



Annual Report 2015



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Part B – Directors’ Report & Financial Statements

Introduction

The mission of the Post Polio Support Group 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 (PPSG) was established for Polio Survivors by Polio Survivors. The Group was formed in 1993 and is run by a voluntary Board of Polio Survivors and volunteers. It is supported by voluntary committees, active members and a small executive staff at the office in Dublin. PPSG is the only organisation in Ireland providing practical support to those unfortunate enough to have contracted Polio. The Group currently has 926 members across the country.

PPSG assists Polio Survivors by providing aids to daily living, stair lifts, callipers, bespoke footwear, electric scooters and wheelchairs. The Group also helps Survivors access Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Respite Breaks, and it provides those who need it with assistance with their heating bills. The Group employs two Service & Information Co-ordinators who provide information, respond to requests for assistance from members and, perhaps most importantly, provide a listening ear to Survivors in need.

PPSG has a network of 22 social support groups around the country and also offers a telephone support service for those members who have difficulty in attending meetings.

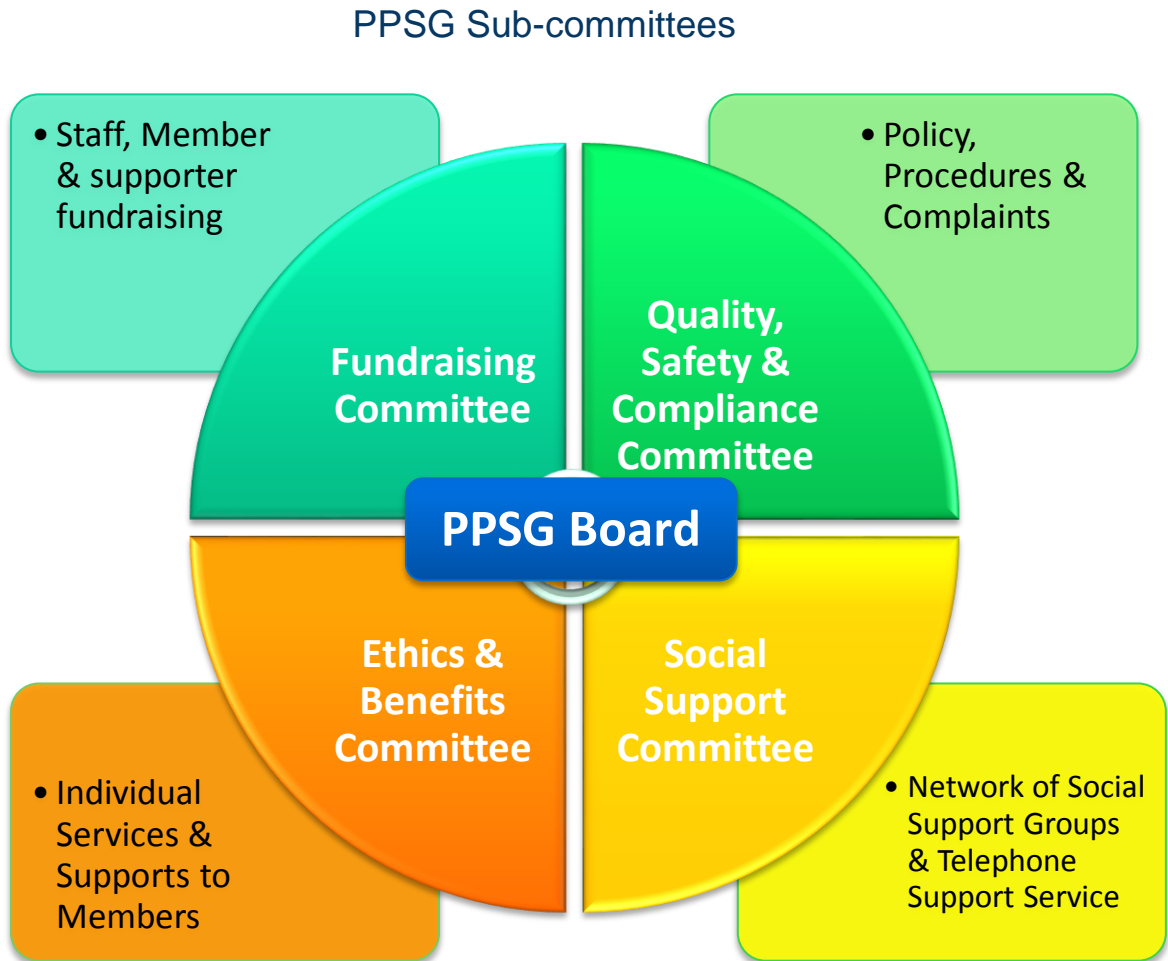
The Group works tirelessly to:

- Create awareness of Post Polio Syndrome
- Provide information on Polio and its late effects
- Ensure the needs of Polio Survivors relating to their condition are met to enable them to live with dignity

Any of the estimated 7,000 Polio Survivors in Ireland can contact the Group for support irrespective of whether they are a member or not.

Funding for the Post Polio Support Group is provided by the Health Service Executive; Department of Environment, Community & Local Government; the Polio Fellowship of Ireland; The National Lottery and various grants from statutory and private bodies and fundraising by members, families and friends.

Organisational Chart



Chairperson's Report



Last year, I reported a more stable period in the life of the Group. I also said that we could not afford to be complacent and indeed we have not! We have reviewed a number of our activities in order to ensure that the Group is sustainable in the short to medium term and fit to carry out the mission for which it was established. This is particularly important as we commence the preparation of our new Strategic Plan.

