

RCNI Charter for Membership

RCNI Charter for Membership. Adopted by RCNI Board, May 2009.

The Rape Crisis Network Ireland.

The Rape Crisis Network Ireland (RCNI) is the national representative body for Rape Crisis Centres in Ireland. The RCNI role includes the development and coordination of national projects, supporting members to reach quality assurance standards, and using our expertise to influence national policy and social change. The RCNI currently has 14 member RCCs in the Republic of Ireland and 1 member RCC in Northern Ireland. The RCNI also coordinates national projects with non-member RCCs. RCNI member RCCs provide direct support to hundreds of survivors of sexual violence every year.

RCNI Governance and Structures.

The RCNI is governed by its Board of Directors. The RCNI is member owned - our Board of Directors is comprised of representatives nominated from member Rape Crisis Centres. Each member RCC can nominate a Director at the AGM. Staff and volunteers from member RCCs also take up membership of relevant sub-groups or working committees of the Board.

The Board oversee the implementation of our Strategic Plan which is developed through high levels of consultation with our members, as well as other stake holders. The RCNI Executive Director reports to the Board regarding staff progression of Strategic Plan objectives through their implementation of annual work programmes. In recognition of the organisational complexities specific to member-owned Networks the RCNI contracts expert consultancy to support and ensure good governance.

RCNI and Accountability.

The RCNI is committed to using its expertise, leadership and authority in constructive, transparent and accountable ways. RCNI members, funders, sexual violence survivors and other stakeholders have the right to expect accountability from the RCNI. The RCNI delivers accountability and transparency through its structures and systems. In addition to producing an Annual Report we maintain an up to date Website with information for the public on our Strategic Plan, Board members, staff members, organisational roles and responsibilities. Through our monthly and quarterly publications, the RCNI keeps its membership informed on its progress and developments. All relevant Quality Assurance Standards, as adopted by our members, are also implemented by the RCNI internally. Through their range of roles RCNI staff are in constant supportive and consultative contact with all member RCCs. RCNI reports and briefing positions are well researched, consultative and evidence based.

RCNI values include:

- A recognition that all forms of sexual abuse are acts of violence, involving the abuse of power and control
- The belief that by drawing on the experiences, wisdom and power of survivors of sexual violence we can make a difference
- A recognition that perpetrators of sexual violence are responsible for their decisions and a belief that perpetrators be held accountable
- A commitment to a partnership and collaborative approach with other key agencies towards instigating real and profound change
- A commitment to a developmental approach in supporting member RCCs to achieve Quality Standards

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- A commitment to constructive, accountable and transparent leadership
- A commitment to a pro-active and leadership role which is informed by:
 - Expertise from our member RCCs
 - Quality data from our RCCs members
 - Other relevant national and international research
 - Feminist, human rights and equality based ideological foundations
 - Striving for the creation of a society that accepts responsibility for eradication of all forms of violence against women, as well as all forms of sexual violence.

RCNI Members.

All RCNI members are independent and autonomous front line RCCs. Each RCC has its' own legal structure, including its own Board of Directors or Board of Management. The **RCNI Charter for Membership** is an agreement between the RCNI and the Board of each member RCC.

Rape Crisis Centres.

RCCs provide a safe environment where survivors of sexual violence can experience safety, empowerment, restoration of positive regard for self, reconnection with the world, and increased capacities for intimacy. Centres provide expert support, counselling and advocacy for those who have been affected by sexual violence. RCC services are delivered utilising a Survivor/Recovery model. Expertise is ensured through training of all staff and volunteers in the reality, nature and extent of sexual violence, the systems and structures which perpetuate sexual violence, along with all other training appropriate to each RCC role.

As an integral part of drawing on the experience, wisdom and power of survivors and as community based NGOs RCCs engage in and deliver awareness raising, training, education and campaigning towards social change and ending all forms of sexual violence.

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RCNI Charter for Membership with _____ Rape Crisis Centre.

The Board of _____ RCC agrees the following Charter for Membership with the RCNI:

The RCNI will deliver its role, through a developmental, collaborative and consultative approach, as adopted by its membership in its Strategic Plan

The RCNI will maintain systems and structures which ensure accountability and transparency in its workings

_____ RCC places the needs and recovery of survivors of sexual violence at the core of its planning and services delivery

In the best interests of survivors and in the interests of highest standards of service delivery _____ RCC will implement the RCNI Quality Assurance Framework and Standards

As members of the RCNI _____ RCC participates in national and regionally planned projects, standardisation and services development, as co-ordinated through the RCNI

As a community based NGO, and drawing on what we have learned from survivors, _____ RCC works through training, education, awareness raising and campaigning, in conjunction with the RCNI, towards a society where sexual violence no longer exists.

Signed: _____

Chairperson, on behalf of _____ RCC.

Date: _____