



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

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

**FOR THE PERIOD 1 January – 31 December 2011**

# 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 2011

**Officers:**

John R. McFarlane	Chairman
Peter Barron	Company Secretary
Clara Dunne	Treasurer

Marie Boland  
Joan Bradley  
Thomas Carberry  
Jim Costello  
Susan Dowling  
Patrick Guy  
Hugh Mc Hugh  
Seamus Ó Cinnéide  
Rose Russell O Donovan  
Evelyn Wainwright

Hugh Hamilton, Hugh Conlon died during 2011. Anne Burns, Paula Lahiff, and Bridie Mc Mahon resigned at the AGM

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 2012 but may be eligible for re-election. They are:

Clara Dunne  
John R. McFarlane  
Seamus Ó Cinnéide  
Evelyn Wainwright

# POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

## Report of the Trustees & Directors

For the period 1 January . 31 December 2011

The Trustees & Directors of the Post Polio Support Group, Charity & Company limited by guarantee, present their report for the period ended 31 December 2011.

### **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 – 2011:**

The Group continued to experience rapid change in the support and assistance work it undertook for Polio Survivors. It was guided by its strategic plan NEW HORIZONS . Plan2015 which provided a new focus on the individual member of the Group. It has striven to involve as many members as possible in conducting the activities of the Group in a structured way under the general direction of the Board. The report, following, is structured around the programme

### **PROGRAMME**                      *Help Polio Survivors access the supports they require*

From the Group Guiding Principles Services and supports will continue to be provided, based on needs identified through consultation with members, fairly and within the financial capacity of the Group

The membership increased by 56 throughout the year but, deducting for those dying or leaving for various reasons the net membership increased from 844 to 869. The contact and support service offered to Polio Survivors was continued throughout the year and enhanced by the engagement of an intern to support this work. Demand increased steadily through the year. An increased workload arose from the removal of certain benefits by State agencies and greater difficulty being experienced in accessing a range of benefits for those newly requiring them.

A three year programme for social support development for all areas of the country has provided opportunities for peer support to many Polio Survivors. This work has been funded by the Department of Environment, Community, and Local Government. In 2011 there were 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 and guidance. The Group has a huge resource in the social support groups and welcomes the fact that so many Polio Survivors are now taking a turn to contribute to running the meetings and other activities and feeding their expertise throughout the organisation. At the end of 2011 the Group was relying on some 10% of the membership to undertake a range of tasks essential to the conduct of the Group's activities.

Some 43 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 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.

Some 28 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.

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 2011.

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 2011.

Some 108 Polio Survivors have availed of grants for respite care breaks each year over the plan period. A feature of 2011 has been continued low 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 23 grants being made in 2011. Many Polio Survivors can and do avail of this service through the HSE.

A Questionnaire was issued in late 2011 to prepare for prioritising the support requirements for individual Polio Survivors starting in January 2012.

Heating grants have been granted, from fundraising income, to some 278 members of the Group. Stairlifts were provided for 4 Polio Survivors. There has been some 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. 10 members were assisted in various ways.

**PROGRAMME**      *Enable and empower members to take increased ownership of their situations and assume a greater role in running the Group*

From the Group Guiding Principles The Post Polio Support Group is member led and Polio Survivors are central to its work.

A co-operative initiative involving Board members, supported from the office, has started work to develop new structures to support the devolution of functions to assist local implementation where possible. Preliminary seminars were held throughout the country accompanied by training for selected volunteer members. This was driven by the need to involve more members in the running of the organization, to deepen their knowledge and commitment and to activate them to take on key roles in the running of the organization as outlined in NEW HORIZONS - PLAN2015. A concentrated effort was made to encourage members with the talents necessary to develop the organisation to come forward. The Board retains overall direction of the activity but the membership has increasing autonomy starting with certain areas subject to proper financial control and audit.

A national seminar entitled 'Building a self-sufficient developing Group' was held in Dublin in September to select the priority areas for Group development recognising that all could not be developed simultaneously. The areas selected by those present were Awareness and Information-making contact with Polio Survivors not in touch with the Group and informing them how they could live with the condition. Equally important, it was felt, was the need to raise funds so that more Polio Survivors could be supported. There was recognition also that it would be necessary to cultivate the social support groups to deliver these elements within local areas.

