

Loreto Centre Crumlin

Annual Report September 2021-August 2022

Adult Community Education & Counselling Service



Loreto Centre Crumlin

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Table of Contents:

Chairpersons Report	3
Clinical Directors Report	4
History of Loreto Centre Vision and Values Mission Statement Aims and Objectives	5
Governance	6
Loreto Centre Events	7
Adult Community Education Courses Delivered Feedback from the Learners Course Outcomes	8
Adult Community Education Classes	9
Community Counselling and Psychotherapy Service	10
Community Team	10-11
Feedback Therapists	12-14
Funding and Resource Supports	15

Chairpersons Report

It is an honour and privilege to present the Annual Report of the Loreto Centre for the year covering September 2021 to August 2022. This report gives a snapshot and an overview of the work of the centre during that 12-month period and like all snapshots and overviews, there are many other stories that could have been included in the report. Stories highlighting the combined effort of all our staff, volunteer therapists, support from the Loreto Order and the wider community. Our core objective is to provide support and guidance to all those with whom we interact. I am very confident that having read this report, you will agree that we continue to deliver on that objective.

Were there and are there challenges? Of course. The challenge is not the challenge itself but rather how we address the challenge and overcome it so we can continue to deliver the services on offer. Finance is exceptionally tight, and we are working on expanding our funding sources our volunteer therapists provided over 2,000 counselling sessions paid for on a donation basis. Commercially this represents approximately €150,000 worth of counselling time alone, not to mention light, heat, staff costs etc. In addition, and as we exited the Covid restrictions, we provided online and in person 126 sessions of educational support across a number of different disciplines including tai chi, meditation, yoga, horticulture and visual arts & crafts. We take a very integrative and holistic view in the delivery of services to all our clients. Everyone has a unique personal journey, and our role is to support and assist them on that journey.

There is no doubt that the demand for therapy has increased over the last 3 years, and we have a number of clients on our waiting list. We are open to recruiting therapists (in training, pre-accredited, senior and/or retired) who are available to contribute a few hours a week at the Loreto Centre. We have the space and the capacity to offer more counselling hours both to

clients and therapists. In particular, we are happy to explore ways in which we can support retired therapists to remain engaged in their professions on a part time basis.

A special word of thanks at this point to our full-time team in the Centre. Led by Anca Lupu, and including Karen, Margaret, Jean, Izabella, John, Stephen, Jim & Terry, every team member works to ensure that our clients and learners obtain the best possible service.

That service is supported by your excellent Board of Management and the Loreto Order and boosted by the commitment of various state and local organisations including Tusla, CDETB, The Department of Social Protection and the Dublin South City Partnership. Behind that support is the close working relationship which exists among and between all the people involved in those organisations. Without this network of commitment and effort, we simply could not operate.

For all of the above and on behalf of the Board of Management, I offer my most heartfelt thanks and appreciation.

Eugene Banks
Chairperson
September 2022

Clinical Directors Report

The past year has been a positive one in many ways but also a sad one. Our former clinical director Pat Colgan passed away in November 2022. Pat was an inspiration to all of us here in the Centre and a pleasure to have known. He retired from the position in mid-2019 but sadly did not get to enjoy the time as he might have hoped. The impact that he and Brede made on the counselling service left Terry and I with a solid basis on which to build. Those who met him will I'm sure always remember him fondly.

The Covid restrictions, which put such a constriction on how we could deliver the counselling service, are thankfully and hopefully a thing of the past. However, they say one should never waste a crisis and, while we were limited in what we could offer it did give us an opportunity to evaluate what we do offer and how it might be improved. Among the matters we are reviewing are use of rooms, opening hours, alternative means of supporting clients on the waiting list, information/statistic gathering and the use/limitations of on-line counselling.

One of the most limiting restrictions was that we had to close almost half of the counselling rooms due to their inadequate size (with regard to social distancing). Now that all rooms are back in use it has enabled the Centre to return to what was the pre covid use pattern. Significantly it has allowed for the reintroduction of workshops/training days for therapists and the provision of additional client services in group activities. Among the workshops delivered were the process of note taking and GDPR and self-care. We would hope to repeat these and add to as ideas come forward.

