



Supporting Parents after Bereavement

# **ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020**





*"Anam Cara provided a forum for me to talk about losing my child with people who understood my feelings because they shared my experience. Listening to their stories helped me to accept my own situation"*



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# CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

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The year 2020 has been a year of unprecedented challenge and change for Anam Cara. As an organisation that relied on face-to-face interaction, in providing our support services to bereaved parents, suddenly, with the country in a series of lockdowns we could no longer deliver our services in the normal manner.

In order to address this sudden crisis in our ability to continue supporting bereaved parents, it was necessary to put in place a process to allow our services to be delivered safely online. This necessitated significant training and changes to our procedures to ensure that the quality of our services was not compromised in any way. I'd like to express my thanks and admiration for the efforts of all our staff, professionals, and volunteers who willingly embraced all these changes during very difficult times.

Enhancing our online services had been one of our strategic goals and the pandemic forced us to accelerate our efforts in that regard. As a result, we are now in a much better position to meet the needs of a wider group of parents and have increased the accessibility of our services into the future. Even with a return to normality, we would envisage a continuing demand for online services along with our face-to-face delivery.

Fundraising is always difficult and this year has been particularly so. Thank you to our funders who helped us to bridge the gap and ensured we could continue to build and develop our services.

I'd like to thank my fellow Directors for giving generously of their time in supporting Anam Cara and as ever we are indebted to Sharon and her team for their continuing dedication and exceptional work in a very difficult year.



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Pat Cullen".

**PAT CULLEN**

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

# CEO'S FOREWORD

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Anam Cara started 2020 with enthusiasm and a focus on our newly launched 2020 – 2023 Strategic plan. However, 2020 turned out to be a year like no other as 'Covid 19' brought the island of Ireland to a halt. Our organisation faced, and overcame one of the biggest challenges since we set up in 2008.

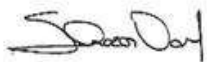
We moved quickly and effectively to deliver our support services online. Processes were written and training was undertaken. There was a lot of training and processes to be implemented to ensure the quality of online support matched that of our face-to-face supports. This ensured that Anam Cara could reach out and make sure vulnerable bereaved parents had access to the information and support, they needed to know they were not alone.

I truly believe that Anam Cara has emerged and grown to be a stronger organisation from this pandemic. One that is proficient and confident in delivering both online and face-to-face support services. With our newly introduced services including webinars, online support events, 1-2-1 support calls, Anam Cara is now accessible to every bereaved mother or father on the island of Ireland. This takes us a step closer to our vision.

Due to the collapse of fundraising in 2020, we are grateful to the generosity of our funders, who stepped in to help us continue doing what Anam Cara does best, providing information and support to families who have experienced the death of their child.

I am so proud and privileged to work with a great team of people connected to Anam Cara. These include the staff team, volunteer parents, professional facilitators and board members. By working together we have found new and innovative ways to continue delivering our support services to parents after the death of their child.

I look forward to both our online service and face-to-face service running alongside each other in 2021.



**SHARON VARD**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



# ANAM CARA NI CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

In more recent years Anam Cara in NI has been established on the same premise as Anam Cara for the rest of the Island. Board membership for Anam Cara in NI expanded in 2019 to include Sharon Vard, Jarleth Corrigan, Kevin Mc Callion, Heather Wells, Anne-Marie McClure and Michael Scott.

Our work continues with the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice. Communications, in the form of press releases were issued in 2020 to bolster awareness of Anam Cara and the groups in Belfast and Armagh. Open Strategic Communications continues to support the group on an ongoing and pro bono basis. When possible, we will work to secure structured links to the undertaker network in Northern Ireland.

The Armagh and Belfast groups continued to meet monthly. These meetings were face-to-face until the restrictions due to COVID-19 meant that this was no longer possible. The support meetings were then brought online. Kate Dornan, facilitator with the Belfast group, facilitated a combined group for all bereaved parents in Northern Ireland, and although the ideal setting for the support groups is face-to-face, during the very uncertain times we faced in 2020, the online meetings were appreciated and well supported.

