



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT
LIVING CLG



West Limerick
INDEPENDENT LIVING

Annual Report 2023

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 and business background and is a person with a disability. Ben is also a PA Service User.
Mr. John Creedon, Director	Report Technician with Sysco Ireland IT Dept. A member of the Irish Wheelchair Association and the Disabled Driver Association. John is a PA Service User.
Mr. John Killowry, Director	PA Service User, studied at NUI Galway and worked in Wyeth Nutrition.
Ms Pamela Hogan Wallace	Pamela comes from a Banking Background and is a PA Service User.
Mr Brendan Dunne	Brendon has a Hotel and Business background and is a PA Service User.

HSE Service Level Agreement

West Limerick Independent Living like many other organizations/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.

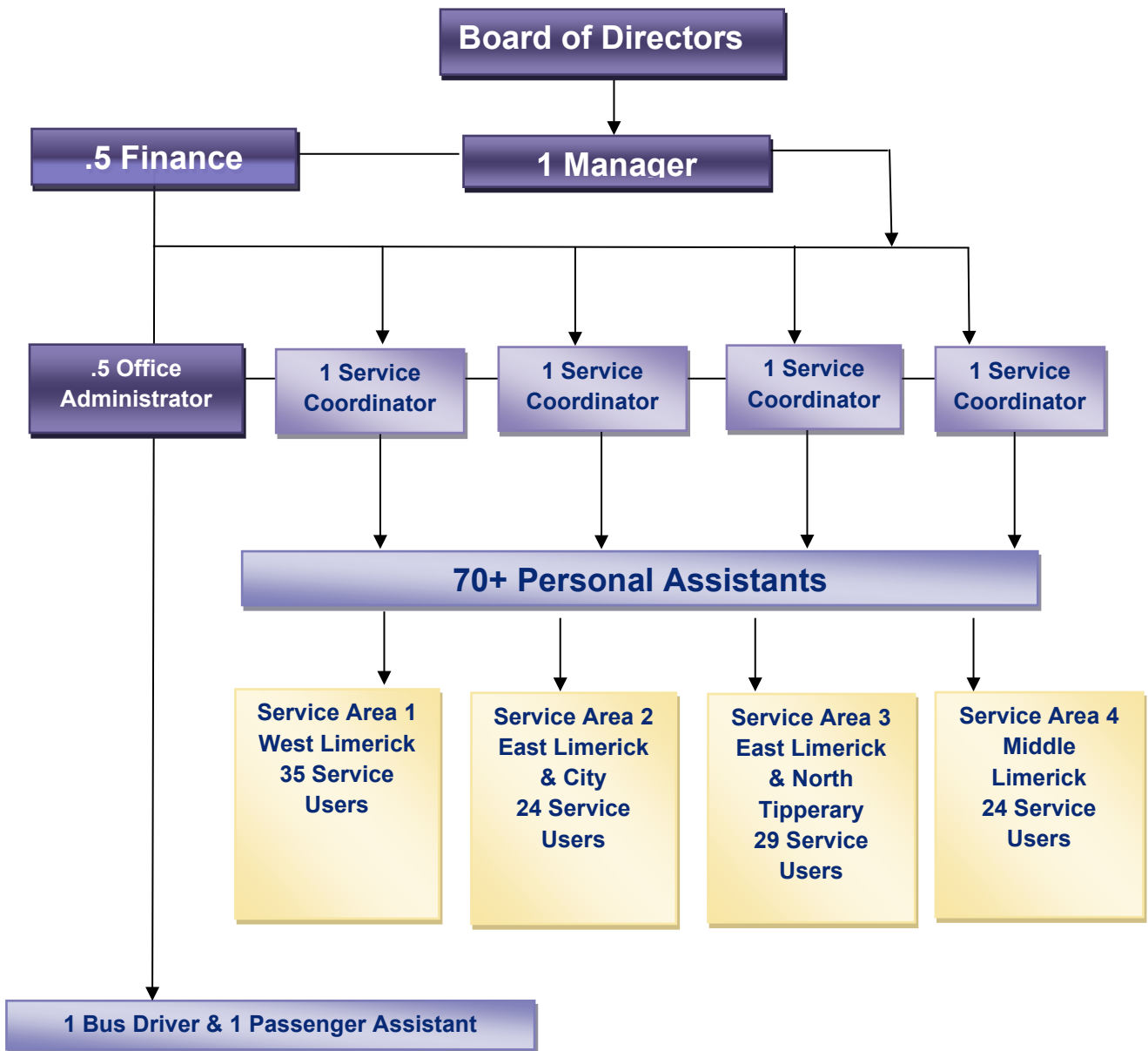
Section 39 bodies related to agencies / groups undertaking services which are similar or ancillary to those of the HSE and to whom the HSE is providing grant aid to do so. However, the HSE would not be legally or statutorily obligated to provide such services.

