

NEWS

and Views...

RehabCare Newsletter



REHABCARE

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Editorial

Once again it has to be said that this year has flown by! I really can't believe Christmas is almost here. I would like to thank you all for making this newsletter such a success. It is really down to all of you who submit articles that make News and Views such an excellent read.

I wish you, your families and friends a very Merry Christmas and Happy Healthy New Year! Until next time...

Kathleen Morris

Open to all Contest

Staff or Service User to create the complaints procedure in easy read/picture format.

Best entry wins to be judged by NRAC National Committee.

Please submit all entries to Kathleen Morris, Roslyn Park, Beach Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4. By January 30, 2005

Person Centred Planning: New ways to make plans and get results!

Person Centred Planning: New ways to make plans and get results!

Paradigm is a British Organisation in the UK who among other things team up with people who want to make plans in their lives and achieve them. In RehabCare there are also people who set goals to make life better and more fun!

We have the Discovery/IAP journey to guide us when we are making our plans. So we invited Paradigm to tell us how they do things and hopefully learn new ideas that will allow us plan in new ways and perhaps get more results!

For any plan to work you need to:

- Explore what exactly you want from life
- Pick what you want to achieve
- Learn what you need to do to get what you want
- Find out who you need on your team to support
- Set a deadline and GO FOR IT!

These people in the UK use PATH to plan and achieve goals. Like our Discovery journey, PATH is about you and planning to get what you want. It is perfect for a goal that will be achieved in a year.



PATH

IF you have a plan you need FIRST to meet with people you want to share it with and then set your goal. The plan takes usually about 3 hours to write and/or draw it.

1. Explore a Dream: This will be good to decide on what you WANT for the future. We don't usually get to live out our dream BUT we do get to do things in life that get us close to things we dream about. Use pictures if you want. I drew a picture of myself in a space ship going up into the sky!!!!

2. GOAL! Now decide exactly what you want to have happened one year from now. Not what you hope to have happened but what WILL have been achieved 1 year from now. I drew a picture of myself in a hot air balloon!!!!

3. NOW: Next step is look at where you are NOW in life. Who do you know? What have you got in

your life good and bad? Draw it or write it down. You have to start here if you are going to move forward.



4. People to Team up with: Now you to decide WHO you need to get on board to reach the goal? We may need people to support us if we want a thing that we don't have. If I want a trip in a hot-air balloon I need someone to take me up in one and who can fly so we don't crash into a house!!!

5. Who do we need to stay strong! What will I do if I have problems along the way! Do I need to meet my team often? Do I need to phone people? Do we all go for lunch and solve it over pizza! What: you must decide now?

6. 3 Months: What has to be done in the next 3 months. This has to be clear and be steps forward to getting the result you want. Each team player can do something to support.

7. 1 month. Decide what has to be done in the next 4 weeks.

8. First Steps: Decide who is going to do what in the next few days. Everyone has a part to play and specific things to get moving on quickly.

END OF PLAN!

Now everyone involved gets a copy of the plan, follows it. Then at the after one year more or less you WILL BE where you want to be or doing what you planned for! [And I will be high in the sky in a big massive hot air balloon!!!!]

If you are in one of the RehabCare centres and you like this way of setting goals for then talk to someone in the centre. Ask if anyone knows how to go about getting your own PATH plan up and running!

Brendan North, RehabCare Kildare



RehabCare Limerick held a 'People in Need' coffee morning on Friday 21st May this year €644.35 was raised by service users and staff of the centre. Our very own 'Elvis' (Aidan Hogan) entertained the crowds!



My Spanish Adventure

By Glen Hayes

I really enjoyed my trip to Spain. It was the first time I was away from my parents. I felt comfortable with my independence. I got to know my fellow workers in a different environment.

We flew out from Shannon on Sunday morning. On arrival in Spain, a coach was waiting to take us to our hotel. The following day (Monday) I went for a swim in the hotel swimming pool. It was quite a pleasurable experience.

We ate in various restaurants. On occasion I ate with 'Eoin O'Brien'. My favourite food was pork chops and eggs. I found the cost of living much cheaper than Ireland, particularly food and drink. The weather wasn't uncomfortably hot. The week passed very quickly. Although I had a great time I was glad to get home to my parents and girlfriend.

I look forward to going again next year.



A Trip to Bunratty

By Bernie Dwyer

On Friday October 22nd a group of us from Douglas, Cork, went to Bunratty Castle and Folk Park for the day.

I got up early and left home around eight o'clock, but it was a very wet morning and it took me an hour and a half to cross the city, as the traffic was heavy. I arrived just in time for the bus.

We started out on our journey about nine forty five. Our first stop was Macroom Mills where we had tea, coffee, sandwiches, scones and cakes.

From there we went on to Bunratty. In Bunratty we visited the cottages and saw how they lived long ago. I took some photos of us sitting at the desks in the school. It was really funny. We had a great laugh.

Then we had our lunch. After lunch we went to a winery, where we had wine tasting and saw how the production line works. I took some more photos. The man there was very jolly. We had a great crack with him.

