

Annual Report

2015



The Social and Health Education Project

Mission Statement

SHEP is a values-led organisation that works together with individuals and communities to develop capacities for positive change, to enhance health and well-being and to promote social justice. We do this through a range of integrated personal, community, environmental and international development initiatives.



**ENRICHING LIVES:
PROMOTING HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING**

Chairperson's Foreword

The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP) is a unique, community-based, regional, training and development organisation. 2015 was another very busy and successful year for SHEP with over two thousand persons and a significant number of groups directly involved with the Project through training, counselling, and advocacy or through other supports. A huge amount of work was done by The Project across a wide range of areas including training, counselling, advocacy, and international partnership. All of this would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of a very large group of people, both within SHEP and in partner organisations/groups.

Core funding from the HSE continues to be hugely important to SHEP and we look forward to continued collaboration with the HSE. Like all community and voluntary groups, we have had to do more with less funding.

Two of the highlights of 2015 for me were: the very successful SHEP Conference – 'Finding our Collective Compass' - which was organised at the beginning of the year; and the growth of the 'Caring for the Earth Initiative' which is proving to be a very exciting partnership with Mercy Sisters' Pairc 'n Tobair. Also during 2015 we continued to provide considerable support to the development of the SHEP programme in Limerick; new advocates joined our volunteer Independent Advocacy Service; and for the first time a SHEP Personal Development Course commenced in Waterford City.

As SHEP moves further into its fifth decade it is clear that the Project continues to grow and adapt, to be responsive to the needs in the community, and to demonstrate that it is contributing significantly to individual and community health and well-being. As Chairperson I wish to extend my thanks to the large body of Trainers, Tutors, Counsellors, and Volunteer Advocates in SHEP, to our staff team, to the large number of people who volunteer with us, and to my colleagues on the SHEP Management Committee for all they have done during 2015.

Siobhan O'Connor, Chairperson



Siobhan O'Connor, with Rebecca Loughry, Jim Sheehan and Jess Bowen at the SHEP Advocacy Fundraising Lunch on October 9th at the Oriel Hotel.

‘It is clear that the SHEP programme portfolio is achieving real and meaningful change in the lives of many of the training participants.’

Exodea Consultants – SHEP Limerick Evaluation (2014)

Director’s Report

SHEP has made very good progress in 2015 with implementing the objectives set out in our three year strategic plan (2014-2016) across all of the SHEP’s eleven key areas of work. The level of work completed in 2015 was similar to 2014 levels despite some reductions in funding to SHEP. Financially, it was probably one of our most difficult years since the commencement of the recession.

The numbers participating in SHEP’s core training programme were a little lower than the previous year, largely as a result of the downturn in the economy, with 10 core training courses commencing in September 2015. The training programme in Kerry continued to gain momentum, particularly with regard to the take-up short courses in the community. The work in Limerick also continued to grow (as part of the collaboration with a number of Limerick-city groups) and another milestone was a group of 18 participants commencing the year-long course in facilitation. An important trend in 2015 was the continued increase in the numbers seeking concessionary rates for training courses – reflecting the large percentage of participants in the Programme on social welfare or with limited financial means.

The Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme once again supported a large number of clients during 2015 with over 500 clients supported with counselling. The complexity of cases presenting also continued to increase, reflecting the difficult circumstances in which many people find themselves.

During 2015, SHEP’s Cork Advocacy Service continued to do important work, often with very vulnerable people, and with very modest resources. We were delighted to welcome some new volunteer advocates to join the service.

Throughout the year we also continued to provide customised training, facilitation and technical support to a range of groups and organisations in Cork, Kerry and Limerick. However, pressure on staff resources meant that less time could be devoted to this than we would have liked.

Our international Partnership with Sahakarmi Samaj, supported by Irish Aid and ICCO, entered into its eight year, and continues to be a great example of multi-agency international, development cooperation, making real differences to the lives of very marginalised people and communities in South West Nepal.

Finally, on behalf of the staff of SHEP I’d like to express my appreciation to everyone who has contributed in whatever way to our work during 2015.

Jim Sheehan



Participants on the Weekend Pachamama Training held in October 2015 in the SHEP Training Centre in Cork.

1 Personal Development Training

The aim of this work is to support individuals to develop capacities for positive change and to enhance health and well-being. **SHEP's Certificate in Personal Development** is a unique programme which has been refined by the project over many years. The course consists of weekly evening or day time sessions of two and a half hours between September and the end of May as well as seven weekend day-long sessions. The principal methodology used is that of experiential group-work.

96 people

received a Certificate of Completion for

SHEP Personal Development

in 2015

Over 1250 people

have participated in

SHEP Foundation Training

since 2000.

Seven groups began The **SHEP Certificate in Personal Development** in September 2014. They comprise four Cork groups, two Limerick groups and one group based in Killarney. This gave a total of **116** people including twenty men. As in previous years, the two Limerick groups were offered in association with a consortium of locally-based groups working with disadvantaged communities. Having completed the course in May 2015, **96** of these participants went on to receive their certification of completion in June 2015. (The Certificate of Completion is awarded on attaining a minimum attendance of 80% on the course.)

