



**The Social and Health Education Project**

# Annual Report

**2017**

## Chairperson's Foreword

The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP) is a unique, community-based, regional, training and development organisation. We continue to be very proud of what has been achieved over four decades.

2017 was another very busy and successful year for SHEP with over two thousand persons and over twenty groups directly supported with the Project through training, counselling, and advocacy or through other supports. Core funding from the HSE continued to be hugely important: we have also been supported by a number of other state agencies as well as by a number of other grantors/funders. Like all community and voluntary groups, there have been significant challenges over the last number of years and 2017 was no exception: we are continuing to do 'more with less'. We remain significantly under-funded and this is an on-going challenge.

At the same time 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. In 2017 we completed a new three-year development plan (2018-2020) to guide us over the next three years. However, the world we live in is changing rapidly and as a Project we need to consider what is the best work for us over the longer term. As Chairperson I wish to extend my thanks to the large body of Trainers, Tutors, Counsellors, and Volunteer Advocates in SHEP, our small staff team, the large number of people who volunteer with us, and my colleagues on the SHEP Management Committee for all that they have done during 2017.

Siobhan O'Connor, Chairperson

## Key Developments in 2017

There were a number of important developments during the 2017. Five were particularly important:

**SHEP Programme in Limerick:** After an exploration process which continued for about a year and a half agreement was reached between SHEP and our local partners in Limerick about arrangements for the future governance arrangements for the delivery of SHEP training in Limerick. The work in the Mid-West Region, which continues to go from strength to strength, will remain part of the SHEP Programme under the governance of the SHEP Management Committee. It will be supported by a new SHEP Mid-West Advisory Group (which has replaced the Local Steering Group). A three-year plan for the Mid-West was finalised. Importantly, Anita O'Shea is being supported by the Mid-West Regional Drug and Alcohol Forum to work two days a week on supporting the SHEP programme in the region.

**Formal incorporation of Earth awareness work:** 2017 was a significant year for the volunteer-led 'Caring for the Earth' Initiative, which commenced as a partnership with Mercy Sisters/Pairc a' Tobair. The initiative was formally incorporated into the Project's mainstream work and now has its own Advisory Group. Significantly, one of the volunteers with the initiative, Maria Young, took over the coordination role in a voluntary capacity (one day per week) and has become a member of the staff team. Finally, some funding was also sourced to support the training and awareness work over the next three years.

**Irish Aid funding for Sahakarmi Samaj South West Nepal Community Governance Programme:** Following three successful grant rounds (and nine years of funding) a fourth application to Irish Aid was submitted in early 2017, with the support of a new partner- Development Fund Norway. Unfortunately the process was extremely competitive and the application was unsuccessful. The decision was made later in

2017 to apply again in early 2018. Also in 2017, SHEP for the first time forwarded the first round of grant funding to Sahakarmi Samaj based on our own fundraising initiatives. €9,000 was granted to Sahakarmi Samaj in July, which included €5,000 from the Presentation Sisters. A fundraising sub-committee was established and organised two important fundraising events: a Coffee morning at Nano Nagle Place in May and a Carol Service in St Patrick's Rochestown in December.

**Reflective Practice:** there were important developments in 2017 with regard to this relatively new programme. We completed the first round of training with three groups in Kerry ETB (School Principals, Deputy Principals and Centre Managers) and commenced three more. We also commenced two further groups in Waterford. Significantly, the Bon Secours Health System agreed to co-fund SHEP Reflective Practice work in Cork, Kerry and Limerick over the next five year period.

**Strategic Planning:** During 2017 following on from an innovative process of organisational enquiry, facilitated by Helen Ruddle in 2016, we completed a new three year Development Plan (2018-2020). During the consultation process it became clear that there are some strategic questions facing the Project which relate to the longer term direction of the Project. It was agreed to develop a process to that would support discussion and discernment on the questions surfaced and to use some of the practices from Otto Scharmer's 'Theory U' to shape the process.

## Delivery of Agreed Actions

SHEP made very good progress in 2017 with implementing our 2017 work-plan across all of the SHEP's eleven key areas of work. The granting of some €60,000 once-off funding to SHEP, and the securing of some additional funding from non-HSE sources, allowed the Project to implement most of the 2017 programme and in many cases to exceed our targets. It also allowed for some important innovations and modifications of the work-plan in response to needs that appeared to us. The numbers participating in SHEP's core training programme were similar to the previous year: 16 core (intensive) training courses were successfully completed and 14 core (intensive) training courses commencing in 2017 (which will be completed in 2018).

The last three years in particular, have been challenging as the effects of the economic downturn continue to impact of people's ability to participate in training. Once again, in 2017, significant effort was made by staff to secure additional grant funding to further subsidise training. A large number of applications to the Department of Social Protection were made in Summer 2017 and all were successful – resulting in free places for 30 participants who started the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development in September.