We left for home about four thirty. We enjoyed the bus journey back as everyone was very happy after having a great day out.



N.R.A.C.

By Derek Keogh, Ballyfermot

On 10/11/04, Amanda and I went to an N.R.A.C meeting as representatives for Kylemore Lifehouse. We left Rehab at 10.15 a.m. and arrived at Roslyn Park at 11.00 a.m. A member of the N.R.A.C greeted us. Support staff provided us with nametags. We joined the rest of the people who were attending and listened to a speech, which was given by Michelle Joyce. It was very good. There were people from different RehabCare from all around the country. We all talked about our own work for a while and then we went into the dining room for lunch, which was very enjoyable.

Afterwards we had lectures until about 3.30 p.m. We then caught a coach outside Roslyn Park, which took us to Bewley's Hotel in Ballsbridge. We were staying for the night. Amanda and I got ready for dinner. We had a great time that night. The following morning we had breakfast in Bewley's before getting the bus back to Roslyn Park for more lectures. At about 2.30 p.m. we finished in Roslyn and left to get the bus home. We both had a great couple of days and really enjoyed staying overnight in the hotel.

The Night We Went To Elvis

By Irene Daly, Carlow

On Sunday 24th October, we went to see 'Elvis' and his big band in the Dolmen Hotel. Two of us collected tickets from people coming in at the door, as it was a night out for Rehabcare. It was the first time I did anything like this and it felt good. Eamonn put a reserved sign on eight chairs for us near the stage. Before Elvis came on, our singing group got up and performed our two songs from the CD, which everyone enjoyed. Then Elvis came on to loud cheers and clapping. He was a lovely singer and the band was super. When the first break came, we sold tickets for a raffle for some very good prizes. After the show, we sold some of our CDs to the audience. It was after 2 o'clock in the morning when we got home but we enjoyed it all.



Pictured above Irene Daly & Elvis

The Day I Go To Class

By Bridget Doyle, Carlow

On Wednesdays I go to Freda's computer class with Karen, Debbie, Sean, Niall, and Adrian. When we are finished our work, we do first keys, which is very good for spelling. If you are doing a letter or forms for anyone, or if anyone needs help, we all work together. Then we have tea and biscuits and talk about how we thought the day went for everyone before we get a taxi back to the centre.

Operation Christmas Child

By Marie Fennelly, Carol Langton, Bridget Doyle, Carlow

This year for the first time, we took part in 'Operation Christmas Child' a project of Samaritan's Purse that involves filling a shoebox with gifts for a boy or girl and wrapping it in Christmas paper. This Christmas, the boxes from Ireland will go to Eastern Europe: Belarus, Ukraine, Armenia, and Mozambique.

Clients from the centre donated gifts to send six boxes and they were wrapped by Bridget Doyle, Marie Fennelly, Carol Langton, and Patricia Hynes our Programmes Supervisor. We enjoyed helping other children to have a happier Christmas and we would like to help again next year. We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy Christmas and New Year.



Left to right: Bridget Doyle, Carol Langton & Marie Fennelly

I Love My Job

By Adrian Darmody, Carlow

I started working in Superquinn on November 11, 2000. I was very nervous when I started working there. I had to wear a white shirt, tie, and navy pants. My job was to pack bags for the customers and carry them to their cars if they wished. I had three supervisors over me Olive, Lorraine and Cathy. Some customers are very friendly and chatty and some are rude. Fergal Quinn often comes down to look around and chat to everyone. Four years on there have been a lot of changes. We have a new boss and two new supervisors Pauline and Donna. We also have new uniforms. I have made lots of friends and I get on well with them. We have the crack in work and on our nights out as well.

Greenhill's College

By Amanda Finnegan, Ballyfermot

I attend Greenhill's College. I was sent by the support of the Kylemore Lifehouse on the Kylemore road to study S.T.E.P.S. This is a short for step to excellence for personal success. The steps programme entails lessons on how to get on with people, how to handle ourselves in difficult situations and also how to be assertive. The four courses I am doing are personal effectiveness, office procedures, French and computer skills.

I like the classes I am doing in Greenhill's. I attend with John McMahon, John Dempsey and Brendan Brady. We have made new friends in Greenhill's College. There are ten people all together in the classes in Greenhill's. The four of us are doing very well in college. I would like to thank the staff in RehabCare in Ballyfermot for supporting us on the course.

Night Out At The 'Person Of The Year' Awards

By Mary Brennan, Carlow

On Friday 19th November we took our singing group 'Ability' to the Dolmen Hotel for the 'Carlow Person of the Year Awards' night where we performed the two songs from the CD. We had to sing them while people were having their soup because there was so much happening after the meal in presenting the awards that there was no other time available!