In Kerry, however, there were only enough applications to fill one group and the decision was made to run that course in Killarney, where SHEP has an office and training room. Part of the reason for

just one course going ahead in Kerry may have been the fact that there were fewer short SHEP community education courses, because of an absence of funding, and as a result a group of potential participants may have been missed out on (Very often participants on the short courses proceed on to do the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development.). Financial constraints both on personal spending and within organisations may also have contributed to the lower rate of applications in Cork.

In contrast to this, in September 2015 ten groups commenced the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development. The work plan only allowed for a maximum of 8 groups in 2015, to take account of staff work-load. However, as a strong need had emerged and application rates were high, it was decided to proceed with those ten groups. A contributory factor here may have been the inclusion of the two “outreach “ groups, one in Waterford and one in Skibbereen. The ten groups involve **169** participants (an increase of **53** people from 2014/15) as follows:

Cork (4 groups): 68 participants (13 male)
Skibbereen (1 group): 17 participants (3male)
Tralee (1 group): 16 participants (3 male)
Killarney (1 group): 16 participants (4 male)
Limerick (2 groups): 35 participants (7 male)
Waterford (1 group): 17 participants (3 male)

Course Funding & Concessions

A very significant amount of staff time was spent in seeking extra funding for these courses, which are currently underway. Apart from the Limerick groups which were funded by **The Mid-West Regional Drug and Alcohol Forum**, all of the other groups received funding from **The Department of Social Protection**, fully funding several people from each group. In addition, The **Mercy Solidarity Fund** granted €5000 towards the course in Skibbereen which meant that all participants in that group who were in need of support were either fully or partially funded. Likewise, extra funding (€3000) was granted in Kerry by the **Bons Secours Hospital Community Trust** towards additional concessionary places in both the Killarney and Tralee groups.

In summary, the Department of Social Protection funded 41 participants. This is a quarter of the total cohort of this year’s group: when the Limerick numbers are removed from the total equation it becomes more than a quarter. When we look at this in combination with the number of concessionary places that were also granted (39 participants supported by **SHEP’s Bursary Fund**), it is clear that a very significant number of people who are interested in and drawn towards doing the SHEP Cert in Personal Development are people who experience financial (as well as other) hardship and who would not be able to participate were it not for this funding.

1.2 Continuing Personal Development

One course at this level of training ran during 2015 in Cork. The facilitators agreed to take two more than the maximum number of participants and additional course time was given to take account of this. Five of the sixteen participants were men, a significant increase in male participation (31%, as compared to 20% in 2014). Three of the sixteen participants had previously participated in a Continuing Personal Development course. Three people had previously completed the SHEP Cert in Facilitation, and two had completed Specialised Tutor Training with SHEP, with the remaining participants having participated in the two foundation courses. Four of the group progressed to the

the 2016 SHEP Cert in Facilitation. This course continues to be a very valuable offering and relevant for people at various levels of experience and training. Participant satisfaction with the course was very high, with an average course rating of 9.5 (out of 10).

Trainer Capacity-Building Initiative in Limerick

In order to support local capacity building SHEP has been developing a panel of Limerick-based Personal Development (SCPD) Trainers since 2010. A third person successfully completed his apprenticeship as a SCPD trainer in May 2015, and began co-facilitating a SCPD group in September 2015. A fourth person began the apprenticeship experience in September 2015 which means that there will be four Limerick—based trainers available for work with SCPD groups from summer 2016.

1.3 On-going Development Programme

SHEP's **On-Going Development Programme** offers graduates of core training courses a way of continuing their personal development work and also offers Community Tutors avenues to develop and enhance their skills. These short courses and workshops contribute to the life and maintenance of the broad SHEP community. A total of 11 workshops offered (two of these were in Kerry) in 2015 on a broad range of topics. Some examples of these were 'The Art of Peaceful Living', 'The Transformation Game', 'Compassionate Presence' and a 'Family Constellation Workshop'. There was also the hugely popular residential mindfulness weekend which was held on Oileán Chléire and led by Mary O'Callaghan in which 34 people participated. A further 136 benefitted from On-going Development courses and workshops, bringing the total participating in this programme to 170 (24 of these attended workshops in Kerry).

2 Social Awareness & Community Empowerment

SHEP's second Foundation Course is a 78-hour course entitled the SHEP Certificate in **Community Empowerment and Social Awareness**. Its aim is to enhance individual's capacity to participate more fully in the wider community and to promote social justice. The course normally runs from September to December and consists of an evening introductory session and five week-end workshops. There can be in the region of 25 participants in each group. The principal methodology used is that of experiential group-work. Some elements of the course are drawn from the 'Training for Transformation' programme. Participants are not required to undertake any written work and there is no formal assessment or examinations.