Three regional representatives were elected to assist the development. A High Level Implementation Scheme based on the seminar outcomes was passed by the Board. The two part time development officers were given roles to support the regional representatives in their work.

**PROGRAMME**      *Continue to improve communication with Polio Survivors generally and with those who are members of the Group*

From the Group Guiding Principles Sensitivity, empathy and understanding are central to communication with Polio Survivors

There was a strong emphasis on the SURVIVOR as the medium of choice for disseminating information to Polio Survivors. Three issues were produced in 2011, in A5 format reducing the cost of postage but maintaining the same amount of content. This new format has been popular. Two editions of the SURVIVOR were produced in audio format and made available to play or download from the website.

The Group has built on the success of its telephone support initiatives - Ring Ring and Phonechat - to encourage and develop more telephone contact between Polio Survivors. Training courses have been organized to broaden the reach of Ring Ring and encompass more Polio Survivors. This service is co-ordinated by a Board member under the aegis of the Social Support Committee and 4 volunteer regional co-ordinators have been recruited to assist the work and oriented to provide a platform for further expansion.

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.

The website continued to be a powerful tool to provide information to Polio Survivors, their families, their carers and medical professionals. It has been invigorated and upgraded. A DVD, 'Look Listen Learn', has been produced to project members of the Group. Some statements drawn from this DVD are available on the website.

A Facebook page was started to bring the chat from the members to a wider audience; enter 'Polio Survivors in Ireland'

A conference attended by some 200 Polio Survivors, family and friends was held in Tullamore in May with a strong educational influence.

**PROGRAMME      *Monitor the policy development and the administrative environment***

From the Group Guiding Principles The Group will advocate for Social Policy change to encompass the needs of Polio Survivors

The Group actively engaged with arrangements by the HSE to conclude service level agreements and grant aid agreements, as appropriate. A number of agreements have been signed in respect of 2011

It has been briefed regularly on the progress of NEW HORIZONS - Plan2015. 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 its help and the co-operation received in the achievement of joint objectives. The Board of Directors is committed to maintaining sufficient income to meet the needs of Polio Survivors in real terms.

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 2010 was carried out in 2011 and indicated a satisfactory outcome.

**PROGRAMME      *Increase the knowledge base of the Group***

As more and more retirements from the polio generation of medical professionals occur the Group is increasingly drawn on as a resource by those charged with the care of Polio Survivors. Study and research, building on the personal experiences of members, working with its honorary medical advisers, maintains its expertise in this area.

The Group took part in an international conference on post polio syndrome to keep abreast of latest developments, including research initiatives, and to share its lessons learned with colleagues in other countries

**PROGRAMME      *Building linkages with other organizations***

From the Group Guiding Principles

The Post Polio Support Group will cooperate and collaborate with other stakeholders, as appropriate

Linkages with the HSE are critical to the successful work of the Group and this partnership will deepen over the period of this plan. The Group has started to play a full part in the new consultative structures being set up by the HSE and looks forward to an increasingly active partnership.

The Group has taken on an active role in developing the European Polio Union as an agent to promote research on post polio syndrome and issues around the treatment and care of Polio Survivors

**PROGRAMME      *Manage finances to maintain or increase the ability of the Group to support Polio Survivors***

The Group has driven down costs in administrative, overhead and expenditure areas, negotiating firmly with existing and potential contractors and suppliers.

The Group secured a three year grant, 2011-2013, from the Dept of Environment, Community and Local Government to fund a development officer position.

The Group, as a whole, has been extremely active in generating funds. New initiatives, new ideas and a lot of hard work have been invested to enable the Group to make a comprehensive support service available to Polio Survivors. Fundraising was a particular focus in 2011 and, recognising the difficult economic environment, efforts were made to arrest the decline evident in recent years. Fundraising income was some 80% of the 2010 total. Steps continued to be put in place to enhance the fundraising capacity of the Group and secure it as a source of long term stable funding.

**Staff Welfare:**

The staff complement was four during 2011, supplemented by the engagement of an unpaid intern from August 2011. The Directors, and the members, of the Group are extremely grateful for the professionalism, dedication and commitment of the staff. The Group complies with the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts, 1989 and 2005 and other personnel related legislation.