They went down a treat with the audience and we got a rapturous round of applause. Mary Kennedy from RTE officiated at the award giving ceremony. We met her afterwards and had a photograph taken with her. She is a lovely person to talk to and we were all delighted that she took the time to chat to us and have her photograph taken with the group. When the awards were presented, we danced the night away to the excellent music of 'Marble City Sound' from Kilkenny. It was a great night and I would like the group to know that I was really proud of them on the night in the way they stood up in front of such a large distinguished crowd of people and performed so well. They proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that they are indeed 'Able People'.



The O2 Concert in the Park

By Emer Tully, Monaghan

We got up at 6am that morning Anne, Teresa, and I. We had our showers, a fry and got ready to go. We are really excited as we had never been to a concert!

We caught the bus to Dublin and we booked a B&B called the Kingfisher. We dropped off our belongings there and ordered a taxi to take us to Phoenix Park.

The taxi dropped us close to the park and all the bands were playing as we were walking. We felt excited and

nervous all at the same time. There were crowds and crowds of people everywhere. They were cheering, jumping about and having a good time. We joined in! My favourite bands were Brian McFadden who used to be with Westlife. Westlife were there to and I really love them. I was happy when they all came out. Girls Aloud are also one of my favourite groups. I enjoyed all the bands!



The Leinster Championship

I'll never forget it and the people of Westmeath will never forget it. It was 6.15 on Saturday evening, 24th July, Croke Park, Dublin. The Westmeath footballers played the Laois footballers in their first ever Leinster title. Laois were three points up after ten minutes and I felt very disappointed but I knew in my heart that Westmeath would win. The lads from Westmeath didn't score for twenty-four minutes. At half time they were two points up, the score was Westmeath 7 points – Laois 5 points. In the second half Westmeath were leading 10 points – 5 points and then Laois came back. But Westmeath were determined to win the match and at the end of the game, the lads beat Laois by two points, Westmeath 12 points to Laois 10 points. I ran down onto the pitch to join in with the celebrations.

Driving back from Dublin, the whole county of Westmeath was covered in maroon and white. There was even a dog in Kilbeggan painted maroon and white. I was delighted and happy. Paidi O'Shea said 'there are fighting men in Westmeath' and everybody cheered. I think he is right.

Barcelona

RehabCare / NTDI Cavan went to Barcelona for five days from September 27th – 1st October.

The feedback from the Service User's within RehabCare was that it was a most enjoyable trip. They commented on the varied trips that were organized, "The Nou Camp Football Stadium", Port Adventura", Gaudi's Cathedral the scenery, the karaoke night and the hotel they stayed in. They found the Spanish people so friendly, and they were delighted with the Spanish words they had learnt before going on the trip, that when they used them people responded back in Spanish to them." I will always have fond memories of Barcelona and it was a journey of a lifetime for me"

By Margaret Conaty, Cavan



Concern Christmas Feast

RehabCare Navan

RehabCare Navan had two service users, Eddie Gilligan and Fiona Brady, and a staff doing the Concern Christmas Fast. We would like to thank all for their support, especially everyone at the NRAC AGM who were happy to put their hands in their pockets when approached by an ever-persistent Eddie!!!

We did well with great support from all our colleagues in Navan and raised the impressive sum of €650.00 for a very good cause. We will be back to do it again next year.

Trip to Aran An Uachtarain

By Olive Hickey

On Tuesday the 5th of October 10 people went to Aras an Uachtarain to meet president Mary Mc Aleese. The people that worked there were friendly and they made us feel welcome. We got to meet the president it was a great honour. There was plenty of food and drink. We walked around the grounds and the house. It is beautiful and we were made feel like it was ours for the day.

A FISH

I AM A SILVER FISH
I TRAVEL ROUND A BIT
I'M SILVERY-GREYISH GREEN
I HAVE A BIG EYE
AND I LOVE TO SPY.

BLUE OCEANS I WILL SWIM
BLOWING BUBBLES
AND SAILING SEAS
THEN DIVING DOWN DEEP
MEETING LOTS OF FRIENDS
WHO SPEAK?

STILL IS THE WATER FULL AND FILLED
HOW HAPPY I AM TO SLEEP
IN THE DEEP BLUE DEEP.

I CAN SEE THE MAN OF SEAS
WITH STARRY EYES
LIKE A CROCODILE
WITH FACE OF GREEN
REFLECTED BY THE FISH
ON THE SEABED.

BY CATHERINE BRADY, CAVAN.



Coffee Morning For Offaly Hospice

*By Jenny Monaghan
and Geraldine Harrington*

We organised a coffee morning for Offaly Hospice in RehabCare Kilcruttin. We raised €160.09.

Everybody paid €2 for tea or coffee. People from around the area came into the coffee morning. We had tea, coffee and biscuits.

Everybody enjoyed themselves.



The Coca-Cola Experience

*By Carrie McCormack,
Crescent House, Athlone*

We went to the Coca-Cola factory in Dublin on 16th November. There was a lot of traffic coming into Dublin and we had to get directions to the Naas Road. We arrived at the factory at 12pm. We were all given a drink of Coca-cola. A man named Tom gave a talk about the factory and about Coca-cola. The bottles are washed seven times before they can be used again. Coca-cola has a mysterious ingredient called Seven X. The secret formula is locked away in a safe deposit vault in Georgia, America. They played music from the ad on TV. Tom gave us posters, pencil cases, hats and bottles of Coca-cola.

