



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

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

**FOR THE PERIOD 1 January – 31 December 2010**

# 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 2010

**Officers:**

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

Joan Bradley  
Ann Burns  
Jim Costello  
Bridie Mc Mahon  
Seamus Ó Cinnéide  
Evelyn Wainwright  
Hugh Hamilton

Hugh Weir and Eamon Porter retired during 2010

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 2011 but may be eligible for re-election. They are:

Joan Bradley  
Anne Burns  
Jim Costello  
Bridie Mc Mahon

# POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

## Report of the Trustees & Directors

For the period 1 January – 31 December 2010

The Trustees & Directors of the Post Polio Support Group, Charity & Company limited by guarantee, present their report for the period ended 31 December 2010.

### **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 – 2010:**

The Group continues to experience rapid change in the support and assistance work it undertakes for all Polio Survivors. It was guided by its strategic plan PLAN2010 which ran until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010 and its general thrust was subsumed into NEW HORIZON – Plan2015. This new strategic document drilled down into certain areas considered key to the future development of the Group.

### **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. There is a strong emphasis on the SURVIVOR as the medium of choice for disseminating information to Polio Survivors. Three issues were produced in 2010, the third in A5 format to reduce cost of postage but maintain the same amount of content.

The Group has built on the success of its Ring Ring and Phonechat initiatives to encourage and develop more telephone contact between Polio Survivors. A support system and a training course have been organized in 2010, the first of three such regional efforts to broaden the reach of Ring Ring and encompass more Polio Survivors.

The Group's primer on the condition; "Post Polio Syndrome – Management and Treatment in Primary Care" has been widely distributed nationally. Each member has received at least two copies for both personal information and distribution to local practitioners. A second reprint of this book was done in 2010 and in addition two new information leaflets, A3 and A1 posters. In addition a book entitled "Post Polio Support Group - Polio Survivors helping each other" was produced for the information of those who have taken up leadership roles in the organisation.

The website has become a powerful tool to provide information to Polio Survivors, their families, their carers and medical professionals. There has been great interest not alone in Ireland but worldwide, particularly in English speaking countries.

A conference attended by some 250 Polio Survivors, family and friends was held in Limerick in May with a strong educational influence. The main speaker was Frans Nollet M.D., Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Amsterdam and medical adviser to the European Polio Union.

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 is currently 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 carried out with the co operation of many Polio Survivors

A programme for social support development to impact all areas of the country is in its third year and has provided opportunities for peer support to many Polio Survivors. This work has been funded by the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs. 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 21 social support groups in existence at various stages of development. Many are mature and, by and large, self sufficient, others still require some mentoring for guidance to structure themselves properly.

Press releases have been issued regularly and events conducted to generate media interest. Every mention on TV, radio and in local or national newspapers generates enquires to the Group from Polio Survivors or their friend and family members. The membership has shown a net increase over the year from 816 to 844.

## **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. The Group has advocated for some members who were able to meet the strict criteria. The Group managed to assist a number of members with advice and practical help particularly where there was manifest hardship.

Approximately 66 Polio Survivors have been assisted with aids and appliances. Provision can be quite basic in some cases but frequently engenders complex solutions working closely with the Health Service Executive (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. Certain Polio Survivors have purchased aids and appliances from their own resources or have had items supplied by the HSE and the Group does not have records of this provision.

Some 20 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.

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 some 38 Polio Survivors in 2010. 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. 11 Polio Survivors availed of counselling grants in 2009 an increase of 50% on the previous year.

Some 100 Polio Survivors have availed of grants for respite care breaks each year over the plan period. A feature of 2010 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 12 grants being made in 2010. 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 220 members of the Group.

A graduated programme to increase the autonomy of the membership has commenced. A concentrated effort is being made to encourage members with the talents necessary to develop the organisation to come forward. They are being gathered in seminar settings to devise future developments. The Board will retain overall direction of the activity but members will have increasing autonomy starting with areas such as social support, public relations and fundraising subject to proper financial control and audit. The process has started with the empowerment of Dublin Mid Leinster plus Dublin North East, representing nearly 500 members. A co-operative initiative involving Board members, supported from the office, will work with the new structures to support the devolution of functions assisting the enhancement of local implementation where possible.

## **PROGRAMME Advocacy**

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.

A Value for Money and Policy Review was initiated by the Department of Health and Children and the Board made a submission on behalf Polio Survivors. 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 has not yet reported.

The Group has been active in the work of the European Polio Union to advance issues for Polio Survivors within the EU, and is an active participant in the organisation of, and promotion of papers to “Post Polio Syndrome – A Challenge of today” Conference in Copenhagen in late 2011.

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 affecting the sector and new sources of information.

## **PROGRAMME Management and Systems**

The Group actively engaged with arrangements by the HSE to introduce service level agreements and grant aid agreements, as appropriate. A number of agreements have been signed in respect of 2010

A comprehensive Questionnaire to gauge the satisfaction of the members with the Group was conducted in 2010 with a 10% random sample of the membership. Analysis of the results was not completed in 2010.

The Board has been briefed regularly on the progress of PLAN2010. The process to generate a new plan was extensive both within and outside the organisation. The successor plan NEW HORIZONS - Plan2015 was launched to an invited audience in late August at Capel Building . 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 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.

Fundraising was a particular focus in 2010 and, recognising the difficult economic environment, efforts were made to arrest the decline evident in 2009 and these efforts proved successful. Steps continue to be put in place to enhance the fundraising capacity of the Group and secure it as a source of long term stable funding.

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 2009 was carried out in 2010 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.

Group governance has been improved considerably and a number of new policies have been adopted and new administrative processes instituted. All cost areas have been critically examined and economies instituted, where possible, with accommodation, services and suppliers. An ethics policy has been adopted by the Group

### **Charities Act 2009:**

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

### **Staff Welfare:**

The staff complement was four during 2010. 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.