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

All organizations 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.

COMPANY ORGANISATIONAL CHART - ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

West Limerick Independent Living is a company limited by guarantee, established in 1997 to develop and deliver personal support services to people with disabilities across Limerick City & County, as well as projecting a positive image and perception of people with disabilities.



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 organization, 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 (WLIL) 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 organization seeks to promote self-empowerment to overcome the disadvantage imposed by physical impairments.



Over the course of this year, we made substantial strides in staff recruitment by deploying diverse advertising campaigns that effectively highlighted our offerings as an employer. We are pleased to welcome several exceptional new team members who bring valuable skills to our organization. Moving forward, we remain committed to growing and developing our team, while we strive to strengthen our organization.

On behalf of the board, I wish to extend my gratitude to everyone involved in our organization. The unwavering commitment of our board members, their selfless dedication, and their resolute adherence to values such as equality and fairness make collaborating with this organization an absolute pleasure.

I also warmly welcome our two board members that joined us this year, Pamela Hogan and Brendan Dunne, whose valuable contributions have already enriched our organization. Additionally, I would like to express sincere thanks to our dedicated staff, whose enthusiasm and strong work ethic ensure the continued delivery of high-quality support to our clients. My thanks to all our service coordinators for once again providing excellent service to our clients.

Wishing the very best to our service users, staff, management, and fellow board members as we move forward into 2024.

Thank you,

Ben Lenihan

Ben Lenihan

Chairman

West Limerick Independent Living

Managers Foreword

It is with great honour that I, as the Manager of West Limerick Independent Living CLG, present this annual report. As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride in what we have accomplished together. Despite the many challenges we faced, our commitment to excellence, innovation, and resilience has enabled us to achieve remarkable milestones.

On June 14th, we celebrated a milestone event, marking a quarter-century of commitment and dedication to our mission. This momentous occasion allowed us to reflect on our journey, which would not have been possible without the invaluable support and trust of everyone involved. Also, in 2023 we celebrated the official opening of our redeveloped offices, this was conducted by Pamela Hogane Wallace (Client) and Mary Geoghegan an esteemed PA who has been with us for nearly 25 years.



The celebration was an amazing gathering of old and new faces, celebrating this significant milestone. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the guests, esteemed clients, dedicated employees, and loyal partners who made our 25th anniversary a resounding success.

West Limerick Independent Living also proudly honoured its employees' dedication and loyalty by bestowing Years of Service Awards upon our esteemed team members. This special recognition highlights the commitment of employees who have reached significant milestones in their tenure, exemplifying the company's core values and contributing to its continued success.

Our growth and achievements are attributed to the unwavering support of our dedicated workforce, the driving force behind our accomplishments. The Years of Service Awards recognized employees who have completed more than 15 years of service with West Limerick Independent Living. These awards not only celebrate employees' milestone achievements but also reflect the company's commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive work environment where employees feel valued and appreciated.

As we continue to deliver independent living support services to individuals with disabilities, we face ongoing challenges, primarily in staffing. The country has reached full employment, resulting in high competition across various sectors for available staff. This competition significantly impacts the care sector, where the demand for qualified personnel is high. We strive to make our terms and conditions as attractive as possible within our available resources, and recruitment remains a continuous and increasingly time-consuming effort for our management team.

