

2006 Annual Report

*“Creating a society where
rape and sexual violence
no longer exist”*

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Board member forward

As a member of the board of management of the Rape Crisis Network Ireland, I am very pleased to present the Annual Report for 2006. In writing this forward I asked Cliona to forward copies of previous annual reports so I could indulge in a little cheating and copy the format. Unfortunately for me the copies she had from 2003 and 2004 had not a forward written by a board member so I have to start from scratch (just my luck).

In looking at the index for the annual report I was struck at the achievements and amount of work done in 2006. It is difficult working in this sector to see achievements clearly at times as there is always more that needs to be done. Reading this annual report, I hope you get a sense as I did of how far the RCNI and the RCCs have come since their conception. Two events for me particularly deserve a mention.

The first being the issue of statutory rape, I feel the RCNI staff showed their expertise at this crucial time. They were informed and present for all aspects of the debate and continue to be. Following with the White Flower demonstrations around the country it was heartening to feel the public support and it gave a clear message to the powers that be that we need solutions from them.

The second of course being the allocation of 7 million to the VAW sector in the Budget in December, which included an allocation of 2.5million to SATUs. We finally saw a response to the years of lobbying nationally by the RCNI and locally by each Centre for additional funding to be made available to the sector. It has been a long struggle but the outcome is near and it is a monumental step forward in recognizing the level of professionalism and expertise offered to all clients everyday throughout the year in our Centres across the country.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to recognise and thank the Member Centres, RCNI staff and my fellow board members for their hard work and commitment. There has been significant achievements and yes we should celebrate and yes there is still work to do for us to continue making a difference.

Anita Clancy
Board Member RCNI

“In my role as Minister of State for Equality I fully realised how vital Rape Crisis services are and working with the RCNI recognised their inadequate funding. I continue to be committed to secure funding for the sector.”

Frank Fahey TD, Minister for Equality 2006

Director's Introduction

Reflecting on 2006 – it already seems so far in the past – thank the goddess for Cliona's newsletters and bulletins which provide an on-going record and documenting of our sector, its struggles, successes and the on-going hard labour of giving birth to an abuse free culture. Crisis work is so continuously located in the NOW and the immediate short term that any reflection and planning seems like total luxury, as opposed to being the critical foundation. 2006 was a year of both crisis and reflection: the statutory rape crisis and the RCNI Strategic Review and Planning both kicked off in June 2006 – although both had been forecast as coming down stream!! What did we learn? We learned that the RCNI, by which I mean the office, board and members, function expertly in both taking and delivering expert leadership during the statutory rape crisis, and taking time to give critical consideration to the future of the sector; where we as a sector want to be and want the RCNI to be in 5 to 10 years time. The staff, board and members worked alongside each other, in their different roles and remits, during both a crisis response and a reflection and planning exercise.

A critical aspect of the Strategic Planning was the emphasis brought to outcomes, and outcomes evaluations. We can be as busy as bees, and describe our activities in different flavours and with pictures, but can we describe the outcomes that we as a sector deliver, and the differences that these outcomes make? The consultants pulled no punches in letting us know we have priority work to do here over the life time of our new plan, especially if we are to continue to draw those continuously needed resources.

The year certainly started at a low point, with no additional funding secured in the 2005 budget, and the HSE in complete disarray in terms of identifying who was responsible for what as its restructuring continued. Whilst half way through a planning process, the NSC was moved to a different section in the Department of Justice, and it was practically a new pack of cards in terms of personnel from Justice (déjà vu anyone?).

Meantime, brand new funding streams were opened up, for court accompaniment and towards training for good governance and organisational support. A separate budget heading for VAW within HSE budgets was secured. Gradually, it was clarified that the RCNI was funded by a variety of Government Departments AND the HSE to deliver National projects, National representation and National strategies. And so December and the budget rolled round again, and then a Ministerial announcement of €4.5 million for VAW and €2.5 towards SATU, on foot of "a lobby with such strength and focus it could no longer be ignored" (Minister for State, Dept Finance, on radio).