We also welcomed our new facilitator for the Armagh Group, Nuala Gorman. Although the restrictions meant that Nuala didn't facilitate any meetings in 2020, she did participate in online training with the other Anam Cara facilitators from all of the other groups. Work is ongoing to develop and expand the number of Volunteer Parents. In the future, efforts will be made to consider expanding the offering of Parent Support Groups within Enniskillen, Ballymoney or the wider Newry area. Sibling support and a wider reach in Belfast will also be a key focus for the Northern Ireland Board in 2021.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all my fellow Board members, the Board and Staff at Anam Cara Dublin office, our facilitators and volunteer parents for their continued hard work and for making it possible to continue to provide services in such a challenging year. And we hope for a more recognisable year in 2021.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Scott'.

**MICHAEL SCOTT**

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD (NI)



*"I am relatively new to attending meetings but I feel a deeper sense of belonging as a bereaved parent from the few times that I attended"*

# ABOUT ANAM CARA

## THE NEED

Each year throughout the island of Ireland, on average \*2,750 families will experience the sudden or expected death of a son or daughter. This is the ultimate tragedy faced by parents. Alongside the devastating grief, many parents experience feelings of isolation, despair and very often loneliness. Some bereaved parents report that they self-isolate as they cannot face meeting people or continue living a normal life when their child cannot.

Sadly, self-isolation is not the only issue faced by bereaved parents. Many feel that friends, neighbours and sometimes extended family avoid them. This may be due to people not knowing what to say to a devastated bereaved parent which unintentionally causes more upset. This social exclusion has a serious knock on effect on the bereaved parent's self-esteem, confidence and mental health causing them to become more isolated.

## THE RESPONSE

To respond to this need Anam Cara, an all-Island organisation, was founded in 2008 by bereaved parents to ensure that all bereaved families in Ireland will have access to information and support following the death of their child.

We provide a wide range of bereavement support services, peer support and understanding to bereaved parents. Anam Cara's online and face-to-face services are available to all parents regardless of the age or circumstances of the child's death and are available for as long as the parents require them.

Anam Cara is unique. There is no other service like us in Ireland. We provide a level of support and understanding that other service providers cannot offer, as our bereavement as parents unites us.

We know and understand what a recently bereaved parent is going through. Therefore, we can offer peer support which is hugely beneficial and comforting to parents. We focus on the similarities of our loss rather than the differences and have found a level of support and understanding that others cannot offer.

\* Data from the Central Statistics Offices on registered deaths between the ages of 0 - 44 years (RoI/Ni)



## **OUR MISSION**

Anam Cara will make a difference and reduce isolation for bereaved families affected by the death of a child or children, regardless of the age of the child or circumstances of death.

Anam Cara will do this by providing easily accessible, quality support services, signposting and information through safe and secure online or face-to-face environments.

## **OUR PURPOSE**

Anam Cara provides a lifeline to parents through our on-line and face-to-face peer support services.

## **OUR VISION**

Every family throughout Ireland will have the relevant support services they need following the death of their son or daughter.

# OUR SERVICES

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Anam Cara has 12 established groups and 3 key partnerships on the island of Ireland. These currently provide a wide range of bereavement support services throughout our network including providing face-to-face support meetings in 12 locations, as well as 11 online support meetings, of which 3 are for parents living with no surviving children. Our commitment is to provide appropriate information, relevant resources, and peer support to parents who have experienced the death of a child.

Since 2008, Anam Cara has forged strong links with other frontline organisations and professionals in contact with bereaved parents. This ensures the best use of our funding and resources and avoids duplication of services in the community.

We believe Anam Cara provides a unique model of group support through our Volunteer Parent and Professional Facilitator roles. There is no other bereavement support service like us in Ireland, as we continue to provide a level of support and understanding that other service providers cannot offer.

Anam Cara has evolved since 2008, we have listened to our service users, taken on board their feedback, and made changes to our services to ensure we are meeting their needs. We will continue to do this and strive for best practice around everything we do.

Our commitment to good governance, training and development along with continuous improvement have been key factors in ensuring Anam Cara continues to be the organisation that bereaved parents can trust to provide them with appropriate information and support. In 2020, although the COVID-19 pandemic seriously impacted how we were able to deliver our services, we acted quickly to adapt our services to an online platform in record time.

Anam Cara understands that the death of a child, of any age, is a life-changing event for parents and surviving siblings. It's not just the absence of their child's physical presence that parents grieve, they also grieve for the future, the many milestones and family events they are missing. For that reason, Anam Cara's support services are available to parents for as long as they need them.



