People Connecting

Findings from 26th June 2006 Consultative Workshop on the Barriers, Incentives and Solutions to Community Participation & Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disability
together with
Recommendations to the Board of the National Federation
The Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee decided that in order to identify the barriers and find the solutions to community participation and inclusion, it was essential to consult with a representative group of people with intellectual disability. So it was decided to hold a Consultative Day in Athlone on the 26th June 2006.

This document is very significant as it reflects the concerns and aspirations of this representative group. The wording in the document was done by Brian Donohoe, a member of the sub-committee. He put into writing the exact words spoken by those who attended the Consultative Day.

On the day each member of the Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee was accompanied by two representatives of the people who avail of their services. Each person had a different type of life experience, such as residential, community or living with family. Each person who uses these services had his/her own opinions and ideas and their participation, and the sharing of their experiences, made the Consultation Day a very powerful and positive experience.

The Consultation Day identified a number of issues which directly affect the lives of the people who attended and took part. These issues are referred to in the document as “common themes”. These are issues which need to be brought to the Board of the National Federation as soon as possible so that the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies can provide the necessary leadership to ensure that member organisations provide and deliver social inclusion and equality of opportunities for people who use their services.

In support and recognition of these issues, the Community Participation and Inclusion Sub Committee made a number of recommendations to Board of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on 18th April 2007. These recommendations are also included in this document.

Yvonne Bohane
Chairperson
Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee
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TO: NATIONAL FEDERATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DATE: 10th April 2007

Dear Colleague,

On 26th June 2006 we held a Consultative Workshop with people who use our services to discuss the barriers, incentives and solutions to community participation & inclusion of people with intellectual disability. We have attached the full report from the workshop for your information.

At the Workshop, people who use our services identified the following issues as being of importance to them:

😊 We need you to promote our right to independence and the right to make our own decisions.
😊 We need you to understand the importance of us having friends, and to support us to meet up with our friends to do things we like to do.
😊 We need you to support us to live and work in places of our own choice and with people who have similar interests.
😊 We need you to support us to take risks like everyone else.
😊 We need you to help change the attitudes and perceptions of staff and others towards people with a disability.
😊 We need you to provide education and support in regard to bullying.
😊 We need you to campaign with us for an increase in the Disability Allowance so we can afford to do the things we would like to do.
😊 We need you to promote the availability of accessible information for us.

In support and recognition of these issues, the Community Participation and Inclusion Sub Committee would like to make the following Recommendations to the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies.
We would like you to:

- Review, as the service provider, how services are traditionally provided, so as to give people a chance to live ordinary lives.
- Build up Awareness, Education & Support in the community so that people who use our services can have real meaningful relationships in their lives.
- Involve more people who use our services in National Federation Sub-Committees so as to ensure that the issues that are of importance to people who use our services are highlighted and taken on board.
- Campaign, with people who use our services, for an increase in the Disability Allowance so as to support people to live ordinary lives and to be able to afford to do the things they would like to do.
- Campaign, with people who use our services, for the Rural Transport Initiative to be expanded country-wide so as to help reduce the isolation of people with disabilities living in rural areas.

1. **Encourage organisations to review how services are traditionally provided, so as to give people a chance to live ordinary lives**

Organisations need to:

- Examine options for supporting people outside of the 9-5 model i.e. life options from 5pm onwards.
- Re-evaluate how services are delivered i.e. moving away from the traditional “day service” and “residential service” approach to service provision to the development of more holistic person centred services.
- Promote individuals right to independence and the right to make their own choices
- Develop short and long term strategies to support people to live, work and spend time in ordinary community settings.
- Create opportunities for people working in and using services to meet and share best practice.
- Provide information in an accessible way so as to support all people involved in services to share information easily.
2. Encourage organisations to build up Community Awareness, Education & Support

Organisations need to:

• Be proactive in fostering good community connections i.e. be proactive in enabling people to get to know people in their community and highlight the importance of interdependency in all our lives.
• Be conscious of the importance of real meaningful relationships in people’s lives i.e. facilitate social networks for people we support to help develop long lasting, freely chosen relationships.
• Support people using services to maintain existing relationships or reconnect with family or friends when moving from one service to another.
• Develop strategies to raise awareness of disability issues in communities and involve people who use services and their families in the development of these strategies.
• Be proactive in raising awareness and challenging media assumptions of people with disability.
• Raise awareness and develop strategies in relation to bullying of people with disabilities both within services and in the community.

