



**TRUSTEE'S & DIRECTOR'S REPORT  
& FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**FOR THE PERIOD 1 January – 31 December 2009**

# POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

## Charity & Company Information

### Charity Name

Post Polio Support Group

### Registered Charity Number

CHY 11356

### Company Number

354283

### Trustees

The members of the Board of Trustees & Directors are listed on page 4

### Registered Office

The Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street  
DUBLIN 7

### Administrative Office

Unit 319, Capel Building, Mary's Abbey,  
DUBLIN 7

### Chief Executive

Eamonn Farrell

### Bankers

Allied Irish Bank, 126 – 128 Capel Street,  
DUBLIN 1

### Solicitors

Lacy Walsh Solicitors, 77 Strand Road,  
Sandymount, DUBLIN 4

### Auditors

BMOL Partners,  
19 Herbert Street,  
DUBLIN 2

# POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

## List of Trustees & Directors

1. The following were Trustees & Directors of the Group on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009

**Officers:**

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Hugh Hamilton     | Chairman          |
| John R. McFarlane | Deputy-Chair      |
| Paula Lahiff      | Company Secretary |
| Clara Dunne       | Treasurer         |

Joan Bradley  
Ann Burns  
Hugh Conlon  
Jim Costello  
Bridie Mc Mahon  
Seamus Ó Cinnéide  
Eamon Porter  
Evelyn Wainwright  
Hugh Weir

2. In accordance with the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association one third of the Board of Directors are due to retire at the AGM in 2010 but may be eligible for re-election. They are:

Hugh Hamilton  
Paula Lahiff  
Seamus Ó Cinnéide  
Evelyn Wainwright

# POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

## Report of the Trustees & Directors

For the period 1 January – 31 December 2009

The Trustees & Directors of the Post Polio Support Group, Charity & Company limited by guarantee, present their report for the period ended 31 December 2009.

### **Mission Statement:**

Our Mission is to create awareness and to provide information regarding the late effects of polio among Polio Survivors, statutory agencies and the wider medical profession, and to ensure that the needs of Polio Survivors relating to their condition are met to enable them to live with dignity.

The Post Polio Support Group is committed to supporting its members and other Polio Survivors and developing its Board, staff and volunteers to achieve the most efficient use of its resources.

### **Structure, Governance and Management:**

As a consequence of the Group's incorporation as a company limited by guarantee in 2002, the Trustees act as Directors of the charitable company. The Board meets at least six times per year.

Directors are elected by national ballot of members and serve for a period of 3 (three) years, and then may be eligible for re-election. Officers may not serve for more than 4 (four) consecutive years in any given position.

Any member of the Group may be nominated for election as director.

The Directors act at all times within the law and, in particular, the constraints of the legislative provisions for companies laid down by the Oireachtas and are aware of their duties, responsibilities and liabilities arising.

The Board appoints Committees to assist with particular aspects of its work, at least one Director sitting on each Committee. The purpose of the Committees is to assist the Board by carrying out certain of its functions and maintain oversight in relevant areas and report regularly to the Board. These Committees may be attended by a member of staff to provide executive support or on request.

The Committees in existence at 31<sup>st</sup> December were;

**Ethics and Benefits**

**Compliance and Governance**

**Social Support**

**Fundraising**

Ad Hoc Sub-Committees may be established from time to time for specific projects or purposes.

The day-to-day management of the Group business is delegated to the Chief Executive, with other staff members reporting through that position to the Board.

## **Objectives and Activities – 2009:**

The Group continues to experience rapid change in the support and assistance work it undertakes for all Polio Survivors. It is guided by its strategic plan PLAN2010 which runs until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010.