**Bereavement Information Evenings** provide bereaved parents with an opportunity to hear a mental health professional discuss parental grief and the challenges parents face after the death of a child. For those whose child suddenly dies outside a hospital or hospice setting, including from suicide, this is often their first encounter with any form of bereavement support. In 2020 we brought this service online with a tremendous response from parents.

**Anam Cara Parent Groups** meet monthly in a safe and comfortable setting and for most of 2020 this was in an online setting. These groups are led by a Professional Facilitator and Volunteer Parent who ensure the evening runs in accordance with Anam Cara's Core Values. Newly bereaved parents can connect with parents further along their journey. Hearing how they have coped through the early months of grief, gives them hope that they too will survive the tragic death of their child.

**Anam Cara Bereavement Support Meetings** for parents living with no surviving children. In 2020, we changed the format of the support we offer to this particularly vulnerable group of parents. We moved from a national single group offering to providing provincial meetings for these parents. During the COVID-19 restrictions, these meetings were provided in an online setting.

**Our Family Remembrance Events** give families, including siblings, an opportunity to remember, with others who understand the impact of grief and the adjustments required to find the resilience and strength to cope. These events allow families to remember their loved one in a meaningful way. In 2020, again due to the restrictions of the pandemic we were unable to offer services in a face-to-face setting and instead we ran a "Virtual Remembrance Event" with 374 families participating in the event.

**1-2-1 Support Calls** The COVID-19 restrictions impacted the way bereaved parents first accessed our services which was often a chat with the Professional Facilitator before a face-to-face meeting. We introduced the 1-2-1 support call to bridge this gap and make the online meeting as smooth and as comfortable as possible for all new parents.

**Anam Cara's Website** is updated regularly with information on our events and resources for parents to download. This includes important links to other organisations that provide information and support to bereaved parents.

**Bereavement Information Pack** includes 8 leaflets for bereaved families, including A Mother's grief, A Dad's Grief, Coping after the Sudden Death of your Child, Milestones and Challenges, Self Care, Supporting My Family, Adults grieving the death of a brother or sister, Living with no surviving children.

# 2020 AT A GLANCE

23 

We currently have 12 active Anam Cara Groups providing services to bereaved parents across the whole of the island of Ireland. In 2020, the restrictions imposed due to COVID 19 we moved online and now have 11 monthly support meetings with 3 regional meetings for parents living with no surviving children

1513 

1513 parents engaged with our services in 2020 across all of our support services: monthly parent support meetings both online and face-to-face; bereavement information and support evenings, family remembrance days and celebration of life events.

223 

We ran 223 events for bereaved parents in 2020 including both face-to-face and online monthly support meetings, Bereavement Information Events, a Family Remembrance Day as well as introducing a new 1-2-1 Support Call service.

185 

Of the 1513 people who engaged with us in 2020, 185 were attending an Anam Cara event for the first time.

8 

During 2020, we provided 8 support events for parents living with no surviving children, 1 face-to-face event and 7 regional online monthly support meetings with 52 parents attending (average 25 per event)

169 

In 2020 Anam Cara incurred expenditure of €256,046. The average cost per person engaged with our services was €169 per person.



# 2020 AT A GLANCE

3 

We currently have 3 Active Partnerships working with the Milford Care Centre in Limerick, the Solas Centre in Waterford, and the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice. And although we did not run any collaborative events in 2020 but will do as soon as we can.

38 

Our 13 Professional Facilitators and our 25 Volunteer Parents attended a variety of training programmes including our own bespoke training programme as well as skills training in facilitating online meetings.

158 

In Q1 2020, we continued our successful Bereavement Support Evenings in collaboration with Féileacáin and Pieta House with meetings in Dublin and Cork. Due to restrictions we were not able to progress this partnership face-to-face but in November we ran an online Bereavement Support Evening with 105 participants in attendance.

1650 

In 2020, we distributed 1650 Information Packs. These packs are often the very first support that a bereaved parent receives in their grief journey.

3 

In 2020 we began building the foundations for three additional Anam Cara groups for parents living with no surviving children, one in Leinster, one in Ulster and one in Munster. These are currently online but we plan to run face-to-face events for this vulnerable group as soon as is possible

2880 

2,880 people viewed our new suite of support videos, produced in response to the restrictions and lockdown in March 2020. These videos were intended to offer support and comfort to any bereaved parent as we had to cancel all face-to-face events.

