

**WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG**

# **Annual Report 2016**





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## Introduction

West Limerick Independent Living was established in 1997 to develop and deliver personal support services to people with disabilities in the Mid-West, as well as to project a positive image and perception of people with disabilities.

West Limerick Independent Living is a community based, consumer driven nonprofit company developing and delivering services designed to enable persons with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and fully participate in all aspects of community life.

West Limerick Independent Living aims primarily to act as a catalyst and an enabler for people with significant disabilities to live independently in their chosen community. In other words it supports people with disabilities to live, study or work fully as they would desire.

West Limerick Independent Living is a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital.

### REGISTERED WITH

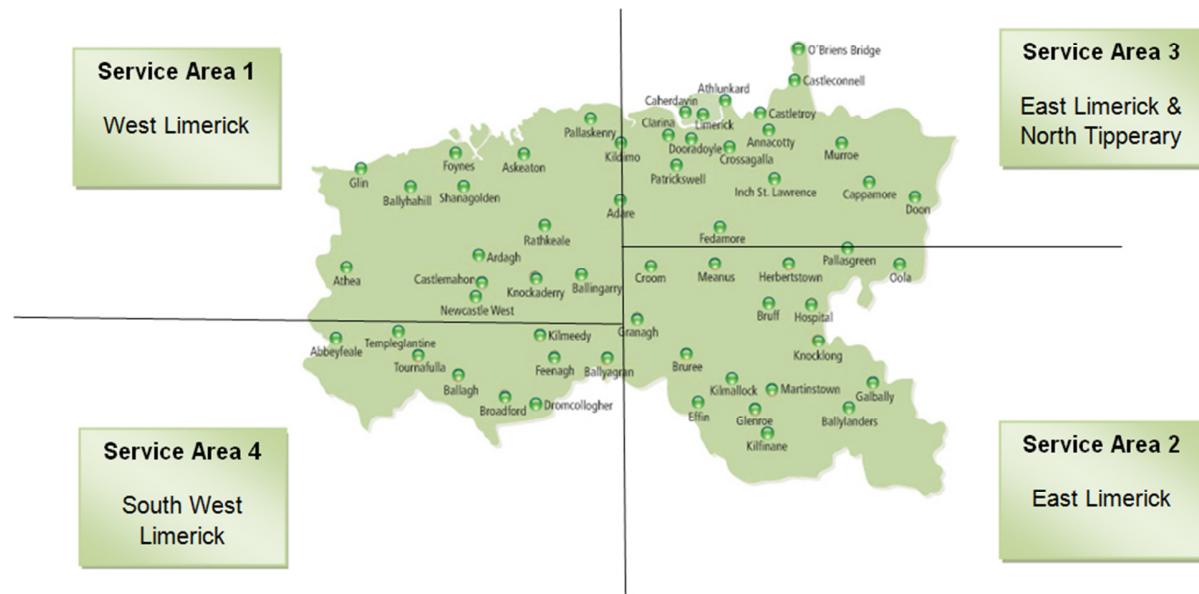
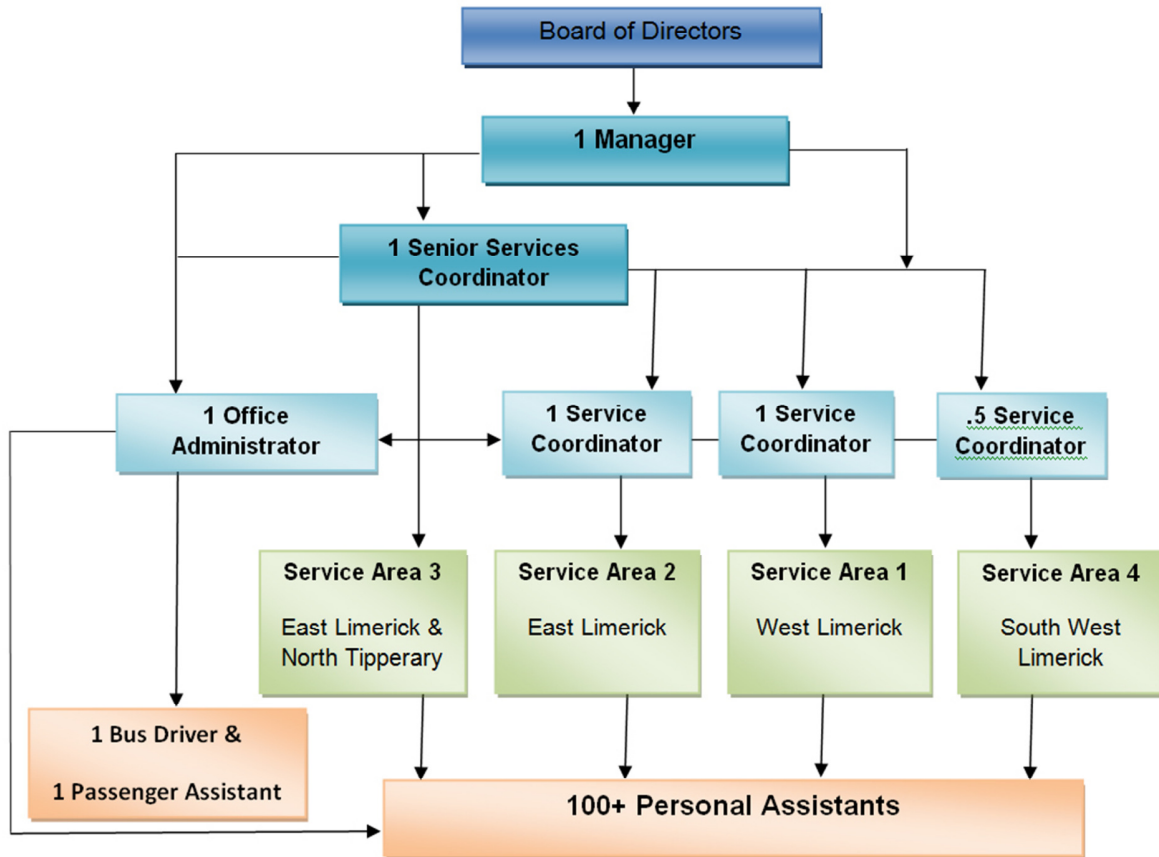
Authority	Identifier
Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA)	20037192
Companies Registration Office (CRO)	271412
Revenue (Charities Unit) (CHY)	12592