The work in Limerick also continued (as part of the collaboration with a number of Limerick-city groups) including the commencement, for the first time of the SHEP Tutor Training Course. To date, 25 intensive courses have been completed. However, our commitment to support the training work in Limerick, without financial support to the organisation, continued to put pressure on the Project during 2017.

The Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme once again supported a very large number of clients during 2017 with 599 clients supported with counselling. The complexity of cases continued to increase, reflecting the difficult circumstances in which many people find themselves. The service had to close to new entrants a number of times during year in order to cope with the increased demand.

During 2017, SHEP's advocacy service continued to respond to requests for independent advocacy support including in the area of facilitating independent group-advocacy. Over 60 persons were supported. This work would not be possible without the involvement and commitment of a team of ten volunteer advocates.

Throughout the year we provided customised training, facilitation and technical support to more than 20

groups and organisations in Cork, Kerry and Limerick though pressures on staff resources meant that less time could be devoted to this than we would have liked. In late 2017 we worked separately with two youth organisations in the South regarding an innovative programme of organisational support which will commence in 2018.

## Other Important Developments

**Limerick Tutor Training:** For the first time ever a SHEP Tutor Training commenced in Limerick in October 2018. A group of 16 participants are participating in a year-long Tutor Training course. This is an important development and a significant undertaking by SHEP.

**Kerry: Largest ever number of Groups:** The work in Kerry continues to grow, with the support of Kerry ETB. Autumn 2017, for example, was SHEP's busiest autumn yet with fourteen courses running. The SHEP Certificate in Facilitation was successfully run in Killarney in 2017. Two SHEP Certificate in Personal Development courses commenced in the autumn, one in Tralee and one in Killarney. The first 'Caring About a Small Blue Planet' started in Kerry, facilitated by Frank Dorr and Eileen Lynch. It has brought together participants from the SHEP Community, the Transition Kerry community and other interested in learning more about caring about our earth!

**Participatory Methods:** This new SHEP course, delivered for the first time in 2017, was a very positive and exciting development. 18 participants from a wide variety of backgrounds completed the course. Level 6 QQI-accredited course is the third part of our community facilitation training programme (the other two being Leadership in the Community, and Reflective Practice).

**Mercy Solidarity Fund:** During 2017 we were awarded over €14,000 from the Mercy Solidarity Fund to support the delivery of SHEP Short Courses in the Community. This is a significant boost to our important community education outreach programme.

**SHEP Self Evaluation – QQI-accredited courses:** During 2017 we completed a 'self-evaluation' of our QQI-accredited training (2013-2017). Five courses have been successfully delivered since 2013 – with 86 people being awarded QQI certificates. Feedback on the courses has been excellent.

**Erasmus Plus Programme:** In 2017 we were successful in securing additional Erasmus Plus Funding. This was our second grant under this EU-funded programme. By the end of 2017, 20 SHEP staff/trainers/tutors had been supported to participate in this important training programme.

**SHEP Community Education article published!** A case study on improving practice entitled, 'Examination of Quality in a Community Family Communication Course' written by Eimer Cadogan, Mary Mangan and Liam McCarthy, was published in The Adult Learner 2017:

[https://www.aontas.com/assets/resources/Adult-Learner-Journal/14218\\_Aontas\\_Adult\\_Learner\\_2017\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.aontas.com/assets/resources/Adult-Learner-Journal/14218_Aontas_Adult_Learner_2017_WEB.pdf).

**Reception for Trainers:** The Management Committee hosted a Reception for all SHEP Trainers (current and retired) on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, to express their appreciation for the work and support of SHEP Trainers, and to open the new training year (2017-2018). The reception was followed by a short meeting of the Trainers' Forum which included the selection of two new nominees to the Management Committee – Rosarie Coleman and Dolores McCashin.

**Selection of New Trainers:** In 2017 we continued to support two persons to phase two of the Trainer Apprenticeship process for the SHEP Certificate in Social Awareness & Community Empowerment.

**Staff Changes:** There were no changes to staffing in 2017. However, one full time member reduced her working hours to four days per week. There are now three full time staff and 10 part-time staff.

## Innovation

**New QQI-accredited ‘Group-work Theory and Practice’:** Following an application by SHEP, approval was granted by QQI so that SHEP is now able to offer those who complete SHEP Certificate in Facilitation the option to do the assessment for the Level 6 minor award ‘Group-work Theory and Practice’. We hope to offer this for the first time in late 2018.

**Expanding Awareness Day – SHEP Cert in Personal Development:** During 2017 work commenced on developing, on a pilot basis in the first instance, a new module in the SHEP Cert in Personal Development. This will be an important and timely addition to the course.

**Self-Advocacy Training (Kerry):** In 2017, the first ‘Introduction to Self-Advocacy’ course in Kerry was completed with a group of 15 participants. The participants were from the Peer Mentoring Training group based in the Kerry Mental Health Associations facilities on Lewis Road Killarney. Most of the funding for this course was provided by Kerry ETB with remaining funding provided by SHEP.