Our Holiday In Sligo

By Ursula O'Brien and Greg Callaghan, Tullamore



On the 21st of September 2004 a group of us travelled to Sligo. On arrival we booked into the Southern Park Hotel for 2 nights.

After seeing the hotel and its facilities, which included the leisure centre, reception area and dining room. We settling into our rooms, 3 service users went for a walk down the town while some others used the leisure centre. After dinner in the hotel we relaxed with a few drinks and some live music in the lounge area.

The following morning 14 people went to visit the Sligo resource centre, where we got to meet other service users and staff. After that we were treated to a bus tour where we got to see various sites around Sligo. Then we went on a boat trip, which was called the Rose of Inisfree, which led us to a tour of the Riverstown Folk Park. Some people remembered different objects and equipment that were used from the days gone by. For example (old school desks, old prams, and bicycles). We then arrived back at the hotel in time for dinner. That night we went down the town to a local pub where again there was live music. Many of our service users decided to let their hair down and this led to many singing and dancing sessions with the locals. All had an incredibly enjoyable night.

In the morning we packed our bags for the journey home. Before the bus left we had enough time to do a bit of shopping in the town. After lunch at around 1:15pm we headed for home and were back in time for our buses home.

Many of our service users and staff and a great time that they would love to repeat on another occasion very soon.

Mama Mia at The Point Theatre

by Laura Gaffey, Crescent House, Athlone

On Thursday 21st October, we went to the Mama Mia show in Dublin. After stopping for a lovely lunch we arrived at the Point Theatre. The show was very good. I loved it. It was all Abba songs – all of their best hits. It was also a very funny show. During the break we all went out for a drink. We needed it because we all got up and danced and sang songs with the cast. We sang and laughed on the way home as well.

The Shaughran

by Jason Kelly, Dundalk

I went to see a play in the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. It was called The Shaughran. It was a good play. The Drama group went to Dublin with Dee and Naomi. We went for burgers and chips in Burger King. We also went for a walk along the river Liffey. The show was funny. It was on at 8 o'clock and over at 10 o'clock. We were home at 12 o'clock.

There was a big cast in the Shaughran. It was a packed hall. It was sad and funny. There was an old lady in the play. The cast was so funny. There was a Dundalk Girl dancing in The Shaughran. The dog was called Trix.

Christmas Lights

By Paddy Durdin

The lights hung across the square. That was making the people so special that the lights were glowing in the square and the lights were on the streets. The shops hung their lights. In Ardee many people were fascinated by the idea of their minds when they should know that Christmas is a time of giving gifts to people and showing them how we care for them all and everyone else.

My Holiday In Kilkenny With St. Ritas

By Therese Baxter, Dundalk

We had been looking forward to going for weeks. The day arrived and we had our bags all packed. We were up early and down to the train station. We went first class. We went to Dublin and had to change trains. Then we went to Kilkenny. We left our bags in the hotel. It was called the Ormonde Hotel. I shared a room with Marie.

We did lots of different things. We went to visit Kilkenny Castle it was really old. We went round different shops. I bought clothes. We had lovely fry's in the morning in the hotel. We got dressed and went out for lovely meals. We went to visit the Dunmore cave. We had a brilliant time.

NRAC National Committee Election

by Mary Browne, Crescent House, Athlone.

I was in Dublin on the 10th and 11th of November for the NRAC elections for the National Committee. People gave speeches and we stayed in Bewleys hotel. We were up early on the second day for another day of meetings in Roslyn Park. Voting for the National Committee took place on the second day. There were people there from lots of different centres hoping to be voted onto the committee. I gave a good speech and then the voting started. I was elected. I was shocked at first and now I am overjoyed that I got onto the National Committee. I will work hard and do my best and that's all I can do.

The Monster Mash

by Bronagh Boothman, Dundalk

When Sandy, our new dram coordinator came, we all decided to write a play for Halloween.

We did lots of talking about different ideas and we came up with the idea of all the different characters. Jason was daddy, M.F. was mammy, Karen was the girl, Ollie was the boy. Anita and Martin H were children. I was a nice old lady. Liam was Dracula and a door. It was all about Halloween.

We spent a lot of time practicing this. We also had to learn some songs for it. We also had to get our costumes organised.

We put on a show for the people in the centre. There was a festival on in Dundalk and we also put the play on for it. We were also part of a parade on 23rd October in the town. We all threw sweets at people along the street.

We made our own banner. We all had a great day and our parents collected us at the Centre afterwards.

My Retirement From PJ Carrolls

By Mary Grimes, Dundalk

I had been working in P.J. Carrolls for years. I was 3 days a week there (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) and two days down in the centre. Angela used to help me in PJ Carrolls. I really wanted to be full-time in the centre and I was able to retire in May.