The first area of review has been in relation to Governance. We have now agreed to adopt the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charity

Organisations in Ireland. This is about establishing a culture that is based on the principles of leading, exercising control, being transparent & accountable, working effectively and behaving with integrity. Once it is confirmed that we are compliant with the Code, the Board must ensure that our Organisation continues to meet the requirements of the Code on an annual basis, thus providing an on-going assurance to ourselves and others that the Group is being run to the highest standards.

Much progress has also been made in the operational area of the Organisation to create a structure which will sustain the work of the Group for the foreseeable future. The Post Polio Support Group needs a significant number of active members and volunteers to maintain its current services and structures. The Board agreed this year to establish three new Networks of active members to engage in activities such as Publicity and Campaigning, Recruitment and Fundraising. These new Networks will spearhead the vital process of recruitment of new active members and raising badly needed funds.

As can be seen from the Audited Accounts there was a small profit for the year which is a very satisfactory state of affairs for the Group. This is the second year we have achieved a profit demonstrating the necessary aligning of expenditure with the lower levels of income that we have received in recent years. This has been achieved by good governance and prudent management. Further details are contained in the Financial Summary and the Financial Statements.

I am pleased to be able to report that our main income from the HSE has remained unchanged again this year which is very reassuring for the Group. Our two part-time Development Officer positions are funded by a grant from the Department of the Environment which expires next June. It is vital for the future of the organisation that we are successful in securing funding under any new grant round that follows.



Members of PPSG in fundraising mode

Fundraising continues to be an important source of income for the Group and we are very grateful to Anne Burns and the Fundraising Committee for the work they have done in this area as well as those who have organised or carried out such activities. Finding people to fundraise continues to be a challenge and amounts raised by members and supporters has fallen over recent years. We hope that the new Fundraising Network will draw in new people around the country and

give a fresh impetus to these activities.

A couple of changes have taken place in our staff during the year. Emma Clarke Conway joined us in February as our new part-time Development Officer while Peadar Ward joined us as part-time Regional Development & Outreach Officer in October.

In summary, we are continuing to work hard to support Polio Survivors and are not resting on our laurels when it comes to dealing with the challenges that we face. However we are a small organisation and our staff and active members struggle with the growing volume of work and the shrinking number of people to do it. That's why we are developing the new Networks and endeavouring to recruit new active members and volunteers. There is a great deal to do but, by mobilising the support of our members, I am confident that we are on the right road to creating a sustainable organisation into the future.

Finally, I would like to thank all those active members, volunteers and staff who have contributed so much to the work of the Group over the last year. I particularly wish to thank Jim Costello, one of the founder members of the organisation, who retired from the Board at the AGM in May. Jim's dedication and selflessness has been an example all of us can follow as we strive to create a new future for Polio Survivors in Ireland.

Susan Dowling
Chairperson

Annual Conference & AGM 2015

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown 18th May

This year's Conference and AGM was held in the Crowne Plaza, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15 and we were delighted that over 180 attendees from around the country were able to make the journey to our annual event.

The conference began with retired TD and government minister, Mary O'Rourke speaking to members about her own memories of polio growing up in Ireland, along with her own life experiences. With an election in the near future, Mrs O'Rourke encouraged Polio Survivors to remind election candidates of the issues they face when canvassing begins – a very important piece of advice, when often Survivors are feel forgotten when it comes to policy and budgets.



Emily Murphy with Guest speaker, Mary O'Rourke and Rose Buckley

Jim Costello, one of the founding members of PPSG, retired from the Board at the AGM and a very fitting tribute was made to him by Chairperson Susan Dowling and by Joan Bradley, his fellow founding member. After presentations and thanks, delegates enjoyed a fine lunch and took the opportunity to catch up with other members. The Crowne Plaza Hotel proved to be an excellent venue – with the important exception one of the wheelchair toilets which posed difficulty for some, though the staff did their best to assist with this problem.

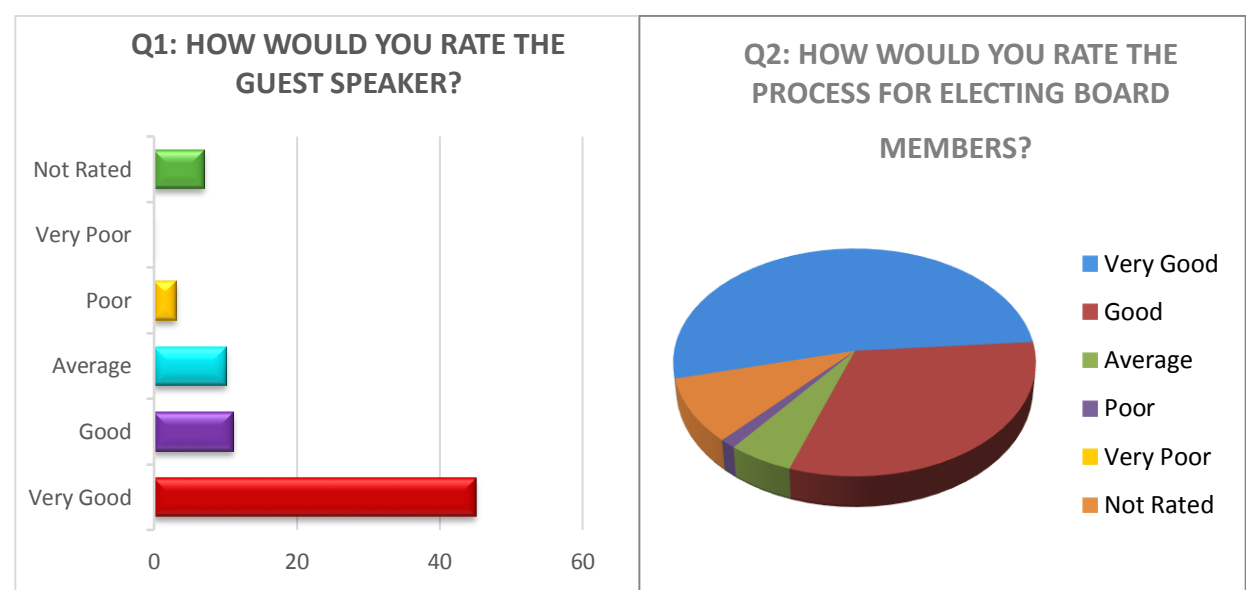
After lunch, the AGM took place with presentations from the Chair, the Treasurer and the Secretary. The financial position was explained very clearly using graphs which helped to illustrate the financial situation. In the afternoon there were three Workshops – Workshop A facilitated by Joan O'Donnell of the DFI, updated delegates on the outcome of the previous year's Regional Meetings and the

