



# Annual Report 2021



## Chairperson's Introduction

In my third year as Chairperson of RCNI, 2021 proved to be yet another challenging year for the organisation, its member centres, our partners and indeed for survivors of sexual violence. It was a year of hope in terms of emerging from the pandemic even though we began the year in another lockdown. The strength of resilience and capacity shown by our own member centres and the RCNI once again shone through in our striving to place the victim and the victim's journey at the heart of how we operate. As chairperson I was able to witness on so many occasions the collective support and guidance offered amongst the member centres which resulted in a true sense of cohesion for the work of the RCNI. Indeed I would suggest that collective expertise has resulted in the expansion and further embedding of the role of the RCNI in being an independent and autonomous advocate for survivors of sexual violence in Ireland.

An annual report is an ideal time to pause and reflect on what we have achieved in the past year while also looking towards our challenges going forward. The details of our work in 2021 are laid out in Dr Cliona Saidleir, our Executive Director's foreword and the report as a whole that we present.

What I would reflect on here is that every day survivors are impacted by the work of RCNI, in multiple ways that they may never realize. From the new legislation and amendments which means the wrong committed against them now has a law which makes it illegal and their case can progress; to the confidence, sensitivity and availability of volunteers all over Ireland to accompany them when they wish to report, to

the protection of their data and their privacy; to their work ensuring rape crisis centres remain confidential safe places that can centre survivors no matter who the funder; to the evolving work of prevention meaning many will never become survivors in the future.

As RCNI's continues in our work focusing on survivor needs, including ensuring survivor's services are sustainable and specialised, we need to highlight the urgent need for focused core funding for clinical training and accreditation and a fully nationally available professionalized Garda and court accompaniment service. Both these areas have been fully researched and engaged upon under RCNI's leadership and now require the government to commit funding to sustain best practice services into the future.

Sincerest thanks to my fellow board members for their ongoing support and work on behalf of the RCNI. While our challenges were many in the past year, as a board the work and dedication never faltered. It was the strength of our board which in many ways allowed us to further network across the sector with the needs of survivors at the core of this.

As I finish this introduction to our 2021 Annual Report, I have great hope and belief that the RCNI and its work will continue to play an essential part in ensuring that the experience and voice of survivors of gender based violence in Ireland will be listened to.

Loretta McDonagh MA SIAHIP  
Chairperson  
Rape Crisis Network Ireland



## Director's Foreword

2021 was another busy, affirming and in places tumultuous year. It was a year marked by contrasts; the uncertainty of Covid alongside the solidifying of partnerships and relationships; the inertia surrounding our lives due to the pandemic against the unprecedented change agenda in reforming how we support the victim's journey through the criminal justice system; the passivity of being subject to a virus against the big and ambitious plans being formulated for the future; the frailty and the resilience of our sector and all who work and volunteer within it, the victims surviving.

None of our work is possible without the engagement and support of survivors, the member Rape Crisis Centres, other NGOs partners and collaborators, our board and funders – thank you to all of you.

The year started with the consultation into the Government Audit into the infrastructure and response across the whole of government to Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (DSGBV). The third national strategy consultation commenced shortly into 2021 and the O'Malley review implementation plan led by the Department of Justice – 'Supporting a Victims Journey' – was very active with three subcommittees and a raft of projects focused on implementation.

Along with engaging in these three big pieces of government led transformative work the RCNI worked with a range of partners throughout 2021 to create the conditions for change. RCNI chaired the Children Living with Domestic and Sexual Violence NGO coalition working to map the child

victim's journey and advocate on their behalf. We initiated the What Works project with sexual violence NGOs and statutory partners to identify shared data points to understand and track sexual violence against children. We continued our collaboration with counselling partners in the Sector Bodies group to advocate for adult survivor rights in the processing of mandatory reporting, chaired by our colleague Maeve Lewis in One in Four. We were part of the Children Rights Alliance led joint campaign to ensure the best outcomes for the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill and continued to work with our partners in the Victims Rights Alliance.

Other critical legislative change this year included the Criminal Procedures Act, the Sex Offenders Bill and the Equalities Act review. We also engaged in a large-scale research project with survivors and counsellors on their experiences and needs in relation to remote and blended counselling. Trauma informed training across the professions of engaged in delivering justice has also been a significant feature of the past year. Our longstanding commitment to education and prevention remained through work across the schools curriculum, the Higher Education Institutes, HSE sexual health work and the Department of Justice-led national DSGBV campaigns.