We do have a very significant waiting list for counselling, and it presents its own challenges. We feel it unfair to have individuals who are experiencing mental and emotional anguish to have to wait, sometimes for months to see a therapist. We are limited in what we can do but some on the waiting list to meet in a group environment on short therapist facilitated

programmes. Two of these have taken place and further ones are planned.

We are dependent on our pool of therapists which is in a constant state of flux as some leave to follow their careers and others join.

An increasing problem for both the recruitment and retention of therapists, and also client availability, is our opening hours.

Given the constraints of Health and Safety we cannot allow the Centre to open and operate without adequate personnel in attendance.

Traditionally we have operated from 9am to 5pm. A decision was made in 2022 to open for one evening (Tuesday) per week until 9pm, this on a pilot basis. So far this has proved successful and hopefully we will be able to continue with it. Thanks to all those staff and therapists who have facilitated and supported these initiatives.

Finally, and most importantly the counselling service is and will continue to be client centered. We operate what we describe as a humanistic and integrative approach. A cornerstone of this is client agency. In this we encourage clients to take ownership of their own lives as far as possible and not be the passive recipients of help. Living in our society is becoming increasingly complex and anxiety provoking. This is a challenge to everyone. There is an increasing pressure to conform to ways of thinking and behaving that are decided by powerful societal and commercial interests. We hope to provide a space where the individual can risk saying the unsayable and think freely without fear of judgement.

Jim Murphy

Clinical Director Counselling Service

History of Loreto Centre

The Loreto Centre was initially established by the Loreto Sisters in 1998 for the purpose of providing low-cost adult community education and a back-up counselling service to people in the Dublin 12 and surrounding areas. The Trustees of the Loreto Centre are the Provincial Leadership Team of the Loreto Sisters (IBVM), Irish Province. The provision of community education in the Loreto Centre is provided from the perspective of the Loreto educational philosophy.

Vision and Values

Loreto Education communities are animated by the spirit of Mary Ward, foundress of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto). They are centred in God, rooted in Christ and based on Gospel values. Our vision is that they will be educational communities where each person has the experience of being valued; where all who participate in the learning process enjoy a liberating education that helps them grow into the fullness of life and empowers them to be men and women of courage who are alive to the needs of humanity and committed to making a difference in our world.

Based on this fundamental belief in the uniqueness of each person, the Loreto Centre has as its main object to inspire and encourage all participants in its programmes to recognise and find their full potential. The aim stems from the conviction that, given the right support, respect and encouragement, individuals are enabled to develop and become empowered so that they feel better about themselves, become more tolerant of others, form better relationships and thereby contribute to the well-being of families, communities and the society in which they live.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to enable and empower people to develop their own resources for more creative and effective living within the context of their personal lives and within their families and to

participate in building a supportive personal and community network.

Aims and Objectives

The main object of the Centre is to advance education through the provision of adult Community education and pastoral care, of both men and women in Dublin 12 and surrounding areas, which in turn will benefit themselves, their families and the community in which they live, in accordance with the educational philosophy of the Loreto Sisters (IBVM), Irish Province.

In furtherance of the aforementioned main objective, the Centre has the following subsidiary / ancillary objectives:

- To provide adults in the community with appropriate education and counselling services;
- To enable and empower men and women to develop their own resources for more creative and effective living and to participate in building a supportive community network;
- To respond to the needs of the local community by providing course opportunities to promote healthy living, healing, growth and development of skills relevant to both personal and community needs;
- To provide an atmosphere of welcome and hospitality, a place where men and women can come to share, listen, or find space for quiet and reflection;
- To establish co-operative links with agencies and networks in both statutory and voluntary sectors at local level.