conclusions reached by the Social Support Committee. Workshop B & C consisted of presentations by Brian Kinsella from the Irish Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists and Thomas McCabe from Siel Bleu. Feedback on the Conference can be found in the evaluation report below.

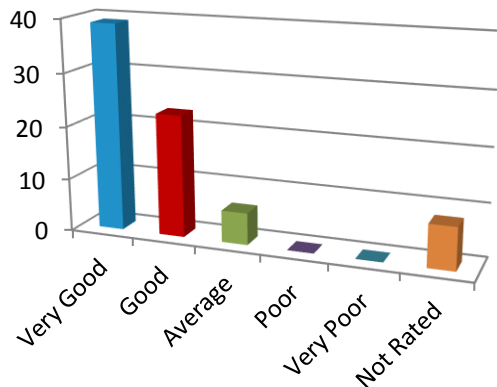
The Post Polio Support Group is very appreciative of the contribution to the Conference of Mary O'Rourke, Brian Kinsella, Thomas McCabe and Joan O'Donnell and of course, our board, staff and members involved in organising the event. We would like to also thank Wheelchair Cars Ireland, Totterdells and Home Instead for manning information stands, and lastly the staff of the Crowne Plaza who contributed to the smooth running of the conference.

Conference Evaluation Analysis

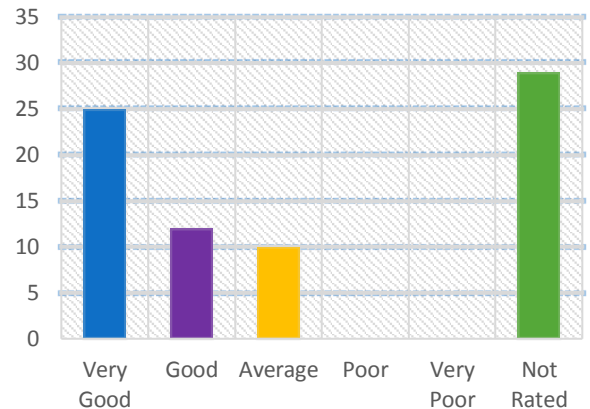
Former Board member Paula Lahiff, undertook an evaluation survey of delegates to the Conference. The feedback is summarised in the charts below:



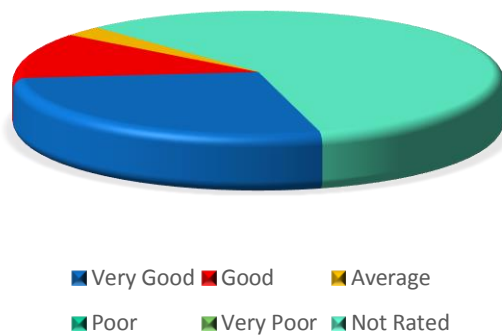
Q3: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE AGM?



Q4: HOW WOULD YOU RATE WORKSHOP A?



Q6: HOW WOULD YOU RATE WORKSHOP B?



Q9: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THIS EVENT OVERALL?



Tribute to Jim Costello

Founding member, Jim Costello decided to stand down as Director of the PPSG at the AGM. For some time Jim, had been receiving advice from his family and the medical profession that he should wind down his activities for health reasons and he had finally decided to listen to them!

Jim contracted Acute Respiratory Polio in 1958 which affected his breathing and use of his upper limbs. He spent 3 years in hospital and now relies on a ventilator to assist his breathing for about 16-18 hours a day.



Jim Costello

Following 3 years of rehabilitation, Jim worked in the family retail clothing business, the restaurant business and property development where he acquired valuable business and life skills. When, in 1993, Joan Bradley and Rosaleen Gallagher started to bring together people who had contracted Polio, they contacted Jim and he attended his first

meeting. In April 1994 he was appointed Chairperson and headed the team which organised an International Conference that year. He chaired the first AGM in 1995 and, using his business experience, he assisted in the drawing-up of a constitution which led to the group acquiring charitable status the same year.

During this time, Jim, Joan Bradley, Ciaran Nicholson and many others (some of whom are no longer with us) fought tirelessly to raise awareness of the needs of Polio Survivors and to highlight the activities they were undertaking in this regard. This was done on a completely voluntary basis, often self-funded with occasional financial contributions from elsewhere. In 1999, Jim led a delegation to the Dail to raise awareness of the needs of Polio Survivors. Some funding was forthcoming and in 2000 the Group secured an office in the Carmichael Centre in Dublin. Following this, an Administrator was appointed. The Group continued to grow its membership and its ability to support them, finally becoming a limited company in 2002.