**Intercultural Dialogue:** Also in 2017 SHEP brought together a number of partners to form a new network and commenced a new initiative in the area of Intercultural Dialogue. The partners include Cork City Partnership and CESCA as well as a number of people from new communities.



**Ken Joyce (Bon Secours) presenting a cheque to Jim Sheehan for the Reflective Practice Programme. Also in the photo are Andrew McCarthy (Bons Secours), Liam McCarthy (SHEP), Chris O'Leary and Joanna Karolina (Cork Volunteer Centre).**

## Collaborations & Supporting Other Organisations

SHEP is fully committed to working collaboratively: indeed we have a long history of collaborating successfully. In 2017 we collaborated with a large number of groups and agencies. Our partnership with local CDPs, FRCs and other community Groups, such as the Lantern Project, remain very important to us and are deeply valued. Our collaborations with Kerry ETB, Cork ETB, CESCA and have all also been very important. Our partnership with UCC to deliver the Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies remains very strong and fruitful.

The Coiscéim Programme continued to collaborate with a large number of groups including; Shine A Light; St Vincent de Paul, Carrigaline Family Support Network, Newbery House (Mayfield) and Fermoy.

Of particular note in 2017 was our work with NAS and SAGE and to deliver independent advocacy in one residential setting Cork.

In 2017 we supported a number of networks, including the Cork community Health Network, the Mental Health Connection Sharing Network and the Cork City Community Education Network. We also supported the establishment of a new network – Cork Intercultural Dialogue Initiative.

During 2017 SHEP Earth Aware linked up for the first time with The Green Sod, an environmental organization based in Galway which will soon take over Pairc a Tobair in Rosscarbery County Cork. We look forward to a fruitful partnership with this exciting organisation for the benefit of nature and our communities. During 2017, SHEP also continued to be involved with and support Cork Climate Action which is a network of Cork-based Non-governmental organisations which aims to raise awareness of the urgent need for action on climate change and climate justice.

During 2017 we also provided training, technical support or organisational support to twelve organisations/groups. Examples include training for teachers in Christ the King Secondary School, community planning with Tracton Community Council, and staff supervision for some of the staff in Marymount Hospice.

## Strengthening SHEP's Organisational Effectiveness

During 2017 the Project continued to support improved organisational effectiveness.

We completed a review of our work and developed a new three year strategic plan. We continued our work to develop quality assurance processes.

During 2017, considerable energy was put into policy development: several new policies were progressed including an important policy on Maintaining SHEP Trainer Panels. We also completed a comprehensive policy with regarding to the undertaking of research in SHEP.

As a way of supporting good practice and the maintenance of high standards significant programmes of in-service training and supervision were conducted for the Project's Trainers, Community Tutors and Coiscéim Counsellors. In 2017 a workshop for Stress Management module trainers took place as well as a training workshop with Helen Ruddle for Tutors.

In line with new regulations, SHEP continued to secure Garda vetting for all new personnel becoming involved with SHEP where Garda vetting is required.

During 2017 work continued, through the support of Apple's 'Benevity Scheme', to help us design and develop a new project database. It is likely to be late 2018 when the new database becomes available.

## Challenges

**Responding to increased need:** It is clear that the need for the Project's supports and services are growing. This is particularly evident in our counselling and advocacy work which is constantly under pressure. Our involvement in Limerick over the last number of years has added pressure on the Training side. As a Project we remain under-resourced to meet the needs which are presenting. This causes considerable organisational pressure and stress on staff.

**Funding:** We remain very reliant on securing additional once-off HSE grant funding, and the securing of additional funding (which is difficult to source). The last two years (2016 and 2017) have been the most challenging for the Project, financially. Operating costs continue to increase putting further pressure on the Project. We remain committed to not raising fees for training courses because of our desire to keep the training as accessible as possible and because of our belief that if prices increase, numbers participating will drop.

**SHEP Fund-raising:** owing to financial pressure on the project we commenced a fundraising scheme in 2014 to establish a SHEP Bursary scheme. This has proved to be an invaluable scheme to support the provision of concessions to participants. However, the numbers supporting this scheme continues to be relatively small and is declining. In 2017 we also started a fundraising initiative to raise funds for the work of Sahakarmi Samaj in Nepal. It is challenging to raise funds from the general public when so many groups are competing for limited resources. Additionally, compliance requirements regarding public fundraising place an additional burden on the Project.

**Maintaining a participatory structure:** We remain fully committed to maintaining a participatory structure in the Project. However, this takes considerable time and effort. **We continue to have fora.** But participation rates in some of the Fora remain low.

**SHEP Premises:** SHEP has been based in Ballincollig for almost ten years. During 2017 we gave some time to looking at alternatives, but it was agreed that for the moment at least staying in Ballincollig is our best option. The situation in Bessborough is also changing: while we are likely to be able to continue using the Granary for the next year the situation after that is uncertain.

