National Federation Secretariat

Service Plan 2009

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

Adam O’Donovan – Artist of image shown on the front cover.

Adam has many interests which include art & crafts, cooking, gardening, swimming, music, making jigsaw puzzles and visiting Fota, the local Wildlife Park, in Cork. Adam attends Castlehyde Courtyard Day Service near Fermoy and enjoys the diverse range of activities provided there.

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1. Introduction

I am pleased to present the Service Plan of the Secretariat of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies for 2009.

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability is a national umbrella organisation for voluntary/non-statutory agencies who provide direct services to people with intellectual disability in Ireland. Our 62 Member Organisations provide services to 22,000 people with intellectual disability and their families in the Republic of Ireland and employ 15,500 staff in a wide range of roles. Our members account for in excess of 85% of this country's direct service provision to people with an intellectual disability. The services provided by National Federation member organisations are founded on the values as set out in the O'Brien Principles (1987) of Inclusion, Choice, Dignity, Respect, Participation and Contribution. They are rooted in the rights based perspective that people who avail of intellectual disability services have the right to live full and active lives, and be active participating members of their own community.

The 2009 Service Plan outlines, in detail, a wide range of activities which the Secretariat will be carrying out on behalf of, and in support of, our membership during the year. The primary focus of our activities this year will be on supporting our members to meet the many challenges arising in the context of a deteriorating macro economic climate. A key principle of the National Federation in delivering our Service Plan is our commitment to actively engage with people who avail of intellectual disability services.

The wide range of actions contained in this Service Plan are similarly focussed on ensuring that member organisations are supported to provide high quality person centred services and supports to people with an intellectual disability. There are many initiatives to ensure that staff and volunteers in our services are equipped to meet the many challenges involved in providing supports in a climate of ever decreasing resources, initiatives to promote the inclusion of people with an intellectual disability in their own communities, key policy development initiatives and an exciting programme of research with a particular emphasis on Living Options which has been identified as the key research priority in 2009. A range of actions are also outlined which will progress the valuable work of the Informing Families Project. As in other years, a key function for us in 2009 is the sharing of information amongst member organisations. Information on best practice, innovative developments, important policy issues and other areas of interest will be collated by the Secretariat team from a wide range of sources both national and international and disseminated throughout our membership during the course of the year.

While the Service Plan for 2009 is ambitious in its contents, the resources to execute it are finite. Apart from myself as Chief Executive, the Secretariat team is comprised of Edel Tierney, Director of Research & Policy Development, Breda Casey, Policy Development Co-Ordinator, Jillian Sexton, Human Resources Training & Development Co-Ordinator, Maria McMahon, Office Manager, Caroline Looney and Mary Barrett who job share as Administrative Officers, Alison Harnett, Informing Families Project Co-Ordinator, Brian Donohoe, part time Clerical Officer and John Doyle who is on a student placement from the University of Limerick.

In order to meet the many challenges contained in the Service Plan we have committed ourselves to a team Building Day in early January 2009 during which we will be developing core team values and also to monthly team meetings to ensure we remain focussed on the target actions set for ourselves in the Service Plan.

As ever we are indebted to all the members of the National Federation's various Sub-Committees and Working Groups, including staff members and people who avail of intellectual disability services, without whose support it would be impossible to deliver on our Service Plan.

Brian O'Donnell
Chief Executive

2. Key Challenges for 2009

In the macroeconomic climate likely to prevail in 2009 it will be a major challenge for the National Federation to maintain current service provision in the face of reductions in member organisations funding allocations. A funding reduction of 1% in disability services was announced in Budget 2009 and when added to the 1% reduction already announced in 2008, together with a likely additional similar cut in early 2009, the scale of the challenge is self-evident.

In 2009 the National Federation will continue its campaign to limit funding reductions to those already announced. We will take every opportunity to remind Government of the commitment which they gave:

(a) to prioritise disability in the context of the National Disability Strategy, and
(b) to minimise the impact of budgetary adjustments on vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities as announced in Budget 2009.

In the early part of 2009 we will be taking the following specific actions:

1. We will, through the Disability Stakeholders Group, be bringing our serious concerns about budgetary cutbacks to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Health which meets in February 2009.
2. At the meeting of the National Disability Strategy Stakeholders Monitoring Groups, upon which the National Federation is represented, we will be stating that there is little scope for further efficiency savings and further cuts in funding will result in service reductions.
3. We will request the National Disability Authority to place this matter on the agenda of their meeting in February 2009 and they would make a statement on the matter after they have met.
4. We will be engaging with the HSE Disability Governance Group to agree the service reductions which will be required including the communication of the reductions to families, people with intellectual disability, Government and the general public.
5. We will be liaising with Inclusion Ireland to advise them of our services and to organise a joint campaign to highlight the impact which service reductions will have on people with intellectual disability, their families and the staff employed to support them.

Also the requirement of identifying and promoting the particular value add which the members of the National Federation provide to its stakeholders including people with intellectual disability, families, funders, Government and society generally has emerged both as an immediate and strategic priority in 2009. In 2009 there is a recognition that the National Federation must proactively address the general issue of efficiency and provide assurances that, as a National Federation of service providers, we are, through our capacity for innovation and creativity in finding solutions to complex problems, maximising the opportunities for people with an intellectual disability from the funding available.

In Budget 2009, the Government announced its intention to establish a group with an independent chair to look at the scope for greater rationalisations and improved efficiency within the disability services sector. In response to these developments, the National Federation established a working group to identify measures to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness, while delivering the best possible outcomes for the people with an intellectual disability who we support in the context of tightening resources availability. In early 2009, the working group will be finalising a consultative document containing detailed proposals for discussion with and by member organisations.

3. Information Sharing

Communication and Dissemination of Best Practice

One of the key functions of the National Federation is to share information amongst members and with the wider community. Information on best practice, innovative developments, important policy issues and other areas of interest is gathered by the Secretariat team from a wide range of sources (including regular communication with member organisations, research, and consultation through Sub-Committees, the National Federation Board of Directors and General Assembly, and from statutory bodies and voluntary organisations). Information that is relevant and important to the members and other stakeholders is then disseminated through various channels such as training, publications, our website (www.fedvol.ie), quarterly newsletters, conferences, regular e-mail bulletins, and through the meetings of the General Assembly, National Federation Board, and Sub-Committees. Details of a wide range of information sharing and communication activities planned for 2009 are set out below:

Objectives:	**Key Actions:**
To organise and take responsibility for managing and updating the information on the National Federation website – www.fedvol.ie, which will provide Member Organisations with relevant and timely information.	A review of our website was carried out at the end of 2008. It was agreed that we needed to update our website. A Contractor was appointed in December to: ▪ Re-design the website to be clear, visually attractive, professional, modern, clean in nature, with effective use of colour, proportion & typeface which reflects the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies ▪ Design Template Audit / Validation For WAI Accessibility Level AA The Secretariat Team will: ▪ Use Webtrade's Content Management System – Siternity – for updating website ▪ Undertake training on-site on the Siternity Content Management System ▪ Feed into the design process and approval of each stage ▪ Consult Member Organisations to feedback their views and opinions on current website and our plans for review ▪ Update the website on a weekly basis
To monitor and disseminate relevant information and resources to the secretariat and member organisations.	▪ The National Federation Secretariat team will distribute regular emails and fact sheets covering a wide range of issues to both the Secretariat Team and to the wider Member Organisations. In particular, emails and a monthly email newsletter will be provided on a variety of issues, such as research reports, policy updates, funding opportunities, media coverage, work updates etc. ▪ Draft regular news flashes detailing current national and international developments and/or new publications e.g.,

	charities legislation, Government social inclusion policies, HSE 2009 programme, Budget 2010 etc. ▪ Enhance links with external organisations - In particular links with The Wheel and the Irish Charities Tax Research Group in areas of common interest e.g. charities legislation, etc. ▪ Publish quarterly Newsletters in 2009: ▪ Spring ▪ Summer ▪ Autumn ▪ Winter
To attend conferences and gather information on disability related issues accordingly.	As relevant conferences arise in 2009 these shall be attended and information disseminated. Examples of relevant conferences which are held annually include: ▪ NDA annual conference and roundtable discussions ▪ HIQA annual conference ▪ Psychological Society of Ireland annual conference ▪ European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) conferences ▪ National Advocacy Conference Information on best practice and innovative ideas will be shared with member organisations and stakeholders
To disseminate research e.g. presentations at national and international conferences and publish papers in peer review journals and other relevant publications.	The National Federation Secretariat team members will: ▪ Continue to disseminate research at national and international conferences and seminars. ▪ Continue to disseminate the implementation of the Research Strategy to member organisations and other disability stakeholders. ▪ Continue to disseminate the National Best Practice Guidelines for Informing Families of their Child's Disability through a range of relevant meetings, conferences, training and study days, and through a significant pilot implementation and dissemination project in the Cork region. ▪ Provide updates for our website ▪ Continue to publish articles in peer-reviewed journals and other disability publications
To develop an on-line National Federation library.	. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will: ▪ Develop an online library system which will log and record literature available on site in the secretariat offices - Reference Manager is the tool being used to develop this

To advise the Board of National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on issues relating to the vocational training and employment of people with intellectual disability.	Through the Vocational and Training Sub-Committee the National Federation will, in 2009: ▪ Examine the recommendations of the National Review of HSE Funded Day Services Report ▪ Survey Member Organisations to gather information on emerging issues and then identify priority areas ▪ Exchange information with the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment's Consultative Forum on Employment of People with Disabilities through its representation by Christy Lynch, KARE on the Forum

4. Research

Supporting and Developing Evidence Based Practice

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies recognises that appropriate high quality research is a necessary pre-requisite to ensuring best practice in services development and delivery and in policy formulation. Consequently the National Federation is committed to supporting the development of a strong research base within National Federation member organisations and initiating and collaborating in research relevant to the lives of people with intellectual disability. Research also has a key role to play in supporting the rights of people with intellectual disability to live full and active lives by creating reflective practice in service provision and supports to people with intellectual disability.

The research role of the National Federation is supported by the Research Sub-Committee which was established in 2003. The Research Sub-Committee has the following functions:

- To advise the Board of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on research issues,
- To identify key areas of research for the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies and to explore potential for developing a cohesive plan of research actions,
- To assist the National Federation in developing research proposals for funded and non-funded research,
- To provide support for National Federation research projects through participation in project advisory committees,
- To disseminate the research undertaken by the National Federation and the member organisations, and to highlight the benefits for people who avail of intellectual disability services and their families (using National Federation website, newsletters, conferences, etc.)
- To encourage informal networking and to facilitate interagency cooperation on research projects among the member organisations,
- To highlight the research activities of the National Federation and its members with European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disability (IASSID) and the National Disability Authority (NDA) and to encourage closer cooperation where appropriate and
- To debate best practice and develop guidelines in disability research based on national and international evidence.

In August 2008 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies launched its National Intellectual Disability Research Strategy. This was the first ever strategy for research among National Federation member organisations. The service plan of Research of the National Federation shall be based on the priorities of the Research strategy and the action plans as outlined below. Further information on the Research Strategy is available on our website at www.fedvol.ie/research.

Objectives	**Key Actions**
To facilitate and support the work of the Research	▪ To implement the agreed aims of the Research Sub-Committee through arranging quarterly meetings during 2009. The Research Sub-Committee will meet on the following dates:

Sub-Committee.	- March 9th - June 8th - September 7th - December 7th - To provide the Sub-Committee with regular inputs regarding upcoming events, funding opportunities, research related projects and evidence based practices in intellectual disability. - To provide opportunities for members to share information in relation to key research related initiatives / projects that they are engaged in at local level. - To review the programme of work undertaken by the Research Sub-Committee on a regular basis. The work of the Research Sub-Committee will focus on pursuing the implementation of the Strategy (see below for detail).
To pursue the topic of Living Options as a research priority in 2009.	11 Priority areas were identified in 2008 as per Research Strategy consultations. **Living Options** is the agreed topic for 2009. Specific actions in relation to this include: - Developing literature updates and relevant reading materials on the topic - Organize roundtable discussions or working groups to debate current issues - National/ Internal experts shall be consulted and invited to advise the Research Sub-Committee on key areas - The National Designated Expert on Living Options, Professor Roy McConkey, will be consulted on this topic and will advise us as to the most relevant / key questions to pursue. - Examine the current options available in Ireland and review the literature in relation to these options
To continue to identify National Designated Experts in the research community and update literature materials and resources on web site.	- In 2009 the National Federation will continue to work with National Designated Experts in key topics of expertise - Designated experts will continue to provide literature reviews on the most relevant literature in their area of expertise and these will be posted on the National Federation website - The list of topics may be added to in 2009 and information will be updated as reviews are submitted
To develop quality indicators for research in Intellectual Disability and develop	- To implement this priority Dr. Suzanne Guerin from University College Dublin will be consulted regarding the development of Quality Indicators and the best way to pursue this priority - Methodologies appropriate for use in intellectual disability research will be identified - The most common methodologies currently employed in research shall

guidelines for evidence based practices.	be explored through an audit of the National Federation Research Database - A review of quality indicators in various methodologies shall be undertaken - Position papers on quality indicators shall be drafted
To measure performance of National Federation research activities in member organisations. To conduct an audit of the type of research being undertaken throughout the National Federation Membership.	- In 2009 the National Federation will undertake an audit of the research database to determine: o what research has been undertaken o what research has been published o what is the rate of differences in publication rate over the years of the database o what are the most common topics in intellectual disability research in Ireland o what methodologies are employed by Irish researchers - The study will be conducted by the Secretariat team and will be entitled *"the prevalence quality and type of research undertaken in the field of intellectual disability in Ireland since 2000: a qualitative and quantitative analysis".* Results of this audit will be available by summer 2009 - The results of this study and in particular the rate of peer-reviewed published articles will be taken as a baseline measure for quality indicators. - The audit will also inform the National Federation about the types and scope of research activity across the 62 member organisations
To identify key people who may act as associate members of the Research Sub-Committee as need and circumstance arise.	- The National Designated Expert in key areas or topics will act as associate members to the Research Sub-Committee and others may be called upon as need and circumstance arise to advise the Sub-Committee in these areas.
To continue to develop research collaborations with national and international research centres.	Some collaborations are already developed on key issues for research as follows: - The Intellectual Disability Supplement to TILDA led by professor Mary McCarron, - The Audit of Abuse in Disability Settings -a joint HSE and National Federation Pilot Study, - The Transfer of Knowledge programme of research at National Institute of Intellectual Disability led by Dr. Patricia O'Brien. These collaborations will be supported further by the National Federation through membership of advisory groups, steering committees, etc. In addition, collaborations on the 'Living Options' topics may develop as this topic is pursued through an action agenda in 2009.