In 2015, two groups comprising 52 people started and 46 successfully completed this training - there was one group in Cork City and one group in Kerry as per our work-plan objective. The overall certification rate across both courses was 89%. Eleven of the participants were men (26%). While a majority of participants had completed previously the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development, for 12 people (23% of the participants) this was their first SHEP course. This was primarily due to the collaboration with, and grant support from, **North, East & West Kerry Development** who supported 10 people to participate from Community & Voluntary sector groups with whom they were working developmentally.

The course has been running as part of the Project's programme since the early 90's with over 60 courses run over that span of time, averaging 3 courses per year with 24 people on average per group. Over 1,400 people have undertaken the course over that time span.

In evaluating the course across Cork and Kerry in 2015 (>72% response rate, n=36) 94% or more of respondents scored (n=36) their answers either 8 or higher on a scale 1-10 (10 being excellent) on their overall rating of the courses, representing a high degree of satisfaction amongst participants. This level was reflected across other measures evaluated, included ratings of learning from the course; methods used; skills of the facilitators; and Programme elements related to achievement of aims of the course such as: Exploring issues related to justice, equality and power; ability to actively listen to what was important to others; understanding of the challenges involved in achieving a just and sustainable developed; and exploring environmental challenges and natural resource limits to development.



Of the 27 participants who undertook and completed the SACE course in 2015 in Cork, 23 of these were from the 2014 SCPD. 2 came from the previous year's SCPD. For two participants, this was their first foundation course. With regard to the Kerry course, of the 22 who undertook the same programme, 5 had progressed from the 2014 SCPD group but 6 had come from the previous year's group. The remaining 11 had no prior SHEP training, though the support of North, East and West Kerry Development.

3 Training facilitators to work in the community

SHEP is committed to enabling people in their own communities, work settings, or elsewhere, to better support reflection, learning and transformation at the personal and community levels. A key aspect of the SHEP model is the systematic training and supervised deployment of community members in response to community needs. The Project offers a range of specialised practitioner training courses to enable people to train as tutors or advocates.

3.1 SHEP Certificate in Facilitation

The year-long **SHEP Certificate in Facilitation** is a key, intermediate-level course which is offered every year by SHEP, in at least one location. Two groups completed the SHEP Certificate in Facilitation in 2015, one in Cork and one in Limerick. Three of the seventeen participants in the **Cork** were men. Sixteen participants will be awarded a Certificate of Completion, and one a Statement of Attendance. Eleven of the participants had previously completed the SHEP Certificate in Continuing Personal Development (CPD), something which highlights the importance of this latter course in the SHEP training programme (completion of the CPD course is **not** an entry requirement for the SHEP Cert in Facilitation.)

Six of the seventeen participants indicated an interest in becoming SHEP Community Tutors, and applied for the Integrated Tutor Training course which was advertised to begin in January 2016. Unfortunately there were insufficient applications for this course to go ahead; the six people involved will have to wait an additional year before continuing their training.

The decision by the SHEP Limerick steering committee to fund a Limerick-based SHEP Cert in Facilitation course was a very important one for the eighteen people who took part in the course there during 2015. Funding was provided **by Limerick City Council/Regeneration (Social Inclusion Fund)**. All participants had previously completed both SHEP foundation courses and many had also completed the SHEP Certificate in Continuing Personal Development. This course allowed participants continue the process of capacity-building and preparation for leadership roles and engagement in their own communities, as well as in their families and work settings. Sixteen participants completed the course, and twelve were awarded Certificates of Completion. Progression within the SHEP training programme for the graduates of this course is difficult, as for the foreseeable future, Specialised Tutor Training will take place in Cork.

3.2 Specialised Tutor Training: ‘Caring for Our Well-being’

The Specialised Tutor training course ‘Caring for our Wellbeing’ began in Killarney in April 2015 with fifteen participants (two of whom were men) and ended in February 2016. Some had begun their training journey with SHEP as far back as 1998, others much more recently. Four of the group had already undertaken tutor training so there was a rich mix in this training group. All of the training team travelled from Cork; the extra time and commitment given by the trainers involved enabled the course to happen – something much appreciated by SHEP and by the participants in Kerry. The learning gained from the pilot run of this course in Cork in 2014/2015 was very valuable, and the changes in structure made in the Killarney-based course improved it significantly.

Some apprenticeship opportunities are already in place for the graduates of this course, and it is hoped that there will be a lot of interest in the 8-week ‘Caring for Our Well-being’ community course which SHEP now has the capacity to roll out in Kerry.