# ACTIVITIES IN 2020

## THE CHALLENGE: CONTINUING SERVICES DURING A GLOBAL PANDMEIC



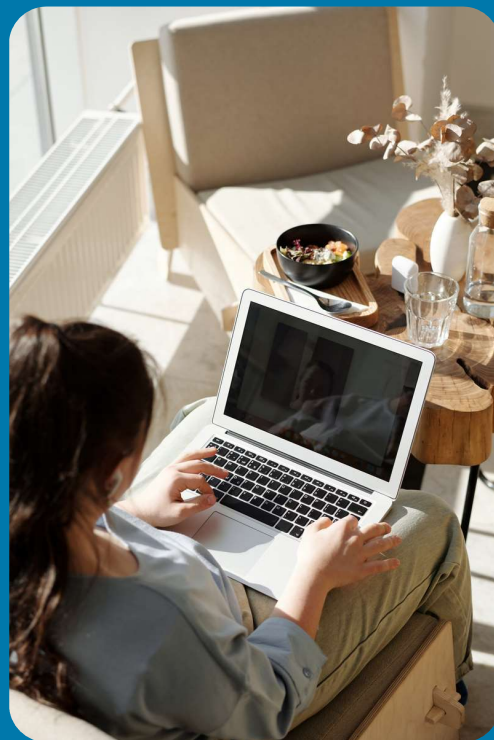
2020 was a year like no other. We started the year with a full calendar of events scheduled and with hopes to expand our support groups from 12 to 14 locations and to collaborate with other specialist organisations to ensure bereaved parents would be able to access the information and support they needed after the death of their son or daughter.

On 13th March 2020 Ireland began to implement restrictions and on March 27th we had our first full lockdown due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. All Anam Cara Face to Face group events had to be suspended as the pandemic and social distancing restrictions became our new normal.

## MOVING SERVICES ONLINE

The uncertainty that came with the rapid development and devastating impact of the COVID-19 Virus was felt by everyone in the country. However, as a bereavement support service it was vital that we moved quickly to support the bereaved parents who used our service and indeed, sadly, make provision to support those who would become bereaved parents over the course of the pandemic too.

As a very small team with a traditional face-to-face service delivery system, we were not set-up for providing online support. The lockdown and restrictions meant that our team had to move to working from home. We quickly set about upskilling and developing support services that could be delivered online so that bereaved parents could continue to get the support they needed from Anam Cara in a safe environment and in line with our core values.



# ACTIVITIES IN 2020

## NEW PARENT SUPPORT MEETING FOR PARENTS LIVING WITH NO SURVIVING CHILDREN

Due to demand in the Munster area, and with no options to provide face-to-face services, we created a new online parent support group in May 2020 for parents living with no surviving children.

Part of our 2020-23 Strategy was to develop services for this extremely vulnerable group of parents and we were delighted that access to the online platforms allowed us to develop this service.

In the Autumn of 2020, we launched another meeting for parents living with no surviving children in Ulster. Both meetings have been well received and they provide a space for parents whose only child has died to meet with other parents who know and understand this unique sorrow and grief.



## OUR MONTHLY ONLINE PARENT SUPPORT MEETINGS



One of the biggest challenges we faced was how to run our monthly Parent Support Meetings online. We had no experience working in online settings as all of our meetings and events were provided in a face-to-face setting prior to the pandemic.

Our team assessed the various online platforms, upskilled to learn to use the Zoom, the chosen platform. We then developed a training programme for our Professional Facilitators so that they could confidently run their meetings online.

We launched our monthly online meetings in May 2020 with 3 groups serving Dublin, Cork and Tipperary & Kerry. By June we had trained 8 of our Professional Facilitators and we were able to offer monthly online support groups serving all our parent groups across the island of Ireland.

Whilst this was new territory for everyone across the world and meeting online didn't always have the personal touches that the face-to-face settings, our meetings were well attended and those attending really appreciated that we were able to offer continued support.