West Limerick Independent Living supports people with disabilities by way of:

- Providing facilitated Personal Assistant services
- Providing a fully accessible transport service
- Raising awareness on disability issues
- Providing information on personal support services

Under our Customer Service Standards, each and every West Limerick Independent Living service user can expect courtesy and respect, fairness, clarity, accessibility, timeliness and responsiveness.

## COMPANY ORGANISATIONAL CHART





## ORGANISATIONAL BOARD

BOARD MEMBERS	
Mr. Ben Lenihan, Director & Chairman  IT Department at University of Limerick and is a person with a disability.	Mr. David Noonan, Director  PA Service User. Retired. Background in business and is a person with a disability.
Mr. John Creedon, Director  Report Technician with Pallas Foods IT Dept. A member of the Irish Wheelchair Association and the Disabled Driver Association. PA Service User	Mr. Donal Cooper, Director  Vast experience in the community and disability sector and former board member of People with Disabilities Ireland.

## HSE Service Level Agreement

West Limerick Independent Living like many other organisations/agencies that are funded under Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act delivers a Personal Assistant service (domiciliary care service) which is similar or ancillary to those of the HSE.

Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act titled, 'Assistance for certain bodies' directs that:

Section 39 bodies related to agencies / groups undertaking services which are similar or ancillary to those of the HSE and to whom the HSE is providing grant aid to do so. However the HSE would not be legally or statutorily obligated to provide such services.

All organisations are required to sign a service level agreement which is a contract between the HSE and agency to deliver a service that complies with all relevant standards and legislation.

## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

In recent days, the advocacy group 'Social Justice Ireland' published a report that called for a social contract to ensure that the expectations of all Irish citizens are met. Such a contract would mean 'that everyone contributes to the common good – economically, socially or culturally – on the assumption that the State will provide a minimum standard of living, essential social services and infrastructure and the protection of basic rights' (Socialjustice.ie 2017).