Tutor Training Apprenticeships

The apprenticeship system in place in SHEP supports beginning Community Tutors to take their first steps in the world of community education. During 2015, fourteen people completed apprenticeships in long-standing SHEP Community Education courses, co-facilitating groups alongside experienced tutors in areas such as ‘Introduction to Personal Development’, ‘Effective Communication’ and ‘Managing Stress’. In addition, the graduates of the Cork ‘Caring for Our Well-being’ Specialised Tutor Training course which ran in Cork in 2014/2015 undertook ‘joint’ apprenticeships with community groups in Middleton (a collaboration with Respond!), Mallow and Bessborough. This made the eight-week course available at little or no cost to participants, because the tutors worked on a voluntary basis. In Fermoy, another apprentice co-facilitated the ‘Caring for Our Well-being’ course with an experienced Tutor. That brought the total number of successfully completed apprenticeships in 2015 to **twenty-one**, a considerable increase on 2014. These Tutors are now eligible to register as Community Tutors with SHEP to support the roll-out of the ‘Caring for Our Well-being’ course in community settings.

Continuing Practitioner Development

As a way of supporting good practice and the maintenance of high standards SHEP offers supervision and Continuing Practitioner Development opportunities to all practitioners working through the Project, including Trainers and Community Tutors.

A day-long workshop with Helen Ruddle, the second in a series offered to all trainers, took place in January 2015. This continued the process of providing a clear common understanding of the basis for the personal development work which SHEP does. Eighteen trainers attended.

A very useful CPD workshop for Stress Management module trainers was held in November 2015. This was facilitated by SHEP training and development staff, and was a good support to the trainers as they embarked on their work in the SCPD groups in autumn 2015.

All trainers had the possibility of participating in SHEP's Caring for the Earth Initiative Peer Training which ran throughout 2015, and which is continuing into 2016.

4. Complementary Accredited Training

Most courses offered by SHEP are experiential courses which are not externally accredited. This will continue to be the case. However, there continues to be interest among some SHEP participants and others in having options in SHEP for accreditation. SHEP's potential to respond to the need is been strengthened in recent years: in addition to our partnership with UCC to offer the Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies, we now have a collaboration with WIT regarding a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Programme and as a QQI-registered provider we can offer a some QQI accredited (Level 6) courses.

4.1 QQI Level 6 – Introduction to Advocacy

Our registration with FETAC (now incorporated into QQI) in 2012, was an exciting development and has provided SHEP with the opportunity to offer a small number of QQI-accredited training modules. In January 2015 twenty participants completed SHEP's QQI accredited 'Advocacy: An Introduction' course. The course was a 15 week course which began in October 2014. The course was very successful and feedback was very positive. This was the second time SHEP delivered Advocacy Training with FETAC/QQI Accreditation. The participants came from diverse backgrounds – some working in disability and older people services, housing support, direct provision, services for women experiencing domestic violence, legal backgrounds, people with their own experience of marginalisation and people interested as citizens in advocacy and committed to the principles of rights based practice and social inclusion. Seven of the participants joined SHEP's Cork Advocacy Service as volunteers on completion of this training.

'Great insight into advocacy and increase in knowledge and skills.'

'Good experience of learning. Kind of gentle and relaxed.'

'For me it's hearing what other people experience during the course, how their views have changed.'

4.2 UCC Diploma in Social & Psychological Health Studies

Since 2000 SHEP has collaborated with **Adult Continuing Education (ACE)** and the Departments of Applied Psychology and Applied Social Studies at UCC in the delivery of an accredited two-year undergraduate Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies. This Level 7 course provides a strong theoretical foundation for those who have completed training with the project as well as those working in facilitative roles in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors. A significant number of people are now coming to SHEP, for the first time, through this course.

In 2015, 16 students completed Year Two of the Programme and were awarded the Diploma in October. This was the sixth round of this two year programme run in partnership with ACE. In September 2015, 23 new students commenced Year One of the UCC Diploma, with 13 having previously completed some SHEP Training.

Case Study 1

Having completed my leaving cert in 1998, it felt like a leap into the unknown undertaking this course, least of all in UCC, a place I never thought I would be. Things like writing essays and referencing were alien to me. I thought that some people just naturally were better at things like that and that I maybe just wouldn't grasp it. But I did. It takes practice, for everyone! For me engaging with the topics and trusting in the experience and advice of the lecturers was the key to understanding the basic elements of each module. It did take a while for me to get over the stress of constructing my assignments but when I worried less about that side of the course, the concepts and ideas being presented to me completely enhanced my ability to understand topics I thought I never would. Each lecturer, in my experience, gave a great foundation of knowledge in each module. These key concepts and ideas have influenced my thinking on a number of subjects and is had a very positive impact on my day to day life. I would recommend this course without hesitation. The confidence it has afforded me has opened up the world of third level education and has inspired me to continue studying. I am grateful for the way in which this course challenged me to question myself and the world around me. It helped me to realise I had more potential and possibilities than I ever knew.

Loretta Sweeney

133 people

have been awarded the

SHEP UCC Diploma (Level 7)

since 2000.

15 SHEP Graduates

Have participated in WIT's RPL programme and have been awarded a

HDip (SPHE) by WIT

Since 2014



Jerome Hodnett, Evelyn Burke, Cathy Chung and Loretta Sweeney receiving their Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies Awards in UCC in October.