Apart from his internal duties as Chairperson, Jim forged relationships with other organisations which were important to the Group and also represented the PPSG in Europe. Jim always conducts himself in a responsible yet cordial manner and there is no doubt that this has enhanced the reputation of the Group over the years.

One of the highlights of Jim's career must be the presentation to the Oireachtas Health Committee in 2004. As a result of this, the Group secured substantial ongoing funding which enabled us to employ 3 full time staff, finance our own office premises and provide aids and appliances to our members. This source of funding and the services it provides continue to this day.

Even after he ceased being Chairperson in 2006, Jim continued to serve on the Board and to be actively involved in the work of the Group, using his enormous experience and life skills.

During this time, he was Company Secretary and also provided support and encouragement to many members as they undertook roles within the Organisation. He remained as a Director until this year's AGM in May, a total of 22 years commitment and service to the Group.

The Post Polio Support Group is eternally grateful to Jim for all his efforts on behalf of the PPSG and its members. We thank him and wish him well in his retirement from the Board.

New Board Elected 2015 - 2016

In accordance with the organisation's Memorandum & Articles of Association one third of the directors are required to stand down each year. Jim Costello after many years' service retired from the Board and two other members of the Board, Jim Barrett and Joan Bradley, were selected by lottery to stand down and submit themselves for re-election. In addition two other candidates for the Board were nominated by members, Pat McGillion, who was a co-opted member of the Board for the previous year and Anne Shanahan. As there were four candidates for three positions there was a ballot at the AGM. The result of the ballot was that Jim Barrett, Joan Bradley and Anne Shanahan were elected to the Board.



***New Board Member,
Anne Shanahan***

The new Board co-opted Pat McGillion and elected the following officers for the year:

Chairperson:	Susan Dowling
Deputy Chairperson:	Roisin Nolan
Treasurer:	Pat McGillion
Company Secretary:	Fran Brennan (CEO)
Minutes Secretary:	Pat Guy

Committee Chairpersons appointed for the year were:

Social Support:	Jim Barrett
Quality, Safety & Compliance:	Fran Brennan
Fundraising:	Anne Burns
Ethics & Benefits:	Roisin Nolan

Michael Keegan was also re-appointed National Co-ordinator for the Telephone Support Service for the year.

Highlights of 2015

New PPSG Medical Alert Card



During the year Post Polio Support Group produced a Medical Alert Card, which was sent to all members, affixed to the front cover of the autumn edition of Survivor magazine. The information it contains may be vital to the well-being of polio survivors and it was recommended that it should be kept on the person at all times, perhaps in a wallet.

Members are being prompted to show the card to their doctor/consultant, when being treated for any medical condition, whether or not it is polio-related.

It is important that people close to polio survivors, family members and/or friends, know about the card and where it is kept. Then, in case of emergency admission to hospital for any reason, the hospital staff can be given the card as soon as possible.

The aim of the Medical Alert card is to assist survivors getting the most appropriate medical treatment.

We acknowledge the cooperation of the European Polio Union in producing this card.

World Polio Day

World Polio Day, October 24th, is marked by Polio Support organisations throughout the world, including the European Polio Union, the Rotarian Action Group and many Polio Survivors associations.

World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis. 2015 was the 60 year anniversary of the vaccine, which was the first step towards eradication of the disease.

The Irish Times covered both of the following events that took place to mark World Polio Day – Buildings go Blue, and launch of 'How We Survived and Surprised.'

Buildings Go Blue!

On World Polio Day, 24th October, to highlight the legacy of Polio in Ireland, iconic buildings in Ireland lit up blue – the Post Polio Support Group colours – to show support to the 7,000 Polio Survivors in Ireland who continue to live with disabilities caused by the disease. Cork City Hall and the Clock Tower lit up, along with Kilkenny Castle. In Dublin, the Mansion House was lit for the week leading up to World Polio Day.



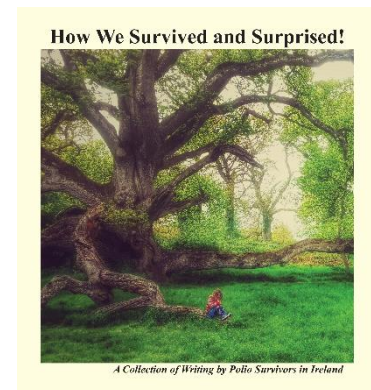
PPSG member Pat McGillion in front of the lit up Mansion House

Epidemics in the 40s and 50s in Ireland left many children paralysed or with permanent disabilities, often living away from their families for years while they went through surgeries or physiotherapy to help them recover. The Post Polio Support Group works to raise awareness of the continuing difficulties faced by those who survived the original infection. Lighting up public buildings around World Polio Day is an innovative and very visual way to bring attention to continuing needs of Polio Survivors.

'How We Survived and Surprised!' Book Launch

To coincide with the week of World Polio Day and to highlight the legacy of Polio in Ireland, the Post Polio Support Group launched a collection of writings by Irish Polio Survivors, called 'How We Survived and Surprised!' on Monday 19th October, at the Fitzwilliam Hotel, Dublin.

This book, a collection of inspiring and entertaining stories (fiction and real life) poetry and images was launched by Marian Harkin MEP and acclaimed novelist, Geraldine O'Neill, herself a Polio Survivor. Geraldine's latest novel 'A Letter from America' features a main character with polio.