Governance

Board of Management 1st September 2021—31st August 2022

Chairperson: Eugene Banks

Treasurer: Tom Scott

Members: Emily Banville

Barbara Murphy

Patricia Stevens

Bronwyn O'Donnell

The following policies were updated by the board during the past year:

- Loreto Centre Risk Register
- Loreto Centre Governance Compliance Record Form
- Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Governance sub committee

In January 2020, the board set-up the Governance Sub-committee to review the Centre's policies and procedures, to make recommendations to the board and to analyse and complete the Governance Compliance Record Form.

The sub-committee members appointed are: Eugene Banks, Emily Banville, Patricia Stevens and the Centre manager.

Finance sub Committee

In April 2020 the board set-up the Finance Sub-Committee to review the finance policies and procedures, to prepare for the audit and to plan and review the yearly budget. The sub-committee members appointed are: Tom Scott (Treasurer), Bronwyn O'Donnell and the Centre manager.

Ongoing Support

The Centre is very grateful to the Loreto Sisters who give considerable support in the form of providing a building and finances for the service as well as providing a manager to work in the Centre and for their support with the

administration of the Centre. The counselling service is supervised by Jim Murphy and Terry Kelleher, clinical directors, who volunteer their time and energy for many years. Their contribution and commitment to the Centre is paramount and very much valued and appreciated.

The board would like to acknowledge the financial and staffing contribution made by other agencies such as CDET B Crumlin, Department of Social Protection through schemes such as JI, CE and TUS, Dublin South City Partnership, TUSLA, Dublin City Council and SOLAS & CDET B Crumlin for MAEDF 2021. Their support has been instrumental in keeping the Centre running, especially in the past year that has brought unprecedented times and challenges for all of us.

Loreto Centre Events

International Women's Day March 2022



Trauma Workshop for Therapists May 2022



Staff end of Year Celebration July 2022



Self-Care day with Simone Meschnig May 2022



Adult Community Education

The Loreto Centre organises and provides course opportunities to build confidence and self-esteem, develop new skills, build up accreditation and to help people become more actively involved in their local community. In reviewing and evaluating the responses from the learners over the past few years we have noticed an increasing demand for classes in psycho-education. Learners have asked for classes in issues that are relevant to their relationships in the home and in the workplace. There is still a demand for classes in holistic education. These are particularly valuable to learners who find themselves living alone and somewhat isolated.

Courses Delivered

From 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2022, 116 people attended classes in the Loreto Centre. The breakdown for each class is as follows:

Courses Terms:

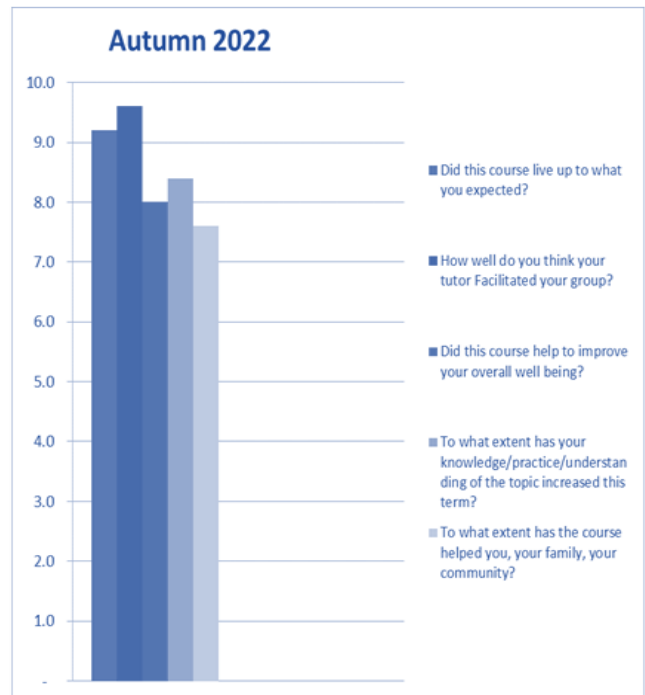
Class	Autumn 2021 12 weeks	Spring 2022 10 weeks	Summer 2022 7 weeks
Tai Chi	5 (online)	8	9
Horticulture/ Gardening	8	5	5
Visual Arts and Crafts	9	8	6
Personal Development and Attachment	N/A	11	7
Mindfulness Meditation I	8	8	12
Mindfulness Meditation II	N/A	7	N/A
Total	30	47	39

Course Outcomes

In each Annual Report we offer an insight into the outcomes from a selection of the courses which have been delivered over the past year

from the point of view of the learners.