To develop a capacity to advise on how research can be funded now and in the future.	- A list of potential funding opportunities will be compiled and circulated to member organisations. - Funding applications will also be developed as opportunity arises in 2009.
To develop a register of disability stakeholders who may be contacted for consultation on research projects, submissions etc.	Work has started on compiling a register of disability stakeholders i.e. parents, staff, and persons with an intellectual disability, government departments and other disability organisations who are interested in hearing about and taking part in research. It will also consist of research contacts within the member organisations. To pursue with this priority the following actions will be taken: - A policy statement will be developed to state the conditions to which a person will join a register and how the information will be used and maintained. - A policy document or statement will be drawn up which outlines: ▪ What signing up to the register means for people. ▪ It will also outline the legal obligations regarding data retention. - Registers will be registered with the data commissioner's office. - People will be offered the opportunity to sign up to the register. - The Inclusive Research Network will be approached and given the opportunity to join a register of stakeholders. - Invitations will be issued to staff members, people who use services and other interested parties e.g., advocacy groups government departments etc to join the register. - The register will be regulated and maintained in accordance with data protection guidelines.
To continue to update the National Federation Database of Research.	- In 2009 the National Federation will continue to update the Database of Research on the National Federation website with abstracts of research undertaken by our members which will then be available for the information of all member organisations.
To develop a National Research Ethics Review System.	The purpose of a National Research Ethics Committee will be to facilitate multi-site research and assist agencies to do research where no Research Ethics Committee exists. The Research Sub-Committee is of the view that resources will be required to pursue this priority and an interim solution was suggested and a proposal will be sent to the National Federation Board of Directors for discussion. Pending approval the following actions will be undertaken:

	- The Research Sub-Committee will approve a list of Research Ethics Centres. - These centres will act as research ethics review committees for a multi site study or for a smaller agency who wish to undertake research but do not have access to a Research Ethics Committee. - This list of approved centres will be available on the National Federation website and their procedures, guidelines etc for agency researchers will be available online. - Researchers may have these Research Ethics Centres approve their research projects if necessary. - The Research Sub-Committee will facilitate access to Research Ethics Centres and continue to build capacity for member organisations. This interim solution will be reviewed at the end of 2009.
To develop inclusive approaches to research.	The Inclusive Research Network (IRN) will continue the joint initiative between the National Federation and the National Institute of Intellectual Disability (NIID) with workshops to encourage researchers to conduct their own inclusive research. - The final workshop, in a series of 3, will take place on Feb. 6th and Feb 9th 2009 in Dublin and Galway respectively. - The workshops will be concluded by encouraging attendees to get involved in a piece of research on peoples experience of where they live. - This will link into the larger agenda of pursuing the topic living options in 2009 where people with disabilities will carry out the field work as co-researchers with support from the IRN. - An event will take place in June where the two groups from Galway and Dublin, will come together to talk about their experiences of being involved as co-researchers and conducting and contributing to a research project. - A report will be compiled on the work of the Inclusive Research network to date.
To review the research strategy.	The Research Sub-Committee will: - Continue to review the Strategy and report on its implementation. - Disseminate details regarding the implementation of the Research Strategy to member organisations and other disability stakeholders. - The research section of National Federations website will be regularly updated.
To implement Innovation Conference outcomes.	In 2009 the National Federation will reflect on the *Innovation in Services and Supports to People with Intellectual Disability* conference which took place in October 2007. - As part of this it will examine the key recommendations arising from the proceedings of the Innovation Conference.

	▪ Implement the recommendations where possible and ▪ Follow up on key outcomes which arose from the conference and solution generating sessions.
To participate in the ROSE - Reducing Occupational Stress in Employment - Project with European partners.	In 2009 the National Federation will participate as a partner in the ROSE (Reducing Occupational Stress in Employment) Project – this is a European Project funded under the Leonardo Programme. The primary objective of the project, whose lead partner is Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), is to develop a combined person and work directed stress management programme in order to improve the retention of staff working in intellectual disability / mental health services. During 2009 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will compile a national profile of: service provision / principle legislation / funding structures / staffing profile / qualifications required by those working in the intellectual disability and mental health sectors. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will identify 6 organisations to take part in the research element of the study: ▪ Managers & employees working at a front line level within organisations will be invited to participated in the project Focus Groups; ▪ Managers will complete an organisational questionnaire on the services they provide; ▪ Front Line staff will also complete a work related questionnaire.

Informing Families Project

One of the areas in which the National Federation has a key research focus is in the initial communication of a child's disability to the family. *Guidelines for Informing Families of their Child's Disability* were developed by the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies with the support of the Health Services National Partnership Forum through a wide ranging consultation and research process including parents and professionals from trade-unions and professional bodies in nursing, medical and allied health disciplines. The guidelines were launched on 3rd December 2007, by Minister for Health and Children Mary Harney, and have received support and welcome from all key stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, professional bodies and trade-unions, the Department of Health and Children, and the HSE. With the continued support of the HSNPF the guidelines are currently being implemented on a pilot basis in the Cork region, and this implementation will be evaluated to inform national roll out.

The aims of the Informing Families Project are to improve outcomes for families being told of their child's disability - through the implementation of best practice; to provide improved support, guidance, education and training for professionals in the important and sensitive task of delivering this news; and to foster and encourage partnership working and a cross-sectoral integrated approach through the progress of the project. The major objectives for the Informing Families Project in 2009 will be the continued dissemination of the Guidelines at national level, to ensure that all professionals for whom this guidance is relevant have access to the recommendations; and the pilot implementation of the Guidelines at local level in the Cork region, to inform national roll-out.

