



Annual Review 2015 / 16

**This year New Life Counselling
have delivered 13,262
counselling sessions to 1,983
individuals across Northern Ireland**

RESERVES STATEMENT

The audited accounts ending March 2016 indicate that New Life Counselling holds a reserve of £368,774.

New Life Counselling's Board has set aside £59,000 as a redundancy reserve should a situation arise where we need to wind up the business.

For the coming year 2016/17 budget the Board has agreed to maintain the current reserve level in line with our reserves policy and to support the business needs for cash flow.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Income (£)

Business Resources	2014/15	2015/16
Voluntary income	18,391	22,797
Revenue Grants	1,849,606	835,707
Fundraising Income	19,468	30,276
Other Income	23,534	26,095
Bank Interest	413	0
TOTAL	1,910,999	914,875

Expenditure (£)

Expenditure	2014/15	2015/16
Counselling Services	2,022,535	936,781
Support Costs	121,891	235,610
Costs of Generating Funds	297	0
Governance Costs	3,731	3,500
TOTAL	2,148,452	1,175,891

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

KATHLEEN LAVERTY



I am delighted to present my first Annual Review since taking up the post as Chair of New Life Counselling in September 2015. I wish to put on record my thanks to the previous Chair, Mr Robert Peel who dedicated himself to the development of the work of New Life Counselling.

New Life Counselling could not continue to deliver services without the support of its various funders both statutory and voluntary. I would like to express our sincere gratitude for their assistance which enables us to provide a much needed and valued service. I would also like to sincerely thank all those who took part in fundraising activities for New Life Counselling throughout the year.

The appointment of new Board Members from a wide range of diverse backgrounds with a wealth of experience in the private, community and voluntary sectors has enabled our work to evolve from good to great. I speak for all of the Board when I say we are inspired by the hard work, dedication, commitment and loyalty of our team. It is clear that our counsellors, staff and volunteers are greatly respected in the community in which they deliver our service, and rightly so. The lived values of respect, integrity, responsiveness and quality are as evident in our billing processes as they are in our counselling rooms.

As we continue to focus on evidencing value for money through continuing the process of internal reform, it is with pride that I have observed the tenacity of staff and their ability to embrace the change, never failing in our mission to deliver high quality services, in the face of extraordinary demands.

The difference in the quality of medical care received by people with mental illness is one of the reasons why they live shorter lives than people without mental illness. Even in the best resourced countries in the world, the life expectancy gap is as much as 20 years. Too often we are taught to care for our physical bodies without being taught to care also for our mental state. There are few five year olds who cannot brush their teeth, and fewer still who can articulate how to cope with rejection. New Life Counselling is at the forefront of enhancing this learning; concurrent with our delivery of quality counselling, we are teaching youths in schools and community centres, how to develop emotional intelligence, mental resilience & life affirming behaviours.

A final word to our clients, the most important people in our charity - thank you for your faith in us. As Julian Seifter once wrote - you are not your illness. You have an individual story to tell. You have a name, a history, a personality. Staying yourself is part of the battle, and we are privileged to help fight it with you.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

KAREN COLLINS



As I write my foreword to the Annual Review for 2015/16 I'm celebrating my 8th anniversary as Chief Executive of New Life Counselling. It is my pleasure to lead this organisation through the many challenges and opportunities of the past 8 years and

going into the future. I have the great pleasure of working with a fantastic team of committed professionals and to daily see the benefit of our services for so many clients.

As I reflect on this period many things have changed since I came into this post in 2008 - we have had opportunities to develop and expand services including our involvement with the Department of Education currently in the delivery of the Independent Counselling Service for Schools for Special Educational Needs schools in the West of the province; partnerships with PHA and the Health Trusts in Belfast & South Eastern areas in the initiation of the Self Harm Intervention Programme (SHIP); set up of 2 Big Lottery funded programmes to support delivery of counselling for children and families - one with Parenting NI in Antrim & Strabane and the other in conjunction with the North Belfast Healthy Living Centres to name the most recent.

It is wonderful to see these opportunities to meet the growing needs for our services even in challenging financial times and I believe the capacity of the organisation to capitalise on these opportunities is a reflection of the dedication, drive and enthusiasm of the entire staff team supported by our Board of Directors all of whom have a genuine passion to meet the emotional health and wellbeing needs of our communities.