We have remained committed in 2021 to supporting our partners across Europe. Ireland is one of the few countries in the EU that has long-standing and standalone specialisation in sexual violence responses and so under the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention which

most countries are now implementing, our insights are in demand. Alongside being a board member of the European Women's Network against Sexual Violence, I was contracted as a specialist consultant to a UNWomen project in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This work included a study day and we are grateful for the participation of our statutory and SATU partners in sharing Ireland's 360 experience of responding to sexual violence as part of this project. The project culminated in a guidance document on the 'how to' of sexual violence response and we participated in dissemination, promotion and training to rape crisis start-ups in other countries. We continue to act as expert advisors to the European Network WAVE as it builds its language around sexual violence specialisation and continue to engage in the learning and collaborative network with our partners across the UK and Ireland.

The core of our work remains the everyday work with survivors both within the RCNI team and through the rape crisis centres who own and govern the RCNI. Significantly increased networking has been an ongoing part of our Covid response, with shared learning, mutual support, policy and guidance development, upskilling and data gathering featuring throughout.

The Storm and Stress research from our colleague Dr Michelle Walsh launched in June made a big impact as this research filled a critical gap in our evidence around adolescent's experiences of sexual harassment and violence. The need for this evidence is clear in how frequently these statistics have been quoted since we published them, including by the Ombudsman for Children, the Rapporteur and a judge in a sentencing in a sexual violence case.

2022 promises to be a busy year again for us with large projects from this year continuing into 2022 and their outputs being launched and finalised. This includes the research from the Clinical Innovation Project, funded by Rethink Ireland, which saw 1000 survivors and 500 counsellors participating in our research. RCNI will continue collaborating in the development of a suite of training materials arising from this learning. Alongside this, we will be making the time for the all-important 'housekeeping' work of a renewal of our strategic direction, governance, website and data collection infrastructure as well as imagining ourselves into the opportunities and challenges presented by the blended world of on and offline working and living, and the commitment and energy to creating change that exists all round us at present.

Dr Clóna Saidléar  
Executive Director  
Rape Crisis Network Ireland

## **Our team**

Caroline Counihan  
Legal Director

Niamh McGarry  
Communications and Information Officer  
(took over role from Hazel Larkin in April)

Elaine Mears  
Privacy and Data Support Coordinator

Lorraine Quigley  
Administrator

## Supporting Survivors' Access to Justice

*RCNI continue to provide excellence in responding to, understanding and advising on access to justice for survivors. This encompasses the work of providing direct legal services to survivors and their supporters, equipping the sexual violence sector to provide Court and Garda accompaniment to survivors and to stay up to date with the law as well as analysing and advising on changes to the law, practice and policy.*

### Legal advice for survivors

**In 2021 RCNI provided expert legal advice directly to 76 survivors and responded to 47 legal queries arising in 12 different Rape Crisis Centres.**

### Legal and justice related internal policy work

Briefings and trainings are provided to those working in sexual violence when legal or practice changes are introduced. In 2021 this included:

- the draft Code of Conduct for Sector Bodies on GDPR etc
- on disclosure of counselling records
- and on gender-specific offences
- on the new Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020
- on the Parole Act
- on the proposed new offence of stalking (Non-Fatal Offences against the Person (Amendment) Bill
- on proposed legislation to introduce Domestic Violence Leave.

### Submissions

In addition, in 2021 RCNI made a number of submissions to various Ministers, government departments and public consultations on a range of issues. These included advocacy with and submissions to:

- December 2021: [RCNI Submission on Consultation on Review of the Equality Acts](#)
- June 2021: [RCNI Submission on General Scheme of Online Safety & Media Regulation Bill](#)
- May 2021: RCNI Submission on '[School Bullying and Its Impact on Mental Health](#)' to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
- April 2021: [RCNI Garda Strategy Statement 2022-2024 Submission](#)
- March 2021: RCNI [Statement on Victims Testimony in Cases of Rape and Sexual Assault](#) to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice
- March 2021: Joint '[Children Living with Domestic and Sexual Violence](#)' Submission to the Family Justice Oversight Group Consultation
- March 2021: RCNI Appendix 3 to [Submission on Victims' Testimony Special Measures Table](#)
- February 2021: RCNI Criminal Procedure Bill 2021 [Commentary on Bill](#)
- February 2021: RCNI [Family Justice Oversight Group Submission](#)
- February 2021: RCNI [Submission on Victims' Testimony](#) to Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice (supported by Safe Ireland)

## **NGO Interagency Groups**

### *Children Living with Domestic and Sexual Violence NGO coalition*

RCNI chairs this group of NGOs which set itself the priority task of understanding and raising awareness of the issues and mapping the Child's Journey

### *What Works*

RCNI established group working with sexual violence NGOs and statutory partners to identify shared data points to understand and track sexual violence against children.