3. Involve more people who use our services in Sub-Committees

• Encourage the Board of the National Federation to facilitate people who use services to participate in Sub Committees so as to ensure that the issues of most importance to people who use services are highlighted.
• In support of this, the Community Participation & Inclusion sub committee would like to extend an invitation to people involved in the Consultative Workshop to join this sub committee. This would ensure proper consultation and discussion is carried out prior to any decisions or recommendations being made which affect the lives of the people who use our services.

4. Campaign for an increase in the Disability Allowance

• Campaign with, and on behalf of, people who use our services, for an increase in the Disability Allowance so as to support people to live ordinary lives and to be able to afford to do the things they would like to do.
5. Lobby the Government to Expand the Rural Transport Initiative

- Lobby the Government, in particular the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs, to have this scheme rolled out nationally so as to help reduce the isolation of people with disabilities living in rural areas.

On behalf of all the people who attended the Consultative Workshop and the Community Participation and Inclusion Sub-Committee I would like to thank you for your support in making these recommendations a reality for people who use our services.

Yours sincerely,

Yvonne Bohane
Chairperson
National Federation Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee
Community Participation and Inclusion

What does it mean to me?

Consultative Workshop - 26th June 2006

on the barriers, incentives and solutions

to community participation & inclusion

of people with intellectual disability

Organised by:

National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee
This report was written by:

Consultative Workshop Attendees
Kevin Barnes, RehabCare
Mary Barrett, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
Yvonne Bohane, DARA Residential Services
Noreen Brophy, RehabCare
Aine Carroll, Cheeverstown
Bernadette Casey, Daughters of Charity Services
Elizabeth Clark, DARA Residential Services
Richard Collins, Brothers of Charity Services, Clare
Cabrini de Barra, Brothers of Charity Services, South Eastern Region
Catherine Devine, Walkinstown Association
Brian Donohoe, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
Theresa Doyle, Sisters of Charity of Jesus & Mary Services
Claire Galvin, St. Joseph’s Foundation
Mary Gavin, Cheeverstown
Patricia Green, Walkinstown Association
Mary Lannon, Daughters of Charity Services
Anne Marie McDermott, Sisters of Charity of Jesus & Mary Services
Joe McGrath, Brothers of Charity Services, Clare
Claire Maher, Brothers of Charity Services, South Eastern Region
Noleen Moore, Cheeverstown
Ann O’Callaghan, St. Joseph’s Foundation
Mary Lucey Pender, Daughters of Charity Services
Anne Marie Rowell, DARA Residential Services
Janet Swinburne, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
Kitty Tumelty, RehabCare
Consultative workshop
1. Background – Setting the Scene

In July 2005, the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies set up a new committee called Community Participation and Inclusion to explore, identify and develop strategies to increase the participation of people with intellectual disability within their community.

Topics such as social networks, self-advocacy, community connections and the barriers to participation and inclusion are discussed by this new committee.

The members of the sub-committee (past and present) are:

- Yvonne Bohane, DARA Residential Services (Chairperson)
- Kevin Barnes, RehabCare
- Richard Collins, Brothers of Charity Services Clare
- Des Connolly / Pat O’Shea, Brothers of Charity Services Limerick
- Roisin Deery, Midway Services
- Catherine Devine, Walkinstown Association
- Cabrini DeBarra, Brothers of Charity Services Waterford
- Theresa Doyle, Sisters of Charity of Jesus & Mary
- Martine Healy, Clann Mór Ltd.
- Claire Maher, Brothers of Charity Services Waterford
- Eileen O’Mahony, Cheeverstown House
- Ann O’Callaghan, St. Joseph’s Foundation
- Tim O’Connell / Dermot Rafter, SOS Kilkenny Ltd.
- Kevin Ryan, St. John of God Hospitaller Services
- Mary-Lucy Pender, Daughters of Charity Service
- Brian Donohoe, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
- Janet Swinburne / Breda Casey, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
Who is the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies?