Geraldine Flanagan, Ailish Twomey and Patsy Hannon, who were conferred with Higher Diplomas in SPHE at the WIT graduation in November in Waterford.

4.3 WIT Recognition of Prior Learning Programme

SHEP's collaboration with **Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)** regarding recognition of Prior Learning for SHEP students commenced in 2013. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Pathway provides an opportunity for some of those who have trained experientially with SHEP to gain a Level 8 Higher Diploma in Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

In January 2015, seven SHEP graduates completed the WIT Level 8 Recognition of Prior Learning Programme (six of whom had the year before completed the Level 7 RPL Process). All seven were awarded The Higher Diploma of Higher Diploma in Social, Personal and Health Education – a level 8 qualification. The previous year a group of eight received their awards, but this was the first time a group of SHEP graduates completed both Level 7 and Level 8 RPL programme. This is a wonderful achievement. This brings to 15 the total number of SHEP graduates who have been awarded the HDip (SPHE) through the WIT RPL programme.



The seven people pictured above were all awarded their RPL Level 8 Higher Diploma in Social Personal and Health Education in 2015 in Waterford Institute of Technology. For six of the group this entailed two year's work: year one, which was the building of a portfolio giving them an opportunity to demonstrate that they had sufficient knowledge, skills and attributes (equivalent to a Level 7); and having attained that, then a second year working towards Level 8. One person from the group had direct entry into year two as she had already a Level 7 qualification. Both years, but in particular, year two, meant significant work, study and time plus travel commitment on behalf of the participants. Year One involved travelling to WIT for three sessions during the year while Year Two involved twelve evening sessions. Study, research and assignments were continuous!

Case Study 2

Patsy Hannan pictured here, first person on the right in the picture above, talks about her SHEP/WIT story as follows:

I had the privilege of being a stay at home mother of two, which was the best decision I ever made and I will be forever grateful for it. When my boys began 'leaving the nest' for play-school, I decided to take a morning course. This was where my SHEP journey began. It was an eight-week Assertiveness Course in Mallow in 1997 and it was my introduction to group work.

My parenting and family life was enhanced with the knowledge, awareness and skills I learned as I moved through the year long course in Personal Development Course in Fermoy in 2003. I began to get to know more about Patsy. One fond memory I have is being in awe of my two facilitators and thinking to myself.....one day I would love to be with a group doing this sort of work. My personal experience and growth, along with the intimate sharing among friends through group work, which are part of the ethos and unique training with SHEP, excited me and were positive elements and motivators as to why I continued training. I was hungry for the next stage and over the next few years I qualified as a group facilitator and community tutor in areas of Family communication (2006), Stress Management and Personal Development (2008) and the 'Let's Talk About Programme' for primary school children. In 2013 I then completed the Tutor training course in 'Facilitating Well-Being and Empowerment in Older Adults'

As a result of all of my training, I have for many years now been a facilitator in a variety of groups within community settings (remember that dream I had!!) and I have worked with enthusiasm, support and awareness as well as with a sense of fun and creativity while being aware of the responsibility of the work and being sensitive to participant's needs. In addition to the work as a Community tutor, I became a module trainer both in Stress Management and Assertive Communication on the yearlong course in Personal Development. I have been with people through their joy, tears and real life transitions and am honoured to be part of their sharing with me.

When the opportunity came through SHEP to do complete my HDIP in Arts in Social, Personal and Health Education I was really excited and grateful and with some apprehension I went for it! Having completed the RPL Level 7 year in 2014 successfully I then went on to complete Level 8 last year (2015). It really fulfilled the need I had and the excitement I felt around putting all of my experiential and personal learning towards some form of academic achievement. It was a bit daunting at the beginning for me to do this but I was part of a group of seven who grew in friendship and who shared knowledge and fears as we travelled together. We supported one another and had a laugh over tea, food, phone calls and meetings. The study and reading was a challenge at times and I can admit to wondering why I put myself through it all! Modules based on personal awareness and theory I loved. Overall, it was a hugely positive experience and one where I learned and explored different topics and grew in confidence and ability along the way. It brought my learning and theories together.

I am so proud of my achievement and to have been awarded with First Class Honours is the icing on the cake for me! Hard work, support from my fellow students, my family and my continued support from SHEP made it a very worthwhile venture.

I would highly recommend a SHEP path as a way of life. It has personally supported me in my own growth and has had a positive impact on my family and friends."

Thank you SHEP.

Patsy Hannan

5. Community Education for Health & Well-being

SHEP's Community Education for Health and Well-being offers a range of short courses in the community. The emphasis is on responding to the needs of individuals and groups, in their own communities, to explore and consider ways of making positive changes and enhancing health and well-being. Courses are typically 20 hours' duration and run over eight or ten weeks. In 2015, 849 people participated in 79 community-based personal development courses/workshops in community centres across Counties Cork, Kerry & Limerick arranged through SHEP (102 of those were 5th and 6th class primary school pupils participating in five Let's Talk About' workshops related to the transition to secondary school).