# ACTIVITIES IN 2020

## ONLINE VIDEO RESOURCES

When the country went into lockdown first in March 2020, we really had no idea what the road ahead would be like but we did know that the parents who used and depended on our services as well as any newly bereaved parents would need support from us in some way. One of the first things we did was to produce a new suite of bereavement support video vignettes, with Bird Carroll, for bereaved parents



## BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT EVENINGS



In 2019, we had introduced our new Bereavement Support Evenings service which we had run in conjunction with Pieta and Feileacain. These meetings allowed parents attending to listen to a bereavement specialist speak about the bereavement journey for parents specifically and they could then break into smaller groups to get more information and support from the organisation that was most relevant to their needs.

We were lucky to have been able to run two of these meetings in a face-to-face setting before the country went into lockdown. The challenge then for us was to bring these meetings online in the Autumn. We ran one of these Bereavement Support Evenings in November 2020 which saw a huge uptake from bereaved parents and we intend to continue with these meetings into 2021.

## 1-2-1 SUPPORT CALLS

One of the most important aspects of our face-to-face group meetings is the cup of tea and informal chat before the meeting starts. This gives any parent attending the meetings for the first time the opportunity to meet with the Professional Facilitator and the Volunteer Parents and feel a connection with the group. COVID restrictions and having to utilise online meetings took away this ability to connect in this warm, open and personal way.

In an attempt to create this connection for new parents we developed the 1-2-1 Support Call service so that parents coming for the first time would have at least one 1-2-1 Support Call with the Professional Facilitator ahead of attending their first online meeting. This service has proven to be very beneficial for parents who are new to the Anam Cara Services





# ACTIVITIES IN 2020

## ANNUAL TRAINING & REVIEW DAY 2020



As part of Anam Cara's ongoing commitment to providing quality services to bereaved parents, we also run a Training & Review workshop for our Professional Facilitators and Volunteer Parents. This is a great opportunity for all those involved in delivering the monthly Parent Support Meetings to come together to learn and to share and to work on any areas for improvement that may have come up in our annual parent satisfaction survey. This workshop is normally a large face-to-gathering however due to the COVID-19 restrictions we were not able to hold a face-to-face event.

Rather than postpone the event, we decided to take this training event online. Given the uncertain times that we were living through and looking forward to when we would be able to host face-to-face events again it was vitally important that the Professional Facilitators and the Volunteer Parents were equipped and ready to work with parents post COVID-19 restrictions and to be aware of the impact these restrictions will have had on bereaved parents both newly bereaved and those who have been bereaved for some time. The topics for the training were Working with Disenfranchised Grief and Supporting Bereaved Parents Post COVID-19.

## ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE DAY 2020

Every year Anam Cara holds our National Remembrance Event on the first Saturday of November. It is an opportunity for parents and their families to come together and remember, honour, and celebrate their loved ones.

It is a time to hear the stories from some of the parents who are further in their journey with Anam Cara and to find hope in their words. So it was with a heavy heart that we had to cancel our planned face-to-face gathering in Athlone this year, due to the restrictions in place due to COVID 19.

However, recognising the importance, for families, to be able to remember their child in this difficult month of November, the Anam Cara team decided to take the 2020 Anam Cara Remembrance event online.

We directed bereaved parents and their families to our website where we had a carousel for the names of the children we remembered and the Anam Cara 2020 Remembrance Book for families to place messages for their child. We chose a beautiful song and a special reflection for the families to listen to.

The families that registered received a 'Remembrance Card' that was personalized with the name of their child and a beautiful poem on the back. They also received a wildflower seed pack to plant in honour of their child. Over 360 people registered for this event and we hope they felt supported on the day.



# OUR STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

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Anam Cara was officially launched in 2008. The main focus of the first eight years was to build support systems and to develop the services including the geographic expansion across the island of Ireland, while maintaining service quality.

There has been a very strong growing focus on governance, particularly relating to the development of best practice, with the drafting and implementation of policies and protocols to safeguard all stakeholders, especially parents and volunteers.

Anam Cara has ensured that all bereaved parents can access appropriate quality support and information, free of charge, and we remain committed to achieving this goal even as the need for our services continues to rise.

In August 2019, we commenced the development of our fourth strategic plan with UpThink Innovation agency. The aim was to review the existing plan and objectives and reflect on what direction and focus to take for our journey to 2022.

2020 was a year like no other due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A year that started off with big plans for the organisation was brought to a crashing halt in March 2020. And while it took a short while to pick up and start moving with online services, Anam Cara took on the challenge and continued to press on with meeting the goals set out in the 2020-2022. Most notable was our achievements on Goal 6: Review our delivery channels and how we connect and new methods of delivery including online as a means of support.