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is a national organisation that represents 59 agencies (e.g. Brothers of Charity, Cheeverstown, DARA Residential etc.) that provide direct services to people with intellectual disability in Ireland.

The aim of this national organisation is to promote equal opportunities for persons with intellectual disability through the provision and development of high quality person centred services in all of the 59 agencies listed in Appendix 1.

How does it achieve its mission?

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies achieves its mission through:

• information sharing;
• development and promotion of codes of best practice;
• acting as a lobbying agent on a national and international basis; and
• working in co-operation with advocacy organisations on behalf of people with an intellectual disability.

How did the idea of the consultative workshop come about?

In March 2006, the National Federation Community Participation & Inclusion Committee held its third meeting and it was agreed that we needed to explore what people with intellectual disability feel the barriers and solutions are to community participation and inclusion within communities across the country.

Following some discussion, the committee agreed to organise a consultative workshop and invite two people who use their services, from each of the organisations represented on the committee, to attend the event.

Invitations (see Appendix 4) and a copy of the questions (see Appendix 3) that would be discussed on the day were distributed to each committee member and all those invited to the workshop.
2. Summary of Findings from the Consultative Workshop

On 26\textsuperscript{th} June 2006, a number of people with intellectual disability using the services of lots of different agencies met with members of the National Federation Community Participation and Inclusion Sub-Committee.

This is the report summarising the information exchanged at that consultative workshop.

As a group, we talked about our experiences of participating and being included in the communities where we live and work.

We shared our past, current and future thoughts, hopes and fears.

We identified that:

- Some of the problems and barriers people with intellectual disabilities experience are the same for people without a disability, such as work commitments or being shy.

- Some of the problems and barriers experienced by people with intellectual disability are different from people without a disability. Examples of these differences include:
  - rules made by family, staff or managers about what people can do, where and when they can go, and with whom;
  - the lack of accessible transport, particularly in rural areas.

It was also felt that some of the things that people with intellectual disability need, to help them to participate and be included in community life, were often things that people without a disability usually have lots of choices around.
Common Themes

Accessible Information, Advocacy, Attitudes, Choice, Disability Allowance, Friendship, Independence, Support, Transport

Some of the common themes to emerge from the discussions include the need to:

- Promote each individuals’ right to independence and the right to make our own decisions;
- Change the attitudes/perceptions of disability in communities;
- Change the perceptions of some staff and organisations structures;
- Have more staff available to provide support;
- Highlight the importance of friends and being able to meet up with those friends to do things we like e.g., common or similar interests;
- Be able to work and live in a place of our choice and with people with similar interests;
- Provide education and support in relation to the prevention and handling of bullying;
- Allow us to take risks like everyone else;
- Increase the Disability Allowance;
- Promote the availability of accessible information.

You will find more detail on these themes in the following pages.
3. Findings from the Consultative Workshop

The following is a summary of the information shared:

😊 What do I like to do and where do I like to go in the community where I live?

- Meet with friends to go out for a drink
- Go to the theatre
- Watch football
- Go walking on the road
- Go to the cinema
- Go walking in the countryside
- Go for meals out with friends or family
- Partying
- Travelling
- Playing badminton
- Visiting friends, family or old school mates
- Travelling on buses (public transport) on my own or with friends
- Going to nightclubs
- Flower arranging
- Riding my bicycle
- Being involved in the Special Olympics
- Gardening
- Playing in traditional music sessions
- Sailing
- Going shopping
- Going set dancing
- Working in the restaurant
- Being involved in sports (swimming, bowling, basketball)

😊 Are there things I would like to do that I don’t do now?