Geraldine O'Neill, Susan Dowling and MEP Marian Harkin, who launched 'How We Survived and Surprised'

"I am delighted to have been the editor of this creative collection from my fellow Polio Survivors. The book highlights the bravery and tenacity of the group, as well as being an enjoyable read, filled with beautiful imagery and a good dash of humour," says Geraldine O'Neill. Geraldine went on to say, "Many people would not be aware of the struggles, both physically and emotionally, that survivors endured growing up with Polio. Some children spent long periods away from education and their families. In spite of the limitations that Polio caused, How We Survived and Surprised! draws

attention to their achievements and the valuable lives that people have led in spite of it. It is something I am proud to have been part of."

New Staff Appointments in 2015

New Development Officer – Emma Clarke Conway

Emma Clarke Conway joined the staff of the PPSG in February 2015, as Development Officer. Emma has worked in the charity sector for over 12 years, with communications, fundraising and PR management experience. Previously she worked in corporate communications and holds a Diploma in Public Relations from the PRII. Her previous role was with another membership organisation so Emma is familiar with being part of a voluntary group providing support to those affected by a medical condition.



Emma Clarke Conway

New Regional Development & Outreach Officer - Peadar Ward



Peadar Ward

Peadar Ward joined the staff of the PPSG in October as Regional Development and Outreach Officer. Peadar has experience as a senior manager in the state and semi-state sectors. He has also held senior management posts in the voluntary and community sectors. He has considerable experience in people management and organising volunteers in the community and voluntary sector, holding posts as National Director of the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps and President of the Maritime Institute of Ireland. Reflecting his nautical connections, the PPSG is delighted to welcome Peadar on board.

Social Support Group Activities 2015



*Dublin S W Social Support Group
Summer Outing*

Dublin South West Social Support Group

The support group's summer outing to the Botanic Gardens took place on the 2nd June. Weather was windy but mainly a dry day. A one hour tour around the gardens was followed by lunch, which everyone seemed to enjoy. It was a great day, and some lovely photos were taken as well.

Sligo Social Support Group – Summer Outing 2015

Sligo Folk Park is situated in Riverstown, Co. Sligo, and is a true experience of rural Irish heritage, with a fine collection of rural history and artefacts. Many of the items on display have been sourced locally, and in the museum is a carefully recreated village street, with shops and services which are no longer needed in this modern world. The park also has a traditional Irish cottage, a library, a dairy and a farm yard, as well as the original Millview House which was built in the mid-1800s. There is also a room dedicated to those soldiers from Co. Sligo who were killed in the First World War. Their names and townlands cover a complete wall – a moving and poignant tribute.

Sligo Social Support Group was warmly welcomed and given a guided tour of the collections and artefacts on display. They then adjourned to the cosy coffee shop, where we had high tea, followed by a sing-song and a chat, and were delighted to welcome some members from the Mayo and Galway groups on the day, and hopefully there can be more joint outings in the future.



Sligo Social Support Group Summer Outing

Cork Social Support Group Christmas Party

The Cork group Christmas Party took place in Vienna Woods Hotel, Glanmire on Sunday 22nd November at 4pm and the sun was shining for all.

The Christmas Draw had twelve prizes. 1st prize of 2 nights' B&B & dinner in Vienna Woods Hotel went to Sara Hylands, 2nd prize of a Christmas hamper to Ted McNamara and 3rd prize of a rocking horse to Anna Marie Collins. Congratulations to all the prize-winners.

The party went off very well, super food with music and song, plus lots of spot prizes for each table. Terry (Evelyn Wainwright's husband) was 80 years young, so there was birthday cake and all were glad to be there to wish him all the best.



Cork Social Support Group Christmas Outing

Fundraising Activities 2015

PPSG members, supporters and staff engaged in a wide range of fundraising activities throughout the year. There are too many to mention all here, this is just a selection that demonstrate the variety and national reach of our fundraising activities

Survivor's Sweepstake – Members Lottery

In 2015, the Post Polio Support Group launched a members only draw, called 'Survivor's Sweepstakes', a lotto type quarterly raffle giving members the opportunity to win €1,000. The jackpot was not won however Macrina Clancy was the first person to match three numbers and win a €50 prize.

Other match three winners in the year were Helen Jordan, Joan Naddy, William Rice, Mary Byrne, Ned Coughlan and Lucy Greene – each also winning €50 – some of whom donated their prize back to PPSG as a gesture of support.

When the jackpot was not won by the end of the year, the PPSG ran a sideline 'random number' draw giving all the entrants in the Winter Sweepstakes draw the opportunity to win €1,000; The winner was former Wexford Support Group Convenor, Povel Thim. The lottery has been a great fundraiser for the organisation, raising a net profit of €4,360 in 2015.



Povel Thim with his €1,000 winnings, presented by Chairperson, Susan Dowling.

Dublin Marathon



Natasha Swan

Natasha Swan, Goddaughter of PPSG member, Simon Graham, took part in the Dublin City Marathon this October, on behalf of the Post Polio Support Group. Natasha achieved the fantastic time of 4 hours and 10 minutes for the 26.2 mile course, which is a wonderful achievement – and raised €250 in the process. Our thanks to Natasha for her support.

Bag Packing in Cork

Cork Social Support Group supermarket bag packing collection in SuperValu, Togher, realised €940.50. This was a fantastic amount to be raised in just one day. Evelyn Wainwright and her team in the Cork support group deserve a great deal of credit for such a well organised and successful fundraising activity.