Our staff are exceptional, demonstrating unwavering dedication to promoting equality and inclusivity. Together, we work to empower those we serve, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives regardless of their abilities. Our organization is guided by a team of consummate professionals who exemplify compassion, expertise, and tireless commitment. With a steadfast focus on individual needs, we provide tailored support services that address the unique challenges and aspirations of those we assist.

We understand the importance of fostering an environment that values self-determination, enabling individuals to exercise choice and take control of their own lives.

West Limerick Independent Living is not alone in facing staffing challenges; the HSE has also experienced significant staffing changes in disability services. Despite these challenges, we continue to maintain meaningful relationships and partnerships with both new and existing colleagues in the HSE. We also look forward to collaborating with like-minded organizations, united in our pursuit of a more inclusive society.

As we continue to embrace the future, we remain committed to innovation and continuous improvement. Our IT Management System, introduced in 2022, continues to enhance the quality and efficiency of our services.

In 2023, we engaged the services of Action HR to ensure compliance with employment law. I worked with their dedicated staff to update our employee handbook and contracts. As always, we strive for the highest standards of quality and efficiency in our services.

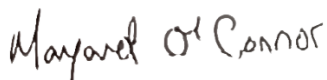
I am deeply thankful to the board for their unwavering dedication to promoting equality and inclusion. This year, we welcomed two new Board Members, Ms. Pamela Hogan and Mr. Brendan Dunne. Your continued support is invaluable to me, and I am eternally grateful for it.

I also want to express my gratitude to my colleagues at work who have been a tremendous support. Your contribution is vital in driving our organization's success and fostering positive change.

Financially in 2023, West Limerick Independent Living operating turnover was € 1,882,124 which is up from the 2022 figure of €1,802,510. Despite staffing challenges, we managed to increase the number of support hours we delivered, this was in no small part down to the hard work and commitment to management and staff. However there was an operating loss of €27,318.

Looking forward, I am confident that we will continue to strengthen this robust foundation. Our strategic objectives for the coming year are evident: to advance innovation, elevate client satisfaction, and cultivate a culture of ongoing improvement.

Thank you.



Margaret O'Connor

Manager West Limerick Independent Living

PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICE

Accessible transport is crucial for economic and social integration, enabling individuals with disabilities and reduced mobility to participate in society on an equal basis with others. It also enhances the quality of life and well-being for those who may face challenges with digital services, walking, or climbing stairs.

As in previous years, many passengers utilizing our transport service attend Enable Ireland day services daily, while others participate in training centres or occasional trips.

The Health Service Executive – West, through its transport and socialization support program, along with West Limerick Independent Living, funds the day-to-day operations of this service.



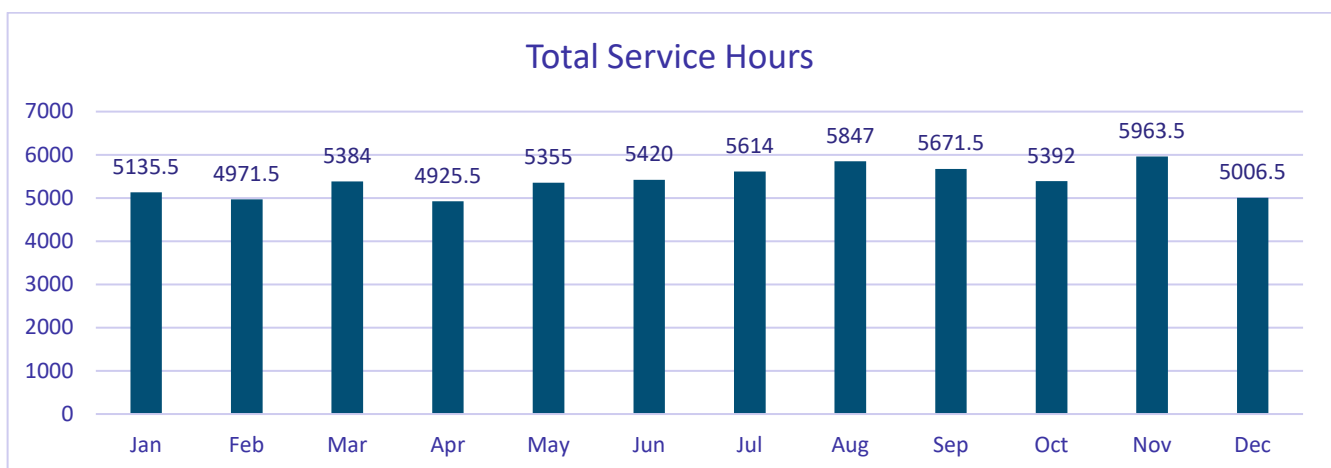
In 2023, the organization faced staffing constraints, resulting in a temporary interruption of service. When operations resumed, the transport service ran only three days a week.

PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (PSS)

In 2023, West Limerick Independent Living delivered 64,686 hours of Personal Support Services to 127 people with disabilities. These services were developed and implemented in collaboration with the Health Service Executive (HSE). Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, services have since recovered. Looking ahead, staff recruitment and retention remain critical issues not only for West Limerick Independent Living but also for the broader care sector. West Limerick Independent Living provided a total of 62,940 hours of Personal Support Services to 122 individuals with disabilities in 2022.

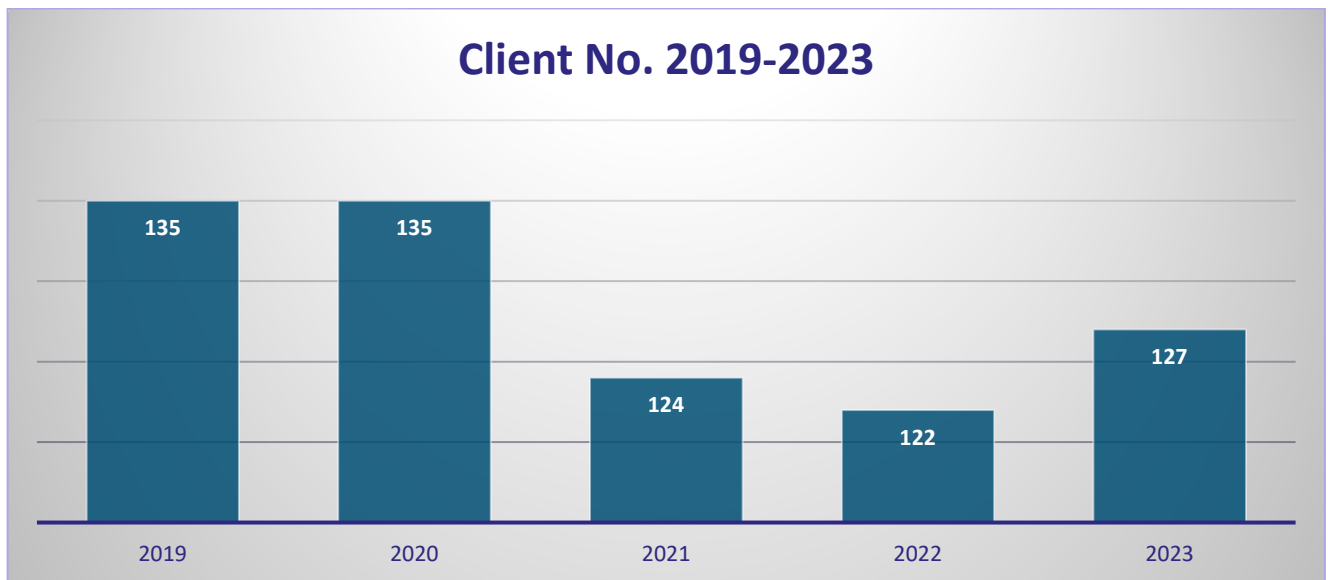
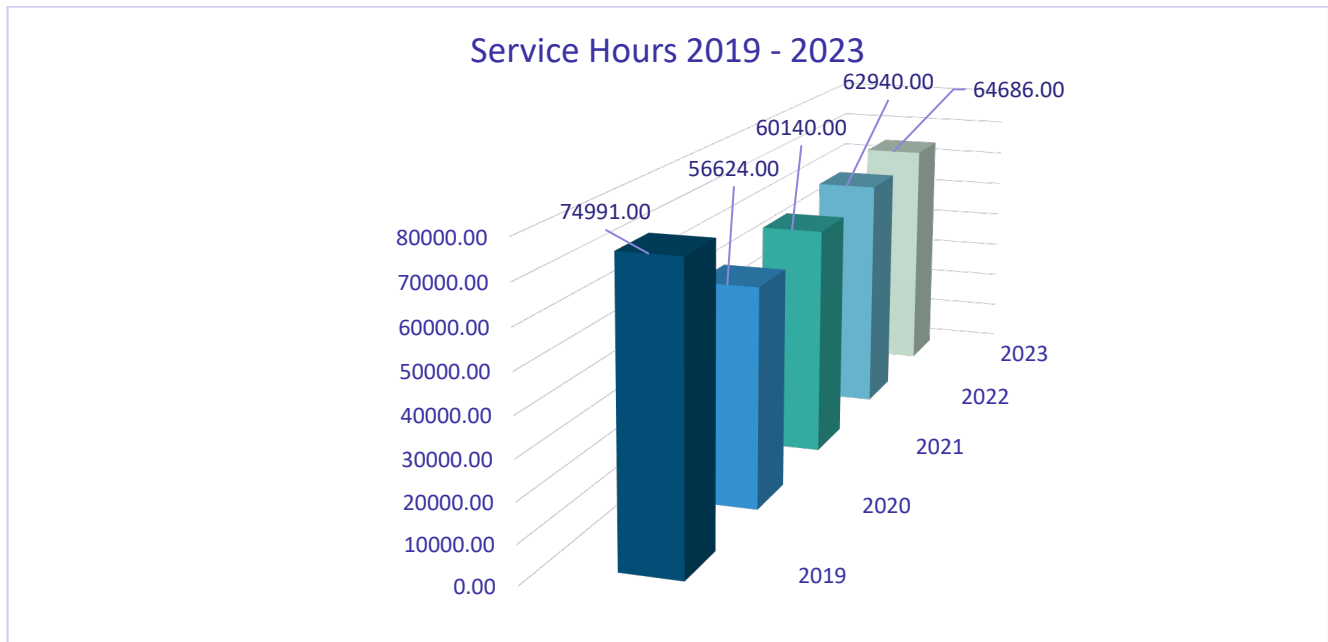
Table of PSS Hours delivered in 2023