Mr. Ben Lehinan  
Chairman

It is this spirit of social justice that underpins the work of West Limerick Independent Living. Those involved in the organisation believe in the importance of meaningful social contracts between our service providers and service users, not merely in an effort to contribute to the common good but to help to create a more just and equitable society.

As one of the largest providers of Personal Support Services to people with disabilities across Limerick City and County, the main aim of West Limerick Independent Living is to provide support services to people with disabilities in our community. These services include the Personal Assistant service, one of the key services pioneered by the Independent Living movement. Thus the organisation seeks to promote self-empowerment to overcome the disadvantage imposed by physical impairments.

2016 was a challenging year for West Limerick Independent Living as the organisation struggled to contend with the fallout caused by public expenditure cutbacks, recent increases in insurance costs and a shortage of suitably qualified personnel to fill vacancies in the care sector nationally.

This shortage in supply has been on-going for some time now and represents a particular challenge to West Limerick Independent Living as we seek to maintain the high standards of care that we and our clients expect. Ireland's ageing population will be a key driver of the future demand for care workers and this is something that our elected representatives must consider moving forward.

However, the work of the board members and staff within West Limerick Independent Living has been critical in ensuring that the service we provide to our clients has not been diminished in any sense.

Looking forward to 2017, those involved in West Limerick Independent Living endeavor to continue such work; to ensure that our service users' expectations are fully met, particularly aiming to support their aspirations to live in the community with dignity and independence.



I would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the board members with whom I have worked with over the course of this year. Even in these challenging times, the board members have been open-minded and fair, ever mindful of the need to strive for a more just and equitable community by empowering people with disabilities.

I would also like to thank all the staff whose dedication and commitment ensure that we continue to provide quality support to our clients.

I would like to give my personal thanks to all our service coordinators, for once again providing an excellent service. I would like to wish all the best to all our service users and staff, management and members of the board going forward in 2017.

Thank you,

Ben Lenihan

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Ben Lenihan

Chairman

*West Limerick Independent Living*



## Managers Foreword

I am pleased to present this annual report of West Limerick Independent Living, I hope that it proves useful when we look back on the past year; the report gives an overview for our service users and their families, our staff and our funding agencies of the work of the company in 2016, as well as providing full details of our financial position.

As a service provider we are acutely aware that the sustained cutbacks in funding have severely tested us over the past eight years of recession, it has been hugely stressful for our clients and staff. We are spreading ourselves significantly thinner than we would necessarily want or to like to be – more than we think is good for our clients and this is not sustainable in the long term.

Our staff; bring a strong level of personal commitment to their jobs, however dedicated as they may be, as the economy recovers and as pay and conditions are restored in other comparable organisations, the pressure on us to retain staff increases. Indeed we are starting to see this already and if this is not addressed there is concern that we will find it difficult to retain staff.

As a service provider we cannot support frontline service outputs while failing to recognize the necessity to resource high quality, back office supports. Our workload has increased in recent years, the reasons for this increase is mainly administration, increasingly complex governance environment, multiple and diverse accountability demands. Our experienced staff are choosing to pursue higher levels of salary satisfaction elsewhere and, in the process, reduce the capacity of West Limerick Independent Living to maintain current levels of service delivery.

We must always remember that the personal assistant service is not a just care service; indeed it is more than a service per say because of the control held by the user that enables independent living. Any understanding as well as practice that ignore the larger purpose of the PA service miss the mark, and is likely to lead to counterproductive practices. The need for a shared understanding and vision for the PA service going forward is crucial and leadership from the disabled community is required.

2016 was a challenging year for West Limerick Independent Living, a year in which we delivered a total of 72,717 personal support service hours to 145 people with disabilities over a wide range of locations across the Mid-West. Comparing to 2015 where a total of 68,569 personal support service hours were delivered to 146 people.

2016 was a challenging year financially for West Limerick Independent Living, with an operating turnover of €1,621,835 which is up from the 2015 figure of €1,525,803



Mr. Gerard O'Connor  
Manager





To comply with Part 18 of The Companies Act 2014, West Limerick Independent Living Company Limited by Guarantee without a share capital converted to a CLG. The CLG is the new updated version of the Guarantee Company format and this includes changing the company suffix and adopting a new constitution.

