

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



MAY 19

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG

Authored by: G O'Connor

Annual Report 2021

Introduction

Established in 1997, West Limerick Independent Living was setup 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. As a community based, consumer driven, nonprofit organization, our services are designed to enable persons with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and fully participate in all aspects of community life. West Limerick Independent Living is a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital.

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.

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
- Provide Home Support services
- Providing a fully accessible transport service
- Raising awareness on disability issues
- Providing information on personal support services

ORGANISATIONAL BOARD

BOARD MEMBERS	
Mr. Ben Lenihan, Director & Chairman	IT Department at University of Limerick 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. John Killowry, Director	PA Service User, studied at NUI Galway and worked in Wyeth Nutrition.
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

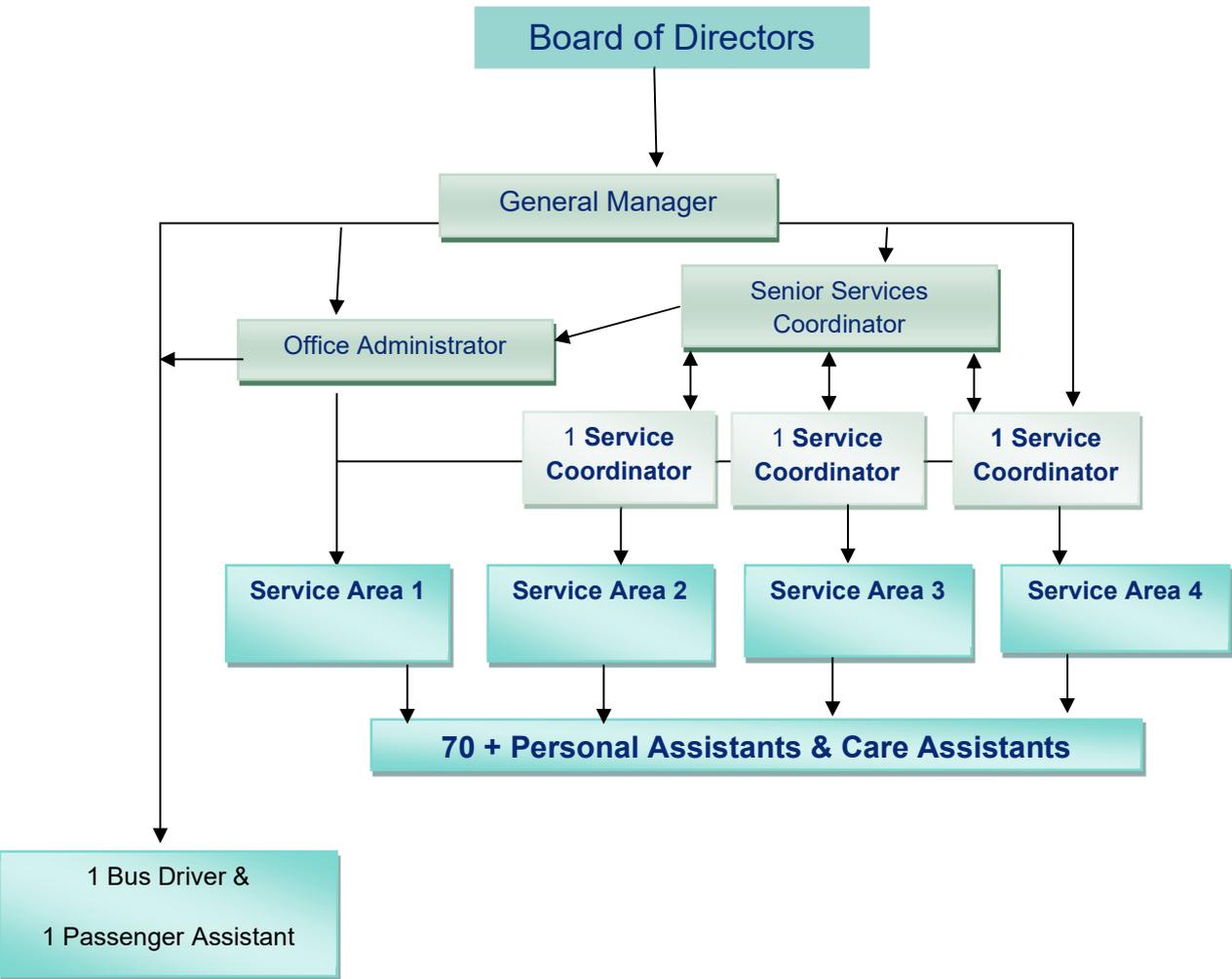
West Limerick Independent Living like many other organisations/agencies that are funded under Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act to deliver a Personal Assistant service (domiciliary care service) which is similar or ancillary to those of the HSE.