Objectives:	**Key Actions:**
To continue dissemination of *Guidelines*, *Consultation and Research Report and DVD.*	The *National Best Practice Guidelines for Informing Families of their Child's Disability*, Research and Consultation Report, and '*Words You Never Forget'* DVD will continue to be disseminated in 2009 in response to requests from: ▪ disability services ▪ HSE community and acute services ▪ universities & training providers ▪ publishers (through the ISBN system) ▪ individual requests
To present the National Best Practice Guidelines.	To ensure that the Guidelines receive the appropriate exposure to relevant professionals on the front line, presentations will be made to various stakeholder groups, conferences and national organisations. These will include: ▪ A presentation in each of the National Federation Areas in 2009, targeted at Early Services teams and members of Multi-Disciplinary teams involved in disclosure. ▪ The first of these presentations will take place for the Dublin North East and Dublin Mid Leinster Areas on Friday 20th February 2009, hosted by St. John of God Hospitaller Services in Stillorgan. ▪ Royal College of Surgeons Ireland 28th International Nursing Conference on 26th February 2009 ▪ Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Faculty of Paediatrics spring study day, 6th March 2009. ▪ Abstracts to be submitted to relevant conferences as calls for papers arise ▪ Invitations received from various hospitals, disability service providers and other organisations to provide presentations and information sessions regarding the *Informing Families Guidelines* will be facilitated and organised as the year progresses.
To write articles for relevant publications.	To maximise exposure of the Informing Families Guidelines in the academic arena and to make effective use of the significant research data gathered through the Informing Families Project, articles will be submitted to various academic publications throughout 2009. These will include: ▪ An article to be written in collaboration with Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital, to compare US and Spanish data, with Irish data gathered through the Informing Families Consultation and Research program. ▪ An article discussing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as it relates to the Informing Families

	Guidelines, in response to an invitation from BJLD, the journal of the British Institute of Learning Disabilities ▪ An article on family support at the time of diagnosis for the Journal of Intellectual Disability, in response to a call for abstracts for a special edition discussing the family.
To develop international collaboration, links and research through the *Informing Families Project.*	The *National Best Practice Guidelines for Informing Families of their Child's Disability* have received attention in a number of countries, leading to international collaborations being formed. These will be further pursued in 2009: ▪ Comparative research by the Informing Families Project with Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital will continue as described above ▪ A medical student will join the National Federation from Harvard Medical School for a 7 week placement from June 2009, with the aim of carrying out research which will be published in relation to the Informing Families best practice guidelines, and facilitating mutual learning between the two sites. ▪ Links forged with the University of Kentucky to share data on the evaluation of training programmes will be continued and developed in 2009 ▪ An invitation has been received to present the best practice guidelines in St. George's Hospital in London
To endorse the *Informing Families Guidelines.*	As each organisation and discipline receives information about the Informing Families Guidelines, requests for formal endorsement through professional bodies and trade-unions will be made. The Informing Families website which is currently under development will then display a statement/logo from each body which has endorsed the Guidelines, to promote their implementation. Endorsement will be sought from the following groups: ▪ parent organisations ▪ professional bodies of relevant disciplines ▪ trade-unions, ▪ statutory bodies

Informing Families – Cork Implementation Project:

Throughout the national and international literature, a recurring point of concern has been the lack of evaluation of communication skills and 'breaking difficult news' in general, and of guidelines for disclosure of disability in particular. To address this issue and to meet with imperative of implementing the findings of the national research the *Informing Families Project* is engaged in a pilot implementation project in the Cork region, with support from the Health Services National Partnership Forum. This implementation programme will be carried out in 2009, across hospital, community, and disability service settings. The work of the Informing Families Project is guided by a local Steering Committee comprised of parents and professionals from across all relevant sectors and disciplines. The Steering Committee is chaired by Katherine O'Leary, a parent of two children with disabilities and a Director of Inclusion Ireland. The programme of work is carried out by a series of smaller Working Groups. Outcomes for families and professionals of the implementation of this programme will be evaluated and along with local implementation, the wider aim will be to gather learning points for national roll-out. Initiatives to be undertaken in the Cork Pilot Implementation Project in 2009 are detailed below.

Objectives:	**Key Actions:**
Information Working Group: To develop an online resource of up to date, accurate, multi-lingual information for provision to parents at the time of their child's diagnosis.	The Informing Families Cork Implementation Project will develop a comprehensive, accessible, multilingual online resource which will provide up-to-date relevant information to professionals and parents at the time of diagnosis, and will address current information inequalities. The Informing Families Project is working in collaboration with the HSE Social Inclusion division in the development of this initiative. The first draft of the online information resource was completed in 2008 and approved by the Informing Families Cork Implementation Steering Committee. The website will be finalised and launched in 2009, using the steps outlined below: ■ Original materials will be developed with the Informing Families Cork Implementation Project Information Working Group ■ Permission will be secured for reproduction of existing relevant materials from 3rd parties ■ Work will continue with the HSE Social Inclusion Department to provide multi-lingual content and translation of English materials ■ Accessible, visually attractive presentation of the written materials will be achieved through work with designers ■ Work will take place with a web company to provide appropriate design, functionality, and accessibility of the on-line content ■ The website will be launched and publicised
Dissemination & Mainstreaming Working Group: To ensure that all relevant professionals in the Cork region have received the Guidelines and any supporting materials such as the DVD, Online information resource, etc.	*The Dissemination & Mainstreaming Working Group will:* ■ Complete a mapping exercise to document all areas in which professionals provide diagnosis of a child's disability to parents or support parents who receive such a diagnosis ■ Agree a plan to access all professionals working in these areas and best use of communication resources to ensure engagement and up to date information is disseminated ■ Specifically track dissemination of the Guidelines with groups in the following areas: o Cork University Maternity Hospital o Acute Paediatric units in Cork o Early services teams working with children with disabilities in the region o HSE Primary, Community and Continuing Care services which play a role in disclosure (e.g. Audiology, Social Work, Speech and Language, Public Health Nursing, Area Medical Officers, Occupational Therapists, Psychiatry, Psychology, GP's etc.) ■ Develop mechanisms for ensuring the mainstreaming and sustainability of the implementation (e.g. inclusion of the

	Guidelines as a policy document in departments, on induction courses, etc)
Teamwork & Liaison Working Group: To work across all sectors to improve communication and continuity of care when families are given the news of their child's disability.	Following on from an integrated workshop which took place in November 2008 with 23 professionals from across acute, community and disability services in the Cork region, this group will work in partnership to design care pathways that provide maximum continuity of care at the time of disclosure of a child's disability ▪ The group will work in an integrated approach to ensure liaison needs are met ▪ The group will ensure that all four levels of practice identified through the national research are addressed namely; individual practice, local team, regional team and liaison at a national level when referral to a tertiary centre takes place
Built Environment Working Group: To assess and monitor the suitability of the environments in which parents are given the news of their child's disability.	The aim of the build environment working group is to ensure availability of suitable private spaces in which to communicate with families. This will be achieved in the following ways: ▪ An assessment process will be carried out to document the suitability of facilities currently available, including the development of a photo essay ▪ Working with colleagues from the Built Environment Working Group and the Hospice Friendly Hospitals Project to make improvements where possible, and recommendations for best use of existing resources ▪ Recommendations will be made to management in local services regarding the improvements required to provide appropriate private facilities for communicating difficult news ▪ Recommendations will be made for future developments to ensure that provision for appropriate private facilities are factored in at the planning phase
Training Working Group: To provide training to all relevant groups in the Cork Region on the *Informing Families Best Practice Guidelines.*	In 2009 the Training Working Group of the Informing Families Project will provide training to the following groups: ▪ Undergraduate medical, nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals in UCC ▪ Continuous Professional Development training for professionals working in medical, nursing and allied health roles in the areas identified by the Dissemination & Mainstreaming Working Group ▪ Targeted training on paediatric and neonatology rotations in Cork University Hospital and Cork University Maternity Hospital ▪ Induction programmes ▪ An online E-Learning module for the Informing Families Project will be developed ▪ Continuous evaluation and development of the training materials and delivery will take place during 2009.