As Manager, I would like to express my gratitude to our main funder – HSE Health Service Executive, particularly the local HSE staff 'on the ground' whom we deal with on a daily basis, Carmel McLoughlin and Ferghal Gray Area Managers for Disability Services and their colleagues.

West Limerick Independent Living have excellent front-line staff, many putting in extra unpaid hours, is a credit to their commitment to their profession and I wish to thank them sincerely for their dedication. I wish to acknowledge the work of the Board, Management and all Staff and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them most sincerely for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerard O'Connor', written over a horizontal line.

Gerard O'Connor

*Manager West Limerick Independent Living*



## Transport Service



In 2016 West Limerick Independent Living transport service operated on average five days a week delivering a transport service to passengers with mobility impairments in County Limerick.

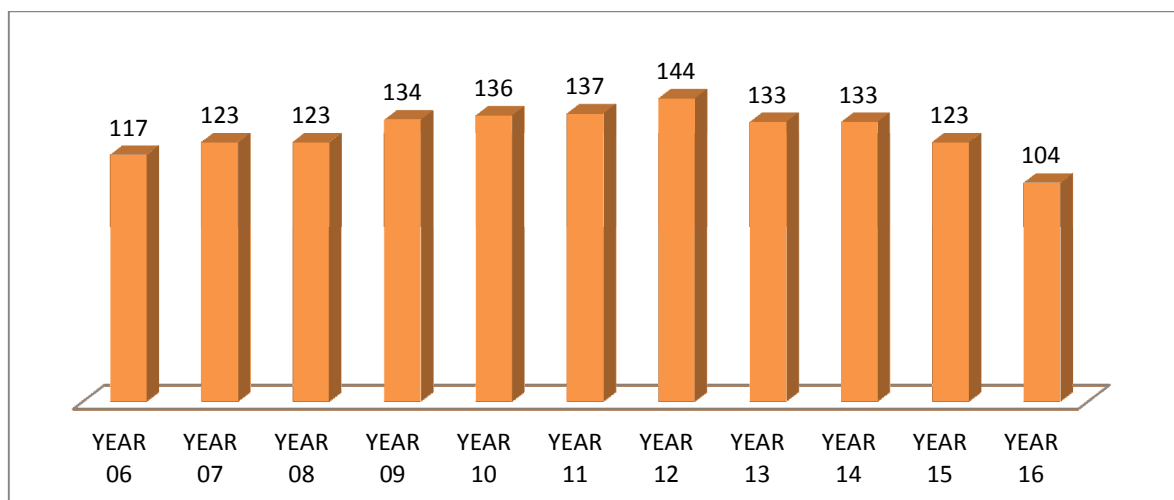
The majority of the passengers who use our transport service go to Enable Ireland services in Limerick on a daily bases, the remainder attend HSE Training Centre, Dooradoyle, Limerick and other once off passenger trips.

In 2016 the service provided over 2,000 single passenger journeys, unfortunately due to maintained and repair requirements the bus was out of service on a number of occasions in 2016, this is mainly due to the age of the vehicle and normal wear and tear.

The service is funded by the Health Service Executive – West under their transport and socialization support program and West Limerick Independent Living.

### Staff Levels in 2016

Year ending 2016, West Limerick Independent Living had over 104 staff members on the company payroll, this figure include management.





## PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

West Limerick Independent Living delivered Personal Support Services to 145 people with disabilities during 2016. Planning and delivery of Personal Support Services was developed and implemented in partnership with the HSE. In total West Limerick Independent Living delivered 72,717 hours Personal Support Services to people with disabilities during 2016.