Table 2 captures the feedback from learners in the Enneagram course



Enneagram Autumn Term 2022 (Tutor Terry Kelleher)

Brilliant course, Terry is so good at explaining everything, I got great insight into my personality and what I need to work on. It was good to hear other people's stories and be able to share my own story. I would highly recommend this course.

Terry is a fantastic teacher. I found it very interesting, loved the stories from different people. Looked forward to it every week.

Terry is an excellent teacher, I learned so much from this course. Interesting to see how the different personalities interact with each other.

Loved the course and people, gave me support at a difficult time. Looking forward to doing another one.

Adult Community Education Classes

Visual Arts & Crafts



Tai Chi



Mindfulness Meditation

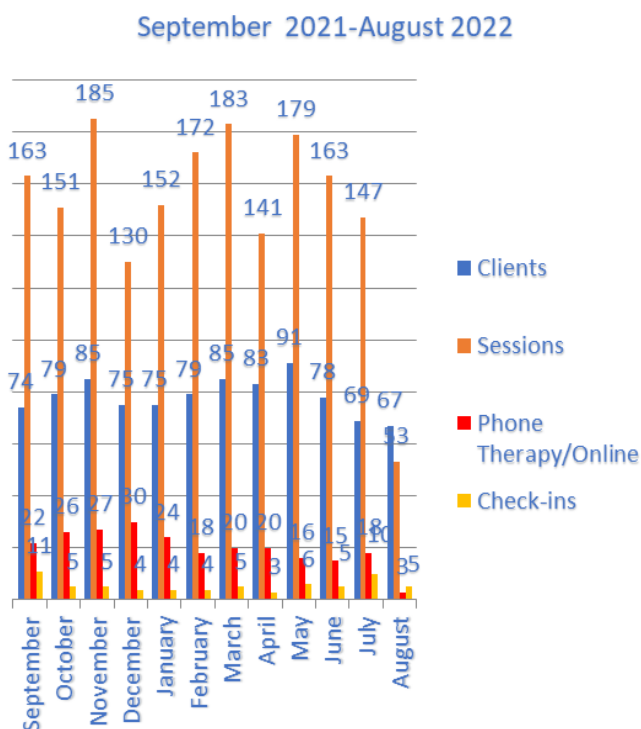


Community Counselling and Psychotherapy Service

During the past year we examined the type of service our clients availed of. Below is a summary table which indicates that the service was being well used by the local community.

Appointments and counselling hours delivered in the Loreto Centre

Table 3 below illustrates the activity of the counselling/ psychotherapy over the past year.



Community Team

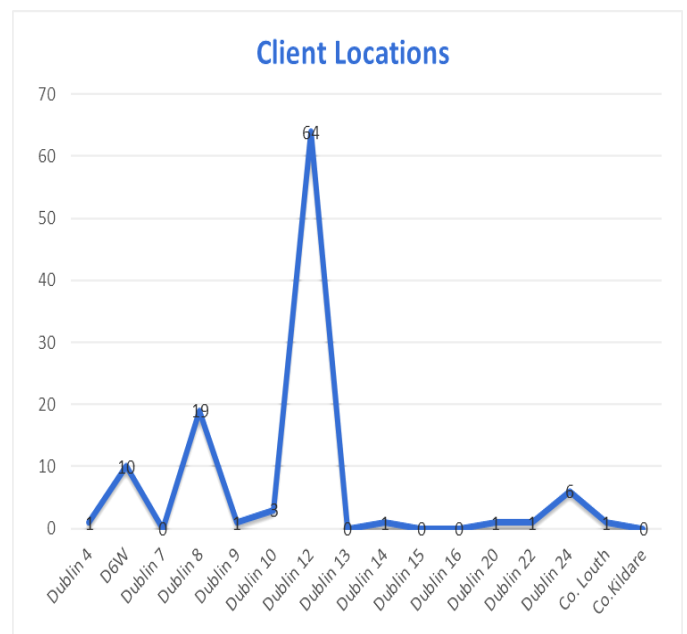
Our team of 25 volunteer therapists guided and supported by the clinical directors provide integrative humanistic psychotherapy to the clients. As well as a core team of fully accredited therapists, the Centre has qualified therapists working towards the requirements of professional accreditation and third and fourth year therapy students from a variety of Colleges. Our therapists meet regularly attending get togethers, online gatherings and participate in CPD training and self care days.