## Governance

As a community and voluntary organisations SHEP continues to put considerable energy into promoting and further developing good governance in the Project:

**New Constitution:** In 2017 a small number of changes were made to the Articles which were subsequently incorporated into a new constitution.

**New Audit Sub-Committee:** a new audit committee was also established in 2017 to help with monitoring and oversight of the project's financial affairs.



**Two new Advisory Groups:** An important development in the Project in 2017 has been the establishment of two new advisory groups: The Mid-West SHEP Advisory Group and The SHEP Earth Aware Advisory Group. The establishment of both groups represent important milestones – the formal inclusion of these two areas into the Project. There are now six advisory groups in the Project supporting the Management Committee and staff.

**Governance Review:** An internal review of our level of compliance with key HSE requirements was commenced and will continue into 2018.

**Equality Workshop:** In October 2017 SHEP Management Committee members and staff participated in an Equality Workshop facilitated by two facilitators from CESCA (Ronnie Dorney and Tehmina Kazi).

**Codes of Good Conduct;** SHEP continues to subscribe to a number of codes of good practice including: The Wheel Governance Code; Dochas Governance Code; ICTR Code on Fundraising; and Dochas Code on Images and Messages.

**SHEP management committee members:** A number of people completed their term during 2017: Una Furey, Sean Long, Geraldine O’Connell and Tom McCarthy. Two new members jointed: Rosarie Coleman and Dolores McCashin. At the end of December, the following were members of the SEHP Management Committee:

- Siobhan O’Connor (Chairperson)
- Angela Murphy (Vice Chairperson) (Advocates’ Nominee)
- Ann O’Sullivan (Co-optee) Retired CEO Cork City Partnership
- Stephen Griffin (Co-optee) Industry (Production Manager)
- Catherine Richardson (Co-optee) Social Worker
- Rosarie Coleman (Trainers’ Nominee)
- Dolores McCashin (Trainers’ Nominee)
- Ber Nolan (Tutors’ Nominee)
- Alice Foley Tague (Tutors’ Nominee)
- Deirdre Lillis (Staff Nominee)



Siobhan O’Connor, Ber Nolan and Ann O’Sullivan at the SHEP Management Committee & Staff Dinner, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the SHEP Training Centre.



Geraldine O’Connell, Stephen Griffin and Angela Murphy at the SHEP Management Committee Dinner on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the SHEP Training Centre.



## Personal Development Training

*Experiential personal development group-work has been at the heart of SHEP's training programme since its inception. The year-long SHEP Certificate in Personal Development is one of the two foundation courses in the programme, and is often the starting point for many people. SHEP offers opportunities to continue personal growth work through participation in the SHEP Certificate in Continuing Personal Development course (also a year-long course), and through the Spring and Autumn schedule of workshops and short courses in the On-going Development Programme.*

**Outcomes:** The SHEP Certificate in Personal Development course is a unique training programme that has been refined by the Project over many years. Nine groups, comprising 144 people, 25 of whom were men, participated in the course in 2017. Four of these groups were in Cork City, one in Mallow, one in Tralee, one in Killarney, and two in Limerick. Of this cohort, 115 participants received their Certificate of Completion. In September 2017 nine groups began The SHEP Certificate in Personal Development: four groups in Cork, one group in Limerick and two groups in Kerry. This gives a total of 135 people including 28 men.

Fourteen people, two of whom were men, participated in the Continuing Personal Development course in Cork in 2017. All fourteen completed it.

There were eleven offerings in the On-going Development Programme during 2017. Nine workshops/short Courses went ahead, with a total of 140 people, seventeen of whom were men, participating. There was a wide variety of workshops/courses including a residential mindfulness weekend, 'Sing Your Heart Out' (singing for well-being), Embodied Presence, Rosen Movement, the Transformation Game, Creative Approaches to Countertransference etc.

**Commentary:** Once again, participation in the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development course has been an invaluable transformational experience for many people. SHEP has been able to ensure accessibility and inclusion through the SHEP Bursary Fund and through funding from other sources. Funding support from the Department of Social Protection in the case of six course groups finishing in 2017, and five course groups beginning in 2017 enabled six eligible people – who would otherwise not have the financial resources - to participate in each of those groups. As these funding grants are awarded on a yearly basis, the continuing long-term accessibility of the courses remains uncertain.

Though participation in the SHEP Certificate in Continuing Personal Development course is not a requirement for entry to any other course, it is popular, and is meeting a real need. Similarly, the On-going Development Programme serves an important function in the Project. The number of people participating in 2017 increased by almost 40% over the number participating in 2016.