I would like to:

- go to a match with people who support the same team
- have the opportunity to go to my boyfriend’s house more often
- build my own house to live independent
- move into a flat in an area of my own choice
- work in childcare
- work in a restaurant
- be able to do work of our own choice
- have my own transport
- go to university
- go to Australia with some very good friends
- teach computers
- get out more at weekends
- get out more during the week
- use a bus on my own
- buy a car
- not have to depend on my family
- go out at night

**If there were no barriers I would go wild!**

😊 What stops me from doing the things I like to do and going to the places I like to go?

**Money**
- Not enough money
- Disability Allowance too small
- Not getting the full Disability Allowance because of where I live

**Organisational Structures and Supports**
- Management and staff
- Staff needing to go with you
- Staff need to trust you to come back safely if you go out on your own
- Not enough staff to support you to go out
- Where I live there are only two staff on duty for 60 people from 8.45 pm every night so I can’t go out at night – curfews/rules restrict outings
- Not enough staff to support you to be independent
- Rules about the times you can go out and the times you must come back in
- The needs and wishes of other people I live with
Family
- My family won’t let me go out anywhere
- The needs and wishes of my family

Transport
- Not having a car where I live
- Having to share a car with others (i.e. another residential house) can be a problem
- The cost of taxis / disability allowance
- No public transport where I live – rural area
- Not enough public transport where I live
- Private buses won’t take the travel pass
- Hard to get out at the weekends in rural areas as you have no way to get there and no one to go with

Friends
- Live too far away, no public transport
- I can’t go out with friends as I have only one friend I can stay with and I don't live beside or close to them
- No one to go out with

Time
- Work and family commitments
- Not having the time to do things
- Being too busy with other commitments

Housing
- Lack of choice of housing is a barrier
- It would be better to live with a smaller group
- To be able to live on my own in a place of my choice would be great

Attitudes and Behaviour
- It is harder for shy people to connect with and get to know people unless they join a club
- Other people outside in the community bullying people with a disability can be a barrier
- People don’t understand us or else they fear us
- Ignorance is a factor
- People with disabilities can also bully
- People talking over my head so I don't understand them
- People talking to my Mum instead of talking to me
- Feeling that the world is not safe
- The world is a different place now so it is more difficult to get to know your neighbours and feel part of a community

😊 What helps me to do the things I like to do?

- I have recently bought a car
- The Rural Accessible Transport schemes can be a great help
- I have rented my own house which is near where I work and all the facilities I need, so I don’t have to rely on others as much as I used to
- When school kids were bullying us our manager made contact with the school. Now we are linked to the school and they come in to us and go out places with us. They don’t bully us any more and are our friends

😊 Would I like to do things or go places more often?

- Some people are happy with what they do
- Most people would like to have more opportunity to get out and about
- It is important to be able to go places and do things with people with similar interests

😊 Who do I like to do things or go places with at the moment?

- My sister
- My family
- My partner
- My boyfriend
Would I like to do things or go places with different people?

- My family
- I would like to go out more with my friends
- I would like to go out with my friends from the day centre but I never get to go out with them
- Some of the people I would like to spend time with live far away
- Other people I would like to spend time with are nearby but they have their own things to do

What needs to happen to help me to participate and integrate more in the community?

- People need to concentrate more on people’s ability, not their disability
- We need to educate people to understand that people with disabilities can live and work in the community, the same as everyone else
- We need to teach school kids about people with a disability
- We need to speak up for other people with disabilities
- We need to talk more at conferences
- Talk to me – not my Mum
- To take responsibility for the choices I make
- Others to recognise our ability to do things for ourselves

Who do I know where I live?

- Work Colleagues
- Friends
- Family
- Members of the local club (e.g., sports, music)
- Neighbours
- Church goers
- School mates
- Shops (e.g., Hairdresser, chemists)
- Doctor / Dentist
- Library
What are the barriers to knowing people where I live?