I would second the Chair's words of thanks to all our funders and supporters who have enabled our work to continue and we look forward to extending these partnerships in the future. A special word of thanks goes to the volunteers who support our organisation whether they be volunteer counsellors, fundraisers or supporters. We benefit greatly from the additional capacity provided by our volunteers without who so much achieved would not be possible.

Finally, we look forward in the coming months to re-launching our website - I'd encourage you to link in with this and via our Facebook and Twitter pages to keep up to date with the work of the organisation and support us where you can whether financially or by helping with our awareness raising events.

Only Kids And Youth Team (OKAY)

In April 2015 to March 2016 why did 406 Kids and Youths request creative therapeutic support from New Life Counselling? Why did 18 schools fund 435 counselling sessions? Why did Social Services finance 162 sessions for 8 Looked After Children who have complex family backgrounds?

The work this team delivers falls into 4 specific groups (1) Community work delivered in our premises in North and East Belfast and in schools throughout the City (2) Independent Counselling Service in Schools (3) Our partnership with Parenting NI, and (4) Our partnership with 4 other Healthy Living Centre in North Belfast through "Supporting Families North Belfast". The last 2 are new pieces of work, starting during this Financial Year.

The OKAY team are a mix of child and youth therapeutic specialists who use art, music, drama and play to support young people who are troubled or troublesome to express emotions in healthier ways to feel better.

Big Lottery in Antrim & Strabane with Parenting NI

In January 2016 we commenced the delivery of an exciting new programme in partnership with Parenting NI in Antrim and Strabane. Thanks to five year financial support from the Big Lottery, in partnership we are delivering two programmes in three schools in each of these areas.

By end of March 2016 we had already delivered one Time Together Programme with four families in the Antrim area. The families gave positive feedback and reported they would recommend the programme to other families in the area. Counsellors also had begun to deliver one to one counselling services for young pupils in primary schools in Antrim and Strabane. Clients and their parents reported a positive change in their presenting issues with outcomes that included reduction in anger outbursts, expression of feelings and increase in self confidence. This programme will run until December 2021 within six schools. More information on this programme can be found through either ourselves, Parenting NI or the participating schools.

The OKAY Team was kindly supported 2015/16 by Public Health Agency, Department of Social Development, Big Lottery Fund, Comic Relief, Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust, Albert Hunt Trust, Enkalon Foundation, Bombardier Foundation, Victoria Homes Trust, Belfast Harbour Commissioners Office. Services were also commissioned by Full Service Community Network, Greater Falls Schools Cluster, Department of Education, ARC Healthy Living Centre, 14 primary schools in Belfast and through Social Services for 8 Looked After Children.

Independent Counselling Service for Schools - Special Educational Needs

This is the second year in which we have provided counselling services within Special Educational Needs schools in Strabane, Omagh, Derry & Enniskillen. This work commissioned by the Department of Education enables the provision of around 550 counselling sessions each academic year.

Pupils, referred within their school by a teacher or parent often seek support for a range of issues such as anxiety, peer relationship issues, bereavement, anger, self-worth, bullying, family and school issues.

The feedback from the young people, as well as their schools, has been positive and we continue to work well within these partnerships to improve the wellbeing of the children and young people.

Supporting Families North Belfast

This has been an exciting year in our established partnership with New Lodge and Duncairn Health Partnership, Ligoniel Healthy Living Centre, Ardoyne and Shankill Health Partnership and Women in Sport and Physical Activity.

The joint initiative "Supporting Families North Belfast" offers a range of services for parents and children under 12 years of age in North Belfast aimed at improving health and wellbeing as well as improving family functioning and resilience. New Life Counselling provides individual counselling and the Time Together programme - a parent and child interactive groupwork programme through primary schools in North Belfast.

Children's experience in counselling has been positive with each having time to work with difficulties using play and drama. The Time Together programme has been well received with one parent commenting she "felt proud that she had completed the programme with her child".

Teachers have also noticed positive differences with children undertaking the Time Together programme in their sociability and emotional regulation. Family Therapy within this programme is offered in our Duncairn office and has been received well by families engaging to address trauma and family stress issues. Family members have begun to share their experience of family trauma, which is increasing understanding and warmth in relationships. Adult counselling is available within this programme in either our Ardoyne or Duncairn office.

Adult Counselling Project

Clients attending the Adult Counselling Project are varied in their presentations and issues. The team offers a range of approaches so that we can be flexible in tailoring interventions to best meet client need. Clients' problems cannot always be solved but through counselling individuals can find ways to live a better and happier life despite difficulty. New Life Counselling has no upper age limit on who can receive counselling, we work with a wide range of common mental health issues including issues relating to the Troubles.