Returning from the SHEP Mindfulness Retreat on Cape Clear, September 2017

## Training in Social Awareness & Community Empowerment

*SHEP's second foundation course is a ten day course in Social Awareness and Community Empowerment – based on the Training for Transformation Programme.* The course includes significant updated material related to the environmental and development as a response to the growing challenges of our times. The majority of participants 87% (85% in 2016) had completed the SHEP Certificate in Personal Development previously to taking this course. This is not a requirement however, the course being open to anyone involved in local organisations, adult or community education, to anyone interested in becoming involved in their local communities and to anyone who would like to develop their own awareness and knowledge about the issues and dynamics of community involvement and collective activity.

The course amongst other things, aims to develop awareness of how we relate and co-operate in groups, how we are shaped by the society we grow up in and how we, in turn, shape society through our lives and actions. It also aims to enhance participants' ability to work together with others, especially in working towards a better society and to develop their awareness and the skills required for effective participation as active citizens.

Experiential group work activity (group and team activity, role plays, simulations, reflection, dialogue ...) is the main learning philosophy and methodology on the course. As such, as the second element of the foundation programme, the course brings to social themes, the same learning approach as brought to personal development themes in the first element of the foundation programme.

### Outcomes

In 2017, two groups comprising 52 (41 in 2016) people started, and 48 (36 in 2016) successfully completed this training. Eight of the forty-eight were men 17% (16% in 2016). There was one group in Cork City and one group in Limerick – the latter course being funded and supported by Mid-West Regional Druga and Alcohol Forum grant and local collaborating partners in the Limerick SHEP programme.

The course in Limerick was highly subsidised with all participants receiving the reduced fee rate through the MWRDAF support. For the Cork course, 52% received concessions (46% in 2016). Between the different mixes of supports across both courses, including the HSE SHEP core grant support, with 77% of participants receiving a reduced fee rate, the course is highly subsidised.

A social inclusion survey (completed for the Limerick course only) suggests that the course is meeting some specific inclusion requirements of the funding and ambitions of SHEP generally - 70% were either unemployed or part-time employed; 60% were receiving some allowance; for 17% the junior certificate was the highest level attained.

Since the inception of the course in 1994, there have been 64 offerings. The average group size commencing is 24, number of people completing is 23 with 1 person on average dropping out. On average 2 receive statements of attendance and 21 (89%) full certificates. Participant end of course evaluations feedback and course score remain very satisfactory – 9.3 (from 10) being the average course overall rating across all participant feedback in 2017.

**Commentary:**

Two quotations offered by participants to share about their experience represent the flavour of experience for participants on the course

*“My learning experience through this course with SHEP has been far deeper than anything I could have ever learned in a book. It has pushed me to consider new perspectives, but within a safe supportive environment with excellent facilitators. I would recommend this course to anyone”*

*“An amazing course that opened my eyes and my heart – helped me look at my fellow human beings as just that, human beings trying to get from A to B in the best way we can”*

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The high completion rates, high course scores and feedback from participants; the courses sustained achievements; some inclusion measure and degree of subsidy, all suggest a valuable offering that is meeting a need. However there are some features that are worth surfacing. The course is offered in the SHEP programme context and is highly subsidised. While the course is open, there is a low level of uptake from the community for this opportunity. Even within SHEP, a question arises as to how many would take the course if it were not part of a requirement for progression, despite the subsidy. Participants sometimes express surprise at the learning despite their initial resistance, and all feedback reflects valuable, if not essential learning.

For SHEP’s vision of the world and vision of human development, the developmental direction for this course ought to be expansion of its scope and reach. The sense from the dynamics and measures above mentioned, is that influences, attitudes or factors in the social world are inhibiting participation in an offering (as currently structured) that is a valuable contribution to building citizenship and community. The story suggests that SHEP needs to reflect and better understand these influences, so as to optimise the contribution of this course in developing the awareness in individuals and communities to meeting the challenges we are facing in the world related to citizenship, inter-cultural diversity, strengthening democracy, justice, inequality, environment and development.

## 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.*

**Outcomes:** In 2017, 27 people participated in year-long SHEP Certificate in Facilitation, thirteen in Killarney and fourteen in Cork. Four of the 27 were men. Twenty-two participants successfully completed the course. The 16-month long Integrated Specialised Tutor Training Course began in Cork in February 2017 with 17 participants, six of whom were men. A 13-month, scaled-back version of this course began in Limerick in September 2017 with 16 participants, two of whom were men. Of the fourteen people – two of them men, who commenced the Specialised Tutor Training course in Grief, Loss & Change in autumn 2016, eleven people successfully completed it in April 2017. Nine graduates of Specialised Tutor Training courses undertook apprenticeships with experienced community tutors in 2017.

**Commentary:** 2017 was a landmark year in that SHEP commenced practitioner-level training in Limerick with people who had completed the SHEP Certificate in Facilitation there. This will enable SHEP to bring the Community Education for Health and Well-being Programme to Limerick.