There was a big party with Veronica and Angela and my friends from PJ Carrolls. It was in Byrnes Pub in Hill Street. I was really spoiled that night. I got lovely cards, an ornament and a voucher for Café Metz.

I brought my friends from the house for a meal in Café Metz. I enjoy being at the centre every day.

The National Tree Week

By Domhnaill Flynn, Dundalk

Every year we celebrate National Tree Day. Gerard organised the trip. He asks us if we would like to go. This year we decided to go to the Phoenix Park. We got there by minibus. The guide showed us around. He showed us different trees. The guide told us, when you look at the rings growing inside the tree you can tell how old they are. We saw a squirrel in the trees. The guide told us about the deer lining in the park. Barry thanked the guide for showing us around Phoenix Park and he told us about the history and we saw a film about the Phoenix Park. We got our lunch there. We got back around 3.30 pm. everyone enjoyed their day in the Phoenix Park.

N.R.A.C. or the National Recipe for Acquiring Contentment.

By Paul Strahan, Secretary, Dunboyne local N.R.A.C. committee

The RehabCare Resource Centre in Dunboyne Co. Meath caters for people with physical and/or sensory disabilities. It is a small unit catering at present for in excess of 45 Service Users with the numbers attending increasing each month. The Service Users come from diverse backgrounds and this diversity adds to the spice of life. The Centre has been described as being vibrant and with a fairly active in-house N.R.A.C. committee.

As part of our agenda for 2004, we set ourselves the goal of raising funds for the use of the people within the centre. We saw the funds being used for funding social occasions with family and friends and also for subsidising 'days out' e.g. a day at the races.

To achieve our goal we decided to organise a table quiz in a local hostelry with the aim of raising funds. We started at the beginning of September and set a date for the quiz of Friday the 29th of October. Initially the committee and our external Facilitator Tina agreed an action plan, which included the distribution of promotional posters and cajoling local businesses to sponsor prizes. The response to this appeal far exceeded our expectation. The Staff in the Centre were superb in their support and the event wouldn't have happened without their help and hard work.

As the big night approached the worry was would we get enough people to support our venture. On the evening of the quiz I was very apprehensive of how successful the night would be for all.

At 8pm on the night, I entered the hostelry to discover that it was full of

families that were not attending the function. Panic ensued but the 9pm curfew rule for children in licensed premises ensured that the premises cleared and we had a clear run. 18 teams of 4 members per team registered for participation in the quiz. The room that we had was full and a number of teams had to be turned away. They were disappointed. At 9.30 our quizmaster, Ciarán Macken, opened proceedings and for the next hour and a half the questions were posed. We had a break mid-way through and sold raffle tickets. The prizes were good and a goodly sum of money was raised.

At the end of the quiz the winners were declared and prizes distributed. Everyone had an enjoyable night and the centre secured funding for it's social fund. The success of the night reflects the efforts put in to the organisation of the night both by the Service Users and Staff of the centre, friends and contacts and it is planned to hold a similar venture in mid 2005.

To modify John F. Kennedy's famous saying "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country", the new saying is "Ask not what your centre can do for you but what you can do for your centre".

Our N.R.A.C. committee is now known as the National Recipe for Acquiring Contentment Committee. Users of the Centre will now be happy because we have raised funds to provide for social events. It gives us independence. We are empowered – other centres should follow suit!

Making a CD for Strongmans Week

By Linda McEntegart, Dundalk

There was a sound track needed for Strongman's Week the play the Encore Productions was putting on in the Town Hall.

I saw a notice on the kitchen board looking for singers. I put my name on it. Sandy and Dee listened to me singing and chose me as one of the singers. There were some people from the centre and also some people from Coes Road singing.

We practiced our songs. We went to the recording studio in Bridge Street. We had to sing the songs over and over until we got them right. We sang our songs and were delighted when they came out on CD. The CD was used for the Strong Mans Week.

In summary, points below set out what, in our opinion, is needed for success.

1. Careful and methodical planning:
Posters
Venue
Prizes (sponsorship)
Quizmaster and questions
Organisers to correct the questions papers.
2. Try to get commitment from family and friends to attend and sponsor a team
3. Organise ticket sellers for raffle.
4. On the night, welcome the participants and at end of night thank them for their support
5. Before the event ends, remind participants that a further quiz will be held in the coming months.
6. Following the event the N.R.A.C. committee should analyse the event to see if any improvements can be made.

Finally, Be innovative and success will follow!

NRAC Committee - RehabCare Lifford

Margaret Norris - Chairperson
Charlie O’Kane - Vice Chairperson
Mary McGhee - Secretary
Adrian Devenney - Treasurer
Anne Quinn - Committee Member
Helena Crow - Committee Member

Our local committee here in Lifford has achieved so many goals since the new members joined in February. We have stopped bullying in the centre by having group discussions and elected a member to be a spokesperson if there are any problems.

We raised money for our social fund by having raffles, a sponsored walk, Easter draw and Christmas draw. This helped towards our day trips to Donegal town, Glenveagh National Park, Dunlewy Heritage Centre and Sligo. We are busy here in Donegal!