In 2015, of the adult community education courses, either initiated by SHEP or where SHEP was requested by a community group to provide and support a tutor, the eight most availed of course topics were:

- Introduction to Personal Development (17)
- Effective Communication for Better Relationships (12)
- Managing Stress in Our Daily Lives (5)
- Grief, Loss & Change (5)
- Caring for Our Wellbeing (5)
- Men's Health & Wellbeing (4)
- Women's Health & Wellbeing (3)
- Family Communication (3)

The average group size at commencement of courses was 12 (courses have a maximum capacity for 16 participants) and at completion 10, representing a high rate of course completion at 82%.

The Community Education courses for Health and Wellbeing are structured to have their own stand-alone contribution and, progression to further SHEP courses is not an expectation of participation. However the Project strategically does aim that the Community Education Programme would foster participant interest in progressing to its own core programme, or to other options, so as to continue and deepen their personal journey of awareness and growth. Over 20% of participants on SHEP's Certificate in Personal Development (Cork & Kerry) in 2015-2016 had undertaken one or more short courses previously. This suggests that for a significant percentage of people, in making their decision to undertake a more substantial course, it was important to have participated in a prior community education short course

These courses were offered during 2015 by a total of 80 registered SHEP Tutors. The current programme activity remains at around 75% of the 2007 level.

7 Coiscéim Counselling Programme

Background to 'Coiscéim' Low-cost Counselling Programme

'Coiscéim' is the Irish word for 'step' and for many SHEP's Coiscéim is a first step toward improved mental health and well-being. Established in 2001, the aim of the programme is to provide quality counselling/therapy services to individuals and, to a lesser extent, to couples, families and groups; people who, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to access the services they need in other ways. The intention is that, through counselling, Coiscéim will help clients to be better able to manage their own arising mental

health issues and their relationships, thereby enhancing their own quality of life and the quality of life of those with whom the clients are closely connected. From the point of initial contact onwards, a person-centred approach is used by offering people choices with regard to the counselling process e.g. time client is available to attend counselling, location of counselling, an agreed contribution from the client to suit his/her particular financial circumstances. The availability of a limited Coiscéim subsidy fund has been critical in ensuring that people with limited financial means have had access to the supports that they need. The programme has grown significantly in recent years. Referrals are made from a wide range of statutory agencies - mainly G.P.s, HSE social work departments and accident and emergency psychiatric nurses. Many clients referred by these departments often require immediate referral and often to experienced counsellors/therapists.

593 people
Assessed for
Counselling Support
in 2015

515
Received
Counselling Support
in 2015

The Programme was commenced with funding from Janssen. The HSE has supported the Programme through the Section 39 core funding grant provided to SHEP. This funding has increased steadily over the years as the Low-cost counselling programme increased in scale. In late 2012, the Counselling Programme was included in a new HSE funding initiative to support the provision of counselling services, with an additional annual grant of €90,000 being awarded to SHEP to support the programme, in addition to the funding for the programme provided through the main grant.

The Counselling Programme is part of the overall SHEP Programme. It is overseen by a full-time Project Coordinator. A Referral Officer (working three days per week) is responsible for completing the majority of assessments, and Development Worker (half-time) provides support with client liaison, counsellor liaison, and programme monitoring. The programme is delivered with the involvement of over 140 counsellors/psycho-therapists.

Numbers Contacting the Programme

During 2015, SHEP's Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme once again supported a very significant number of clients. **716** clients contacted Coiscéim seeking counselling, reflecting the continuing difficult circumstances in which many people find themselves. It is important to note that 23% of the adults contacting the service for support were men (slightly up from 22% in 2014). The number and complexity of cases presenting also continued to increase. 112 of those referred to the programme were children.

	Made Contact	Did not wait	Assessed	Did not attend	Availed of Counselling
Total	716	123	593	78	515
Women	423	61	362	47	315
Men	166	26	140	20	120
Girls	59	23	36	6	30
Boys	53	12	41	4	37
Couples	15	1	14	1	13

Numbers Assessed in 2015

A total of 593 persons were assessed by Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme during 2015 (compared to 524 persons in 2014). This included 78 children. These assessments were made by the Programme Coordinator and the Referral Officer (who works three days per week). The number of those that did not wait to be assessed nearly doubled from 69 in 2014 to 123 in 2015.

Numbers Counselling in 2015

A total of 515 persons accessed counselling following assessment and referral by the programme during 2015. Of these 120 were men, and 67 were children. The number that did not go to counselling after being assessed increased from 53 in 2014 to 78 in 2015 (the DNA rate increased from 10% in 2014 to 13% in 2015).

7 Independent Advocacy – Cork Advocacy Service

For SHEP, advocacy is about being beside somebody, supporting them to get their voice heard and in accessing their rights and entitlements. It is what we all do for each other as friends and family at different and perhaps difficult times in our lives. It is not about making an assessment and taking decisions about what's in a person's best interests. It is about listening, supporting, sometimes questioning or challenging a decision, and sometimes speaking up for a person. It is not complicated but it can be difficult. For SHEP, advocacy is fundamental to our commitment as an organisation to empowering vulnerable or marginalised groups and communities. We see it as clearly linked to community development, as it plays an important role in developing civil society and bringing about social justice and social transformation.