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.

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

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.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

West Limerick Independent Living seeks to forge meaningful and just social contracts between our service users and those who work within the organisation, in a manner that contributes to the common good and helps to create a more equitable society. As one of the largest providers of Personal Support Services in Limerick City and County, the primary objective of West Limerick Independent Living is to provide support to people with disabilities in our community. These services include the Personal Assistant service, a key provision of the Independent Living movement. Ultimately, the organisation seeks to promote self-empowerment to overcome the disadvantage imposed by physical impairments.



While COVID-19 hasn't gone away, the vast majority of people warmly welcome a long-overdue return to normality. The past couple of years have been difficult for many of us, but we can now look forward to socialising, attending events, going out for a meal or a pint, or whatever might pique your interest. Broadly speaking, we are getting back to living, instead of merely surviving. I think we can count ourselves lucky, particularly when we see what the misfortunate people of Ukraine are currently enduring. Our thoughts are with the Ukrainian people, who are fighting to defend their country, their homes, their lives, and the lives of their loved ones.

2022 will bring the end of an era. Gerard O'Connor has announced he will be retiring from the general manager position at WLIL after 25 years at the helm. I remember first meeting Gerard roughly 20 years ago, shortly after I was discharged from the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Dun Laoghaire. Gerard has always proven to be an intelligent, hard-working, honest man with the best interests of our organisation at heart, particularly those of the people therein. Fair, considerate, practical, professional, approachable, open-minded, knowledgeable, and quick-witted are just a few of the characteristics I would use when describing Gerard. Never one to shy away from difficult decisions, and with a keen eye for investment opportunities, Gerard possesses every attribute one could hope for in a manager. Gerard, you will

be missed. Here's to a wonderful career and the hope that we can continue to build on the trojan work that Gerard has done throughout his career at WLIL.

On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge the efforts made by all at WLIL to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of those we serve. I would like to acknowledge the unrelenting commitment of the Board Members; their willingness to devote their time, their dedication, and their absolute determination to uphold values like equality and fairness mean that it is a pleasure to work with such an organisation. I would also like to thank all the staff whose enthusiasm and work ethic ensure that we continue to provide quality support to clients. I would like to give my personal thanks to all our service coordinators for once again providing excellent service to our clients. I wish all the best to all our service users and staff, management and members of the board going forward in 2022.

Thank you,

Ben Lenihan

Ben Lenihan

Chairman

West Limerick Independent Living

Managers Foreword

As always with this West Limerick Independent Living annual report we hope to provide a comprehensive account on our company's activities throughout the preceding year. With this report we aim to give our clients and their families, our staff and our funding agencies and other interested people an overview of the work of the company in 2021, information about the company's activities as well as providing full details of our financial position.



2021 has been another challenging year, bringing all kinds of trials for us here at West Limerick Independent Living and especially difficult for many of our valued clients, their families, and their personal assistants. For us, the main challenges we face going forward is staff recruitment and retention.

A government workforce advisory group has been working on the recruitment crisis in homecare since March, with recommendations expected by September. The immediate urgency of this crisis cannot be overstated, in recent months we have handed back five support packages to the Health Service Executive (HSE), the funding is available to provide support hours to enable people to continue living in their own homes, but the workers aren't available. This is extremely frustrating and stressful, despite ongoing recruitment there is increasing difficulties in recruiting suitable staff.

West Limerick Independent Living is very concerned that if this situation continues, it will seriously impact in our capacity to deliver frontline home-based personal support services across Limerick city and county. In turn this will lead to greater pressure on HSE staff resources or other agency providers to fill the gap.

2021 was a difficult year, a year in which we delivered a total of 60,140 personal support service hours to 124 people with disabilities over a wide range of locations across the Mid-West. Comparing to 2020 where a total of 56,624 personal support service hours were delivered to 135 people. A small recovery in the hours of

assistance provided from the previous year, however this recovery was hampered by the issues of recruiting and retaining staff due to increased demand for workers across the care sector.

Financially in 2021, West Limerick Independent Living operating turnover was €1,638,356 which is up from the 2020 figure of €1,486,254. This increase ties in with the vaccination program and easing of restrictions in services due to COVID-19. I wish to acknowledge the work of the excellent front-line staff, 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,



Gerard O'Connor

Manager West Limerick Independent Living

TRANSPORT SERVICES

Accessible transport allows more and more people with disabilities to continue living in their own homes and communities, this creates savings in other areas such as health and social services.