At the moment we are campaigning for a zebra crossing and bus shelter in Lifford town. We have involved Councillor Jimmy Harte and made petitions with help from local people in the town. This was featured in local newspapers with pictures of our NRAC Committee and Jimmy Harte. We are still campaigning for this to happen.

What NRAC has done for me.

By Margaret Norris, Lifford

For the past year I was a member of the National Committee in Dublin, which meant I had to travel every month to Roslyn Park headquarters of RehabCare. It meant an early start especially in the dark mornings during the winter. At first somebody had to go with me to Dublin until I was confident to go myself. This has

been one of my goals to be able to travel independently. I’m currently doing a course on policy making. I have enjoyed my year on the National Committee it has been a challenge for me. I would like to say Good Luck to the new members on the committee.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

DISNEYLAND AND RHYTHMS TOUR 8240

By Maureen Deacy, Castlebar

Since I was little I was always a big fan of Elvis Presley and it had always been my wish to visit Graceland. Myself, my sister and our friend decided that we would go on a trip of a lifetime. Our trip brought us to the following places:

• CHICAGO

We spent two nights in Chicago. We went on a sightseeing tour on the riverboat. We also went for a walk to the shops and bars.

• NASHVILLE NIGHT LIFE

We had singers and entertainment and a couple who were on tour with us got engaged. We also went to the grand ole opera and the country music hall of fame.

• LAFAYETTE

We went to a dance and had dinner and plenty of dancing

• NEW ORLEANS

We went on a swamp tour where we saw alligators, racoons, ducks and water snakes. We also went on a dinner and jazz cruise on the Mississippi River.

• MEMPHIS

While in Memphis we visited the Sun Studios. This is famous because it is where Elvis first recorded.

• ST LOUIS

We went up on the Gate Way Arch, shopping and to bars. We toured a lot on the bus and were called ‘the rich and famous’.

• GRACELAND

Our final stop brought us to Graceland the home of the King of Rock n Roll Elvis Presley. We were brought on a tour of Graceland. We visited Elvis’s house; his grave and we bought lots of souvenirs.

I really enjoyed my trip. It was my dream come true and hope that in the future I will be able to re-visit this famous place. It is a trip I will never forget.



PITCH AND PUTT FUN DAY

By Cathriona McLoughlin, Castlebar



Bernadette asked us would we go pitch and putting in Tuam. It was a fun day organised by Special Olympics , A busload agreed to go. We set of f good and early. I golfed a bit before so I knew what to expect. . We arrived in Tuam at about 11o clock. The day was not great weather wise, it was wet weather. We just got caught in one shower where we sheltered under a tree. We were given clubs as we went to play the pitch and putt and we were given a tee and ball also. We had a

watchman shown us what to do. The ground was very wet in parts. We played for about two hours and then we had lunch. We got forty minutes for lunch. There were three groups altogether including ourselves. We finished up at about half past two. We had a most enjoyable day. I enjoyed it very much and will play in the competitions in the New Year. The best part was we got lovely certificates for attending

TRIP TO THE NATIONAL DISABILITY AUTHORITIES CONFERENCE

On the 19th of October a group us from RehabCare in Galway attended the National Disabilities Authorities annual conference, which was called Delivering Change Through Disability Research.



How we choose our new-programme supervisor for our Galway Sheltered Workshop

By Dan Doherty, Anthony Hynes, Frank Bucher

On the 23rd September interviews were held for the position of programme supervisor in our sheltered workshop. We felt it was important for us to be involved in choosing the staff that would be working with us, so we asked if we could be involved in the interviews.

Everyone in the workshop met with our community services manager Finbar Colfer everyone that was interested put there names in a hat 3 names were chosen the people chosen were

Frank Butcher, Anthony Hynes and Dan Doherty. Marion Mc Evilly helped us with the 'Questions' that we were going to ask the candidates. We did two days training before the interviews took place. "I was nervous about taking part in the interviews but I enjoyed it and felt it was a great experience" Anthony Hynes. "I enjoy it, it was something I had never done it was a great experience to interview" Frank Bucher. "I defiantly would do it again" Dan Doherty.





Our Trip To Dublin

By Patricia Cavanagh, Castlebar

On Wednesday November 10th myself Martin and Lorraine went to Dublin for the NRAC AGM.

I got the train in Claremorris and headed for Dublin. We got off the train and got a taxi to Roslyn park, when we landed in Roslyn park we got a cup of tea and we were briefed about our N.R.A.C meeting which was to take place over the next two days. We were shown a video in difference languages and subtitles but it was a bit hard to understand and follow.

Wednesday evening we had a lovely meal in O'Connell's restaurant Bewley's hotel also a lovely breakfast again the following morning

After our evening meal we had a drink in the bar and met up with the

other groups from Roscommon and Galway

On Thursday we split into groups and we were asked to talk about groups we were involved in. I had to go up and present our feedback to the whole group. I was a bit nervous but excited doing this as I had never done this before. This part of the meeting was very interesting.