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns and restrictions left us with no option but to provide services online and to think creatively to ensure that bereaved parents were able to access the support and services that they needed. As we approached the end of 2020 there was no end in sight to the restrictions and the importance of our online services was highlighted as more and more parents attended our online events, many who had not engaged earlier in the year.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS 2020-22

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## **Strategic Goal 1:**

Evaluate our business model options to allow us to expand our reach, develop new services, explore education and research, build on partnerships and evaluate new delivery mechanisms.

## **Strategic Goal 2:**

Review the organisational structure and put in place the succession plans for key executive roles.

## **Strategic Goal 3:**

Recruit an experienced fundraising specialist for the role of Director of Fundraising whose role will include creating a financially stable, long-term, sustaining able business model together with developing a Fundraising Strategy.

## **Strategic Goal 4:**

Communicate achievements and agreed strategic plan to our beneficiaries, stakeholders and collaborators and increase awareness of the Anam Cara brand.

## **Strategic Goal 5:**

Expand our reach through the development of local partnerships and collaborations with similar organisations that have aligned values, creating better outcomes for bereaved parents and their families.

## **Strategic Goal 6:**

Review our delivery channels and how we connect and new methods of delivery including online as a means of support.

## **Strategic Goal 7:**

Capture and document Anam Cara's domain expertise, evidence, data and knowledge. Expand research both domestically and internationally to share our thought leadership.

# WHAT THE PARENTS SAY

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In May 2020, a survey was sent out to 1,420 parents and an overwhelming 332 responses were received. This survey produced a 23% response rate and had more than a 50% increase on 2019. The purpose of the survey was to gain feedback and insights from bereaved parents about the Anam Cara events and groups.

95% of responded that they were satisfied or very satisfied with Anam Cara activities.

96% are satisfied or very satisfied with the Family Day and Remembrance Events.

95% are satisfied or very satisfied with Parent Evenings or Bereavement Information Evenings.

Being able to talk openly about their child and feeling that others understood them were the two leading benefits, identified by parents, of attending Anam Cara services. Support for upcoming milestones, better coping with day-to-day challenges and coping with feelings of isolation all being high scoring benefits of availing of our services.

The data from the 2020 Parent Survey was analysed by Dr. Ingrid Holme, Research Fellow, School of Sociology at UCD and this analysis will inform an Impact Report that Dr. Holme will produce for Anam Cara in early 2021.





*"I have experienced a feeling of solidarity  
with others who are bereaved"*

*"Feeling like I am amongst friends even  
though they are strangers who I know very  
little about. I know their first names only, yet  
I feel like I can totally be myself and stop  
pretending to be ok"*

*"I felt supported in so many ways"*

*"Our other children in particular benefit  
greatly from social events  
run by Anam Cara"*

*"It is safe place and being able to talk  
openly is very very important."*

# FUNDRAISING IN 2020

The global COVID-19 pandemic with the resulting lockdowns and restrictions had a huge and devastating impact on fundraising in 2020, both for Anam Cara's own fundraising events as well as for any public fundraising activities. The impact of this meant that income from fundraising was down to less than 25% of that raised in 2019.

We would like to thank all those who did manage to raise funds for us in 2020 through donations online, through text donations, from running events like personal sponsored events, coffee mornings and other fundraising events. Given the exceptional times we were all living through it really meant so much to us that people continued to support our work when life for everyone in the country was very tough. Your continued support meant everything. We look forward to better times.

## ANAM CARA FUNDRAISING LUNCHES



Our fundraising lunches, Cork in April and Dublin in November are two big dates in the Anam Cara calendar. Both of these fundraising lunches have proven to be hugely successful year-on-year and are always something to look forward to. However, in 2020, both of these events had to be sadly cancelled. We hope to be in a position to host these wonderful events in 2021 and we are very grateful to the organisations and individuals who supported us financially at the event times despite us not being able to come together.

## VHI MINI MARATHON

This year, the Women's Mini Marathon was also impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions. An innovative virtual Mini Marathon took place from the 1st - 10th October allowing women from all over the country to do their 10K their way. We were delighted that the ladies across Ireland took to the streets and raised much needed funds in support of our work.