Like many passenger transport services in 2021, West Limerick Independent Living transport service continued to be impacted by COVID-19. The service was limited to two passengers to observe social distancing and ultimately attempting to keep our passengers safe from COVID-19. This resulted in less than 1,000 single passenger journeys, delivered to people with mobility impairments in County Limerick.



Like previous years, many of the passengers who use the service go to Enable Ireland day services daily, the remainder attended training center and other once off passenger trips.

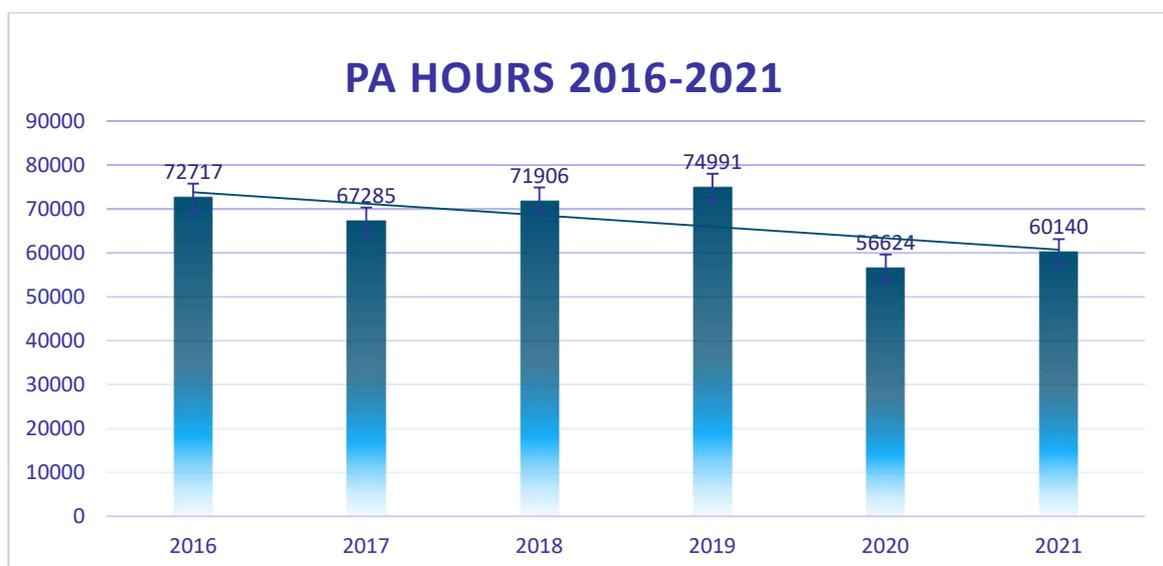
The day to day funded of this service is met by the Health Service Executive – West under their transport and socialization support program and West Limerick Independent Living.

PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (PSS)

Planning and delivery of Personal Support Services was developed and implemented in partnership with the HSE. Unfortunately, like our passenger transport service, our personal support services continued to be impacted by COVID-19, thankfully not to the same extent as the previous year. Going forward staff recruitment and retention will remain an issue, as this is not only an obstacle for West Limerick Independent Living in the delivery of services, but also a serious challenge across the care sector. The Government has established a cross departmental task force to examine the staffing challenges experienced by the care sector. In total West Limerick Independent Living delivered 60,140 hours Personal Support Services to 124 people with disabilities during 2021.

Table of PSS Hours delivered in 2021

Limerick	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
PA	1486	1144	1166	1009	858	1088	1259	1366	1441	1148	1149	1479
HS	756	633	678	552	399	514	328	302	285	394	420	557
Sub Total	2242	1777	1844	1561	1257	1602	1587	1668	1726	1542	1569	2036
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PA	2959	2560	2508	3094	2590	3160	2316	2463	2503	2759	2820	3524
HS	395	335	366	799	656	764	478	493	516	494	522	655
Sub Total	3354	2895	2874	3893	3246	3924	2794	2956	3019	3253	3342	4179
Total	5596	4672	4718	5454	4503	5526	4381	4624	4745	4795	4911	6215



Staff Levels in 2021

Year ending 2021, overall West Limerick Independent Living had 88 employees (15 full & 73 part time) on the company payroll, this figure includes transport and management. High staff turnover continues to be a pressure point, PA recruitment is proving very challenging, we have been advertising on an on-going basis with poor results.

Attracting quality staff, is a major concern for West Limerick Independent Living, how do we resolve this problem that undoubtedly exist. Attracting quality workers and, just as important, holding on to them is top on our list of priorities. Personal Support Services are a personnel-intensive business, and agencies cannot begin to function without front-line staff, our greatest single asset.