Evaluation Working Group: Pilot and evaluate the implementation of the *National Best Practice Guidelines for Informing Families of their Child's Disability* in the Cork region.	The evaluation of this Cork Implementation Project will be carried out by the Evaluation Working Group of the pilot project. ■ Existing evaluation methodologies will be gathered to define the most effective method to evaluate the pilot project ■ A methodology will be agreed with the Evaluation Working Group and Steering Group of the Cork Implementation Project ■ The plan for evaluation will be executed, with a dual focus on Process Evaluation and Outcome Evaluation

5. Policy Development

Informing National and International Policy for Disability Services

The member organisations of the National Federation account for in excess of 85% of direct service provision to persons with intellectual disability in Ireland. Therefore it is vital that we are proactive in developing and contributing to policy initiatives that impact on the lives of children and adults with intellectual disability. Working closely with our various sub-committees, the National Federation develops policy positions on a wide range of topics for consideration and approval of our Board.

We also contribute and respond to non-policy initiatives developed by the statutory authorities including the Department of Health & Children, Health Service Executive, National Disability Authority, Health Information and Quality Authority etc. and represent our sector on an extensive range of advisory groups and national committees.

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies also contribute to policy development at a European level through our representation on the Board of the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD). This provides us with an opportunity to contribute to the development of various EU directives, to the implementation of the Council of Europe's Disability Action Plan and enables us to monitor developments at EU level.

The National Federation has developed close links with the Disability Law and Policy Unit NUI Galway who are at the cutting edge in policy development and legislation relating to disability. Collaboration with the centre will continue in 2009 through various initiatives and collaborations to develop knowledge and policy in this area.

The key policy development priorities for the National Federation during 2009 are set out in detail below:

Objective:	**Key Actions:**
To support external research advisory committees and policy development expert groups.	The National Federation will continue to advise the national research projects underway through its membership of expert and scientific advisory groups as outlined in Section 4 of this report. The National Federation will continue to support national initiatives of this kind as requested throughout 2009.
To promote and develop work based partnership initiatives.	The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is represented on the Health Services National Partnership Forum by Brian O'Donnell, Chief Executive, who continues to ensure that there is a full understanding at the national level of the specific issues arising in the context of workplace partnership in intellectual disability services. The Forum comprises senior health services management, including representatives from the voluntary hospitals and intellectual disability services and senior officials representing the main national trade unions.

	■ Funding proposals to promote partnership approaches in intellectual disability services both nationally and locally will be developed and progressed through the Forum. ■ The establishment of new partnership committees within our services will be promoted and existing partnership committees will be supported by our dedicated partnership facilitator. ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will continue to play the lead role in meeting the various requirements set out in the national agreements such as performance verification and change related to the modernisation agenda in intellectual disability services.
To ensure robust monitoring of implementation of the Government's National Disability Strategy under the social partnership agreement "Towards 2016".	■ Brian O'Donnell, Chief Executive, will continue to represent the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on the National Disability Strategy Stakeholders Monitoring Group. ■ Continued attendance at the biannual meetings between the Disability Stakeholders Group which is a smaller group comprising the non statutory disability umbrella organisations and the Senior Officials Group on Disability which comprises officials representing the six Government Departments responsible for implementing sectoral plans and a number of other Departments including the Departments of Finance and Education. ■ Progress on overall implementation of the strategy will be monitored building on review procedures already in place in each of the six sectoral plans.
To promote the equalisation of opportunities for people with disabilities through effective high quality services and supports.	■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will organise and host a European Conference in Dublin in November 2009 on the topic "Inclusive Education for All" ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will participate on EASPD's working group to contribute to implementation of the Council of Europe's Disability Action Plan ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will make submissions on the implications for Irish Service Providers on EU Directives relating to Working Time and Services of General Interest ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will participate as a partner in EU Project ROSE dealing with employee welfare in the social care sector. ■ Brian O'Donnell, Chief Executive, will participate as a member of the Board of ESAPD for a three year term following his election in September 2008.
To facilitate ongoing high level interaction between the HSE and the National Federation on the multiplicity of	■ Following a proposal made by the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies in late 2008 the HSE established a National Working Group to manage implementation of the 1% cut in funding allocations to voluntary organisations which was announced by Government in Budget 2009. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is represented on this Group by John O'Dea, Chairperson and Brian O'Donnell, Chief Executive.

issues arising in the sector.	▪ Also in response to a proposal made by the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies the HSE established a Working Group to develop proposals to address Emergency/Crisis and school-leavers situations arising in 2009. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is represented on this group by Paul Ledwidge, St. Michael's House, Maura Donovan, Stewarts Hospital and Brendan Sutton, Cheeverstown House. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will engage constructively with the HSE in the development of a new Service Level Agreement Template which will set out the respective expectations and responsibilities of both the HSE and the service providers. It is expected that the new template will be completed in early 2009. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will continue to participate in a Working Group which was established by the HSE to develop proposals to protect the State's interest in capital projects in respect of which funding has been allocated. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will be obtaining legal advice to ensure that service providing interests are also protected. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is represented on the Working Group by Breda Crehan-Roche, Ability West, Pat O'Toole, St. Christopher's and Gina Magliocco, Brothers of Charity. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will co-operate with the HSE in the dissemination and implementation of the recommendations (where applicable) of the National Adult Day Services Review. Pat Reen, Prosper Fingal will continue to represent the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on the National Steering Group.
To liaise with the HSE - Employers Agency to ensure that National Federation members are fully informed regarding employment legislation and related policies.	The HSE-Employers Agency is a representative body for health service employers, which aims to promote the development of improved human resource practices within the health service. It also represents and supports employers in the management of industrial relations. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will arrange bi-annual meetings with key personnel from the HSE – Employers Agency with the aim of ensuring that human resource practitioners from across member organisations are updated regarding changes in employment legislation and policy related developments.
To participate in the National Review of the Dignity at Work Policy.	A National Review of the Dignity at Work Policy shall be undertaken in 2009 ▪ To represent the views of National Federation of Voluntary Bodies members in the review of the Dignity at Work Policy that commenced in 2008. ▪ To ensure that all National Federation members have adopted the revised policy and provide training in relation to the implementation / operation of the policy and the role of those appointed as Support Contact Persons. ▪ To support the further development of mediation as a means of resolving disputes within intellectual disability services.