When the meeting was over we got a taxi back to the station to get the train back home before we left the train station we had a bit of a lunch of chips burger and coke which was very enjoyable.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Lorraine for taking us to Dublin

I really enjoyed it.

Family Day

On the 3rd of October RehabCare Sligo held a function to celebrate the involvement of families in the services it provides in Sligo. The event was held in RehabCare St Anne's Sligo. This also coincided with the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Year of the Family, the event was part funded by the Dept Social and Family Affairs.

Mr. Eamonn Wheeler Community Services Manager RehabCare Sligo welcomed over 180 people from 60 families, of individuals, who attend RehabCare Services in Sligo.

He thanked the families for their support and stressed the importance of family and friends as a means of support for each individual service user.

Mr. Wheeler also paid tribute to the staff team in RehabCare Sligo who "do the real work " the "important work" on a daily basis, in a professional and very person focused manner.

Members of the staff team Teresa O Boyle and Florence Clarke Mc Loughlin then gave an overview of how RehabCare Staff and Service Users can work with families in order to support people in their own communities.

Food was provided and Frank Farry entertained everybody with his music. This was an excellent opportunity for family, friends, Staff and Service Users to mingle, dance, and generally get to know each other in a very pleasant social setting.



Picture captures: Teresa O' Boyle, Programmes Supervisor RehabCare Sligo, talks about Person Centered Planning to Service Users and families at the Open Day in October 2004.

Bernie Attends Rehab's People of the Year!

I Bernie McDermott attended The National Rehab people of the Year in the City West Hotel, Dublin on October 9th 2004. It was my first time to attend such a event. Many famous people attend this event such as Sonia O'Sullivan, Bill Herlihy, Gay Byrne, Jimmy Magee, and Mary O'Rourke. I had had my photo taken with Sonia and Bill Herlihy. We had a lovely dinner and I met lots of really nice people. It was a wonderful evening!

By Bernie McDermott



Hi Everyone,

Congratulations to everyone who made the Annual General Meeting a great success this year yet again. Without your enthusiasm and participation all year it would not have been the success that it was.

I would like to thank the outgoing committee 2004 for their commitment throughout the year a lot was achieved

- Policy making Project
- UCD Course" Citizenship & Advocacy"
- Submissions to Government
- Creating logo for NRAC
- Regional Meetings
- AGM
- EQRM
- Communication meetings

Congratulations to the newly elected committee 2005, this committee will have a 2-year term which was voted by all Service –Users whom attended the AGM. Thanks to local committees without your feedback/suggestions/queries put forward by you, this is what makes a good advocacy committee NRAC.

Thanking you

Michelle Joyce

Michelle Joyce
NRAC Nat.Dev Officer

YOUR NEWLY ELECTED NATIONAL COMMITTEE
NRAC 2005

West/North West

Bernie McDermott
RehabCare
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Ballinamore
Co Leitrim
07196-44132



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North East/Midland Region

Jimmy Dooner
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Mary Browne
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East/South East

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South/MidWest

Simon Buggy
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Brandon House
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Michael O'Brien
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The Toolbox

by Kevin Barnes, Programmes & Research Dept., RehabCare

It must be the stage of life that I am at but I have a new hobby, which I wanted to share with you. Home improvements.

I am not sure if it is the hundred and one television shows about doing up your home or the inflated testosterone that comes from starting up a power drill. More likely it's the thought of the extra few bob when I sell the apartment. Whatever it is I've caught the bug.

I have to say it was a long time coming. In school I was a lot happier with quadratic equations than woodwork. My father's encouragement never bore any fruit and even the laughter of my friends when the coat hooks I did put up fell down could never persuade me to do it myself. But because of life changes suddenly I am Dr DIY himself.

To begin with my enthusiasm was greater than my skill level. But I started small and kept it simple. Putting up small shelves that were already made. Repainting the front room. I left the tiling, the fitted kitchen and the re-carpeting to the experienced people. Forget rewiring.

My shelves stayed up and this encouraged me to go further. My friends stopped laughing at my failures and complemented me on how well the place looked. This provided me with positive reinforcement and increases my desire to carry on. My motivation increase and I wanted bigger challenges. I bought a book, talked to friends and looked at some night classes. I finally got the advise of my father that me wanted to give all those years ago.

The tools I have are limited and not the best in the world – but they do the job. I know someone who works in a hardware shop. He helps me decide what I need to complete the task making the most of the money I have. He also gets me a discount.

I do not have all the equipment I need but I try to be as resourceful and creative as possible. I choice the best tool for the job. But if I do not have the perfect one I try with

what I have. Nails have been hammered with spanners. Not ideal I admit but it did the job. My neighbour gets a regular knock on his door with me looking to borrow their drill. I always make sure I return it so he will lend it me again.