Throughout 2015, Cork Advocacy Service (CAS) continued to provide access to one to one and group advocacy in both community and residential settings to people who through difficulties of health, disability or ageing are:

- struggling to get their voices heard
- want information about rights and entitlements
- want help to raise concerns about supports and services
- experience difficulty in speaking up for themselves.

One to one community advocacy support, provision of information and signposting was provided to 59 individuals in 2015.

Residential advocacy support, both one-to-one and group advocacy, continued to be provided to two residential services for older people (involving 88 people). As SAGE, the emerging national advocacy support service for older people, developed in 2014 a transition was undertaken from CAS to SAGE at Heather House, where CAS had been providing advocacy support to for the past six years. A final report was provided to HIQA with a summary of our learning (The report is available on request).

Also during 2015, **group advocacy support** was provided to two HSE congregated settings for adults with intellectual disabilities in Cork (136 people). Access to one-to-one advocacy support was also provided as necessary when this was not available from the National Advocacy Service.

The work undertaken through CAS would not be possible without the dedicated commitment of a core group of volunteer advocates who continue to offer their time to what can be very difficult and challenging work. The advocates undertake work as volunteers (primarily one to one advocacy work) and, occasionally, on a contractual basis (primarily group advocacy work). 2015 saw an increase in the number of volunteers

available with seven new volunteers joining the team from **the QQI-accredited Introduction to Advocacy course** completed in early 2015. As they undertake opportunities to shadow and lead on advocacy work, they continue to develop their advocacy skills.

8. Supporting Communities, Groups & Organisations

Given SHEP's expertise and experience, the Project is regularly requested to provide facilitation and/or specialist technical support to communities, organisations and groups.

During 2015 SHEP provided organisational supports to over 10 groups in Cork, Kerry and Limerick and participated in over 17 networks. As set out in both the work and strategic plans, resourcing and other programme priorities are the primary limitation to this activity. A conservative estimate however of this contribution suggests over 100 hours are offered in facilitation and technical supports and over 200 hours are contributed to participation in the range of networks. Examples include:

The collaborative work with Pairc A' Tobair towards supporting the emergence of a collaborative **Earth Initiative**, has evolved into an expanded programme of activities and the emergence of a Support and Development Group.

Education and Prevention Sub-Group of the MWRDAF – a series of facilitated planning sessions concluded in early 2015 (4 workshops in all) and concluded with the delivery of the assembled documentation of the process.

Limerick Social and Health Education Programme Steering Committee – preparation of an options paper to support and inform the local process of deliberation around future organisational arrangements

Arbour House - The collaboration with Arbour House regarding the delivery of the SHEP Cert in Personal Development and the SHEP Cert in Facilitation as part of a proposed new degree course in Addiction Studies continues. This project is still at the planning and development stage.

COPE - SHEP responded to a request from COPE to deliver customised facilitation training for their Person-centred Plan facilitators. Six days' training was provided by SHEP, and it proved a worthwhile if challenging project. It was an important contribution by SHEP to the move towards a more person-centred model of service.

The **Lantern Community Project** – SHEP continues to actively participate on this community group's design team

CESCA – SHEP continued to participate strongly in the emergence of this initiative in Cork.

Inishmore Family Centre – SHEP facilitated two management committee induction workshops

Cork Eating Disorders Centre – SHEP facilitated a review workshop with the management committee

Churchfield Community Trust – SHEP facilitated a review workshop with the staff team

SHEP participated as members (committee organisers in some instances) in over 17 networks across our work area including: Cork City Centre Education Network; Cork Education Forum; Fermoy Community Network; Cork Community Health Network; Mental Health Connection Sharing event; Cork City PPN; WIT SPHE Network; Cork County (Social Inclusion Linkage Group); Cork Climate Action; Community Counselling Network group; Irish Childhood Bereavement Network; West Cork Counselling and Support Services Board; Cork Suicide Response – Engagement Working Group; Advocacy Network, and Cork County PPN.



Some of the participants at the Cork Community Health Network meeting held in Mayfield Community Development Project on October 8th.

9 International Learning Partnership

2015 was the 8th year of operation of the South-Western Nepal Community Governance Programme, which is funded by Irish Aid and ICCO Cooperation and implemented by our Nepali partners, Sahakarmi Samaj. SHEP has the role of monitoring the project and providing organizational support for Sahakarmi Samaj.

December 1st 2015 saw the start of the second year of phase 3 of the project. The 1st and 2nd phase of this project (2007-2013) was implemented in 21 village development areas in two districts in South West Nepal. In phase 3, the project is running in 10 new village development areas, in two remote districts, Jajarkot and Kailali.