Demand for therapy remained high, especially when the Centre resumed its service in June 2021, creating a waiting list. While graphs tell the story of the activities it is also important to note that the service has developed a high reputation for the quality of the service. Along with the professional standards in therapy which are guided by the professional accrediting bodies such as IAHIP and IACP, our clients also frequently refer to the warm hospitality of the staff in the Centre and the calming environment which gives them privacy and a quiet space.

Counselling statistics for September 2021-August 2022

2157 counselling sessions were delivered in the Loreto Centre, including clients who were continuing therapy from the previous year. 175 clients attended counselling/psychotherapy sessions between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022. 139 appointments for new clients were made to see the Clinical Directors. Out of that figure there were some cancelations and no shows which brought the number of intakes to 108 new clients.

Table 4 below describes the geographic area from which new clients come from.



Tables 5 and 6 below show the source of referrals for counselling and age and gender profile of our clients during the year September 2021 – August 2022:

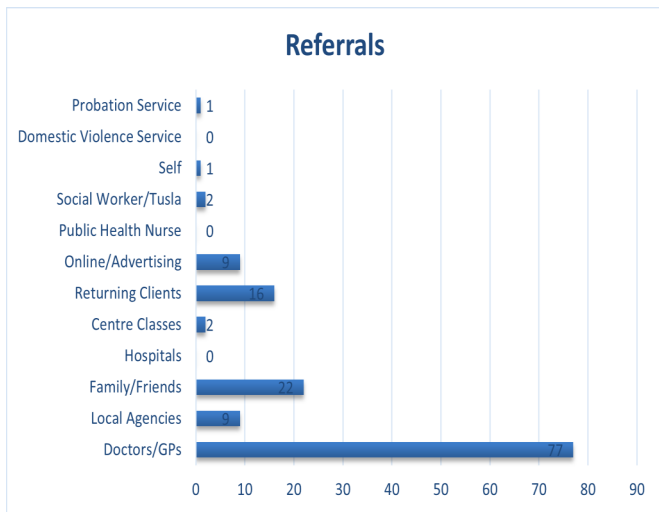


Table 6 describes the age and gender of clients for the same period :