FETAC (QQI) Level 5

- 33 Personal Assistants have full QQI Level 5 Care Skills or higher award.
- 22 Personal Assistants have several QQI Level 5 modules completed.
- 18 Personal Assistants have no QQI Level 5 Care Skills completed.

Training Costs

	Numbers	Trainer	Venue Hire	Staff Wages
Manual Handling (5 classes)	35	€1,975.00	€0.00	€1,470.00
Behavioral Insights	1	€350.00	€0.00	€158.00
HSELand.ie (Infection Control)	All Staff	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Social Care	1	€125.00	€0.00	€0.00
Team Leader	1	€150.00	€0.00	€158.00
Covid Compliance Training	1	€210.00	€0.00	€0.00
Amiric Covid Training	88	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Epilepsy Training	12	€358.40	€0.00	€0.00
First Aid Training	4	€1,000.00	€0.00	€1896.00

Annual Health and Safety Report

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 evaluates the extent to, which the Safety Statement, Policies and Procedures were effective during the previous twelve months. This report 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 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 2021 and there were several updates made to the Risk Assessment by management.

Assigned Safety Responsibilities:

First Aiders:	Ms. Laura Denihan & Trish Kavanagh
Fire Wardens:	Ms. Laura Denihan
Health and Safety Coordinator:	Ms. Margaret O'Brien
COVID-19 Compliance Officer:	Ms. Margaret O'Brien
Safety Representative:	Ms. Margaret O'Brien, Ms. Trish Kavanagh and Ms. Laura Denihan

West Limerick Independent Living and Safety Policy

West Limerick Independent Living will continue to review annually and 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

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 2021 Health & Safety Training was organised for company employees over five training days, a total of 35 employees completed the training. The cost of the training was as follows:

Training Course	Staff Numbers	Cost
Manual Handling Training	35 people	Trainer Costs €1,975
		Staff Wages Cost €1,470

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 2021 an office and working from home risk assessments was completed by Service Coordinator's, and no issues were identified. All work locations where staff including lone workers work were risk assessed on an annual basis and more frequently if a 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 2021 & Actions Taken

PA	Service User	Date	Incident	Action Taken
No incidents				

New Safety arrangements put in place during 2021

West Limerick Independent Living Safety Statement was reviewed in 2021 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

The renovated premises were inspected by Apex who fitted the necessary fire extinguishers and provided training to the West Limerick Independent Living fire officer Laura Denihan.

Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee Annual Report 2021

Annual report to the HSE

West Limerick Independent Living has established a complaints procedure by agreement with the HSE and acknowledges that it must provide the HSE with a general report on the complaints where those complaints are made in relation to matters which fall under the scope of the Health Act 2004 i.e., complaints relating to activities or services which are funded by the HSE in whole or in part. The report will specify all relevant complaints received by the service provider during the previous year indicating:

- The total number of relevant complaints received

- The nature of the complaints

- The number of complaints resolved by informal means

- The outcome of any investigations into the complaints

As well as providing an annual report it is envisaged that the Health Service Executive will collect statistics / details of complaints on a half yearly basis. It is also requested that where a serious complaint is made that the Local Health Manager will be made aware of same.

Background

The Quality, Safety and Ethics 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 summarizes the activities of the West Limerick Independent Living's Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee (the Committee) for the financial year 2021 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 Board of West Limerick Independent Living with assurance

on all aspects of quality including delivery, governance, risk management and workforce, and the regulatory standards of quality and safety.

Compliments received from clients

32 Compliments received during 2021 came directly from clients who wished to express that their Personal Assistants deliver quality support and are integral to their lives.

Membership and Attendance Record

During 2021, the Committee met nine times with attendance recorded in the table below.

Date	Manager	Service Manager	Coordinators	Office Administrator	Representative of WLIL Board	Personal Assistant
14 th Jan 2022	√	√	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
10 th February 2021	√	√	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
10 th March 2021	√	√	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
14 th April 2021	√	X	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
12 th May 2021	√	X	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
08 th June 2021	√	X	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
21 st July 2021	√	X	Trish Kavanagh, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll	√	X	X
11 th August 2021	√	X	Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Eimear Carroll, Alison Oldfield	X	X	X
12 th September 2021	√	X	Sabrina Doran, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Alison Oldfield	√	X	X

30 th November 2021	✓	X	Sabrina Doran, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Alison Oldfield	✓	X	X
6 th December 2021	✓	X	Sabrina Doran, Margaret O' Connor, Laura Denihan, Alison Oldfield	✓	X	X

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

Significant issues brought to the attention to the Board

No significant issues were brought to the board in 2021. 4 complaints were received, 2 upheld and the issues were minor in nature and addressed by service coordinator.