"Come on the town" PPSG collection at Oriel Park



Senator Mary Moran, Labour Spokesperson for Disabilities in the Senate, and her son, with PPSG's Brendan Moore at Oriel Park

On Saturday 5th September local members of the PPSG and volunteers made their way to Oriel Park, home of current Airtricity League champions and league leaders, Dundalk F.C., to hold a bucket collection in aid of the PPSG. The jingle of the coins was a great sound as Dundalk F.C. and Sligo Rovers F.C. supporters dropped coin after coin into the buckets.

The only winners that Saturday night was the PPSG, as the bucket collection raised a total of €415 for the group! The PPSG would like to thank the generosity of Dundalk F.C. for giving us permission to hold this collection at their grounds, and of course to both sets of supporters for being so generous.

Last but not least, to the volunteers who helped on the night - because without them PPSG could not have had such a winning evening!

Mini Marathon 2015

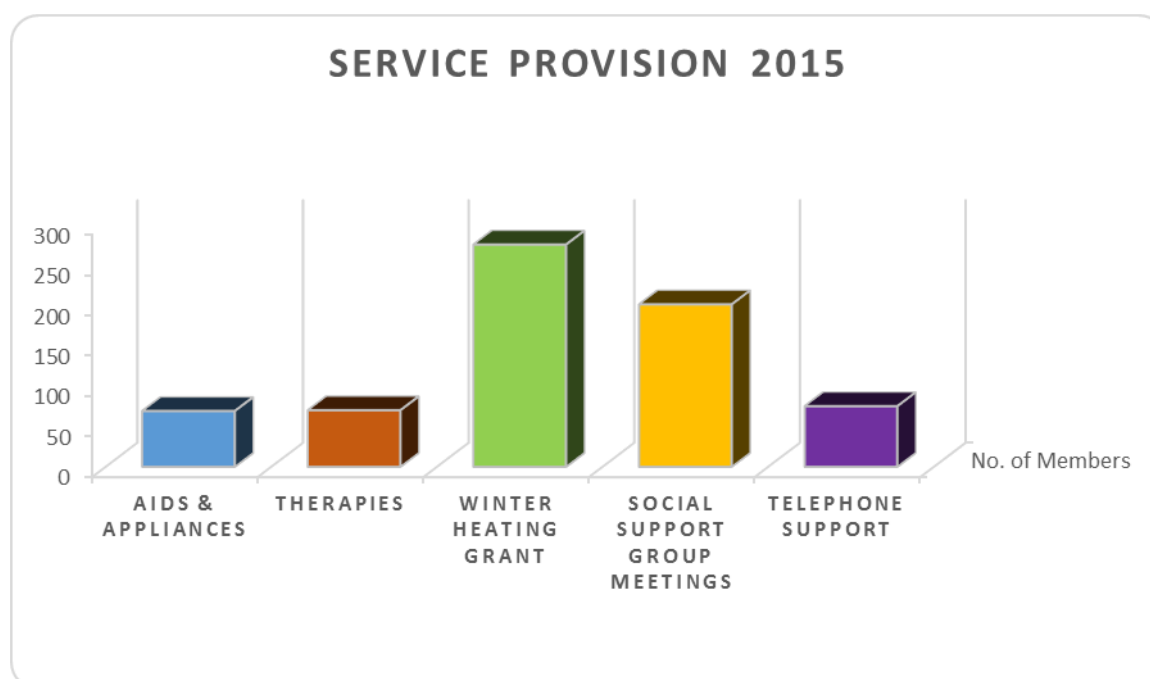
Post Polio Support Group are delighted with the grand total of €1,700 raised by the ladies who took part in this year's VHI Ladies Mini Marathon in support of PPSG. Thanks must go to the participants, their friends, families and to all those who sponsored them. The particularly inclement weather for this year's event has to be acknowledged. Mother Nature completely forgot it was the June Bank Holiday and it absolutely bucketed down - everyone was wet through! Indeed it was the intrepid ones who fought to the finish line. So, Aideen Lee, Ruth Hughes, Stephanie Ryan, Libby Hendrick, Linda O'Neill, Emma Clarke Conway, Jacinta O'Neill, Jean Booth and Natasha Swan and their friends deserve particular recognition.

Service Provision 2015

The Post Polio Support Group provides a range of services to Polio Survivors. These include information, support with aids and appliances, a variety of therapies, respite, stairlifts and heating grants. These supports are administered by the Service and Information Co-ordinator (SIC) Lillian McElvaney and the Assistant SIC, Kerrie Donegan. The Post Polio Support Group would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the HSE in particular, a variety of other grant making trusts and our fundraisers who make this invaluable support to our members possible.

Membership of the Group stood at 926 people at the end of 2015. The PPSG carries out a number of interventions with Polio Survivors each addressing an aspect of the deterioration in their functional abilities, in so far as is practicable. Each intervention provides incremental redress of the loss of functional ability. The intervention originates with formal self- assessment by the Polio Survivor followed by contact assessment from an SIC. In addition the Group provides supports to those with needs arising from unforeseen circumstances and responds appropriately. The Services and Information Co-Ordinators work cooperatively with HSE frontline staff and other professionals to ensure that the intervention is appropriate to the individual Polio Survivor and arranges supply of the required supports as promptly as possible.

Figures for supports provided are as follows:



69 people received Aids & Appliances during the course of the year. Total expenditure on Aids and Appliances was €82,560

70 people availed of services such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Chiropody and Respite at a total cost of €18,560

275 members benefited from our Winter Heating Grant of €125 at the end of 2015 at a cost of €34,400. The grant is offered to those members who are assessed as being

vulnerable to cold and having difficulty in meeting their fuel bills. All the money for the heating grant is sourced from fundraising. We are very grateful to those organisations and individuals who supported us in providing this much needed grant.