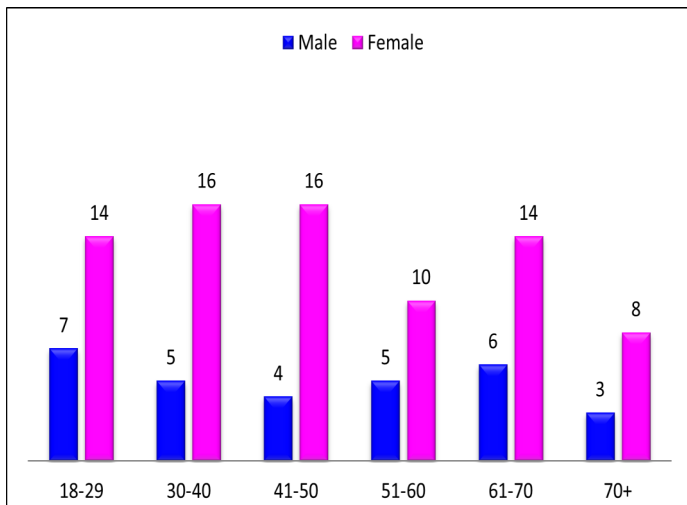
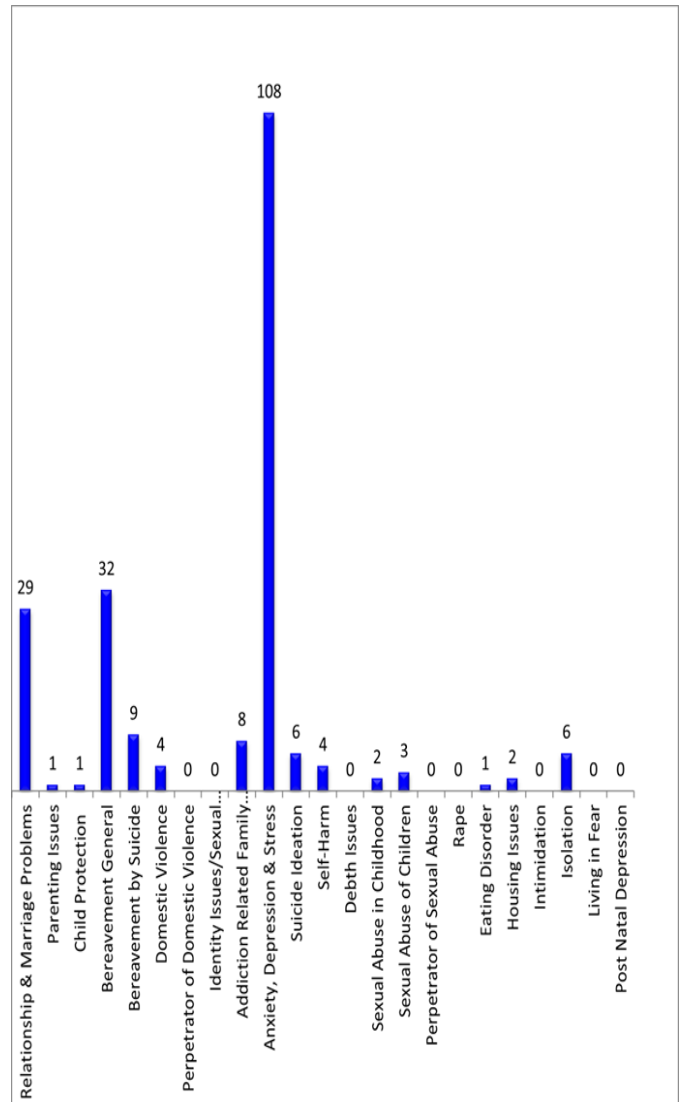


Table 7 shows presenting issues of clients:



Presenting issues:

Throughout the counselling process a variety of issues may emerge. The following chart no. 7 illustrates the span of presenting issues that clients identified when they decide to engage with our service. A visible development this year is the increase in anxiety, depression and stress identified in the initial interview. While bereavement and relationship breakdown remained high, bereavement by suicide and isolation were identified as emerging issues in the past year.

Feedback from Loreto Centre therapists

Robert O'Malley

“From the first day I walked into the Loreto Centre, as a most trepidant, tentative, unsure ‘young’ therapist, in the late summer of 2012, I have been made to feel most welcome and ‘at home’ here. The occasion was, ostensibly, to undergo an interview with the Centre’s then Director, Sr. Brede Quirke. Quite how, within moments, it seemed, we fell to discussing Munster Hurling, of all things, I’m quite unsure, but that advent helped a somewhat nervous trainee therapist relax a little, at least.

Brede, ever the practical, the down-to-earth, the efficient, the hard-working, the wise (*because* she was practical and grounded?), the ‘worldly’, the perhaps above all compassionate and caring – caring for her staff and all those who came through the door of the Centre, regardless of ‘socio-economic status’, of gender, of address, of dress, of orientation, of ethnicity, of nationality, of denomination, of ‘history’, Brede personified the hospitality and the dignity afforded each and every person who found their way to the Loreto Centre, in whatever capacity.