### Table of PSS Hours delivered in 2016

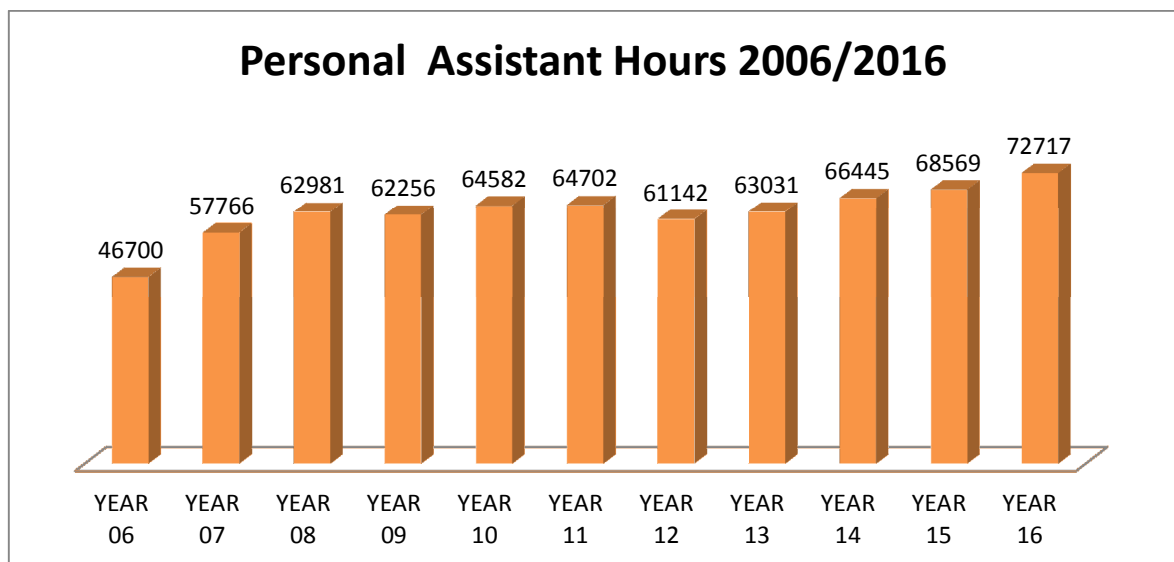
#### HSE Limerick PA Services

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Hours
3918	3631	4621	3916	3968	4981	3920	4147	4694	3787	3948	4934	50465

#### HSE East Limerick PA Services

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Hours
1803	1866	2249	1863	1894	2355	1804	1639	2061	1650	1305	1763	22252

### Chart of PSS Hours from 2006 to 2016





## Training

Employee development is a shared responsibility of management and the individual employee. The responsibility of management is to provide the right resources and an environment that supports the growth and development needs of the individual employee.

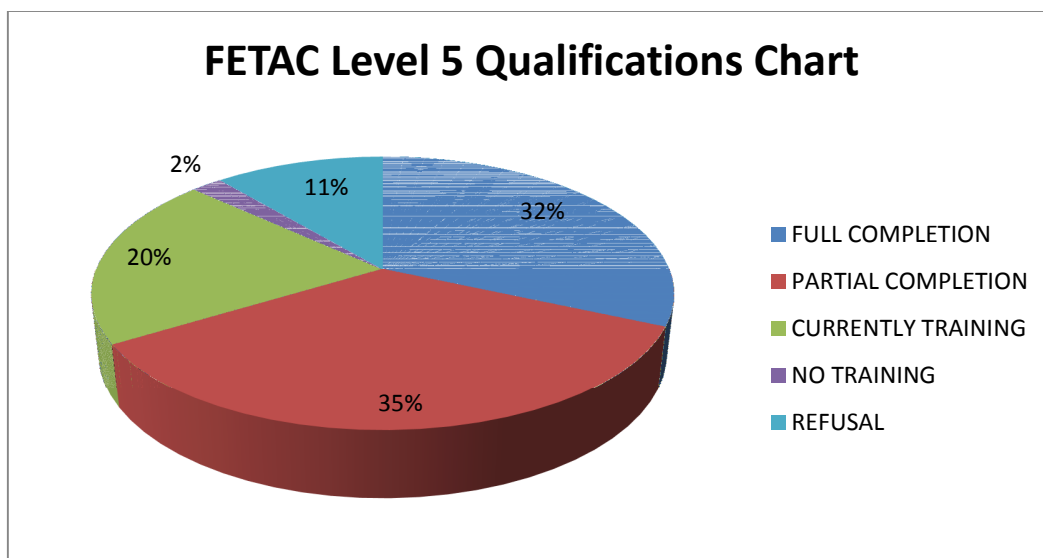
All staff are supported and encouraged to participate in training and development to increase their lifetime value to their organization.

