh@opentrainingcollege.com](mailto:rightssmh@opentrainingcollege.com) and we will get back to you with details.

Thank you for your continued commitment, resilience, and dedication to St Michael's House throughout the past year, and I would like to extend my invitation into 2024 to any family member who would like to meet me face to face to discuss anything which may be pertinent to you. You can make an appointment with my secretary [suzanne.doherty@smh.ie](mailto:suzanne.doherty@smh.ie) or phone 01- 8840204.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful Christmas season filled with warmth and gratitude and best wishes for the New Year.

Liz Reynolds  
CEO of St Michael's House