The same was true of her immediate predecessor, Sr. Ann O’Dwyer, as it was of the sadly recently departed and much lamented Mr. Pat Colgan, the inaugural Director of Counselling. These ‘senior’ people obviously had no small insight into the need for, and place of, an ethos that would make all and sundry feel valued, highly. They clearly understood the imperative of cultivating an atmosphere and environment in which people could and would feel welcome and accepted, one in which they might begin to heal, and grow, and change, and, over time, maybe flourish again and rediscover their innate value and worthiness as human beings.

Much ‘vulnerability’, much uncertainty, much loss, much grief, fear, sometimes much anger, or at least ‘angst’, and yes, much pain walks through the door in Loreto, daily, weekly. It seems to me

that Loreto somehow strives to provide a balm for all of that, or at least a place where it can be ‘held’, ‘contained’, a place where it might be given time and space for expression, for exploration, for ‘sounding’, in every sense of that term. Maybe Loreto’s *raison d’etre* is to hold a hope for clients who ‘present’ when they feel there is none?

All of the foregoing is provided by the people who provide the ‘service’, or the services, more accurately, by John and Stephen who do such an important and dedicated job, by the ladies at ‘front-of-house’, led and encouraged so ably by Karen, the said ladies being so helpful, courteous, discreet, welcoming, gentle, efficient, effective – we all know them, in no particular order, Margaret, Jean, Izabella and Sr. Bernadette, by Nagham and Janice who are, it’s evident, meticulous in presenting the place consistently shining like a new pin.

By the presenters and facilitators of the various classes and courses. By the selfless, tireless and obviously hugely committed Board members who give of their time, too, voluntarily, and by the equally hard-working, pleasant, accommodating, approachable and supportive Centre Director, Anca, and by the indispensable, again selfless and highly dedicated and professional Clinical Directors, Terri and Jim, and lastly a team of therapists who are the beneficiaries of the work Team Loreto consistently delivers, week in, week out, season in, season out.

In conclusion, the Loreto Centre is a haven for many people, a place of shelter and refuge, of growth and change and learning, of welcome, of safety, of service, of belonging, hopefully, and again, hopefully, of hope, of generosity, of encouragement, and maybe even, from time to time, of fun?! It doesn’t, as we know, happen by accident. It needs to be minded, cherished, encouraged, and strengthened. As long as it’s ‘serviced’ by ‘Centre-Client-Centred’ people it should survive, even thrive. As long as we remain

mindful of the example of those who went before us, conscious of the over-riding, or under-pinning ethos and work which remain the corner-stones of the entire 'project' we shouldn't go too far wrong. Keep up the good work."

Amina Samee

"I would like to thank Pat, Brede, Terry, Jim, Karen, Margaret, Kate, John, the rest of the staff and Anca for the years of support, co-operation, and guidance. I value the connections that I have made with all of you, my relationship with my clients and the work that I have done. I would like to thank all of you for this opportunity. Thank you for giving me the space to evolve and grow as a counsellor and psychotherapist over the years. I am indebted to all of you for the faith you have shown in me. I will miss not seeing all of you and wish you well in your professional and personal lives."

Annette O'Connell

"I am a trainee Psychotherapist who joined the Loreto team in Crumlin 6 months ago. It is a very inclusive environment where every single individual is recognised as being essential to the success of the centre and consequently wholistic to its core. Because this atmosphere and reality exists it inevitably impacts on clients in a positive way. Anyone who walks through the Loreto Centre doors is made feel welcome and of value. I enjoy my work there and value hugely being part of a team that truly believes in equality, fairness, and social justice."