- Nosey neighbours
- Time
- Living near rented accommodation
- Cliques
- Transport
- Not being involved in local sports/clubs
- Not making an effort / shyness
- Lack of information
- Lack of education around disabilities
- Information not given clearly e.g., official documentation and how we are spoken to……
- Organisation politics/structures set-up obstacles

Do I know enough people?

- Sometimes lonely
- Need personal space

What are the barriers to knowing enough people?

- Ourselves
- Not making the effort
- Dangers – safety
- Fear
- Staff
- Personalities
- Values of the organisations
- Take more risks

Where can I go to meet more people?

- Pubs
- Arch Clubs
- Swimming club
- Church
- Gym
Bowling
Concerts
Horse Riding
Hotels
Meeting/Conferences
Cinema
Sport
Entertainment / Parties

😊 Who can help?

- Support ourselves
- Support staff
- Family
- Pool of friends
- Staff
- Parents
- Key Workers
- Job coaches
- Managers / Bosses
- Assertiveness courses
- Advocacy

😊 Final comments: Community Inclusion

- We can be involved and we can make choices to join in the community
- We need accessible information from the community, so you get involved more – newsletters / spoken announcements – clear/accessible information, use of local radio, internet / shop windows / papers / FÁS
- Community participation and inclusion means getting involved in things that are going on in the community.
- Having friends and knowing people/relationships are important in the community.
4. People Connecting Cards

As a reminder of the day it was agreed that each person would send a “Connecting Card” to another person who attended the Consultative Workshop. Names and addresses were exchanged on the day.

These cards were ordinary holiday postcards and the idea was that they would serve as a reminder of a powerful and positive experience of sharing information.

And finally, a reminder again of the common themes from the Consultative Workshop ……..

Accessible Information, Advocacy, Attitudes, Choice, Disability Allowance, Friendship, Independence, Support, Transport

NOTE: the pictures used in this document are available free of charge on the Internet from the following websites:

😊 www.inspiredservices.org.uk
😊 www.microsoft.com
Appendices
Appendix 1: National Federation Member Organisations