### *Sector Bodies Group*

Collaborated with the sexual violence specialist sector and professional bodies representing counselling in the Sector Bodies group to advocate for adult survivor rights in the processing of mandatory reporting,

### *Children's Rights Alliance campaign*

Worked with the Children Rights Alliance led joint campaign to ensure the best outcomes for the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill

### *Victims' Rights Alliance*

An Alliance of victim support and human rights organisations in Ireland formed with the goal of ensuring the Victim's Rights Directive is implemented in Ireland within the proposed time frame, with all victims of crime in mind.

### *National Advocacy Project*

Chair of this group of NGOs and State agencies that discuss the possibility of piloting an Irish National Advocacy Project, chairing of that meeting and follow up work.

### *Beyond Exploitation*

One of fourteen supporting organisations in *Beyond Exploitation*, Ireland's civil society campaign for equality and freedom from sexual exploitation.

# Dignity And Prevention Through Cultural Transformation

*RCNI continue to pay close attention to the rights and dignity of survivors in all aspects of their disclosure, receiving responses and engaging with a range of professionals and institutions as well as with their families, circles of trust, communities, workplaces and places of study and leisure. This focus involves both changing culture and changing systems and so we engage in public discourse, public awareness campaigns and education.*

## **Public Engagement - Prevention and Awareness Campaigns**

### **Media and Culture**

In terms of the public discourse and effecting the public debate and culture, we continued to manage and develop our engagement through the media and our online presence and social media channels as well as monthly newsletters to stakeholders.

### **Informing Legislators**

Alongside the public sphere work was a considerable engagement across the Oireachtas to inform and support legislators in their work.

### **Children and youth education and development**

- Consulting into the Department of Education SPHE school curriculum, review undertaken by the NCCA,
- Continued partnership with Foróige on the REAL U programme
- Advisory on the Manuela Riedo programme for schools.
- Advisor to the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme in updating materials for the RSE junior cycle curriculum.

### **Higher Education**

#### *Higher Education Institutes (HEI)*

Expert advisor on the HEA Framework for Consent monitoring advisory, member of National Advisory Committee for HEIs, Partners with Active Consent NUIG, delivered training programme to a range of professionals in HEI and partners.

- [Active Consent/Consent Hub](#)

### **Public Awareness Raising Campaigns**

*Department of Justice-led national DSGBV campaigns*

- [Still here](#)
- [No Excuses](#)

# THE IRISH TIMES

## State can no longer ignore sexual violence towards teenagers

Data shows we must protect adolescents from frequent and severe bullying and abuse

Expand



# RTÉ

## 22% increase in helpline calls during pandemic - RCNI

Updated / Thursday, 7 Oct 2021 11:09



The RCNI is calling for greater investment in a sustainability and infrastructure for rape crisis centres in the upcoming budget

# thejournal.ie

## Rape crisis centres: 22% increase in helpline calls as waiting lists rise

More than 13,000 contacts were made to six centres last year

Oct 19, 2021, 1:28 PM 1,462 Views 8 Comments



# Irish Examiner

## More than four out of five teens experience sexual harassment



Luke O'Grady, from Brough, who is currently studying to become a teacher, says more needs to be done to educate students around sexual harassment. Picture: Dee Moloney

## Changing signage won't alter lived reality of why women go to toilets in groups

The School Design Guide for Sanitary Facilities has proposed a move away from single-sex facilities to unisex facilities to minimise the risk of bullying



Girls will still go to the toilet in groups because changing the signage won't have changed their lived reality — that they get to escape for five minutes in the girls' toilets before they re-enter the fray of a culture that is violently misogynistic. Picture: P6

WEB, 19 MAY, 2021 - 06:12  
CLÍONA SAIDLÉAR

## Clíona Saidléar: Sex attack survivors are 'worth' only 0.4 a €4bn problem

Let's not congratulate ourselves for the funds we provide survivors on waiting lists are 'worth' only 0.4% of a €4bn



## Sexual violence begins much earlier than adulthood, and needs to be tackled then too

Female vulnerability to sexual violence, and acting out of harmful sexual behaviours in males, manifest when the child is under the age of 13

# newstalk



A 100% increase in contacts to Rape Crisis Helplines in the last 10 years



# COUNSELLING SURVIVORS IN AN ON & OFFLINE WORLD



**RETHINK  
IRELAND** Our  
Social  
Innovation  
Fund

As a result of Covid 19, counselling was moved online and both survivors and counsellors were forced to rapidly adapt. Safe spaces as previously provided by Rape Crisis Centres and face to face counselling were no longer accessible and had to be replaced by online and telephone connections.