So, on reflection what can be seen in 2006? Well, we haven't as yet got stuck into the outcomes evaluation work but, perhaps one outcome of 2006 is that when we are clear on our different roles and remits within the sector and maintain good communications, the RCC sector can pack one hell of a punch – a 7 million Euro punch even!

Fiona Neary
RCNI Executive Director

RCNI Vision

The Rape Crisis Network works towards a culture free of abuse.

RCNI Mission

The Rape Crisis Network Ireland is uniquely located to identify authentic solutions to sexual violence through collaborative leadership and capacity building with key agencies. The RCNI reduces the impact of rape and sexual violence on the individual and works to create a society that understands the impact of rape and sexual abuse. Our professional expertise is continuously informed by a victim focus, research and our 16 member Rape Crisis Centres.

RCNI Structural Development Strategic Planning for 2007 - 2010

Liz Hayes and Susan Coughlan of the Centre for Corporate Community (C4CC) were contracted by the RCNI to undertake our Strategic Review and Strategic Planning Project, with an Strategic Advisory Group comprised of Board members Miriam Duffy and Tanja Alanko O'Malley and staff Susan Miner and myself. It was clear from early on that the AGM would be very central to a consultation and dialogue process with the wider membership. We appear to have struck gold with our choice of consultants, with participants at the AGM very happy with how C4CC engaged them in this challenging process, and many asking that this positive feedback be passed onto Liz and Susan. Recognising that the RCNI is "a woman with a history" the consultants captured both the achievements of the RCC sector, and the foreseeable challenges ahead. It is clear from their document that C4CC do not shy away from naming the difficult and encouraging their clients to risk moving on and embracing change. C4CC identified that the RCC sector needed to move forward from a survival mindset, fear of annihilation, operating in crisis and let go of the legacy of conflict and fragmentation. In particular, an outcome and impact focus going forward was emphasized.

The RCNI was recognized as a key strategic player with an expert voice, contributing to partnership approaches, playing a pivotal leadership role with enormous potential. As well as identifying Strategic Goals and Objectives, the plan identified and recommended staff development, structures and supports going forward. These recommendations included agreeing a membership charter in place of the current (outdated) Criteria for Membership, on-going collaboration with the National Network of Women's Refuges and Support Services, continued support of good governance amongst many others!!

Following on from the Board agreeing the draft plan, it now returns to the membership at the AGM, with proposed Vision and Mission Statements. The RCNI staff have already commenced actioning the plan, and provided a draft workplan for year one to the RCNI board. It is clear that we have an ambitious document, well informed by members, to guide our work in the coming years.

Fiona Neary

National Statistics Development

For the first time this year we were in a position to contract in a statistical expert to analyse the data we were collecting. This not only gave us an outside perspective but added to the rigour of our statistical findings. Following guidance from Dr. Maureen Lyons from the Equality Studies Centre, School of Social Justice, UCD we were able to critique our existing data collection methods and outcomes and implement a number of process and software changes so that the collective story of the survivors who use RCC services can be told in the most accurate and comprehensive way possible. Since we could not guarantee that our 2005 statistics met these new standards and would therefore truthfully tell the collective story, we took the decision not to release statistics for that year. In addition to improving accuracy we added in variables that capture more demographic characteristics. The care being invested by the RCNI in this project is indicative of our commitment to delivering the highest standard service in response to survivor need. In our quest to be accessible to all survivors of sexual violence we need first to understand exactly who is using RCC services and, of equal importance, who is not using RCC services. While it is always up to a survivor what healing choices she or he makes, accessing an RCC needs to be a real option for all. A standard of data collection and analysis beyond reproach allows us to shape authentic and meaningful responses to survivor need and public opinion and policy.

Susan Miner



Key Support Activities

Organisational Development

We addressed both RCNI and RCC organisational development issues in a variety of ways, with funding from a variety of sources, during the year. Network staff had the opportunity to meet with consultant Rita Burtenshaw for a day to work on Network organisational issues. Through Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs funding, we were able to provide induction training again with Rita Burtenshaw to the members of the RCNI Board. Among other topics, this training included the roles and responsibilities of Board members and governance issues. In addition, we were successful in obtaining a grant from the Wheel to enable a trainer to work in the next year both individually with RCCs on their own organisational issues, and jointly with members of RCC Boards. This grant came from a pilot scheme for networks with most of the money coming from the Department of Enterprise and Employment. Our network received the funding along with ten other diverse networks with differing levels of development and varied training needs.