Over €6,300 was raised, with many kilometres completed and for that, we are so grateful. Thank you all again and thank you too to Mary Kennedy for her support in raising awareness of our cause. Hopefully next year, we can all be together in Merrion Square and Doheny and Nesbitts afterwards!





*"I am relatively new to attending meetings but I feel a deeper sense of belonging as a bereaved parent from the few times that I attended"*



# INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT

## ANAM CARA PARENTAL AND SIBLING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

#### TO THE MEMBERS OF ANAM CARA PARENTAL AND SIBLING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

##### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Anam Cara Parental and Sibling Bereavement Support Company Limited by Guarantee (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2014, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland*.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland*; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

##### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the Ireland, including the Ethical Standard issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

##### Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

##### Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.



# ANAM CARA PARENTAL AND SIBLING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

### TO THE MEMBERS OF ANAM CARA PARENTAL AND SIBLING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

#### Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the directors' Report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

#### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of our obligation under the Companies Act 2014 to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions specified by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made.

#### Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the statement of directors' responsibilities, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

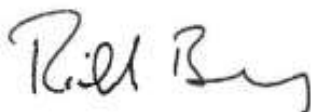
#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the IAASA's website at: [http://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditing-standards/International-Standards-on-Auditing-for-use-in-Ireland/International-Standards-on-Auditing-\(Ireland\)/ISA-700-\(Ireland\)](http://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditing-standards/International-Standards-on-Auditing-for-use-in-Ireland/International-Standards-on-Auditing-(Ireland)/ISA-700-(Ireland)). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Richard Berney  
for and on behalf of UHY Farrelly Dawe White Limited

Certified Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditor

Unit 4A

Fingal Bay Business Park

Balbriggan

Co. Dublin

20/10/2021

# EXTRACTS FROM ACCOUNTS

## ANAM CARA PARENTAL AND SIBLING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

		Unrestricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020	Total 2019
	Notes	€	€	€	€
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and gifts	3	53,103	-	53,103	179,759
Charitable activities	3	42,500	154,029	196,529	109,858
Investments	4	2,130	-	2,130	1,063
<b>Total income</b>		<b>97,733</b>	<b>154,029</b>	<b>251,762</b>	<b>290,680</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	1,331	-	1,331	8,174
Charitable activities	6	94,616	160,099	254,715	288,989
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>95,947</b>	<b>160,099</b>	<b>256,046</b>	<b>297,163</b>
<b>Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers</b>		<b>1,786</b>	<b>(6,070)</b>	<b>(4,284)</b>	<b>(6,483)</b>
Transfers between funds		(4,288)	4,288	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(2,502)</b>	<b>(1,782)</b>	<b>(4,284)</b>	<b>(6,483)</b>
Fund balances at 1 January 2020		433,018	1,782	434,800	441,283
<b>Fund balances at 31 December 2020</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>430,516</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>430,516</b>	<b>434,800</b>

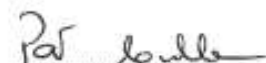
**ANAM CARA PARENTAL AND SIBLING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT  
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**BALANCE SHEET**

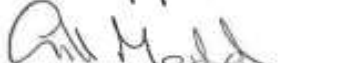
**AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	Notes	2020 €	€	2019 €	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Intangible assets	10		2,301		4,533
Tangible assets	11		2,330		3,190
Investments	12		250,000		50,000
			<u>254,631</u>		<u>57,723</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	13	1,125		1,777	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>225,111</u>		<u>392,177</u>	
		226,236		393,954	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(50,351)		(16,877)	
Net current assets			<u>175,885</u>		<u>377,077</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>430,516</u>		<u>434,800</u>
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	18		-		1,782
Unrestricted funds	18		<u>430,516</u>		<u>433,018</u>
			<u>430,516</u>		<u>434,800</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 20/10/2021