It is also noteworthy that over one third of the members of the 2017-2018 Cork Integrated Specialised Tutor training course are men. There are very few male Community Tutors on SHEP's panel of registered Community Tutors; when they graduate, the six men will be a welcome addition to the panel, strengthening SHEP's capacity to work with men-only groups in the community.

Following the Specialised Tutor Training course in Grief, Loss & Change, SHEP now has additional capacity in North Kerry/West Limerick to offer the 'Seasons for Growth' course in that region. It has been a challenge for SHEP to sustain access to progression courses in the SHEP training programme outside of Cork.

The successful delivery – with significant financial support from the Project - of the SHEP Certificate in Facilitation in Killarney in 2017 was an important achievement. In Cork, it has proved more difficult than in previous years to recruit a full group for the SHEP Certificate in Facilitation. This course would not have gone ahead in 2017 without the participation of a number of members of the Coiscéim panel of psychotherapists who accessed the course via SHEP's Recognition of Prior Learning pathway.

## Reflective Practice

*The Reflective Practice for Practitioners Programme is a relatively new area of work in the SHEP programme. It is based on the delivery of a version of the Critical Reflection model developed by Fook & Gardner (2007). The programme, as shaped by SHEP, involves approximately 30 hours' training over nine months, in small training groups.*

**Outcomes:** The first round of Critical Reflection training delivered as part of an innovative collaboration with Kerry ETB was completed with two groups (School Principals, and FET/Centre Managers) in May 2017: 17 completed the training. A customised programme of 3 sessions was also completed with Kerry ETB Deputy Principals (7 completed this training). In September, Critical Reflection commenced with two new Kerry ETB groups (Deputy Principals and a group of Adult Literacy Staff). A continuation programme of four sessions was also commenced with the School Principals. For the first time, Reflective Practice was offered in Waterford in 2017 – and two groups (of 8 participants each) commenced in the Autumn at the Edmund Rice Heritage Centre – an open group and a Managers/Team Leaders group.

**Commentary:** A very significant development in 2017 was the agreement reached with Bon Secours Health System that they would provide financial support to the programme over the next five years. This will allow the programme to be offered in Cork, Kerry and Limerick at highly subsidised rates, to innovate and to accelerate the momentum of the programme. The two courses in Waterford have supported SHEP to establish links with a large number of organisations working in the South East, which is likely to generate additional interest in SHEP training in this region. In general, this programme is generating considerable interest and is likely to grow further in SHEP over the coming years. It is interesting that like most training in SHEP, there is a far greater participation by women than men: in the Waterford programme, for example, just two of the 16 participants are men.



## Complementary Accredited Training

*Whilst most of the training offered by SHEP is not externally-accredited, a small number of courses are offered by SHEP with QQI accreditation and we have an on-going collaboration with UCC with regard to the Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies.*

**Outcomes:** In June 2017, 17 students completed Year Two of the UCC Certificate in Social and Psychological Health Studies. In September 2017, a group of 17 of students commenced Year One of the Programme. This is the eight round of this two year programme run in partnership with ACE. Just one QQI-accredited course was offered in 2017 – Participatory Methods, which was delivered for the first time. 18 participants commenced with 16 people completing this 70 hour programme and received a QQI level 6 certificate (15 ECTS).

**Commentary:** The profile of participants recruited for the 2017-19 UCC Diploma is very encouraging, with significant diversity in people's backgrounds (6 of the 17 are from non-Irish Backgrounds) thus providing an important opportunity for intercultural learning. However, the lower than usual number recruited suggests that additional effort will be needed in future. It is interesting to note that 9 of the group have previously done SHEP training. With regard to the QQI-accredited Participatory Methods course, this was a very successful training initiative which linked SHEP with 16 organisations. The availability of SHEP grant funding for this course (the fee was only €35) is likely to have supported the strong level of interest in the course. The internal self-evaluation completed by SHEP on the delivery of the five QQI-accredited courses since 2013 shows very high levels of satisfaction and a high level of quality across all areas of course design, delivery and evaluation.



Participants who have just completed the two year SHEP/UCC Diploma Programme in Social and Psychological Health Studies at the O'Rahilly Building in UCC's Main Campus, in May 2017, with Jim Sheehan.