To represent the views of National Federation members in the review of the Trust in Care Policy.	The objectives of the Trust in Care Policy, which was launched in 2005, are twofold – firstly, to promote a safe environment in all health settings where the dignity of those availing of services is paramount. Secondly, it aims to safeguard staff by providing for effective supervision, support and training and a safe system of work. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will participate in the national review of the Trust in Care Policy that is due to commence in 2009 – this will include undertaking a review with member organisations in relation to issues arising in the operation / implementation of the policy at a local level.
To liaise with the HSE Human Resources Directorate and Forum to ensure HR personnel are fully informed on human resource related matters.	▪ To continue to liaise with human resource personnel from across the HSE, through the work of the HR Forum, which aims to act as a network for the sharing of information on key human resource related initiatives. ▪ To ensure that all National Federation members are updated on new developments as introduced by the HSE HR directorate.
To provide strategic advice and guidance to the management of the Centre for Disability Law & Policy Unit, NUI Galway.	The National Federation will participate on the National Advisory Forum of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy Unit to: ▪ Provide strategic advice and guidance to the management of the Centre ▪ Raise the profile of the Centre nationally and internationally ▪ Provide advice on current trends, practices and developments nationally and internationally ▪ Advise on fundraising opportunities ▪ Reflect and input the views of stakeholders in the disability community in Ireland
To advise the Minister of Health & Children on matters relating to the provision of health and personal social services.	The National Health Consultative Forum is comprised of representatives from senior public and private hospital management, a wide range of health professionals, academic institutions, voluntary and community groups, advocacy groups, professional representative bodies, trade unions and relevant Government departments. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will be represented in the Forum in 2009 by John O'Dea, Chairperson and Brian O'Donnell, Chief Executive. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will highlight issues of concern and examples of innovative solutions to complex problems within intellectual disability services at the Forum.

To plan and co-ordinate implementation of the Mental Health Act, 2001.	■ In 2009 the National Federation will engage with the Mental Health Commission with regard to implementation of the Mental Health Act, 2001 in intellectual disability services. ■ Arrange a series of regional meetings and site visits for senior officials in the Mental Health Commission throughout intellectual disability services
To publish National Federation Volunteering Policy Guidelines.	The Volunteering Sub-Committee published findings from a national survey in 2008. ■ The Volunteering Policy will be developed with these findings in mind. ■ The Sub-Committee will agree and disseminate a final draft of the document.
To Monitor and Identify Education Priorities for People with Intellectual Disabilities.	Through the Education Sub-Committee, the National Federation will: ■ Plan and coordinate an International Conference co-hosted by National Federation and the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) entitled: Salamanca - 15 years on "Inclusion – A school for All" which will be held in Dublin on 12th & 13th November 2009 ■ Plan and organise the logistics associated with the conference in relation to venue and entertainment ■ Source speakers from Ireland for conference Programme to reflect inclusive education in Ireland ■ Source experiences of the education system in Ireland for a person with a disability and positive examples of pupil/teacher stories and of inclusion from a parent perspective ■ Work with local agencies to organise study visits for delegates to organisations who provide education to people with intellectual disability ■ Develop links with the Head of Research of the National Council for Special Education and with the European Agency for Development in Special Education ■ Helen Guinan, COPE Foundation, is the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies representative on National Council for Special Education. Helen will continue to attend consultations and meetings and update the Education Sub-Committee on relevant issues. ■ Identify education priorities in Ireland 2009 and continue to provide a network for members to share information on education issues for people with intellectual disability ■ Advise the Board of Directors of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on issues relevant to education of people with intellectual disability

To examine how best to support best practice in the area of Medication Management in respect of people with Intellectual Disability.	The Person Centred Medication Management Policy will be completed in 2009. To achieve this the National Federation will: ▪ Complete the draft policy guidelines ▪ Arrange for consultation of the draft guidelines with key stakeholders including people with intellectual disabilities and their families and key professionals ▪ Seek approval for final draft of publication from the Board of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies ▪ Arrange for publication and dissemination of the document.
To develop a new vision for intellectual disability in the 21st century which will set out its proposals for improving the lives of people with intellectual disability and their families and carers based on recognition of their rights as citizens of this State.	▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will lobby Government to produce a new vision for intellectual disability for the 21st century ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will establish a working group to develop proposals for consultation with Member Organisations and consideration by Government in the context of this review ▪ The group will consult with key stakeholders including Inclusion Ireland, HSE etc ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will complete its draft document for submission to John Moloney, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Health & Children, by the end of March 2009
To consider the proposed Mental Capacity Bill	▪ The National Federation will consult with member organisations and other stakeholders to draft a submission on the forthcoming Mental Capacity Bill ▪ The consultation process will form the basis of a submission document ▪ A submission document will be produced and presented to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 2009
To monitor progress and ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.	The National Federation will: ▪ Continue to monitor UN Convention developments in Ireland and internationally ▪ Observe developments at European level and provide updates to member organisations on a regular basis

6. Inclusion

Supporting Active Engagement with People with Intellectual Disability

The Government's National Action Plan for Social Inclusion frames a vision of "an Ireland where people with disabilities have, to the greatest extent possible, the opportunity to live a full life with their families and as part of their local community, free from discrimination" (2007). This commitment from Government is also reinforced in their Social Partnership Agreement Towards 2016 and in the current National Development Plan (2007). The principle of inclusion is underpinned by The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which outlines that "States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community….." (Article 19, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006)

The National Federation is committed to enabling capacity building in member organisations which will promote the inclusion, rights, independence and choice of people with intellectual disability within their own communities and within services provided by National Federation Member Organisations.

The National Federation Intellectual Disability Research Strategy 2008-2013, which sets out a vision for the research activities of the National Federation for the next six years, was developed through extensive consultation with all stakeholders in the disability community, including consultation with the Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee, the Seasamh Parliament and the Inclusive Research Network. Research Priority No. 11 of the research strategy outlines the commitment of the National Federation to "consult with and listen to people who use the services through research initiatives such as the Inclusive Research Network and continue to develop experience and expertise in participatory research methodologies". Development of these research approaches will ensure the participation of people with intellectual disability in research activities of relevance to them. Priority 11 is an overarching priority and the process of listening to and engaging effectively with people who use services is applicable across all the priorities of the strategy.

The key objectives and actions of the National Federation, in relation to the inclusion of people with intellectual disability, are outlined in more detail in the following table, and this work is supported by a very active and enthusiastic Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee. This is an inclusive group, comprised of people who avail of intellectual disability services and staff from services. The purpose of the group is to explore, identify and develop strategies for promoting inclusive communities and increasing the participation of people with intellectual disabilities within their communities.