Some examples of clients who have been helped through counselling:

A young woman who had severe Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) symptoms carrying out daily rituals since her early teens and which took 8 hours to complete. She was offered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. She worked hard initially on reducing her rituals and this challenged her belief that her family would be harmed. Through psycho-education and a willingness to test out her beliefs this client managed to overcome her OCD.

A young man presented with low moods and generally feeling lost in life. Through therapy he was able to connect with unresolved grief and process his feelings that he had originally blocked out. At the end of therapy he discussed how he was feeling like himself again and that the experience of counselling was a 'powerful' process for him.

Recovering from the physical, psychological, and emotional damage of being hit by a car, while waiting at a bus stop 8 months previously, this elderly lady was suffering flashbacks and isolation. Counselling enabled her to restore her confidence and independence.

In his 40s, this man, referred by his GP, had no idea how counselling could help - unable to talk about his problems without feeling judged. Working as a driver he developed a crippling anxiety about accidents, couldn't sleep or concentrate and stopped going out. He felt frustrated and angry with others and this was severely damaging to his family and work relationships. In counselling he found talking a relief and gained an understanding of stress, and with a new perspective on himself and his difficulties was able to identify how he could be more positive. He started to be more active and more sociable and returned to work stating that he now knows how he can help himself cope with the stress.

The Adult Counselling Project was generously funded in 2015/16 by the Public Health Agency, Department of Social Development, Victims and Survivors Service, Belfast Trust Mental Health Hubs, Black Santa, Limestone Trust and ESB Electric Aid Ireland.

Family Liaison Service & Self Harm Intervention Project (SHIP)

Today's environment is tough, and sometimes it feels like it is getting tougher. Have you ever thought of what it would be like to be caught deep in the throes of suicidal ideation? What it would be like to waken every morning and wish you were no longer here? Have you ever thought what it would be like to be so alone in the world that nobody ever phoned you, sent a text or a message on social media? Have you ever thought if you lost your lifelong partner to suicide that you would want to join them rather than experience the pain, the loneliness and the hopelessness?

It is at these times and with these people when the Family Liaison Service and SHIP counsellors are there to help get these individuals through one of the most difficult journeys they will ever take. With commitment. With passion. With experience. And with you.

We meet families at their most vulnerable. We meet them in their own homes, or where they feel safe. We meet them at a time they feel ready to meet and we don't go away until they feel safe again. If they want to come back - they can come back. We counsel these families. We counsel their children. We counsel their communities. Whatever they need we try to support that.

In the last year 51 people were supported through the Family Liaison Service and 61 were supported through SHIP

We are told we save lives.

These projects are specific pieces of work whereby clients are referred into New Life Counselling by professionals. Referral for Family Liaison Service are that the client must be situated in South or East Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area or South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area and must have been personally impacted by the suicide of a family member or close friend. Referral issue for Self Harm Intervention Project (SHIP) is that the person must be aged 11+ and have presented with a health professional in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area or South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area with self harm.

Family Team

This year the Family Team have been focusing on the needs of families experiencing a range of difficulties impacting negatively on family functioning, relating and communication, and increasing family distress.

On average, we met with families for up to seven sessions and using family relationships as a resource, we noticed families engaged with the idea that all had a view or opinion about their difficulties as well as having some ideas of how problems could be resolved.

Family members displayed courage and honesty to focus on their strengths and build family resilience rather than focus on issues relating to parental separation/divorce, parent with mental health diagnosis, children potentially with an Autism spectrum condition diagnosis, anxiety and domestic abuse.

An emerging theme in Family Therapy referrals this year included working with parents and their adult children. Managing some of the above difficulties was no less distressing for children as they moved into adolescence, adulthood and/or leaving home or becoming parents themselves.

We noted difficulties with adult children were exacerbated as problems had been established over a much longer period of time. Family members reported their stress levels had been reduced by at least one third and parent(s) felt better equipped to meet demands of family life.

Family Therapy work was kindly supported in 2015/16 through the Public Health Agency and Henry Smith Charity.

Communications

This year New Life Counselling has sought to communicate to a wide range of interested groups including funders, staff, clients, politicians, community partners and supporters. Our work would not be here without the support of each of those groupings and for that we are very grateful.

This year much of our communications support our community fundraising with much publicity celebrating our Charity of the Year status with the Northern Irish Football Referees Association, raising £7,000 (figure by end March 2016). We were also pleased to promote the fundraising by Belfast International Airport which raised £2,441 towards our work. We were one of 300 charities chosen by Lidl to celebrate our work, and celebrated this with a community open day and beautiful cake provided by McAulfields bakery on Ardoyne Road.