## Community Education for Health & Well-being

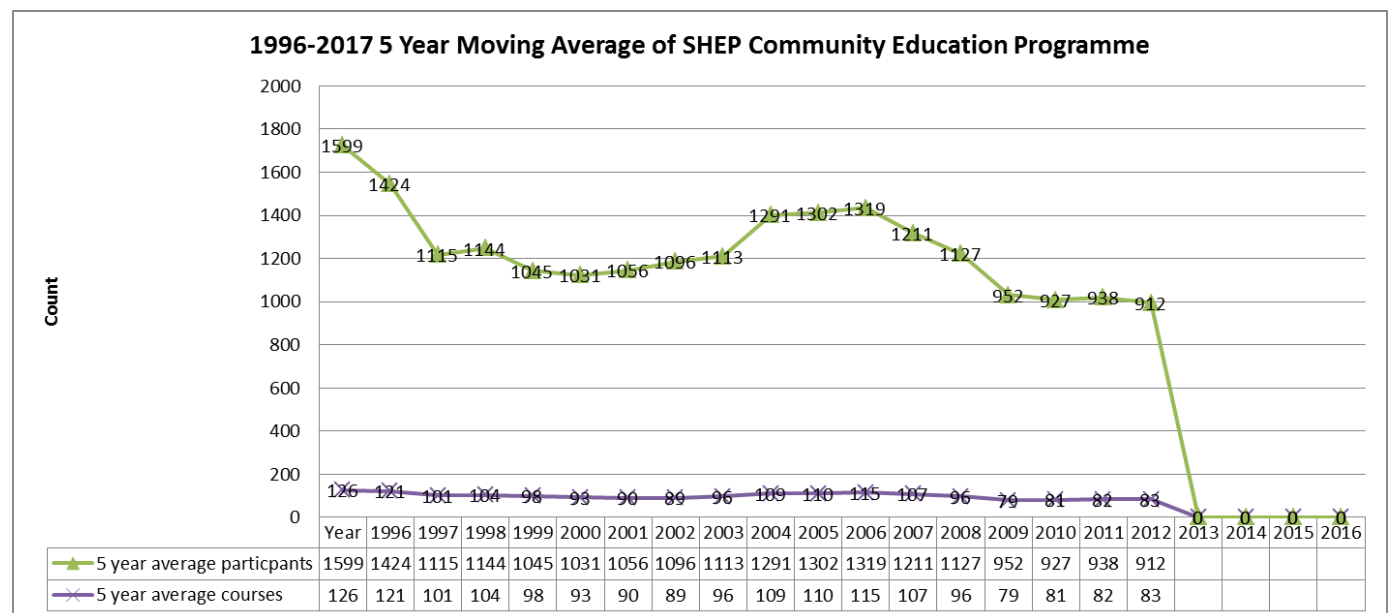
*SHEP's Community Education for Health and Well-being offers a range of short courses in the community.*

**Outcomes:** In 2017, 727 people participated in 81 community-based personal development courses/workshops in community centres across Counties Cork and Kerry arranged through SHEP. The most availed of course topics were: Introduction to Personal Development (19); Caring for Our Wellbeing (10); Effective Communication for Better Relationships (7); Grief, Loss & Change (6); Men's Health and Wellbeing (6), Women's Health and Wellbeing (4) and Managing Stress in Our Daily Lives (4). These courses were offered by a 33 trained tutors working with 20 apprentice tutors (there is currently a total of 81 registered tutors on SHEP's panel). The average for male completion rate from 2017-2013 was 31%, it being 26% in 2017

**Commentary:** Within the overall picture of the programme some trends are worth highlighting. In Figure 1 below the 5-year moving average trend from 1996-2017 of the programme is displayed, plotting 5-year average of the total number of participants completing and total number of courses each year. The picture painted is of a strong programme that continues to reach an average of 90 plus people per year through 85 or so course offerings. The current level of the programme, following on from years of austerity and changes in the practice field of provision, attests to its continued reach and value of experiential learning method in mix of approaches in adult and community education.

We are currently undertaking a study of over 1200 participant evaluations from the years 2007-2017 towards surfacing and profiling the qualitative impact of the programme.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 2:**

The plot below represents the funding mix for the programme over the last six years. The ETB's in Cork and Kerry have significantly committed to the programme; SHEP over recent years ceased for the moment resourcing courses through participant fees. Inwards requests for tutors by groups having some grant



support to offer a course has somewhat decreased; SHEP continued to resource the programme through staff role, small grant support and in 2017 significant support from a grant from the Mercy solidarity Fund. It is anticipated in 2018 that the funding mix will be largely similar and sustained.

## Counselling

*The Counselling Programme is part of the overall SHEP Programme. It is overseen by a 4 day week Project Coordinator. A Referral Officer (working three days per week) and a second Referral Officer (working 1 day per week) are 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 126 counsellors/psycho-therapists. 85 of whom are actively referred clients and a further 41 who are referred clients if their expertise is needed by a client's presenting issues.*

**Outcomes:** During 2017, SHEP's Coiscéim Low-Cost Counselling Programme once again supported a very significant number of clients. 695 persons sought counselling of whom 599 were assessed and referred in 2017. This included 129 clients between the ages of 8 and 25 years old.

**Commentary:** The service along with client referrals continues to provide support and consultation to a wide range of individuals, voluntary and statutory services regarding information on counselling and to get advice/support for individuals that they may have concerns about in their line of work. The service also works collaboratively with other voluntary organisations (Shine a Light, SVDP, Respond Housing, Focus Ireland) with regard to the provision of funding for client referrals and subsidies for them. The complexity of cases presenting continue to put pressure on the number of client sessions that can be allocated to any given client thereby increasing pressure on the management of funding grants. The continued implementation of list management is paramount in dealing with complex client needs and managing funding whilst also endeavouring to respond to as many people seeking counselling as possible.