Objectives	**Key Actions**
To work with the Community Participation and Inclusion Sub-Committee.	■ To provide up-to-date information and relevant materials in an easy to read format to Sub-Committee members, capturing innovative ideas on involving people in their own communities ■ To continuously monitor that we are all equal members of the group ■ To continue to facilitate the opportunity for each person on the group

	who avails of intellectual disability services to act as co-chair of Sub-Committee - To update Community Participation Section of our website – www.fedvol.ie
To examine best practice in relation to involving people in their own communities, including developing partnerships with local communities.	Discussions have taken place at Sub-Committee meetings and workshops have been attended to enable this process. - In 2009 the National Federation will draft a document on best practice in this area for approval by the Sub-Committee - Publish guideline document for consideration by the Board of the National Federation
To collate personal life stories/story boards of people who avail of member organisation services.	Life Stories can be used as a very effective tool to transform negative attitudes towards people who access services: - Zoe Hughes from the National Institute of Intellectual Disability has agreed to facilitate training on developing life stories when this is required by the Sub-Committee
To continue to disseminate the findings from People Connecting publication.	People Connecting was the result of participatory research carried out in 2006 and highlights issues that are important to people with intellectual disability in order for them to live the life of their choice and be meaningfully included in their own communities. The National Federation will: - Prepare a draft article for approval by the Sub-Committee outlining the role and work to date of the group. Publish this article with article from a member of the group on one of the key themes from People Connecting. - Prepare a draft article on community participation for Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disability (JARID) - Present to Advocacy Groups on community participation as the opportunities present themselves
To provide accessible information to the Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee.	- The Community Participation and Inclusion Sub-Committee will continue to work on its agenda and minutes so that the group is fully accessible to all its members.

To enhance Training & Development of Sub-Committee Members.	▪ The National Federation will, in 2009, advise Sub-Committee members of training opportunities as they arise ▪ Source opportunities to enhance skills of Sub-Committee members, e.g. presentations etc. ▪ Continue to document the learning experienced by the group as we progress through each year thereby providing a learning opportunity for other inclusive Sub-Committees and groups.
To continue to be involved in the National Working Group which is developing guideline materials which will make information accessible for all people with disabilities and people who may not have English as their first language.	The National Federation will: ▪ Continue to input into the National Guideline document ▪ Examine possible funding opportunities for publishing document
To collaborate with Health Research Board in organising National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD) Annual Report art competition.	The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies works closely with the Health Research Board and the Department of Health & Children in the formulation and publication of the National Intellectual Disability Database Committee Annual Report. The Database report is an essential services information and planning tool. ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will organise an art competition for people who avail of intellectual disability services within its membership to design the cover of the National Intellectual Disability Database Committee Annual Report for 2008
To provide information to the National Intellectual Disability Database Committee Annual Report.	▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies through its membership will provide comprehensive information on current services provision, on current unmet need and on future service requirements ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will arrange for representation on the NIDD committee. The National Federation is currently represented on the committee by James Rocke, Western Care Association, and Patrick McGinley, Brothers of Charity Galway

To enhance links with Advocacy Groups.	■ The National Federation will present to the Seasamh Parliament and Forum in January 2009 outlining the role of the National Federation and develop links between both groups ■ Present to other advocacy groups as opportunities arise
To produce easy to read material and information that is accessible to a wide audience.	Easy to read publications shall be disseminated in 2009 including: ■ Service Plan 2009 ■ Annual Report 2008 ■ Inclusive Research Network Workshop Findings ■ Other National Federation materials as required
To disseminate the work of the Inclusive Research Network (IRN).	■ The National Federation will publicise and disseminate the work of the IRN as outlined in Section 4 of this report.

7. Human Resources Development

Providing Supports to Staff and Volunteers

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies in its human resource work focuses on both employee and volunteer supports. It seeks to ensure that its member organisations are kept abreast of employment and industrial relations related developments and new initiatives related to supporting volunteering.

Employee Supports

There are many benefits to organisations of having a strong human resource strategy in place – mainly provision of a clear sense of organisational direction, sharing of resources and knowledge amongst employees, better equipped, motivated and developed staff and ultimately the provision of a better quality service to those accessing services. The mission of the National Federation in relation to human resources is to:

a) Provide a communication, information and networking forum to Human Resource practitioners within National Federation member organisations whereby they can meet with colleagues and pursue HR objectives of common interest.
b) Gather and disseminate information in relation to key issues of relevance to member organisations and to provide support in relation to human resource related developments.
c) Provide a strategic decision making forum whereby common positions can be developed where this is considered beneficial.
d) Ensure that the intellectual disability sector is recognised, connected and has a voice at national level.
e) Examine and furnish reports on relevant human resource related issues and legislation and to provide advice to member organisations through National Federation structures.

The Human Resources Sub-Committee is a key forum for the sharing of information and best practice on key human resources related issues and initiatives. Through the work of the Sub-Committee, and the regular meetings which are held with the HSE-Employers Agency, organisations are supported to network with fellow human resource professionals and develop common positions on key matters. During 2009 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will also continue to work closely with the HSE, in particular with the human resources function, and will continue to participate in the HR Forum which has been established to support those working in the human resources field. An overview of the key human resources related actions to be undertaken during 2009 are provided below.

Volunteering Supports

Volunteering is an integral part of community activity within the member organisations of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, reducing the levels of social isolation and exclusion often experienced by people with intellectual disabilities within their own community. The National Federation Volunteering Sub-Committee expertly supports the planning and prioritisation of volunteering needs identified by member organisations, whilst informing the Board of Directors on priority issues, key challenges and recommendations in respect of volunteering at a local & national level. The key actions to be undertaken during 2009 are provided below.

Objectives	**Key Actions**
Employee Supports	
To support the Human Resources Sub-Committee in the implementation of its terms of reference.	■ To implement the agreed aims of the Human Resources Sub-Committee through arranging quarterly meetings during 2009. ■ To provide the Sub-Committee with regular inputs regarding upcoming events, funding opportunities, human resource related developments. ■ To provide opportunities for members to share information in relation to key human resource related initiatives / projects that they are engaged in at local level. ■ To review the programme of work undertaken by the Human Resources Sub-Committee on a regular basis.
To ensure National Federation member organisations have appropriate procedures in place for Garda vetting of staff and volunteers.	■ To ensure that all National Federation of Voluntary Bodies members undertake Garda vetting for staff and volunteers within their organisation and have the necessary policy and procedures in place. ■ To liaise with personnel from the Garda Central Vetting Unit to ensure that National Federation members have access to a timely Garda vetting process. ■ To address the issues of concern as identified by National Federation of Voluntary Bodies members in relation to Garda vetting.
To support National Federation members in relation to key industrial relations issues.	The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will continue to provide support to its member organisations in relation to national deliberations regarding terms / conditions of employment for staff. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will also continue to monitor the position in relation to industrial relations matters of relevance to member organisations and to respond as required. Specifically this will include: ■ Providing support to representatives who sit on national committees on behalf of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies member organisations. ■ Supporting organisations in relation to key industrial relations issues / national agreements e.g. the implementation of the reduction in the working week of nurses; dealing with outstanding issues arising from the Labour Court Recommendation (LCR No. 18049) relating to Social Care Workers and other matters as they arise. ■ Gathering information from member organisations in relation to key issues under consideration so a national picture / shared position can be developed.