Dr Michelle Walsh, clinical lead of the the Clinical Innovation Project (CIP) researched the state of counselling for survivors of sexual violence in Ireland in 2021. The aim was to develop the evidence-base to inform a safe and specialist standard of trauma counselling, on- and offline, for survivors of sexual violence. On the basis of the evidence, the CIP report will recommend the introduction of regulation for specialist professional counsellors, to include the requirement for standardised specialist training and accreditation.

The research highlighted survivor-centred perspectives on counselling and aligned the survivor perspective with the counsellor perspective. Almost 700 survivors of sexual violence participated in the research and gave detailed information on recent experiences of accessing and engaging in counselling. 380 counsellors also provided their perspective on providing counselling to survivors of sexual violence and accessing specialist training and supervision.

The research was focused on survivors who were able to access counselling before and during the pandemic, and included (33%) survivors who did not manage to access counselling.

The CIP report and associated training is due for release in 2022.

## Centring Survivors: Collecting The Evidence

RCNI since 2003 has collaboratively developed and pioneered a national data collection system across sexual violence specialist NGOs. In 2013 this partnership encompassed 93% of all survivors accessing services, and has been academically evaluated and promoted by EIGE, the European equality agency, as best practice. RCNI are specialists in co-creating standards, promoting good data collection practices, supporting data protection culture and collaborative stakeholder engagement on matching data capture with evolving need and practice. In 2021 our ongoing work on data included:

### Data Protection

GDPR training and upskilling ensuring good data management and survivor privacy. Our shared concern continues to be facilitating the efficacy of this work in a manner that is fully cognisant that sexual violence supports are engaging with victims of crime where their cases are or may in future be subject to investigation and prosecution. In light of the rapidly evolving technological landscape these remain under review. We reviewed and updated guidance briefings which we distributed to all NGOs specialising in delivering counselling to these victims of crime. We have initiated a review process of our Data Protection practices and suite of policies and standards which were initially developed in the GDPR 2018 compliance process. We also began gathering information about specific data and information processes within RCCs, with a view to improvement and standardisation through shared learning.

### GDPR standards review

We finalised the revision of 13 Standards and documents relating to GDPR and data protection practices in RCCs (best practice standards, forms, protocols etc). This process was done in collaboration with RCNI staff, the RCNI Quality Assurance Subcommittee, key RCC managers, and external data experts and adopted by RCNI and member Rape Crisis Centres and their boards.

### Survivor data gathering processes

We began a review of the RCNI Data Collection System with Data Collection Officers from each RCC who use this system. The past year has accelerated changes in how survivors access RCC services and highlighted how reliant



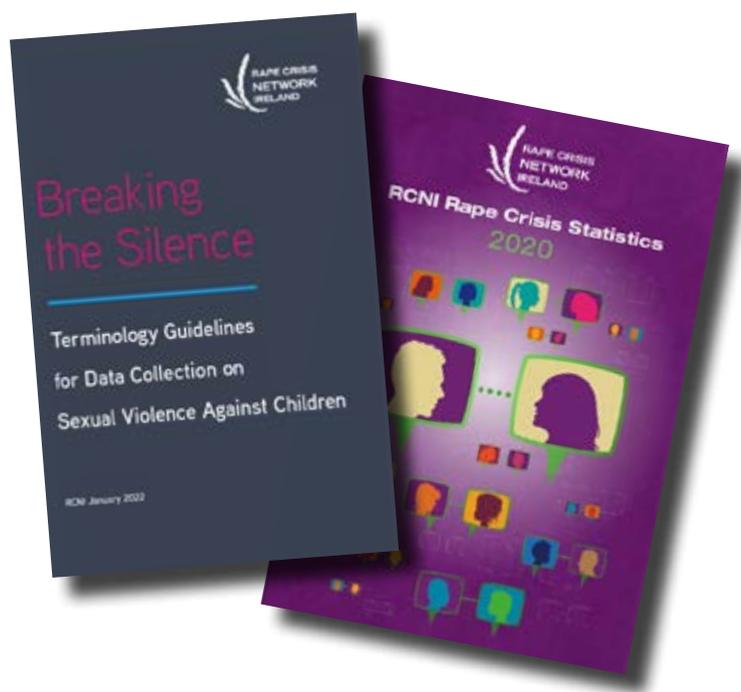
survivors are on RCCs for additional advocacy and supports beyond counselling. Court and Garda accompaniment services have had to be reimagined during Covid, and in order to capture the breath of support RCCs give survivors as part of this service, as well as all the other advocacy supports RCCs provide, we initiated major structural changes within our data collection system which allow us to record this more effectively. This is a major process involving all RCCs using the system and the IT development company who donate their time and development of the data system to us pro bono.