Susan Miner

RCNI Court Accompaniment

The Court Accompaniment project in 2006 saw member centres accompany 29 clients to court cases that lasted a total of 82 days. Additionally 13 clients were accompanied over 31 days to Garda stations. The following are direct quotations from service users who shared their views in the 'satisfaction surveys' that they are encouraged to complete at the end of their case.

From a client accompanied in their contact with the Gardai:

"It was really important to me to attend the Rape Crisis Centre rather than have to go to the Garda station alone, also knowing that the counsellor was there to support me was paramount, I felt I was treated with absolute respect and I felt it was a brilliant[way] to do such a hard thing[as make my statement]".

From a client accompanied to court:

"I felt a lot safer with someone there to support us through it all, the person understood the court system very well and arranged for a victim support room. The service provided by the Centre is invaluable, thanks!"

In September 2006 the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime held a seminar at Croke Park bringing together all the actors in the criminal justice process, the An Garda Síochána, The DPP, Courts Service, Probation and Welfare and NGO's involved in the support of victims of violence against women and those involved in support of victims of crime more generally. The RCNI were invited to present at that seminar. Our input before this key and influential audience [the Commissioners are Marion Finucane, Nora Owen, Jim McHugh] was wide ranging in scope, highlighting the profile of the work of Rape Crisis Centres as well as making recommendations for improvements needed in the criminal justice process if we are to engage and retain complainants in such a difficult and inordinately long process. These recommendations included the need to statutorily underpin the largely aspirational Victims' Charter; send out Victims' Packs to all complainants which include details of all the services available; advertise the court accompaniment nationally.

As I reflect back from the vantage point of 2007 I am very happy to say the Victims Charter is under review and the Commission are welcoming submissions on the subject, the Gardai now send out details of all services in a standard letter generated by pulse following the logging of a report and the DJE&LR have funded the production of a leaflet which is due to be available at the end of this year for national distribution through all garda stations/courts/RCCs outlining our accompaniment services.

Kate Mulkerrins

RCNI Training Packs and Launches

The training packs many RCC staff and volunteers have envisaged for the past few years have now become a reality. Trainers provided invaluable feedback about what was needed, what worked well and what needed to be changed. Many other RCC personnel provided ideas and suggestions as well.

We now have a 200 hour basic training pack, initially developed by Susanne Borner and updated by Marian Shiels (both from the Galway Rape Crisis Centre) and the rest of the Training Committee including Vera O'Leary (Kerry Rape Crisis Centre), Nicci Rowntree-Carroll (Mayo Rape Crisis Centre), Una Travers, and Daphne Hunt (both from the Carlow & South Leinster Rape Crisis Centre). As adjuncts, Aoibheann McCann compiled five additional packs. Three of these are designed for internal training: Helpline, SATU Support, and Specialised Sexual Violence (Top-Up) Training either for qualified counsellors who have not received such training or RCNI staff and volunteers with a non-counselling role. These packs reflect the increasingly diverse roles that staff and volunteers fill. The other two packs are designed to be delivered by RCNI staff and volunteers: the first is an education pack for secondary school age youth; the second is a disclosure workshop.



These handbooks were launched in Limerick, Galway and Carlow by Jan O'Sullivan, Labour TD, Michael D. Higgins, TD and Chair of the Labour Party and the Fine Gael Senator, Fergal Browne on Education. This provided an excellent opportunity to highlight the varied ways in which RCCs provide services to survivors and supporters, as well as engaging in social change. In conjunction with the launches Current Training Matters discussions were held with RCC staff and volunteers. These discussions included the need for and availability of training in organisational development and social change. Knowledge gained from this process continues to inform the work of the Network.

Susan Miner

Coordinators' Forum

RCC Coordinators expressed an interest in having a facilitated forum at which they could meet to exchange ideas, support and best practice. That Forum began in 2006 facilitated by Marie Carroll.