Community groups

Despite the extremely difficult circumstances in Nepal this past year, including the earthquake, political unrest resulting in the closing of borders with India and a swine flu epidemic, the staff of Sahakarmi Samaj continued their work. At the end of the year, 175 community groups (CGs) had been established (versus a target of 150). The total number of CG members is 4,028 coming from 3,914 households in the working communities. Approximately, 26,917 people so far are benefitting from the project in the new districts of Kailali and Jajarkot. The interventions by the CGs has extended its benefit outside their own communities into the general population. CG interventions have transformed the systems, structure and culture of

peoples' participations within the VDCs and approximately 45,000 people in the working VDCs are benefiting indirectly. About 78% of the CGs are led by female members and female leadership has gradually been enhanced in the working communities.

Shantaram's situation is an example, of how these community groups have improved peoples' lives. Shantaram's house was completely destroyed by a storm and his family with two small children became homeless. They had nowhere to sleep and no money to build a new home. All the community group members got together, collected the necessary building materials and over a two week period they helped him build a new house. Speaking of his experience, Santram said 'I will never in all my life, forget this enormous support. Sahakarmi Samaj, has made us human beings and changed our thoughts, as well as transformed us into well organized and unified community groups.'

Participation in /relationship with Local government

This project also provides support to CGs and local stakeholders to extend their capacity in using local and external resources. It focuses on enabling active participation of citizens, not only in the community, but also in local government. Therefore, a strong collaborative approach between government and community has been steadily build-up throughout this project. Sita Ghartipun, as part of a delegate from her community group, had for the first time become involved with the planning and budget allocation process of the local government office. She said, "This is the first time I have been in the VDC (local government office) planning process and I feel it is very important to our village. In the previous year we didn't know what had been going on in the VDC. I have learnt much from this process. As a responsible citizen we need to continue our participation in the planning process and pay attention for the effective budget allocation and implementation".

Strengthening community based networking organizations (CBNOs):

Our Nepali partner, Sahkarmi Samaj, has been providing organisational strengthening supports to the CBNOs established in phase 1 and 2, including organizational, programme and strategic supports and the provision of a small fund. These CBNOs have been leading the community groups (CGs) in helping to facilitate solutions to local community issues in the area in collaboration with the local and district level stakeholders. They have completed many activities to help the CGs achieve their plans, and have enlisted the support of the relevant government offices and municipalities and local NGOs etc.

Disseminating community empowerment approach:

17 training/workshops were facilitated to different I/N/GOs during the period of the report by Sahkarmi Samaj, on topics such as intervention processes, social mobilisation process, skill development and strategic planning. Participants included, Save the Children partners, United Mission to Nepal, International Committee for Red Cross, Welfare Association of Children and many local NGOs.

10 Strengthening SHEP's Organisational Effectiveness

During 2015 the Project continued to support improved organisational effectiveness. We continued our work to develop quality assurance processes. Significant programmes of in-service training and supervision were conducted for the Project's Trainers, Community Tutors and Coiscéim Counsellors. During 2015, considerable energy was again put into policy development and refinement.

A full review of the Project's governance policies and procedures was undertaken using The Wheel's Code of Governance was completed in early 2015 and the majority of the actions identified were implemented by the end of the year.

A significant amount of staff time and resources was allocated during 2015 to supporting the SHEP Limerick Steering Committee to work through new governance options, particularly a model of governance based on the Carver Model. By the end of the year, agreement had been reached regarding the establishment by our local partners of a new initiative in Limerick to support experiential learning (BEL – Building Experiential Learning). This is an important development which will lay the basis for continued collaboration in Limerick into the future.

Priorities for 2016

In addition to the large number of actions set out in 'Year Three' actions from our Strategic Plan we have identified six key priorities for the coming year as follows:

1. Delivering all actions in agreed annual work-plan (2016);
2. Strengthening Governance Procedures in SHEP, including reviewing the functioning of the Management Committee;
3. Following up on agreement with Limerick Steering Committee regarding the conclusion of the Limerick Social and Health Education Programme (2019-2017) and the move to a new arrangement for collaboration;
4. Negotiating with HSE regarding once off funding (for 2017);
5. Re-engaging with QQI to maintain our registration as a provider of Community Education.

Appreciation of Support

The Management Committee and staff of The Social and Health Education Project would like to sincerely thank everyone who supported our work in 2015. The support of our main funders the HSE, Irish Aid, and ICCO – are greatly appreciated. Total funding in grants and fees was €1,129,857. Total expenditure by SHEP in 2015 was €1,130,408. Total expenditure of HSE funds in 2015 was €714,276. Support from the Cork Education and Training Board, Kerry Education and Training Board, The Family Support Agency, The Department of Social Protection, Citizens Information Board and Janssen Pharmaceutical all played an important role in enabling SHEP to deliver our extensive programme of work for 2015 in support of a wide range of people from a wide range of backgrounds. Copies of our most recent audited annual accounts are available on our website www.socialandhealth.com. Thank you for your interest and support.