### FETAC Level 5 Care Assistant course

As part of this Service Level Agreement (SLA), all newly recruited staff i.e. if the person has started the Fetac Level 5 Qualification Award or indeed agrees to have it completed by a certain date they will be allowed by the HSE to be recruited by an agency after January 2017.

All existing staff members will need to achieve this qualification in order to enhance their prospects of further work. Trained staff will be offered service hours over non trained staff should hours become available. It is in the interest of all staff to achieve the qualification standard. The following is a breakdown of FETAC Level 5 employee training:

- 31 employees have fully completed FETAC Level 5 training
- 34 employees have one or more modules of FETAC Level 5 training
- 20 employees have no FETAC Level 5 training
- 2 employees have refused to undertake FETAC Level 5 training
- 11 employees are currently undertaking FETAC Level 5 training





The HSE has outlined the recognised qualification for all Personal Assistants as the Fetac Level 5 in Healthcare Support Certificate. Staff currently working as Personal Assistants who have not completed the programme will remain in their positions. However these workers will be offered the programme as soon as can be made available to them.

The company has arranged FETAC Level 5 Care Assistant training for 11 staff in conjunction with the VEC. In addition the company supports staff who arrange their own training with 50% funding.

The company also require, fund and facilitate training for key staff which includes compulsory training comprised of Health and Safety - Manual Handling and Ergonomic Assessment.

The following Training was delivered to staff in 2016:

- Challenging Behavior (46 employees participated)
- Safe Guarding – Everyone's Responsibility (2 employees participated)
- First Aid (5 employees participated)
- Safe Guarding Vulnerable Persons Awareness Program Course (12 employees participated)
- Effective Communications & Team Building Techniques (10 employees participated)
- Service Coordinators Risk Assessment Training (4 participated)
- Team Building Techniques (10 participated)
- Child Protection Training (2 participated)

Other training includes 44 employees who attended People Moving & Handling - Health and Safety – Risk Assessment has been arranged for all service coordinators in 2016.

The total cost of training of €5,871.00 (not including wages for time at training and cost of training venues) poses a significant investment by West Limerick Independent Living in staff development; however the benefits:

- are greater productivity
- a highly skilled workforce
- training is key to morale
- motivation
- job satisfaction and employee engagement.



## Annual Health and Safety Report

### Introduction

This report provides information on the performance of West Limerick Independent Living against its safety objectives. This is set in a context of the organisations safety statement, range of activities with corresponding risks, and arrangements put in place to control these.

On an annual basis, WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING is required to evaluate the extent to, which the Safety Statement, Policies and Procedures were effective during the previous twelve months. It will show the level of resources committed to Safety, Health and Welfare, any special preventative measures taken and data on occupational injuries and ill-health in the workplace.

This will be reported in the company's annual report and include details such as:

- Safety Statement reviews
- Risk Assessment reviews
- Health & Safety Training completed
- Numbers of recorded incidents
- New safety arrangements put in place during the year

### Safety Statement & Risk Assessment Review

The Safety Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed in 2016 and there was a number of updates made to the Risk Assessment by management.

### Assigned Safety Responsibilities:

<b>First Aiders:</b>	Ms. Trish Cunningham
<b>Fire Wardens:</b>	Mr. Kevin Flynn (Limerick Local Link)
<b>Health and Safety Coordinator:</b>	Ms. Margaret O'Brien
<b>Safety Representative:</b>	Lynda McElligott, Breda Bennett, Margaret O'Brien, Trish Kavanagh and Laura Denihan

### West Limerick Independent Living and Safety Policy

West Limerick Independent Living will continue to communicate Health and Safety policy that provides a clear statement of commitment to provide a safe and healthy place of work. The Policy contains commitment to ensure that:

- West Limerick Independent Living complies with current safety legislation,
- hazardous activities are identified, risk assessed and controls implemented,
- suitable training, information and instruction is provided,
- there are arrangements for consultation between staff, and management on health and safety issues,
- resources are made available for safety.