Sheila Vereker, Coordinator of the Waterford Rape Crisis Centre documented her experience thus, 'I must admit I was curious about the function of the forum at first, and attended out of that curiosity and open to the possibility. It was great to meet up again with colleagues old and new – though not of course in terms of age! We had common problems and experiences and I learned from same – it was good to share these. In the 2006 meetings I felt the tempo was quite upbeat – lots of things going on in lots of Centres.' There is a high level of attendance and Coordinators continue to express a need for the Forum.

Direct Support for Survivors

The RCNI provided direct support to survivors mainly through the work of both the Legal and the Communications Coordinators.

RCNI Campaigns 2006

Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs)

In 2005 Susan Miner, Services Support Coordinator and Angela McCarthy, Head of Clinical Services at the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, participated in the creation of Sexual Assault Treatment Services: A National Review along with personnel from the various government department including the HSE and the Gardaí, the INO, and various nurses and doctors. Following a lot of campaigning on the part of the Network and many individual RCCs, this review was launched by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform in June. Agreed recommendations include: (1) standardisation of existing SATU services; (2) proper resourcing of existing SATUs so that anyone aged 14 or over can access services, whether she/he chooses to report to the Gardaí or not; (3) development of a pilot forensic nursing training programme; (4) development of two new SATUs in 2006 in Galway and the midlands; and (5) SATUs, existing and new, to follow Rape/Sexual Assault: National Guidelines on Referral and Forensic Clinical Examination in Ireland. RCCs are identified as the organisations best placed to provide psychological support in the SATUs.

In the interim between the completion of the Review last year and its publication this year, the Regional Planning Committee in the mid west have established a service in Limerick.

Although 2006 ended without the establishment of the new SATUs or the provision of adequate funding and resources to existing SATUs, again after much campaigning, Minister for Health and Children Mary Harney announced that €2.5 million in HSE money has been allocated for 2007 to begin implementing the Review's recommendation.

Susan Miner

Statutory rape crisis - time line of events

Tuesday the 23rd May

Supreme Court rules that Section 1(1) of the 1935 Act is unconstitutional because the defendant is not allowed a defence of mistaken belief in age in statutory rape cases.

Thursday 25th

First statutory rape case since ruling is withdrawn.

Friday 26th

First RCNI position paper on the crisis prepared and circulated.

Sunday 28th

Newspapers suggest Minister McDowell will lower the age of consent to 16 in any new legislation.

Monday 29th

Mr A., convicted solely on statutory rape, makes an application to be freed under Article 40 on the basis of unlawful detention.

Tuesday 30th

The High Court releases Mr A. An appeal to the Supreme Court begins the following day.

Thursday 1st June

RCNI strongly resist a suggested lowering of the age of consent by McDowell both through public debate, press releases and direct lobbying of opposition spokespeople.

Friday 2nd

White Flower Rallies takes place throughout the country. The Dáil comes off its holiday and passes the new Sexual Offences Act 2006. McDowell reintroduces statutory rape but without strict liability which he warns will have repercussions for child witness in rape cases. He does not lower the age of consent in this new

legislation. The Supreme Court rules on the same day to re-imprison Mr. A.

Weds 7th

Joint all party Dáil Committee announced and sits for the first time on July 18th chaired by Deputy Peter Power.

July

Sullivan report on the communications breakdown in the Attorney General's office affecting their preparedness for the CC case concludes it was human oversight.

September

RCNI make comprehensive submission to the Joint Committee on Child Protection.

Nov 30th

Joint Committee Report on Child Protection launched. It contains 62 recommendations.

The fall in Statutory Rape legislation and the ensuing debate, lobbying, emergency legislation and Joint Oireachtas Committee dominated much of the resources of the RCNI for six months from May to November. When the Supreme Court ruling was announced the RCNI were well positioned in terms of existing expertise and research to set the agenda and respond to issues being raised. Three staff members postponed all non-essential work and met continually to strategise throughout the crisis. Given the constantly shifting nature of the events which were to unfold this was to prove vital.