Other supports provided to members include assistance towards meeting the cost of installing stairlifts and a hardship fund for those Polio Survivors in acute need. The Post Polio Support Group is very grateful to the Monkstown Foundation for their support in helping us meet the need for stairlifts in 2015.

Social Support

The PPSG runs 22 social support groups around the country in the following locations:

Athlone, Co Westmeath; Bray, Co Wicklow; Castleblayney, Co Monaghan; Carlow; Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim; Ennis, Co. Clare; Cork, Finglas, Swords, Clontarf and Tallaght in Dublin; Donegal; Enniscorthy, Co Wexford; Galway; Kilkenny; Limerick; Navan, Co Meath; Kildare; Castlebar, Co Mayo; Portlaoise, Co Laois; Sligo; and Kerry.

Over 200 members benefitted from attending social support group meetings and events in 2015.

Telephone Support

PPSG's Telephone Support Service is a peer service provided from home to home by and for Polio Survivors across the Republic through our RingRing and PhoneChat services. RingRing is a one to one peer support service where a volunteer polio survivor calls a fellow survivor who may have difficulties attending PPSG events or even leaving the house. Typically each volunteer has three regular survivors who they phone each month. At the end of 2015 there were 26 volunteers calling 66 fellow polio survivors.

PhoneChat is a fortnightly group conference call – a volunteer Polio Survivor and member facilitates a conversation with 3 to 4 fellow Polio Survivors. At the end of the year there were 3 active Phonechat groups with 9 participants.

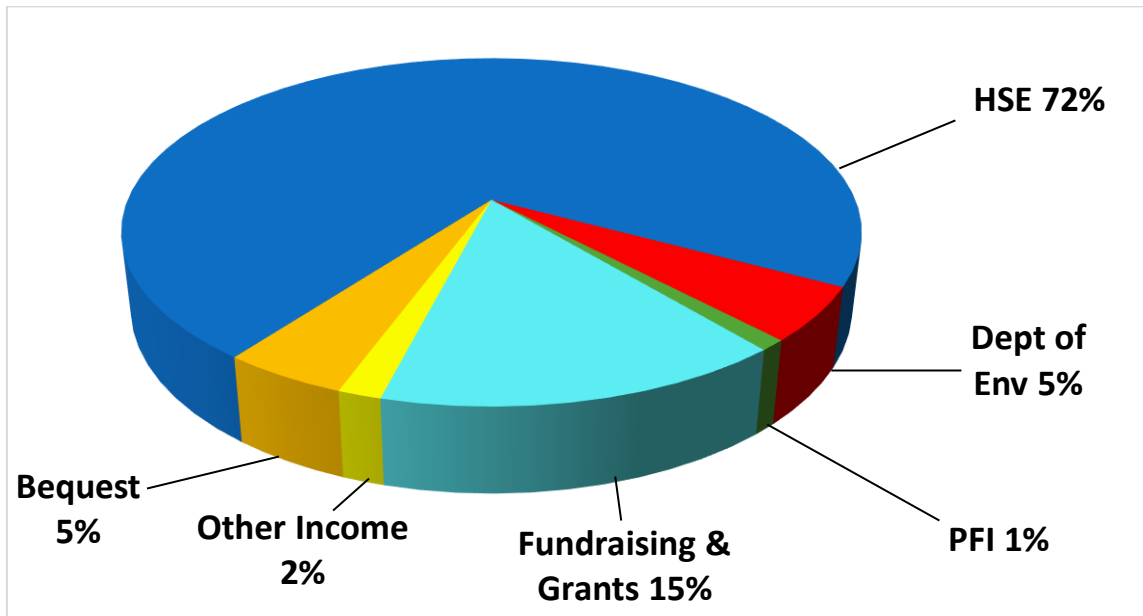
A total of €23,500 was spent on social & telephone support in the year.

Complaints

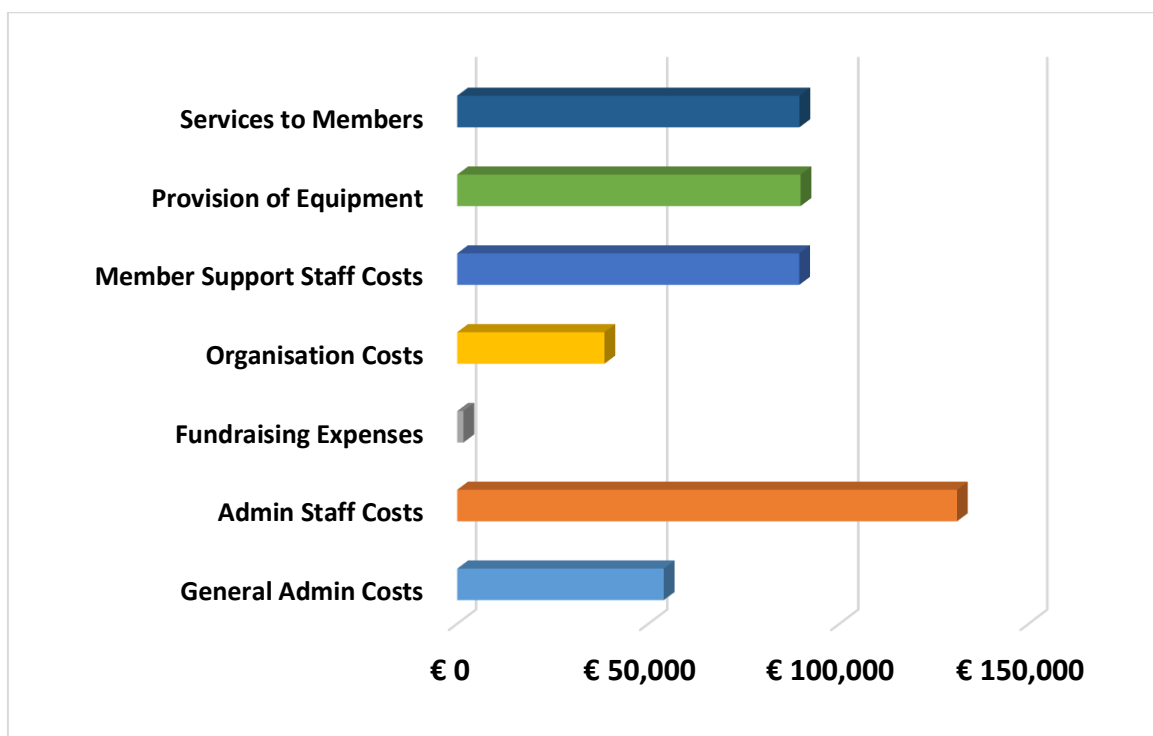
The Group has a complaints procedure and the Company Secretary maintains a register of all complaints and actions arising. There were no complaints registered in 2015.