### **PROGRAMME Awareness and Information**

Creating awareness has been a feature of the Group's work and, while all elements have been targeted, there has been particular focus on Polio Survivors, their family members and on those medical staffs which support and treat Post Polio Syndrome

In early 2009 the Group worked with RTE producers on a programme in the OUTBREAK series which was shown in June on RTE 1. It featured three Polio Survivors who told their stories which were treated in a dignified manner. People have contacted the Group offices following this and all publicity initiatives

The website has become a powerful tool to provide information to Polio Survivors, their families, their carers and medical professionals. It has become an important means of information sharing with Polio Survivors and in particular those abroad. The SURVIVOR has been published regularly and to a high standard and has been shown, in a survey carried out shortly after the launch of PLAN2010, to be a key element for maintaining contact with Polio Survivors

"Post Polio Syndrome – Management and Treatment in Primary Care" has been widely distributed nationally. This publication has been circulated in CD format to GPs and to Chartered Physiotherapists and, additionally, in hard copy to those requesting it. It has been provided to libraries particularly those with medical and nursing schools. Internationally it has been distributed to companion organisations and to institutes and libraries with emphasis on medical and social science faculties at third level. Permissions have been granted for reprints where requested by companion groups overseas including a recent request to translate it into Spanish. Each member has received at least two copies for personal information and distribution to local practitioners.

The Group actively promotes, through the European Polio Union, initiatives to conduct large scale research into Post Polio Syndrome. Smaller scale research is promoted locally. Ms Deirdre Murray is a Senior Physiotherapist in the Polio Clinic in Beaumont Hospital. She has started researching "The impact of Cardiovascular and Inspiratory Muscle Training on Energy Cost of Walking and Fatigue in Prior Polio", part funded by the Group, and with the co operation of many Polio Survivors

Funding to engage additional staff resources has been secured from State and other sources to assist with this work. From October 2007 until May 2009 an outreach worker, activated Polio Survivors in North Dublin city and county, conducted development and other group activities to promote the emergence of self sustaining peer support in the area. Since March 2008 a regional support officer has been working throughout Ireland to develop a network to facilitate the provision of peer supports, principally through face to face meetings. A number of new groups have been formed and existing ones invigorated. The regional support officer has been active in nurturing and mentoring groups as they are formed and assisting and facilitating their development. Currently there are 20 social support groups in existence at various stages of development. Some are mature and, by and large, self sufficient, others are getting a considerable amount of development guidance to organise and structure themselves for growth and increasing effectiveness

Telephone support networks throughout the country have been developed. An initial sponsorship has ended and this support is now being funded and structured for its long term survival. A programme has been drawn up for social support development to impact all areas of the country and provide opportunities for peer support to all Polio Survivors.

The membership has shown a net increase over the year from 792 to 816. A new category of life membership was introduced in 2009 which was taken up by some 300 of the membership

## **PROGRAMME Support for Polio Survivors**

There has been very little activity in building adaptation. The process within the Local Authorities is slow and bureaucratic and requires patience. In 2008 revised grant regimes were put in place limiting the amounts to be granted and placing income restrictions on applicants. On the face of it these arrangements should have facilitated the most needy, in line with the voted expenditure, but in mid 2009 the funding for the schemes was withdrawn, the only exceptions being made by the local authorities were in cases of acute medical necessity. The Group has advocated for some members who were able to meet the strict criteria. The difficult banking environment has caused some people problems in securing adequate credit. None the less the Group managed to assist a number of members with advice and practical help particularly where there was manifest hardship.

Approximately 100 Polio Survivors have been assisted with aids and appliances. Provision can be quite basic in some cases but range to the provision of complex solutions working closely with the HSE, occupational therapists, and equipment providers. Occupational therapy assessments are the bases for the provision of the more complex solutions for Polio Survivors. Such assessments are conducted using community Occupational Therapists and private Occupational Therapists, where appropriate. Polio Survivors have been supplied with aids and appliances by the HSE, also, and the Group does not have records of this provision.

Some 90 Polio Survivors have availed of physiotherapy grants (incl. physical and massage therapies, hydrotherapy and acupuncture) over the plan period. Many Polio Survivors can and do avail of this service through the HSE though it can be administratively difficult to access it.

Increasing numbers of Polio Survivors have availed of occupational therapy. The services of community occupational therapists were availed of, where possible. The Group provided grants to assess more than 40 Polio Survivors in 2009. The Group does not record the number availing of HSE Occupational Therapists

Grants for counselling were offered, when needed, during intervention by the Group or at the request of the Polio Survivor. 12 Polio Survivors availed of counselling grants in 2009 an increase of 50% on the previous year.