In the three weeks following May the 23rd the RCNI covered every local and national radio station in Ireland and some in the North. At a conservative estimate we had 10 hours of air time by the time of the white flower rally on Friday the 2nd. That is not counting the extensive work Rape Crisis Centres around the country were doing in the media, in supporting survivors and in organising white flower rallies. We had been on RTE news twice on TV3, Sky news and TV4 news, on Ireland AM and on Primetime. We had issued 12 press releases and a policy position paper which we kept updating as the situation unfolded and re-releasing. The hours briefing journalists are hard to approximate but it was extensive and often unaccredited. We had also briefed and informed other key agencies in their response to the unfolding crisis. We had supported a number of survivors in telling their stories in the media. We had attended the Mr A appeal of sentence in the High Court and the Supreme Court decision to re-imprison Mr A. And we had organised nationwide rallies which brought the government back to the Dáil in an emergency sitting to pass emergency legislation. Over the summer we prepared submitted and launched detailed recommendations entitled. Agenda for Justice II: Delivering on the Promise of Child Protection.

The result was that the RCNI had informed, steered and led the debate. There was not a player, actor or argument in the crisis which was not influenced by the RCNI. We had been key in guiding public awareness and response to the crisis. We had informed key party political policy as the situation developed. We had strongly influenced McDowell's about turn on lowering the age of consent and we had helped shape the agenda going forward.

Cliona Saidlár

"The Statutory Rape Crisis in 2006 heightened the public's awareness of the nature and extent of Sexual Violence against young children. The special enquiry by Dail Éireann into the matter was greatly assisted by the input from the Rape Crisis Network Ireland for which I am deeply appreciative."

Deputy Peter Power,
Chairman Joint Oireachtas Committee
on Child Protection (2006-2007).



Age of Consent Debate

On the last day of November the Joint committee on Child Protection issued its very welcome report. The committee made 61 excellent recommendations and one recommendation the RCNI judged to be a mistake. They recommended the lowering of the age of consent from 17 to 16.

The RCNI had been tracking the committee's thinking on this issue for a number of weeks and had already attempted to influence the final decision of the committee. Our strategy was founded on the RCNI legal Committees (Mary Hackett Brennan, Ingrid Wallace and Kate Mulherrins) deliberations on this issue when they had met in emergency session to discuss and agree the RCNI policy position. Unfortunately we had failed in the objective of influencing the committee on this issue. We then moved into a communications strategy to raise awareness, to win allies and to start a public debate. While we achieved extensive coverage in the 24 hours immediately after its announcement no wider debate was initiated. The RCNI continued to campaign through press releases, advocating with spokespeople and briefing organisations. It took over two weeks for a level of interest to be achieved about this issue.

The key aim of the RCNI campaign was to see the implementation of the 61 recommendations of the Joint Committee on Child Protection in building its 'zone of absolute protection' but for them to not implement the one recommendation to lower the age of consent. The committee in its report tied the statutory rape age to the age of consent. This was not necessary, and in our analysis it was a mistake. The committee treated the age of consent as if it were merely a law. They did not take into consideration the social and cultural aspects of this social tool.

They give four reasons for lowering the age of consent. They were:

1. teenagers don't know it anyway. RCNI solution:

- educate them and focus on public awareness

2. the age of medical consent is 16. RCNI solution:

- We need statutory guidelines for professionals offering services to teenagers. Lowering the age of consent does not fix the problem, unless you lower it to about 11.

3. the 'reality' is that teenagers are doing it anyway. RCNI argument:

- The law on consent should not necessarily follow reality (smoking and drink driving laws don't) and even if it did the latest research shows us that 17 is the median age for young people in Ireland to have first sex.

4. for clarity's sake the age of consent should be the same as the age of strict liability. RCNI argument:

- The 'zone of protection' only requires the age of strict liability to be set. The age of consent does no extra work there.

The prolonged debate on the age of consent, it stretched over Christmas and into January, was a very useful platform for exploring the realities of people's attitudes, for awareness raising and for advocacy concerning young people and sexuality. One of the key aspects revealed in many of the public debating fora was that young people themselves (particularly girls) did not want the age of consent lowered. In the end the political appetite for lowering the age of consent appeared to dissipate and Ireland had benefited from a healthy airing of opinions on a vital issue concerning child protection, healthy attitudes to sexuality and the emerging widespread understanding that our current sex education for young people is inadequate.