Description	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
No. of PA Service hours delivered to Adult 87	4095	3892	4266	3892	4238	4165	4432	4618	4493	4270	4305	4084	50751
No. of Home Support Service Hours delivered to Adult 33	894	902	932	945	960	1092	1030	1074	1029	969	1488	810	12125
No. of hours delivered to NCW Training Centre Adult 6	146.5	177.5	185.5	88.5	157	163	152	155	149.5	153	170.5	112.5	1810.5
Total monthly hours	5135.5	4971.5	5384	4925.5	5355	5420	5614	5847	5671.5	5392	5963.5	5006.5	64686



SERVICES CHALLENGES – A FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

Over the past five years, our organisation has faced significant challenges, particularly reflected in our service hours. Starting from a high of 74,991 hours in 2019, we saw a sharp decline to 56,624 hours in 2020, largely due to the global impact of COVID-19 and staffing shortages. Despite these setbacks, we have demonstrated resilience and adaptability, with service hours gradually increasing to 60,140 in 2021, 62,940 in 2022, and reaching 64,686 in 2023. This steady recovery highlights our commitment to overcoming obstacles and our ability to adapt to changing market conditions.



Staff Levels in 2023

Year-ending 2023, West Limerick Independent Living had 80 employees (26 full & 54 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 exists? 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

We are currently working with employees who do not have a FETAC qualification, providing them with support to achieve this healthcare award.

- 34 Personal Assistants have full QQI Level 5 Care Skills or higher award.
- 20 Personal Assistants have several QQI Level 5 modules completed.
- 15 Personal Assistants have no QQI Level 5 Care Skills completed.