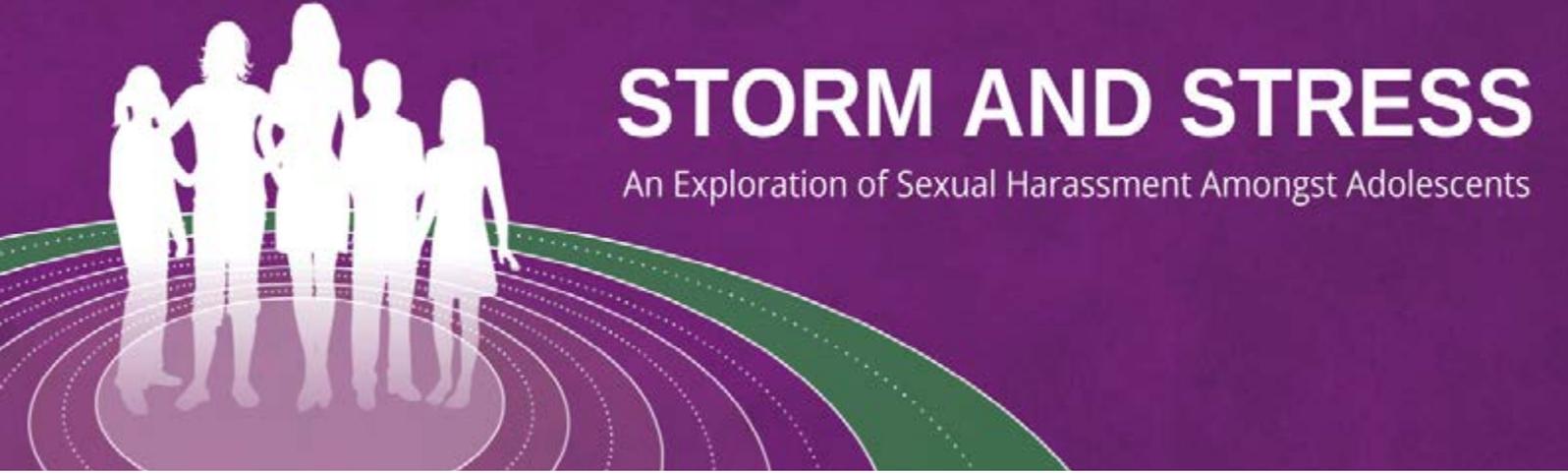
### **Survivor data**

We spent a number of months cleaning 2020 survivor data entered into the RCNI data collection system. Ongoing data reports of headline statistics were made available as appropriate and requested. Annual Statistics Report 2020 is available [here](#).

## **Breaking the Silence Needs Assessment**

We carried out a mapping exercise and needs assessment 29 relevant national authorities, public services and NGOs providing support services to survivors of sexual violence against children. The analysis provided insight into the state of data collection in frontline services for survivors of SGBV in Ireland in 2021. We identified 27 key terms and indicators for administrative data collection on sexual violence against children and developed an agreed shared definition for each which was in line with international human rights standards. Read the report [here](#).





# STORM AND STRESS

An Exploration of Sexual Harassment Amongst Adolescents

**Early intervention in children's lives is the strongest commitment we can make to prevention and protection from sexual violence. Understanding the experience of adolescents is the first step to shaping interventions that work.**

On Thursday 29 July 2021 Rape Crisis Network Ireland launched its new report 'Storm and Stress: An Exploration of Sexual Harassment Amongst Adolescents'. This vital report fills a critical gap in our knowledge regarding adolescent experiences of sexual harassment, explores Irish adolescents' understanding of sexual harassment within their peer communities and outlines the responses required to address it.

The comprehensive report was launched by Ombudsman for Children Dr Niall Muldoon and Dr Conor O'Mahony, Government Special Rapporteur on Child Protection.

Cliona Saidléar, executive director of Rape Crisis Network Ireland said, 'when asked if they felt they had the power to combat sexual harassment, 81% of adolescents said, if given the support, they believed they could. There can be no clearer signal to government and all of society of the task we have at hand.'