Clíona Saidléar

Election 2007 Campaign

The work of establishing RCNI election priorities began at the 2005 AGM where priority areas were identified. These were fleshed out and researched and tested in the rest of that year. 2006 saw phase two of the campaign being rolled out. The election strategy in 2006 had two threads. The first was scheduling meetings with and briefing all political parties in an effort to influence their manifestos. This not only meant formal meetings with key spokespeople but also identifying key party researchers and advisors who would have significant inputs into the manifesto, influencing party conference motions and raising the issue throughout the party rank and file. The RCNI's capacity to achieve success therefore was augmented considerably by the concerted effort of the entire membership in carrying this message to their local representatives. The second thread was to direct our public awareness energies into promoting the RCNI priorities; Education, Policing, Funding and SATUs. What this meant in practice was to use, as appropriate, relevant platforms and events as they arose to promote these issues, thus generating public awareness and debate supporting our policy priorities.

By the close of 2006, two of our election priorities had already achieved significant advances. Namely the budget announced for 2007 finally gave us a significant proportion of what we asked for in terms of additional funding for the Violence Against Women sector and also funding was announced for the implementation of the SATU review recommendations.

Clíona Saidléar

Partnership in the VAW Sector

I am delighted to have the opportunity to add to your annual report 2006. I cannot express enough how critical the relationship between the two Networks has been over the past year and assure you of our continued commitment to partnership working with the RCNI. Not only has this relationship been a source of great support to the NNWRSS it has also been ground breaking in terms of its achievements. I think our work together had a huge impact on the government. We let it be known that between the two Networks we could mobilize 56 independent, strong organizations in the lobby for additional funds. Together we won that campaign and raised the profile of our work considerably. We have a lot more to do together and I think that is both exciting and challenging! I would like to take this opportunity to commend the RCNI and its membership on all the work carried out in 2006. It's an outstanding achievement and one to be very proud of as you move into another year and many more campaigns.

Sharon O'Halloran
Director, NNWRSS

Agenda for Justice I

Achieving the necessary legislative, practice and policy changes to re-calibrate the scales of justice to a more 'balanced' approach is what Agenda for Justice I is all about. Outlining as it does the 19 points of reform that Rape Crisis Centres see as 'key' to transforming the legal landscape into which complainants report, it is our major broad brush lobbying tool seeking reform of that arena. 2006 was significant in regard to progress on 2 of those specific 19 points. The RCNI are delighted to report that we can 'flag' two steps on our journey, the first of these, like our movement itself, was born in crisis, the statutory rape crisis of the summer of '06 to be exact and the subsequent new Sexual Offences Act (2006) which rose, if not quite as a phoenix from the ashes of the Supreme Court's decision in the CC case. The effect of that Act on two areas that we had been lobbying for was twofold, firstly:

The removal of the 12 month time-limitation during which prosecutions for unlawful carnal knowledge had hitherto had to be commenced. The extension of the protections hitherto afforded only to girls in a heterosexual context to apply without reference to gender or sexual orientation. And 'legislation to reflect the changing nature of 'families' e.g. the need to protect children/young people from a wider category of persons most notably step parents, persons standing in loco parentis etc., The 2006 Act achieves a great deal towards these goals however of course much was lost with the demise of strict liability, for the very first time since 1935 a defendant can assert that he/she 'honestly (though not necessarily reasonably) believed the young person was 17. The second important marker of achievement in '06 was the establishment of a specific 'notification procedures' by the Irish Prison Service. To avail of this information a victim must put a request in writing to receive the relevant information from the Irish Prison Service. This very welcome reform marks a very significant recognition for the need to put in place, [a] 'national notification procedures to ensure that victims are advised in advance of the release from custody of their perpetrator' which point 17 of Agenda for Justice I called for. There is of course a lot more to do, for sure, but we must remember to pause and celebrate.