Now I am getting better and can do more and more things for myself. This gives me a great sense of achievement. This sounds grand but can still lead to problems. My wife does not always share my taste. I need to ask if it is okay to hang a picture here or build a cabinet for there. So we make decision together about what looks good. We do not always agree so we have to compromise. My zeal also needs to be kept in check at times. Drilling into the wall I have found is not popular with my wife nor my neighbours after 9 o' clock in the evening.

It is not all about home improvements for me at home though. All the other jobs and tasks still need to get done. All the fun things I do I still want to be a part of. I have to balance my new creative desires with maintaining the present. The dinner still needs to be cooked, the house still gets dusty and I cannot go out in dirty clothes. I still meet my friends, go to the cinema and I indulge myself with a record or two.

So to summarise what has help me develop my interest. I wanted to do it, the timing was right for me. I started small, built on my successes and increase the challenge slowly as I got more confident. I got support from friends and family, giving me reinforcement for achievements in a valued activity. I also found out how the community can help. I made the most of the resources I had. I shopped around for bargains and borrowed from neighbours. I used what I had creatively to make the most of it. For me it did not have to be perfect good enough was good enough. I considered other people in my life and how it could negatively affect my neighbours. Finally all the other things, which were essential for me, I continue to do. I balanced the new with the old.

National Programmes Workshop

On November 4-5th over fifty RehabCare staff from around the country gathered in Dublin to attend the National Programme Workshop. This year hosed a conference on 'Getting to know you.' Over a day a half was spent on learning to communicate well with everyone we work with. The days included guest speakers from Paradigm in the UK. Many different ideas were provided including eight essential

elements of a fulfilling task, importance of planning and seizing opportunities, the best part of what you do, creative ways for looking at someone's interests, partnership projects and many more exciting ideas. We would like to thank all of you who participated on the days!

Kathleen And Kevin

Jokes Corner

What do you call a man under a door?

Matt.

Did you hear about the woman who ironed her curtains?

She fell out the window.

Joe Gallagher, Crescent House, Athlone.

"When I first saw you, I thought it was you, but now I see it is your brother."

"Have you seen Rafferty lately?"

"Well, yes and no."

"How do you mean, yes and no?"

"Well, I saw someone I thought was him, and he saw someone he thought was me, but when we got up to each other we saw it wasn't either of us."

Down by the Sally Gardens my love and I did meet
She'd stepped on something squishy with her little
snow-white feet.

Kyra Kinirons, Crescent House, Athlone.

On the 'Right' road –

Charter of Rights and Responsibilities/ Complaints procedure review 2004.

During the months of August and September over 400 Service Users and 27 services participated in the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities and Complaints Procedure national review. This made the consultation one of the biggest in RehabCare's history.

People were asked to give their opinions on both the Charter and the Complaints procedure. Services were open to create their own unique method of reviewing both.

As part of this year's review a prize of €250 was offered for what the Programmes and Research Department considered the most creative review. After much discussion it was agreed to split the prize between RehabCare Kilkenny and RehabCare Limerick.

Big Brother came to Limerick. "Everybody was encouraged to get involved with the role play and it just took on a life of its own!" said Patricia Davern Programmes Supervisor, "and having watched the video and discussed the review afterwards, it was obvious that most service users in Limerick have a very good understanding."

While in Kilkenny a brain storming session produced a number of ideas but the singer/ songwriters in the group won thorough. The result was a composition to the tune of Mad World by Gary Jules entitled "The Cats Charter". Evelyn Prendergast, Programme Supervisor RehabCare Kilkenny, said "The group brainstormed rhyming lines from the Charter, the process was very creative and spontaneous with everyone joining in. Singing proved very popular,.. and gave some clients an opportunity to excel in an area of strength."

I would also like to mention "The Brain Boxes" from RehabCare Carlow. They can through a closely fought battle in the Charter and Complaints quiz. I hope the €20 was well spent.

The full Charter and Complaints review is available from your centre manager or alternatively please contact Kevin or Kathleen (01) 205 7200. Thank you for taking part.

Congratulations-

Congratulations to Trudy Gilfillan, staff at Crescent House, Athlone, on her recent graduation from NUI Galway. Trudy received her Certificate in Health and Social Care.

Christmas Recipes

Cinnamon Dough Ornaments

A richly scented ornamental cookie. These would be fabulous decorating a Christmas tree, **but don't try to eat them!**

1 cup ground cinnamon
4 tablespoons white glue
3/4 to 1 cup water

Mix cinnamon and glue. Gradually add the water. Stir until a ball of dough forms. Roll out with rolling pin 1/4 inch thick and cut with cookie cutters. Poke a hole and let dry at room temperature for 1 to 2 days, turning over every 6-8 hours. If desired, decorate with white Royal Icing. Hang with ribbon and enjoy



Christmas Jokes

What do elves learn at school?
the elf-abet

What do you get when you cross a snowman
with a vampire?
Frostbite

What do you get if Santa goes down the
chimney when a fire is lit?
Crisp Cringle

What's an ig?
A Eskimo's house without a loo

Where do snowmen go dancing?
Snowballs

What do snowmen eat for dinner?
Icebergers