Our links within the community were greatly strengthened through our membership of the Healthy Living Centre Alliance. New Life Counselling, along with 4 other centres based in North Belfast were successful in their bid for Lottery funding in the Autumn 2015.

In addition we saw an increase in our online presence on Facebook (now at 1,796) and Twitter (now at 923) with connections made each week.

Volunteers

The volunteer team now consists of 27 newly qualified counsellors or those in the last year of their training. Over the last year they have given in excess of 4,416 hours to client work.

If someone decides to ask for help, they are often at a point in their life where the right support can make a real difference. If we can match them with one of our volunteers after the assessment they usually can access this help quickly.

Many of our volunteers have extensive training and are very experienced; they also have ongoing support and training available to them.

Volunteers can therefore support clients with difficult issues from the past, present, or concerns for the future. They might come with depression, anxiety, relationship difficulties, or struggle to know how to deal with strong feelings.

Being given the time, space, and working with a trained volunteer counsellor who cares, uses their skills and believes they can lead a better life can make all the difference.

The Volunteer and Training Team was supported 2015/16 through Public Health Agency, Northern Trust Mental Health Hub, Big Lottery Fund and services were also commissioned through Insight Accessibility, Cliftonville Community Centre and Windsor Women's Centre.

Fundraising

This year New Life Counselling has much to celebrate by way of new funders.

Belfast Local Commissioning Group has released funding for Mental Health Hubs to support counselling giving GPs more options for their patients.

The Public Health Agency commissioned a new service to provide counselling to people presenting with self harm, called Self Harm Intervention Project, this was in response to growing numbers of people presenting to the Emergency Department in need of therapeutic support.

Our third major triumph this year was to successfully bid for Big Lottery funding through the Supporting Families Programme, with two sets of partners. The first is to deliver counselling and our parent/child programme in Antrim and Strabane schools in partnership with Parenting NI and the second one was with the North Belfast Healthy Living Centres to deliver sessions and the parent/child programme for people in BT14 and 15.

Fundraising remains tough at present, however, we have intelligent, responsive funders who are constantly seeking to meet the needs of society's most vulnerable and wish to work in partnership with us to achieve that. We also have a great Board and staff team who actively engage in fundraising themselves and support events so there is a sense of collective responsibility. Thanks specifically to Board members who have arranged events - fashion shows, nominated us for Charity of the Year and given to us on a monthly basis, it has made an enormous difference.

Aim 1

Therapeutic Service Delivery & Development

To develop & deliver responses which intervene early and address long term difficulties. To provide targeted, evidence based, quality therapeutic services.

Aim 2

Evidencing our Impact & Influence

To evidence the impact of our service on individual lives and the community. To use this evidence to make a difference to Northern Ireland policy.

Aim 3

Developing our Organisation

To develop our business model to be sustainable and self sufficient.

newlifecounselling.net



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Title	Name	Background
Chair (until Sept. 2015)	Robert Peel	Company Director
Chair (from Sept. 2015)	Dr Kate Laverty	Manager of Colin Community Counselling
Vice Chair	Diana Press	Educational Consultant
Treasurer	Heather Cousins	Senior Civil Servant
Secretary	Gabi Mornhinweg	Community Development, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
	Tom Crossan	Environmental Health, Belfast City Council
	Rev Lynne Gibson	Curate
	Dr Gerard Lynch	Consultant Psychiatrist
	Kate Deery	HR Director, Agnew Group
	Tom McEnaney	Head of Statutory Business Development, Aware Defeat Depression
	Nick Heath	Administrator, MACS
From Dec. 2015	Stephen Robinson	Associate Lecturer in Psychology with Open University

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Chief Executive Officer	Karen Collins
Head of Operations	Stephanie Wethers

COMPANY DETAILS

Business Address:	25 Ardoyne Road, Belfast, BT14 7HX
NI Reg. Charity Number:	NIC102590
HRMC Reference Number:	XR33055
Company Registration Number:	NI 40330
Banker	First Trust Bank, 322 Antrim Road, Newtownabby, BT36 5EQ
Solicitor	Worthington's Law, 21 Oxford Street, Belfast, BT1 3LA
Auditors	Moore Stephens, Donegall House, 7 Donegall Square North, Belfast, BT1 5GB

CONTACT DETAILS

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