Kate Mulkerrins

Attrition Research

2006 saw the first full year of the 'operational' phase of this project. Just to remind everyone, and to initiate the new, this is the research project that the RCNI have commissioned NUI Galway to undertake. What is attrition? In this context, attrition may be defined as the process by which rape cases are filtered out of the criminal justice system at successive points of that system. By agreement, this study concentrates on the following points:
 Strand I The decision by rape complainants whether or not to report their allegations of rape to An Garda Síochána and their experience of doing so. Strand II The decision by the Director of Public Prosecutions whether or not to prosecute allegations of rape; and, Strand III The nature of the rape trial, with a particular emphasis on the operation of the "rape shield laws". The study is therefore built around the three points in the criminal justice system at which attrition is most likely to occur. It is anticipated that this structure will enable us to present the most detailed and comprehensive picture ever obtained of the criminal justice system's response to the crime of rape. That is so important because as we know to influence policy makers we must have an evidence based analysis of the problem(s). 2006 concentrated on strand I of the project in the form of a comprehensive survey of eligible participants [victims of rape who were aged 18 or over at the time, occurring in Ireland since 2004]. As it turned out, we received 103 eligible responses which was only 50% of our target. Nevertheless, we are confident that a statistical analysis on these responses will provide a great deal of information on the decision-making processes of rape complainants. It is also worth noting that while our response rate has been lower than we had hoped, that response rate is broadly in line with the response rate found by other researchers in foreign jurisdictions. Getting sufficient numbers of participants was a fraught process at times for all concerned, but what has been achieved whilst far from our original target, is the largest survey of rape complainants' experiences ever undertaken in Ireland. As the Dean of Law, Gerard Quinn said at the launch of this project: "This project will enable the experience of the silent majority to be told sensitively and with compassion. Put together these stories will hopefully inform rational reform. This is law reform at its best".

Kate Mulkerrins

See *Agenda for Justice I*, Page 4 'Legislative Reform' point 5 & 6.
 See *Agenda for Justice I*, Page 5 'Practice Reform' point 17.

Money Matters

Audited Accounts 2006: The 2006 RCNI annual accounts have been audited by our accountants, Arkin Kenny & Company. John Kenny, accountant, commented on the well-managed funding as once again we have an under-spend (though not all of the €65,273.00 is an under-spend as some of this amount are budgets not yet spent but will be in 2007) - a miraculous feat as we have had no core funding increase since 2002 but unfortunately a feat that we will find hard to carry forward again despite our careful spending. It was a busy year financially as we have many different funding lines each requiring a six monthly or annual financial return and in different formats.

Rape Crisis Network Ireland Limited

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
 for the year ended 31 December 2006

	2006	2005
Income	-	534,296
Dept of Justice (Legal Post)	60,000	-
Dept of Justice (Information Leaflets)	11,000	-
The Wheel	12,000	-
Daphne	60,426	-
Atlantic Philanthropies	69,099	-
Dept of Justice (Attrition Research)	36,018	-
Dept Comm., Rural & Gael Affairs (Manage Training Fund)	15,000	-
Dept Comm., Rural & Gaetacht Affairs (Policy & Comm Post)	79,860	-
HSE	223,844	-
HSE - Retention Fee	11,781	-
Other Income	56,856	-
Federation Grant	60,000	-
	<u>635,884</u>	<u>594,296</u>

Administrative expenses

	2006	2005
Wages, PRSI & Pension Costs	295,772	291,288
Research & Consultation	107,997	109,533
Supervising & Training	23,750	27,598
Data Analysis	21,862	5,211
Workshop & Consultancy	420	11,433
AGM	9,232	9,879
Light & Heat	1,075	1,066
Rent	13,600	13,600
Projects, Travel, Subsistence	51,838	52,086
Telephone, Communications	10,776	7,967
Hire of Venue	360	810
Bank Interest & Charges	198	311
Postage	755	1,467
Printing & Stationery	12,679	4,135
Insurance	1,050	1,172
Subscriptions	760	1,364
Accountancy/Legal Fees	3,694	3,722
Depreciation	4,696	4,340
Advertising	-	2,527
Management Charges	2,903	2,840
Staff Development	5,697	3,105
Sundry expenses	1,497	2,662
	<u>570,611</u>	<u>558,116</u>
Operating Profit	570,611	558,116
	<u>65,273</u>	<u>36,180</u>
Net Profit for the year	65,273	36,180



Other Matters

White Paper Funding Schemes: Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs: we have two funding lines from this body which were to end in November 2006- Policy & Communications and Management Training funds-but there was a six month roll over bringing us to March 2007-while a new funding scheme for 'National Organisations' replacing the current scheme for 'Federations, Networks & Umbrella Bodies' was been put in place.