Training Costs

Numbers	Trainer	Venue Hire	Staff Wages
Manual Handling (3 classes)	1,280.00 euro	0.00 euro	1,812.00 euro
MS Information Day	0.00 euro	30.00 euro	580.00 euro
Amric Covid 19 training (all staff)	0.00 euro	0.00 euro	0.00euro
Contact Person Training	300.00 euro	0.00euro	0.00euro
Gluais Training (4)	590.00euro	0.00 euro	232.00euro
Skin Integrity 2 classes	1,400.00 euro	0.00 euro	1,348.50 euro
Epilepsy Training (2)	160.00 euro	0.00 euro	168.00 euro

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 the context of the organization’s 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 have been put in place during the year.

Safety Statement & Risk Assessment Review

The Safety Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed in 2023 and there were several updates made to the Risk Assessment by management.

Assigned Safety Responsibilities:

First Aiders:	Ms. Laura Mulqueen & Alison Oldfield
Fire Wardens:	Ms. Sabrina Doran
Health and Safety Coordinator:	Ms. Sabrina Doran
COVID-19 Compliance Officer:	Ms. Margaret O’ Connor
Safety Representative:	Ms. Alison Oldfield, Ms. Laura Mulqueen and Ms. Precious Madubeko

West Limerick Independent Living Safety Policy

West Limerick Independent Living will continue to review annually and communicated Health and Safety policy that provides a clear statement of commitment to providing 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 corresponding range of risks to be managed. The range of risks can be summarized 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.
- Homework place risk assessment.
- 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 and TTM Training offsite Manual Handling company's, the training is refreshed on a three yearly basis or more frequently, if identified through the review of accident and illness records.

In 2023 Health & Safety Training was organized for company employees over five training days, a total of 18 employees completed the training. The cost of the training was as follows:

Training Course	Staff Numbers	Cost
Manual Handling Training	26 people	Trainer Costs €1,280
		Staff Wages Cost €1,812

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 organization 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 2023 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 1

On 10th January 2023, there was an incident involving the West Limerick Independent Living (WLIL) bus in Clariana. The bus, which had a driver, a bus assistant, and five passengers on board, encountered particularly poor road conditions during its regular Tuesday morning route. Heavy rain throughout the morning had rendered a section of the road muddy and slippery. As a result, the vehicle lost traction and began to slip onto the grassy verge.

It was a very minor accident, and no injuries resulted. All passengers appeared to be fine, and it was decided to allow them to continue to their respective day services. The centres were notified of the incident. The Gardaí assessed the scene and found no issues. Subsequently, the vehicle was taken to a garage for a full inspection and report.

Company policy was followed:

- Due to the driver's cautious approach, she was able to bring the bus to a stop without any impact. We are expecting a report from the Gardaí in due course.
- All passengers' family members were contacted and informed about the incident.

-
- We have taken the vehicle to a garage for a full inspection, and a report will be issued following the assessment.
 - We are also conducting our own internal investigation. An independent medical assessment of the driver revealed no medical issues; the incident was purely due to bad weather conditions.

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 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.

Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee Annual Report 2022 (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 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 2023 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.

24 Compliments received during 2023 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 2023, the Committee met eight times with attendance recorded in the table below.

Date	Manager	Finance Officer	Coordinator	Office Admin	Rep of WLIL Board	PA
14 th Feb 2023	√	√	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield Precious Madubeko	√	X	X
29 th Mar 2023	√	√	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield Precious Madubeko	√	X	X
10 th May 2023	√	√	Precious Madubeko, Alison Oldfield Sabrina Doran	√	X	X
11 th July 2023	√	√	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield Precious Madubeko	√	X	X
11 th August 2023	√	√	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield Precious Madubeko	√	X	X
21 st Sept 2023	√	X	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield Precious Madubeko	X	X	X
11 th Aug 2023	√	X	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield	√	X	X
25 th Oct 2023	√	√	Sabrina Doran, Laura Mulqueen, Alison Oldfield	√	X	X

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

Significant issues brought to the attention of the Board.

No significant issues were brought to the board in 2023. 3 complaints were received, 2 upheld and the issues were minor in nature and addressed by the service coordinators.