Financial Summary 2015

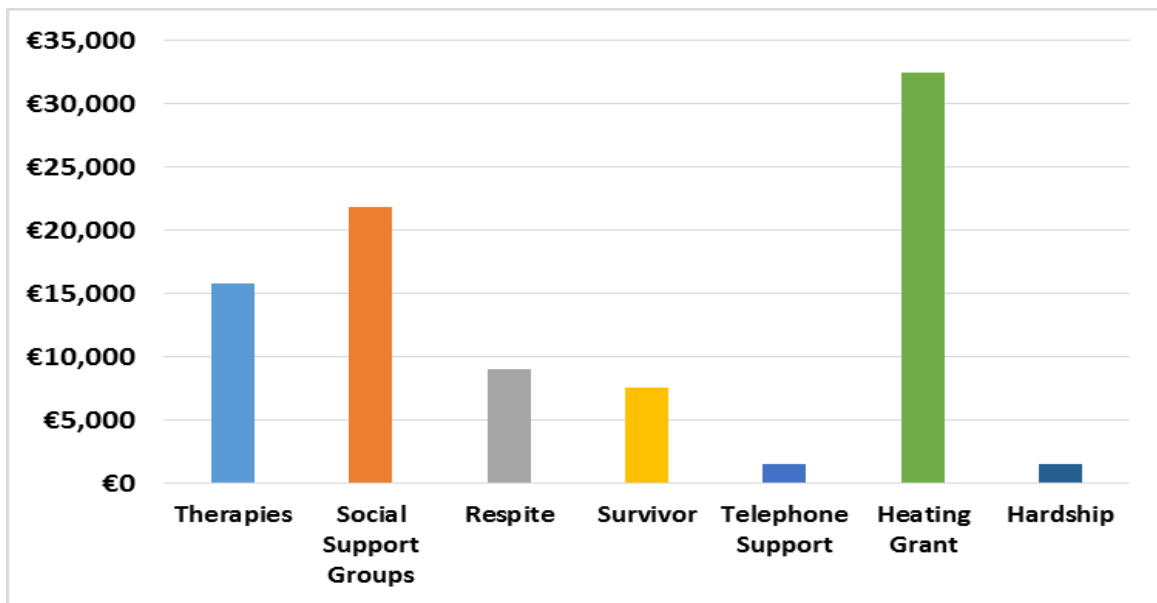
Income Total: €496,291



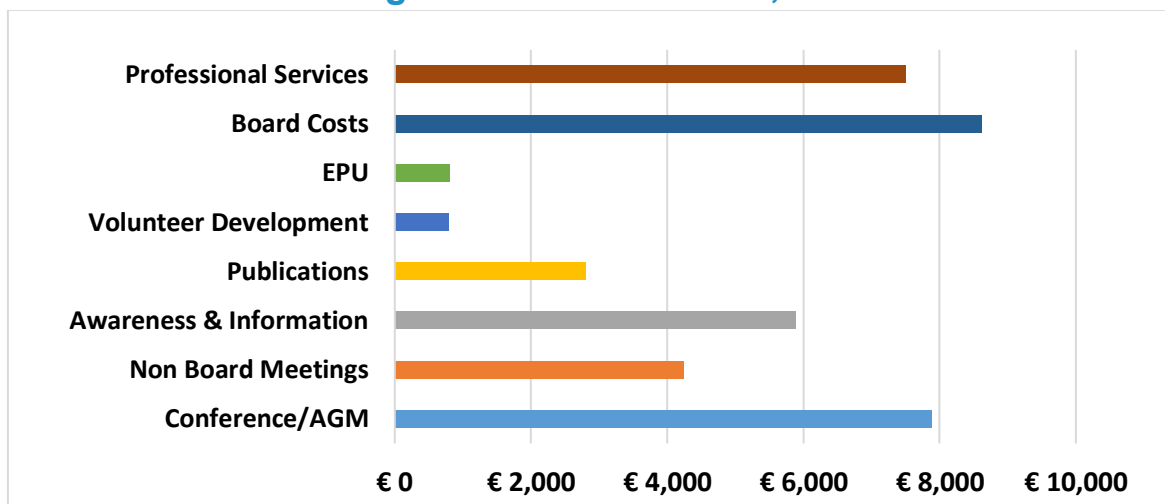
Total Expenditure: €494,136



Services to Members Expenditure: €89,572



Organisation Costs: €38,520



Administration Costs: €186,707