Training Packs: In 2006 the RCNI Training Packs were up-dated and added on to so there was a vast amount of work involved between the content up-dating, photocopying, binding and then the launches. My involvement was the photocopying (the photocopier has still not forgiven me!!) and the binding mainly and even with the help of a couple of students it was a busy time.



White Flower Day: Wow!! What an explosive few days? Like a tornado coming out of nowhere it just literally landed on us. From having a normal calm (!!) staff meeting -then eruption out of the blue - caused all the staff (except myself) hightailing it to Dublin. But even though it was Marie Celeste in the office that did not stop the phones from hopping out of their cradles (and all at the same time as well) as journalists from all areas of the media were looking for information, comments, interviews and more. Galway RCC, along with a lot of other centres around the country, held an impromptu march, starting outside the local court and marching up to Eyre Square to lay white flowers for all victims of child sexual abuse. As this march was at 1pm and only organised at 11am I decided to help by printing up leaflets and racing around to all local businesses to display these posters. The turn-out was well represented by both participants and media alike and it is at times like this that you feel "yes people out there do care" and after many years of a slow hard journey that awareness is reaching a certain percentage of people.



Independent Chair 2006

Margaret Barry

Company Directors 2006

Name	Centre
Miriam Duffy	Limerick RCC
Anne Kirwan Finn	Kilkenny RCC
Jan O'Rourke	Wexford RCC
Una Travers	Carlow and South Leinster

Board of Management 2006

Name	Centre
Anita Clancy	Tipperary RCC
Anne Kirwan-Finn	Kilkenny RCC
Catherine Dooley	Tullamore RCC
Daphne Hunt	Carlow & South Leinster
Eileen Kelly	Belfast RCC
Ellen O'Malley Dunlop	Dublin RCC (10.04.06 start)
Jan O'Rourke	Wexford RCC (March 06 left board of management)
Miriam Duffy	Limerick RCC
Ruth McNeely	Mayo RCC
Sara Donovan	Donegal RCC
Tanja Alanko-O'Malley	Galway RCC
Mary Allen	Athlone Midlands RCC
Alice Kavanagh	Kerry RCC

(Please note that our Board of Management and Company Directors' term runs from October to September)

Fiona Neary, Executive Director
Susan Miner, Services Support Coordinator
Kate Mulkerrins, Legal Coordinator
Cliona Saidléar, Policy & Communications Coordinator
Mary D'Arcy, Financial & Network Administrator



RCNI Board 2006 back row L - R Margaret Barry independent chair, Ellen O'Malley Dunlop DRCC, Anita Clancy TRCC, Sara Donovan Donegal RCC, May Allen Athlone Midlands RCC. Front row L-R Anne Kirwan-Finn Kilkenny RC&CC, Addy Roddy Carlow South-Leinster RC&CC, Miriam Duffy LRCC, Tanja Alanko-O'Malley GRCC

Induction Days: The RCNI Board of Management Induction Days were held in Tullamore on 3/4th October 2006 and facilitated by Rita Burtenshaw. The newly elected board members found this training very beneficial.

AGM: A big 'thank you' to Sligo RCC for hosting the 2006 AGM which was a huge success. They were celebrating their tenth year as a Rape Crisis Centre. From contents/input during the day to the evening 'accreditation dinner', where we received lovely handmade cards & candles, lively music, dancing and beautiful singing made it a thoroughly enjoyable RCNI AGM. Yet again it was great to meet up with all the members for another interesting, informative, lively and fun 2006 AGM.

Mary D'Arcy