Patrick Cullen  
Director



Gill Madden  
Director

Company Registration No. 452644

# WELCOME TO OUR TEAM

## Our Board of Directors



**Pat Cullen**  
*Chairperson ROI*



**Valerie O'Riordan**  
*Director ROI*



**Dr. Amanda Roberts**  
*Director ROI*



**Gill Madden**  
*Director ROI*



**Tony Mahon**  
*Director ROI*



**Tadgh O'Sullivan**  
*Director ROI*



**Rory Coll**  
*Director ROI*



**Jarlath Corrigan**  
*Director ROI & NI*

Company Secretarial services provided by: Goodbody Secretarial Limited



**Mike Scott**  
*Chairperson NI*



**Kevin McCallion**  
*Director NI*



**Heather Wells**  
*Director NI*



**Anne-marie McClure**  
*Director NI*

# Our Staff



**Sharon Vard**  
*Chief Executive Officer*



**Leanne Milligan**  
*Communications &  
Operations Coordinator*



**Niamh Farrell**  
*Administration Coordinator*



**Karen O'Shea**  
*Fundraising Manager*

## Company Information

### Republic of Ireland:

Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support Ltd is a company limited by guarantee but not having share capital. It is registered in Ireland with the Companies Registration office.

**Companies Registration Office Number:** 452644

We are a not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity with Revenue and with the Charities Regulator.

**CHY (Revenue) Number:** 18073

**Registered Charity Number (RCN):** 20068592

### Northern Ireland:

Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support Northern Ireland is a company limited by guarantee but not having a share capital. It is registered in the UK with Companies House.

**Company number:** NI650439

Anam Cara NI has applied for registration as a charity in Northern Ireland with The Charity Commission Northern Ireland.



# CHANGES IN PERSONNEL 2020

## BOARD CHANGES

At our AGM in December, we said goodbye to two of our longest standing Board members, Carmel Battigan and John Mullins.

Carmel has been with Anam Cara since the very inception of the organisation and John almost as long as that too. Their understanding of our values and of what we set out to do, along with their guidance and ongoing support have been invaluable to Anam Cara and to the growth and development of the organisation.

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to both and we hope that they will always feel like part of the Anam Cara family and we wish them the very best for the future.



In December, we also welcomed Dr. Amanda Roberts to the Board. Amanda has worked in a bereavement development role with the Irish Hospice Foundation since 2017 where she collaborates with bereavement services on both a national and regional level to help develop best practice in bereavement care in Ireland.



We also welcomed Goodbody Secretarial Limited who will be providing pro-bono company secretarial services for the charity.

A&L Goodbody

## STAFF CHANGES

We are delighted to welcome Karen O'Shea to the Anam Cara Team to head up our Fundraising and Communications moving forward.

Karen will have responsibility for funding opportunities that arise through both government and corporate bodies along with raising the profile of Anam Cara nationwide. We wish her the very best of luck in this exciting role.



And sadly, in September, Orla Demspey, our Groups Administrator, left the organisation. We thank her for everything she brought to her role and to Anam Cara and we wish her the very best for her future.



# OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our work at Anam Cara would not be possible without the tireless work of our volunteers. These include our Volunteer Parents who have already been mentioned in this annual report.

Currently we have 34 Volunteer Parents, who themselves are bereaved parents, and have availed of Anam Cara support after the death of their child. It is their kind and gentle presence at the Anam Cara groups that sets Anam Cara apart and ensures we offer a unique and effective bereavement support service.

These altruistic volunteers understand the devastation and despair recently bereaved parents are experiencing and reach out to help these parents as they start their own tough journey through grief.



There are also other volunteers connected to Anam Cara, these include extended family and friends who help us run various events throughout the year, including our Anam Cara Family Days throughout the country and fundraising events.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to all our volunteers, your time and kindness throughout 2020 is very much appreciated especially given how exceptionally difficult the year was.



# OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Government bodies, local authorities, foundations, organisations and companies who have supported us in 2020. We were the beneficiaries of many Covid grants including Galway, Kerry, Tipperary and Dublin County Councils, Siol Foundation, HSE National Lottery Funding, The Ireland Funds and Bank of Ireland Begin Together Award as well as RTE Does Comic Relief.

A special word of thanks to Pobal for their continued and extra support this year and to the Healy Group, who welcome us each and every day in our complementary office space. Without your support especially the additional COVID-19 supports the work we do would not be possible.







*"Anam Car helped me cope through the worst most painful times of my life . It was super to meet parents further down the road and it gave me hope that despite the detestation I could survive"*



### ***Republic of Ireland***

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**T:** +44 (0)28 95213120





*"Anam Cara has benefitted me as in the early days of my bereavement I just went to the meetings and listened as I wasn't in a position to talk but gradually I was able to add my voice and my experience. I always felt very welcome and reminded myself that we all shared the same loss"*