- Ard Aoibhinn Centre, Belvedere Road, Wexford
- Association of Parents & Friends, Corcrin, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan
- Beam Services, Chestnut Court, Royal Oak Road, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow
- Brothers of Charity Services, Banner House, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
- Brothers of Charity Services, Bawnmore, Limerick
- Brothers of Charity Services, Belmont Park, Waterford
- Brothers of Charity Services, Lanesboro Street, Roscommon
- Brothers of Charity Services, Lota, Glanmire, Co. Cork
- Brothers of Charity Services, Woodlands, Renmore, Galway
- Camphill Communities of Ireland, Ballytobin, Callan, Co. Kilkenny
- Cheeverstown House, Templeogue, Dublin 6W
- Children’s Sunshine Home, Leopardstown Road, Foxrock, Dublin 18
- Clann Mór Ltd., Clann Mor House, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
- Clones Branch, Cairde Activation Centre, Canal Stores, Clones, Co. Monaghan
- CoAction West Cork, Slip, Bantry, County Cork
- COPE Foundation, Bonnington, Montenotte, Cork
- Co. Wexford Community Workshop, Beelefield, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
- Co. Wexford Community Workshop, Marshmeadows, New Ross, Co. Wexford
- DARA Residential Services, 8 The Avenue, Castletown, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
- Daughters of Charity Service, St. Vincent’s Centre, Navan Road, Dublin 7
- Delta Centre, Strawhall, Carlow
- Drumlin House, Cootehill, County Cavan
- Galway Association, Blackrock House, Salthill, Galway
- Holy Angels Day Care Centre, Strawhall Industrial Estate, Carlow
- KARE, Lower Eyre Street, Newbridge, County Kildare
- KASMHA, College Gardens, Callan Road, Kilkenny
- Kerry Parents & Friends, Old Monastery, Port Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry
- L’Arche Ireland, Cluain Aoibhinn, Fairgreen Lane, Callan, Co. Kilkenny
- Malta Services Drogheda, Industrial Estate, Donore Road, Drogheda
- MIDWAY Services, Beechmount Industrial Estate, Navan, Co. Meath
• Moorehaven Centre, O’Brien Street, Tipperary
• North West Parents & Friends Association, Holy Family Day Centre, Ballytivnan, Sligo
• Peacehaven, 138 Hillside, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
• Peamount Hospital, Newcastle, County Dublin
• Prosper Fingal, Vocational Training Centre, Piercetown, Skerries, Co. Dublin
• Rehabcare, Roslyn Park, Beach Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4
• Sisters of Charity of Jesus & Mary, Moore Abbey, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare
• Sisters of La Sagesse, Cregg House, Sligo
• Sisters of Bon Sauveur Services, Carriglea, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford
• SOS Kilkenny Ltd., Seville Lodge, Callan Road, Kilkenny
• St. Aidan’s Service, Millands, Gorey, Co. Wexford
• St. Anne’s Service, Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary
• St. Catherine’s Association, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow
• St. Christopher’s Service, Leamore Park, Battery Road, Longford
• St. Cronan’s Association, Grange, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary
• St. Hilda’s Services, Grace Park Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
• St. John of God Hospitaller Services, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
• St. Joseph’s Foundation, Charleville, Co. Cork
• St. Margaret’s Centre, Moorehampton Road, Donnybrook, Dublin 4
• St. Michael’s House, Ballymun Road, Ballymun, Dublin 9
• St. Patrick’s Centre (Kilkenny), Kells Road, Kilkenny
• St. Vincent’s Centre, St. Mary’s Road, Cork
• Stewarts Hospital Services Ltd., Palmerstown, Dublin 20
• Sunbeam House Services, Cedar Estate, Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
• Tipperary Association, Drangan, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
• Walkinstown Association, 1 Longmile Road, Dublin 12
• Waterford Association, Spring Garden Workshop, Cherrymount, Waterford
• Western Care Association, Pool Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
• Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit, Larkins Lane, South Main Street, Wexford
Monday, 26th June 2006 - Creggan Court Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

Evaluation Form

a) How would you rate the following:

- Benefit of the consultative workshop to you
- Layout of the consultative workshop
- Content of the consultative workshop
- Venue of the consultative workshop
- Catering at the venue
- Organisation of the consultative workshop

b) How beneficial were today’s discussions to you?

- Very Useful
- Useful
- Average
- Not Useful

c) Overall, what do you feel went well at the consultative workshop?
d) What could have been improved at the consultative workshop?


e) What further workshops would you like the National Federation to run in the future?

1.

2.

3.

f) If you have any further comments, please write them here:


We would be grateful if you could return your completed form to the Registration Desk.

Thank you for your contribution to the Consultative Workshop.
Appendix 3: Questions

Community Participation and Inclusion

What does it mean to me?

What do I like doing in the community where I live?
Are there things I would like to do that I don’t do now?
What stops me from doing these things?
Are there places I would like to go that I don’t go to now?
What stops me from going to these places?
Would I like to do things or go places more often?
Who do I like to do things or go places with?
Would I like to do things or go places with different people?
Who do I know in the area where I live?
What stops me from knowing people?
Who knows me in the area where I live?
What stops people from knowing me?
Do I know enough people?
How can I get to know more people?
Where can I go to meet more people?
Who can help?
The National Federation Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee invites you to attend a Consultative Workshop on the barriers, incentives and solutions to community participation & inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities on Monday, 26th June 2006 from 11.00 am to 3.15 pm in the Creggan Court Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

Reply by Friday, 16th June 2006 to Janet Swinburne, Policy Development Co-Ordinator Tel: 091-792316 or by Email to janet.swinburne@fedvol.ie

Please advise Janet of any particular requirements when confirming attendance.
This project is supported by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under its Funding Scheme to Support National Organisations in the Community & Voluntary Sector

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES
Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

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June 2007