The study outlines the sexual harassment witnessed and experienced by 600 Irish adolescents within their peer groups, over a 12 month period. Its findings include:

- 80% of adolescents disclosed being subjected to some form of sexual harassment
- 24% of adolescents disclosed that they were subjected to physical or extreme forms of sexual harassment
- 83% of adolescents witnessed some form of sexual harassment
- 28% of adolescents witnessed physical or extreme forms of sexual harassment
- 78% of adolescent participants said that sexual harassment occurred within their peer community
- 100% of the youth workers who participated in the study stated that they had witnessed sexual harassment with levels varying from verbal to extreme forms of sexual harassment
- 57% of youth workers experienced sexual harassment from adolescents while at work
- 68% of LGBT+ adolescent participants experienced serious sexual harassment compared with 20% of the whole population
- 47% of adolescents did not know how to report sexual harassment within their school.

**The full report can be downloaded [here](#).**

**Watch the launch video [here](#).**

# 2021 Outputs

## Research Projects and Publications

### *Counselling in an On- and Offline World*

A large-scale research project with survivors and counsellors on their experiences and needs in relation to remote and blended counselling. This included research which saw 1000 survivors and 500 counsellors participating in our research towards identifying new ways of understanding survivor needs, how we meet those and what our gaps are. Key findings disseminated to stakeholders and policy-makers. Public report to be released 2022.

### *Adult Survivors' Experience of Retrospective Reporting*

RCNI formed a part of a small group of NGOs invited to take part in a research project on adult survivors' experience of the retrospective reporting process, run by UCD Assistant Professor of Social Work Joe Mooney, contributing to discussions on methodology and the format of the research questionnaire and liaising with member RCCs and others outside the Network to ensure that they were kept up to date with the progress of the project and were given the opportunity to take part in it if they so wished.

### *Annual Statistics 2020*

RCNI national database and its statistical outputs for 2020. Report [here](#).

### *Storm and Stress: Sexual Harassment Amongst Adolescents*

Dr Michelle Walsh's PhD research filled a critical gap in our evidence around adolescent's experiences of sexual harassment and violence. The need for this evidence is clear in how frequently these statistics have been quoted since we published them, including by the Ombudsman for Children, the Child Rapporteur and a judge in a sentencing in a sexual violence case. Report [here](#).

### **Collaborations included:**

- Children Living with Domestic and Sexual Violence (RCNI Chair)
- Victims' Rights Alliance (board and ordinary member)
- NGO campaign on Online Safety (Children's Right Alliance led)
- The Sector Bodies group on Data Protection for Adult Survivors (Chaired by One in Four)



- Beyond Exploitation campaign (led by NWC, ICI and Ruhama)
- NAPs development advisory (convened and chaired by RCNI)

## Advisory/Consultations

- Government Audit into the infrastructure and response across the whole of government to Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
- Third national strategy consultation on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence
- O'Malley review the implementation plan led by the Department of Justice - 'Supporting a Victims Journey' RCNI worked on all three subgroups, Specialist Training, intermediaries and the Victims' Journey.
- Central Statistics Office liaison group on the first national survey on sexual violence.
- Delivering data for RCNI engagement with [Garda National Protective Services Bureau](#).
- Higher Education Authority advisory group on the monitoring of the implementation of the Framework for Consent
- Sector Bodies' work on [Child Abuse Substantiation Procedure](#) (CASP)
- Worked with [Fair Plé](#) to develop guidelines regarding sexual harassment and sexual violence relating to the traditional music sector;
- Worked with Student societies in third level to develop a guide to supporting survivor disclosure, peer groups and activism.
- Protect II Project Advisory Group meetings
- Night Time Economy Advisory Group meetings
- Crisis Pregnancy Agency programme for young people
- Foróige education programme for children and youth
- Alcohol Forum: working group re: GBV webinars. Including providing the keynote in

their webinar on sexual violence as part of their series on alcohol harm.

- Participating and contributing to the various interagency working groups developing policy and infrastructure to implement the Framework for Consent for HEIs.

## Training

In 2021 we trained 195 sexual violence specialists in a range of areas including garda accompaniment, victim impact statements, new legal obligations, being an RCC trustee, and data collection and processing. Outside the sector we delivered training to a range of allied professionals, these included the judiciary, barristers and solicitors, those implementing the HEA Framework for Consent in HEI and other settings, industry and other NGOs.