West Limerick Independent Living has a range of activities and a correspondingly range of **risks** to be managed. The range of risks can be summarised as follows but is not exhaustive:

- Activities involving manual handling and lifting.
- Activities where people work alone.
- Frequent and prolonged use of workstation equipment.
- Areas where there is potential for people to slip, trip or fall.

West Limerick Independent Living manages these risks through the implementation of general arrangements for safety that include:

- Arrangements for reporting incidents, near miss incidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Fire risk assessment and fire safety precautions.
- Safety training and instruction.
- Workstation assessment and provision of eyesight screening.
- Communication and consultation on safety matters (Safety and Health Committee).

### **Health & Safety Training**

44 staff undertook training in good manual handling technique and risk assessment to reduce or eliminate manual handling associated injuries. Manual Handling training was provided to staff members who required instruction, by Optima Training an offsite Manual Handling company's when required, the training is refreshed on at least a three yearly basis or more frequently, if identified through the review of accident and illness records.

In 2016 Health & Safety Training was organised for company employees over six training days, a total of 48 employees completed the training. The cost of the training was as follows:

- Training Providers €2,000
- Training venue hire €406
- Employee staff costs €3,525

People attending these courses were reminded and encouraged to report injury from manual handling activities so that the full extent and potential of manual handling injury is known. This information is used by the organisation to consider the effectiveness of their manual handling risk assessments and control measures and whether more can be done to further reduce the risk from manual handling activities.

### **Review of Hazards/risk assessment and risk control procedures**

In 2016 an office risk assessment was completed by Lynda McElligott Service Coordinator, and no issues were identified. All work locations where staff including lone workers work were risk assessed on an annual bases and more frequently if an health and safety issue was raised by an employee or client.

### **Number of recorded incidents**



The Health and Safety Authority, the organisations Management and the West Limerick Independent Living insurers require the immediate reporting of accidents, dangerous occurrences and property damage incidents. All employees are obliged to immediately report all such events to their Services Coordinators.

In addition, staff are required to complete an accident report or dangerous occurrence report form. These forms are available from West Limerick Independent Living website or office and must be submitted within 24 hours of an accident/ incident.

Services Coordinators must also conduct and submit an investigation report for each incident and identify the corrective measures required \ learn from the incident so as to prevent recurrence. The Health and Safety Coordinator reviews all Accidents \ Dangerous Occurrence forms submitted, reviews the importance of the actions arising, collates statistics and monitors trends.

#### Incident reports 2016 & Actions Taken

PA	Service User	Date	Incident	Action Taken
SF	LB	2 <sup>ND</sup> September 2016	<p>An incident that occurred on this date where this employee outlined that she felt a twinge as she described shoulder/neck area and she had pain down her arm.</p> <p>The task undertaking at the time of alleged incident was passive range of motion exercises. Employee received training from physiotherapist on how perform this task correctly.</p> <p>GP advised employee to go to hospital where she was informed muscular pain, prescribed pain relief. Following that she had a scan on 22/10/16 which outlines multilevel degenerative changes are evident, in combination with the facet joint arthritis. In summary the scan report outlines degenerative changes to C5-6.</p> <p>Employee is making a personal injury claim and WLIL has received a letter from her solicitor's regarding this incident.</p>	<p>Incident report form completed.</p> <p>Sick leave rest for one week.</p> <p>MRI scan</p> <p>GP fit to work cert</p>





### **New Safety arrangements put in place during 2016**

West Limerick Independent Living Safety Statement was reviewed in 2016 with no changes to document. The Safety Statement, in accordance with Section 20, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, outlines the policy of WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING in relation to the management of health and safety.

West Limerick Independent Living Risk Assessment completes regular health and safety inspections in all areas. All Service Coordinators complete at least one inspection annually in their relevant areas in accordance with the Risk Assessment checklist and they ensure all necessary corrective actions are implemented.

### **Fire Safety Arrangements**

Fire Safety training was carried out by West Limerick Independent Living staff in 2015. There were no fires in 2016, work continued on the review and update of the fire risk assessments and serviced annually the fire extinguishers.



## Quality Committee Annual Report 2016

### Background

The Quality Committee is a sub-committee of the West Limerick Independent Living Board, and as such provides a regular report to the Board on the main issues raised and discussed at its meetings.