Some 90 Polio Survivors have availed of grants for respite care breaks each year over the plan period. A feature of 2009 has been the decrease in hotel rates and the increase in the number taking a respite break to attend the annual conference

A programme to offer chiropody grants to Polio Survivors has been maintained with nearly 50 grants being made in 2009. Many Polio Survivors can and do avail of this service through the HSE though it can be administratively difficult to access it. Heating grants have been offered, from fundraising income, to some members of the Group.

There is a rehabilitation strategy working group set up under the aegis of the Department of Health and Children and the HSE to make recommendations on the provision of rehabilitative supports to people with disabilities. The Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) is part of the consultation process and has included the Group by providing it with a place on its consultative group. The report of this committee is in its final draft stages

## **PROGRAMME Advocacy**

The current Minister of State for Disability and Mental Health, Mr John Moloney, personally accepted the final report of the outreach worker in North Dublin in 2009

The Group has been active in the work of the European Polio Union to advance issues for Polio Survivors within the EU and has engaged, successfully, with the Irish MEPs to gain their assistance in this endeavour

The Group is active in the work of the disability sector particularly that of the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) and the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI). It keeps itself informed on issues in the sector and new data sources which emerge

## **PROGRAMME Management and Systems**

Such opportunities that presented themselves, generally at the political level, have been used to advance the Group's policy agenda. Face to face meetings with HSE administrative staff have been infrequent. Proposed consultative arrangements are monitored, working principally with DFI.

The Group actively engaged with arrangements by the HSE to introduce service level agreements and grant aid agreements, as appropriate. A number of grant aid agreements have been signed in respect of 2009 but the service level agreement and its associated schedules have not yet been signed with the principal funding office

A comprehensive Assessment of Needs study was carried out in 2009 which resulted in refinement of the Group's process and was designed, following internal review, to better target the resources of the Group by prioritising those most in need and those less well equipped to resolve their situations

The financial control procedures for the Group were collated in 2009

Fundraising declined in 2009. This was due to factors in the economy, generally. A central meeting, supplemented by local gatherings, was conducted to stimulate fundraising and has encouraged new initiatives, most notably enhanced church gate collections which generated considerable funds. Fundraising income is not at the level of earlier years and not expected to improve in the foreseeable future. Steps were put in place to enhance the fundraising capacity of the Group

The Common Assessment Framework was adopted as the assurance mechanism of choice to ensure compliance and good governance. An assessment on the Group's work in 2008 was carried out in 2009 and a number of recommendations made to improve the Group processes and implementation of improvements has started. The process was led independently of the Board.

A system of review of the four functional committees has been completed. The Committee structure has been changed to monitor the work of the Group more effectively and develop the structures that are required to comply with changing regulatory environments. The, formerly, Governance and Nominations Committee (now the Compliance and Governance Committee) continues to advise the Board on governance issues and has provided revised the Terms of Reference for the new Committee structure. An ethics policy is at a late stage of development

All cost areas have been critically examined and economies instituted, where possible, with accommodation, services and suppliers. Group Skills development training was conducted in 2008. Work on developing guidance for those leading in social support has been underway for some time and notes in a loose leaf folder were produced in 2009. A programme of training for those providing telephone support was provided in 2009.

The Board has been briefed regularly on the progress of PLAN2010 and has started the process of consultation to evolve a successor plan. The Board of Directors is committed to maintaining sufficient income to meet the needs of Polio Survivors in real terms. Close liaison with the various Statutory Authorities, principally the Health Service Executive (HSE), is maintained and the Group works in partnership with all its funding bodies to accomplish its objectives. The Group fully acknowledges all funding bodies and thanks the HSE, in particular for all the help and co-operation received in the continuance of its work.

### **Charities Act 2009:**

The Group has studied with interest the discussion around the contents of the proposed Charities Act. The Group will continue its study in this area to ensure that it will be able to meet the requirements of any forthcoming legislation.

### **Staff Welfare:**

The staff complement was five during 2009 but decreased to four in May. The Directors, and the members, of the Group are extremely grateful for the professionalism, dedication and commitment of the staff at all levels.

The Group complies with the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts, 1989 and 2005 and other personnel related legislation.