- RCNI oversaw national specialist training including the specialist sexual violence Court and Garda Accompaniment programme
- internal legal training and for Garda liaison.
- Sex Trafficking and International Protection (alongside a Ruhama trainer).
- Partnered on the HEA funded programme to deliver the Sexual Consent Promotion: Skills and Practice – 10 ECTS Module in NUIG
- Diploma programme class on Criminal Law run by the Law Society on victims' rights and vulnerable witnesses.
- Certificate in Charity Law run by the Law Society for Trustees of Charities.

Sexual Violence rape crisis model training in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention to NGOs and their statutory partners in the Czech Republic, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

## European and International Partnerships

- *European Women's Network against Sexual Violence*  
Board member
- *European Network - Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE)*  
Expert advisor on the Sexual violence working group as it builds its language around sexual violence specialization.
- *UN Women*  
Specialist consultant to a UNWomen project in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Shared Ireland's 360 experience of responding to sexual violence as part of this project. The project culminated in a guidance document on the 'how to' of sexual violence response and we continue to participate in UNWomen led dissemination, promotion and training to rape crisis start-ups in other countries.
- *Rape Crisis Scotland*  
Consultations on RC Scotland's experience with the development of the Scottish National Advocacy Project.
- *The Nations Group*  
Liaison and shared learning with sexual violence specialists across the UK and Ireland.

Input expertise, statistics and evidence into

- The European Inclusion Summit (EIS) disability research,
- European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)
- European parliament survey on Covid Impact on DSGBV and Istanbul Convention

## Funding and Staffing

Funding is and always will be central to the work and impact of our organisation. In 2021, more than ever specialist sexual violence services needed secure funding. Alongside the critical funding from the SSNO fund, we are very grateful to the Department of Justice for the continued funding of our core work. One off projects this year received funding from Rethink Ireland and the What Works DCEDIY fund. New on our core staff team of 5 this year was Niamh McGarry in the role of Communications and Information Officer alongside significant contributions to our team in 2021 by Michelle Walsh and Helen Bartlett.

**Due to Covid we don't have the usual photos of the team out and about, so we asked them for photos that reflect their experience of working from home.**



Cliona spent working from home in the company of this bonsai tree she rescued from the office



Elaine spent lockdown being judged by her cat



Caroline ensured her bookshelves were tidy at all times



Niamh made countless loaves of banana bread



Tyson hung out with Michelle in her home office

# Rape Crisis Statistics



# 2020

On Thursday October 7 2021 Rape Crisis Network Ireland launched its Annual Statistics 2020 Report.

The findings for 2020 indicate that regional Rape Crisis Centres are facing an emergency situation in which chronic underfunding is leading to an inability to train, recruit and retain counsellors resulting in long waiting lists for survivors in urgent need of support, in which local helplines whose existence rely solely on fundraising are frequently being used by survivors to replace or supplement a planned programme of counselling and in which these essential services are dependent on annual funding that is uncertain, inadequate and unstable.

National Data Coordinator Elaine Mears:

'This data indicates that regional helplines became a lifeline for many survivors during the pandemic. We found a 22% increase in helpline usage with 13,068 people contacting these services and, most tellingly, a 71% increase in time spent on helpline calls. Furthermore, the intensity and length of the calls indicate that, rather than seeking information and referrals, the helplines are being used to access counselling by people carrying a high level of trauma. Year on year our Centres have seen increases in demand: in the last 10 years we have seen a 100% increase in contacts to Helplines, a 63%

increase in appointments provided by RCCs, and a 30% increase in the number of survivors and supporters attending RCCs – these figures indicate that when seeking help people want their first point of contact to be local and that regional services provide an indispensable and integral service to their communities.'

RCNI Executive Director Dr Cliona Saidleair:

'While 2020 was an incredibly traumatic year that no doubt triggered a surge in demand for support from survivors, these figures are part of a pattern of increased need without a concomitant increase in funding. Our sector is consistently expected to deliver supports at lower costs: after a decade of austerity, by 2019 we were still struggling to reach 2008 levels of funding. We now call on the Government to commit to a programme of multiannual funding so that Rape Crisis Centres can bolster their essential helpline services, can train more specialised counsellors to reduce waiting lists and can offer survivors the help and support that they need and that they deserve.'

In spite of one in three women and one in four men being victims of sexual violence in their lifetime, in spite of Ireland's human rights obligations under the Istanbul Convention, in spite of a global pandemic that made the lives of women and girls even more unsafe, the Irish state still needs to do more to respond adequately to the needs of victims of sexual violence.