Catie McCarthy

"I was welcomed to the Loreto Centre Crumlin in November 2022 on clinical work placement as part of my training in Art Therapy. Each week, I look forward to coming to the centre to work with clients. The team at Loreto are very supportive, passionate and empathic. They have imparted important knowledge and also provided opportunities to make connections with other therapists and staff through ongoing continuous professional development and self-care days. I

highly recommend the Loreto Centre for anyone looking to gain experience and develop their counselling/psychotherapy skills."

Grainne Gowran

"I spent 4.5 years with the Loreto Centre. From my interviews with Pat and Brede I could tell that the centre was a special place. The staff were always approachable and helpful. They treated the clients with such dignity and respect. They looked after the therapists very well.

The cohort of clients is very mixed. This was invaluable during my training and also after I finished training. I was sad to leave but felt the time was right to focus on my private practice. I will miss the support of the centre. I'm very grateful for the time I had there."

John Kearns

"I worked for four years as a therapist in the Loreto Centre and found the experience to be really invaluable. It is a highly well organised and professionally run therapy hub that provides a caring and supportive environment for all service users. For therapists who are completing their training or are in their pre-accreditation stage, there is great expert support available for any issues they may encounter in their work. Most importantly, the Centre provides a crucial support service to many people on low incomes in the locality and its services are now more needed than ever, given the mental health challenges posed by the recent Covid 19 pandemic. "

Maeve O'Sullivan

"I have worked at the centre for almost a year but I notice others have been here a lot longer because they get as much back as they give. There is a feeling of belonging for me as a therapist with other therapists, with the staff and with the clients who walk through the door.

This community is a place that goes back to my childhood and the connection I feel now feels more real than the disconnection I felt in my youth. Vulnerability stopped me reaching out then but I do that now not just to offer support to

others but because connection is what I seek too. It's about being human. Giving and receiving and the sharing of that is what community is about and this Centre is about community.”

Silvia Ferreira

“I joined Loreto Centre as a volunteer therapist in April 2022. It has been an excellent opportunity to practice and develop my professional skills.

The team in the centre is very friendly and well-structured in facilitating face-to-face work with clients in a safe and welcoming environment. As a psychotherapist in the Loreto centre, I receive regular support throughout my clinical placement whether individually or through CPD events.”

Terry Kelleher

“Overall, it has been a very rewarding experience working and offering support to the community through the Loreto Centre Crumlin.”

I met a client coming down the stairs one day who, on seeing me, said spontaneously “It’s wonderful.... She (her therapist) helps me feel my own strength and I can do things better because of it.... You do a great job here...Thank you.”

One of my colleagues reported being in another part of the city when they were approached by someone who said, “You work in the Loreto Centre.... You’re great...A friend of mine went for counselling to your place and she is feeling much better now.... She is full of praise for the all the staff there.”

Funding and Resource Supports September 2021-August 2022

The Board wishes to acknowledge the contribution made by staff and volunteers who continue to make this Centre such a vibrant place. In particular, the Board wishes to acknowledge the role played by the following:

- ◆ The Trustees, who are the Loreto Sisters.
- ◆ The Clinical Directors & the centre therapists .
- ◆ The tutoring, counselling, administration, housekeeping staff and volunteers, for their dedication, professional service and expertise in working with the learners and clients.
- ◆ The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) for JI, CE and TUS projects.
- ◆ CDETБ Crumlin Area who commit personnel resources to the Centre and who make a significant contribution to the day to day running of the Centre.
- ◆ HSE.
- ◆ Dublin City Council.
- ◆ SOLAS

The Board wishes to record appreciation for the professional support received from the other agencies at local and national level who inspire community education and the management of the counselling service in many diverse ways. Finally, the Board acknowledges the trust that learners and clients put in the Centre.

Funders:



Loreto Sisters Ireland, Loreto Province Fund, Mary Ward Mission Fund and Loreto Past Pupils Union



TUSLA Child and Family Agency

An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection through D12 Jobs Initiative and CE Daisy Chain Project



City of Dublin Education and Training Board (AES, Crumlin Office)

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
City of Dublin Education and Training Board



Dublin South City Partnership and TUS Programme

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