## Advocacy

*SHEP's Cork Advocacy Service CAS is a volunteer-resourced independent advocacy service which offers one-to-one supports, group advocacy support and training. 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.*

**Outcomes:** One-to-one community advocacy support, provision of information and signposting was provided to sixty four individuals who through experiences of ill health, disability or difficulties related to ageing found themselves marginalised and struggling to get their voice heard ( seven of these were cases were carried forward from 2017). Eight people were referred to other advocacy services/resources. Three group advocacy initiatives were supported. A self-advocacy training was completed in Kerry with ten participants.

**Commentary:** The service is proving to be highly responsive and innovative, but continues to be under-resourced. The one to one work can range from support to self-advocate with information being shared over the phone or through a meeting to longer term support that can go beyond one year. The independent advocacy facilitation of two of the groups supports people who are facing into major changes in their lives

as residential institutions are closing down. Although the ultimate aim of independent advocacy is to make ourselves redundant, that is an aim that is probably unreachable. There will continue to be a need for independent advocacy to support people who are excluded from major decisions about their lives to have a voice and have their rights respected. This resource is delivered through one part time worker and a panel of trained volunteer advocates who do some contracted work where we are able to source funding for group advocacy facilitation. We see the facilitation of self-advocacy courses as a critical element of our work in developing the capacity for people who share similar experience to support each other as peer advocates. We hope to continue with this element of the work in 2018.

## 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.*

**Outcomes:** Over 20 groups/organisations were supported in 2017 with facilitation, supervision and training – in addition to on-going support to organisations such as Cobh Community Hospital; and Marymount Hospice. SHEP responded to a small number of requests for customised training sessions during 2017 including training for teachers in Christ King Secondary School. Facilitation support was provided to a number of groups including Tracton Community Council. Staff supervision was provided for a number of the staff in Marymount Hospice.

**Commentary:** This continues to be an important area of work and significant effort has been given to it in 2017, though it represents a small and declining portion of our overall effort. The limited availability of resources is the primary limitation to this activity. Our giving more time to Reflective Practice work has also limited the time available for this work, though providing training in reflective practice is itself an important support to organisations and represents offering support to organisations in a collective setting.

## International Learning Partnership

*SHEP entered into a learning partnership with Sahakarmi Samaj in 2007. Since 2008 SHEP has supported Sahakarmi Samaj to secure Irish Aid funding for its South-Western Nepal Community Governance Programme.*

**Outcomes:** In 2017 the third three-year Community Enhancement Programme was completed by Sahakarmi Samaj, with support from ICCO Kirkinactice. A fourth application to Irish Aid was submitted in early 2017, with the support of a new partner- Development Fund Norway. Unfortunately the process was extremely competitive and the application was unsuccessful. The decision was made later in 2017 to apply again in early 2018. Also in 2017, SHEP for the first time forwarded the first round of grant funding to Sahakarmi Samaj based on our own fundraising initiatives. €9,000 was granted to Sahakarmi Samaj in July, which included €5,000 from the Presentation Sisters.

**Commentary:** The loss of Irish Aid funding to Sahakarmi Samaj was a significant setback in 2017. However, this led to the decision by SHEP to commence fundraising directly from the Irish public. This brings with it increased responsibilities (governance and compliance) but also represents an important opportunity to raise awareness of the work on Sahakarmi Samaj in Nepal.

## Priorities for 2018

In addition to delivering all the actions set out in our 2018 work-plan we have identified six key priorities for the coming year as follows:

1. Delivery of Year 1 actions from our new Development Plan (2018-2020).
2. Securing HSE Mid West programme for the Training Programme in Limerick and the Mid-West Region.
3. Increasing revenue raised through fund-raising/corporate donations.
4. Finding alternative premises/Training rooms for Bessboro and Killarney.
5. Policy Development (especially to support inclusion and maintaining our QQI registration).
6. Supporting the induction of new Tutors and Trainers.

## 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 2017. The support of our main funders - the HSE in particular - is greatly appreciated. Total funding in grants and fees was €1,085,392. Total expenditure by SHEP in 2017 was €1,085,157. Total expenditure of HSE funds in 2017 was €766,00.

Support from the Cork Education and Training Board, Kerry Education and Training Board, The Family Support Agency and The Department of Social Protection all played an important role in enabling SHEP to deliver our extensive programme of work for 2017 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](http://www.socialandhealth.com). Thank you for your interest and support.

*SHEP - promoting health and well-being since 1974*

The Social and Health Education Project,  
Village Centre, Station Road, Ballincollig, Co. Cork & Park Road, Killarney.

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