Good practice states that the West Limerick Independent Living Board should review the performance of its Committees annually to determine if they have been effective, and whether further development work is required.

This Annual Report summarises the activities of the West Limerick Independent Living's Quality Committee (the Committee) for the financial year 2016 setting out how it has met its Terms of Reference and key priorities.

The purpose of the Committee is laid down in its Terms of Reference. In summary it is responsible for providing the West Limerick Independent Living Board with assurance on all aspects of quality including delivery, governance, risk management and workforce; and the regulatory standards of quality and safety.

### Membership and Attendance Record

During 2016, the Committee met five times with attendance recorded in the table below. This demonstrates that every meeting of the Committee during the year was quorum.

Role	28-Jan-16	24-March-16	28-April-16	30-June-16	3-Nov-16
Chairman – Company Director	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓
Company Director	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Manager	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Senior Services Coordinator	X	X	✓	X	X

Key: ✓ = In attendance X = Absent ✓\* = Deputy in attendance



## **Significant issues brought to the attention to the Board**

The following issues of interest have been highlighted and addressed at West Limerick Independent Living Board level:

### **Staff timekeeping**

Many complaints received from clients in 2016 relate to staff timekeeping, as the majority of our staff are lone workers, who provide assistance to more than one service user.

Issues that would impact on the timekeeping of these workers are:

- The geographical area we deliver services in is both urban and rural and the rural areas pose their own challenges to staff for example farm animals and machinery using roads at certain times of the year.
- Poor road network.
- Staff being delayed in one service user's home, therefore delaying all subsequent visits to all other service users.

As a lot of timekeeping issues are beyond our control as a service provider we continually communicate with our service users to ensure they are aware of any delays and reasons for delays.

Summary: complaint noted, and resolved with the establishment of an out of hours call service.

### **CarePlus**

A number of complaints received from staff, mainly in rural areas regarding mobile broadband coverage. The staff in question are unable to use their Care Plus app on their smartphone to communicate with the central administration system to view work calendar of appointments and to check-in and check-out at each appointment.

We reported all difficulties to Appajak, the Careplus developers and to date a number of issues have been resolved, however the poor mobile broadband coverage in some rural areas is an issue outside of our control.

Summary: complaint noted, and resolved where possible.

### **Personal Assistants**

A small number of complaints by service users relate to unavailability of staff to cover shifts, this is due to an ongoing issue, the recruiting, hiring, and retain of Personal Assistants, mainly due to competition from other service providers paying better pay rates.



As a HSE Section 39 funded service provider we are not included in national pay awards so we will have to negotiate locally before 2017 prior to any new Service Level Agreement and if progress is not achieved we will continue to loose staff.

Summary: complaints noted, currently measures in place include recruitment and job advertisement and these measures are ongoing.

### **Confidentially**

A number of complaints received from service users and staff on the issue of confidentiality, staff discussing or revealing confidential information to other employees without a legitimate need to know. As this a breach of company policy, disciplinary action has been taken and any staff member found in breach of this policy will be disciplined appropriately as per company disciplinary procedures.

Summary: complaints noted, currently measures in place include confidentiality policy and disciplinary process and these measures are ongoing.

### **Other Complaints**

Other complaints we receive can range from staff not doing their work, or not doing tasks to the satisfactory of the service user's expectations, staff talking too much to not talking at all. Staff scuffing & marking door frames and walls while pushing wheelchair. Staff attitudes, throwing eyes inappropriately and talking ill of work colleagues to staff using electronic cigarettes while at work. These are examples of some of the issues we deal with on an ongoing bases and can take time and resource.

At the onset, a lot of complaints appear to be trivial in nature, however on investigation the majority of these complaints manifests themselves out of personality clashes. At some point the professional relationship broke down, service user and staff member can't seem to get along. The unfortunate result is that the quality of our service suffers, and stress levels skyrocket.

A clash of personalities is most likely at the root of these conflicts. Despite our best efforts to resolve these conflicts, sometimes the only solution is to replace staff member/s.

### **Recommendations**

#### **The Board is to:**

- review the Company's Complaints Policy and Procedure

#### **The Board instructed Management to:**

- review the Quality Committee structure, and
- review the Quality Committee's Terms of Reference