**DOWNLOAD RCNI ANNUAL STATISTICS 2020 [here](#).**

## RCNI in Numbers

**76** survivors responded to by Legal Director

**10** submissions to various Ministers, government departments and public consultations on a range of issues produced by RCNI

**7** interagency groups contributed to by RCNI

**700** survivors of sexual violence participated in Clincial Innovation Project research

**380** counsellors provided their perspective to Clincial Innovation Project research

**29** relevant national authorities, public services and NGOs providing support services to survivors of sexual violence against children consulted for Breaking the Silence mapping project

**27** key terms and indicators for administrative data collection on sexual violence against children identified and an agreed shared definition developed for each.

**195** sexual violence specialists trained in a range of areas including garda accompaniment, victim impact statements, new legal obligations, being an RCC trustee, and data collection and processing.

## DIRECTORS AND OTHER

Directors	Ms. Miriam Duffy Ms. Vera O'Leary Ms. Grace McArdle Ms. Anne Scully Ms. Loretta Brosnan McDonagh
Secretary	Ms. Lorraine Quigley
Charity Number	13236
Company Number	363350
Registered Office	Carmichael Centre Brunswick Street North Dublin 7
Auditors	Loughlin & Company Unit 9a Howley Square Oranmore Co Galway
Bankers	Allied Irish Banks plc Lynch's Castle Galway

# Accounts Summary

## STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Cash generated from operating activities	(61,101)	112,112
	-----	-----
Net cash flows from operating activities	(61,101)	112,112
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payments to acquire fixed assets	(1,781)	(2,580)
	-----	-----
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	(1,781)	(2,580)
Interest paid	-	-
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	-	-
<b>NET (DECREASE)/INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	(62,882)	109,532
Cash and Cash equivalents at beginning of year	181,699	72,167
	-----	-----
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>118,817</b>	<b>181,699</b>

On behalf of the Board

Director

Grace McArdle

Director

Vera O'Leary

# Accounts Summary

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
<b>INCOME</b>	423,175	399,802
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>	(422,892)	(322,793)
	-----	-----
<b>OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>77,009</b>
<b>DEFERRED (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>77,009</b>

The income and excess of income over expenditure relate to continuing operations as no business were acquired or disposed of as of 2021 or 2019. A separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses is not required as all gains or losses have been reflected above.

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	3,357	2,288
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	118,817	181,699
Trade and other receivables	50,300	1,149
	-----	-----
	169,117	182,848
<b>CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR</b>	<b>33,211</b>	<b>46,156</b>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>135,906</b>	<b>136,692</b>
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<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>139,263</b>	<b>138,980</b>
	-----	-----
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>		
Unrestricted Funds	94,492	71,790
Restricted Funds	44,771	67,191
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<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>139,263</b>	<b>138,980</b>

## **RCNI Board Meetings and attendance 2021**

Vera O'Leary, Clíona Saidléar, Anne Scully, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Grace McArdle, Anne Kirwan Finn

10th Feb 2021

Attending: Clíona Saidléar, Anne Scully, Grace McArdle, Vera O'Leary, Loretta McDonagh, Anne Kirwan Finn

Apologies: Miriam Duffy

24th March 2021

Attending: Grace McArdle, Vera O'Leary, Loretta McDonagh, Anne Kirwan Finn, Miriam Duffy, Cliona Saidlear

Apologies: Anne Scully & AKF had to leave 30 mins before meeting ended.

18th May 2021

Attending: Grace McArdle, Vera O'Leary, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Anne Scully, Clíona Saidléar.

Apologies: Anne kirwan Finn

22nd June 2021

Attending: Vera O'Leary, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Anne Scully, Clíona Saidléar,  
Apologies Anne Kirwan Finn, Grace McArdle

AGM 29th Sept 2021

12th Oct 2021

Attending: Vera O'Leary, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Anne Scully. Grace McArdle, Clíona Saidléar,

Apologies: NA

10th Nov 2021

Attending: Vera O'Leary, Clíona Saidléar, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Grace McArdle

Apologies: Anne Scully

14th December 2021

Attending: Vera O'Leary, Clíona Saidléar, Anne Scully, Loretta McDonagh, Miriam Duffy, Grace McArdle

Apologies: NA



**RETHINK  
IRELAND** Our  
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**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland



**An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt**  
Department of Justice



**An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth



**Rape Crisis Network Ireland**

Carmichael Centre  
Brunswick Street North  
Dublin 7

[www.rcni.ie](http://www.rcni.ie)

July 2022