To support employee well-being within National Federation member organisations.	This initiative will seek to identify the main health and safety / employee well-being issues facing National Federation member organisations. Specific actions to be undertaken include: ▪ The design of an employee well-being / health and safety questionnaire to circulate to member organisations to determine priority issues and concerns. ▪ Analysis of results and identification of key actions to be undertaken / recommendations arising. ▪ Circulation of survey findings to members of the Human Resources Sub-Committee for consideration and the development of a programme of work. ▪ Participate as a partner in the EU ROSE Project which is focusing on reducing occupational stress for employees working in the intellectual disability and mental health sectors.
To provide retirement and life assurance benefits for the members of the National Federation Pension Scheme.	The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Pension Scheme was established in 1996. As at 31st December, 2008 there are 2,500 members from 23 different member organisations of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies availing of the scheme. During 2009 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will continue to: ▪ Liaise with our Fund Manager New Ireland Assurance to ensure that our members interests are protected in the current difficult economic climate ▪ Administer the scheme in conjunction with New Ireland Assurance to ensure that members contributions are invested in timely fashion ▪ Arrange meetings of the Pension Scheme Trustees at regular intervals throughout 2009 to ensure proper administration of the scheme. The Pension Scheme Trustees will meet with Fund Managers to assess performance and ensure members interests are protected and promoted as far as possible. ▪ Organise two workshops for Pension Scheme Administrators employed by member organisations to keep them fully informed on all aspects of the scheme including administration, fund performance, member benefits, etc.
To ensure that there is an effective recruitment advertisement procedure in place for National Federation member organisations.	During 2009 the National Federation will: ▪ Continue to Link with Independent News & Media in relation to paper based advertising for member organisations. ▪ Advance proposals and options in relation to the development of web-based advertising options for National Federation members with a view to ensuring maximum value for money in recruitment.

To support the registration process / on-going professional development of health & Social Care Professionals.	The Health & Social Care Professionals Council was established in 2007 with the aim of protecting consumers through promoting high standards of professional conduct, education and competence. The Council was established under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 and will lead to the statutory registration of twelve health and social care professions none of whom were previously subject to statutory registration. Specifically during 2009 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will: ▪ Support the National Federation representative on the Health & Social Care Professionals National Council. ▪ Make submissions to / provide feedback to the HSE in relation to their role in the Education and Development of Health and Social Care Professionals.
Volunteering Supports	
To work with the members of the Volunteering Sub-Committee.	Throughout 2009 the National Federation will ▪ Provide up-to-date information and relevant materials to Sub-Committee members, capturing innovative ideas and volunteering opportunities
To arrange a meeting with Minister Pat Carey, the minister with responsibility for active citizenship.	▪ Agree purpose of meeting with Volunteering Sub-Committee and National Federation Secretariat ▪ Contact Minister's office to arrange meeting
To disseminate the findings of the Volunteering Survey.	▪ Complete article for Frontline Magazine ▪ Prepare draft article for JARID ▪ Continue to disseminate survey and recommendations as and when opportunities present themselves.
To finalise Volunteering Factsheets (easy-to-read) versions for our member organisations and all those who avail of services.	Discussions have taken place at Sub-Committee meetings regarding the development of Factsheets. In 2009 the Sub-Committee will ▪ Agree final version with Sub-Committee ▪ Publish Factsheets – including publishing them on our website

To facilitate the ongoing development of Volunteering supports to member organisations.	To achieve this objective the National Federation will - Disseminate contact details of our panel of mentors, drawn from existing Volunteer Co-Ordinators, who will provide support and guidance to organisations who are interested in recruiting and maintaining volunteers. - Email member organisations to ascertain interest in developing a volunteering network - Update Volunteering Section of our website – www.fedvol.ie
To facilitate ongoing support to our member organisations so that volunteer resources can be maximised to support people with intellectual disability in their own community.	Support to member organisations under this objective shall be maximised by the following actions in 2009 - Develop formal link with Volunteer Centres Ireland. Explore common issues and support for member organisations and continue to advise our members of training available through Volunteering Ireland. - Continue to liaise with Special Olympics Network through links with Volunteering Sub-Committee. - Continue ongoing links with Best Buddies Ireland, Pobal Enhancing Disability Services, and Office of Active Citizenship etc.
To make the Volunteering Sub-Committee more inclusive.	In 2009 the National Federation will - Explore option of inviting volunteers and people who avail of intellectual disability services on to Sub-Committee in order to get the views and opinions of all stakeholders.

8. Skill Development

Supporting Capacity Building, Training and Professional Development

Skills development remains a significant area of work within the overall brief of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies secretariat – this brief incorporates a range of initiatives focused on capacity building and professional skills development. The programme of work outlined within Service Plan 2009 aims to build on the work undertaken by the National Federation Secretariat in recent years to support those with a learning and development brief across member organisations. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, within its overall aims, seeks to support the development of world class services and key to this is ensuring that staff has the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to support those that they are working with.

The National Federation aims to provide training and networking opportunities at an inter-organisational level, thus supporting organisations to come together and undertake training on a collective / shared basis.

The Training & Development Sub-Committee will continue to act as a central co-ordination and reference point for a number of the training and development activities undertaken by the National Federation. The Sub-Committee is comprised of highly experienced training and development professionals from across National Federation member organisations. The terms of reference of the Sub-Committee are as follows:

1. To advise the Board of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on recommendations to meet the learning requirements of staff of member organisations through education, training and development
2. To facilitate the identification and prioritisation of and plan appropriate responses to the education, training, development and learning requirements of member organisations.
3. To influence the provision of options and resources to address the education, training, development and learning needs of member organisations.
4. To act as a network, to share information and resources regarding staff training and associated HR related matters.
5. To develop national criteria for standards in education, training, development and learning across a wide variety of priority roles.
6. To provide a programme of activities to meet education, training, development and learning needs.
7. To review education, training, development and learning course content to ascertain consistency with core principles and ethos of National Federation of Voluntary Bodies.
8. To ensure that the specific staff training and development interests of the non-statutory bodies are understood and included in people management planning at a corporate level in the regional health authorities.

Objectives:	**Key Actions:**
To implement the terms of reference of the Training & Development Sub-Committee.	■ To work with members of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Training & Development Sub-Committee to implement the groups terms of reference through arranging quarterly meetings of the group during 2009. ■ To provide the Training & Development Sub-Committee with

	regular inputs relating to upcoming events, funding opportunities, training events. - To provide opportunities for members to share information in relation to developments in the training and learning field that they are engaged in at a local level. - To act as a network, to share information and resources regarding staff training and associated human resource related matters - To review programmes of work undertaken by the Training & Development Sub-Committee on a regular basis.
To agree responses to meet the training & development needs of organisations.	- To agree priority training and development actions to be undertaken during 2009 in conjunction with members of the Training & Development Sub-Committee. - To review this programme of work on a quarterly basis.
To enhance organisations understanding of eLearning / blended learning.	To make arrangements for a 1-day workshop focusing on eLearning / Blended Learning. Specifically this event will aim to: - Provide an overview of eLearning – what's involved for organisations and learners, how it can be of benefit to organisations and compliment other forms of learning; - Explore the challenges involved for organisations in making the most of eLearning and using technology as a integral medium for learning and development; - Examine the HSEs Learning Centre – www.hseland.ie - which aims to provide learning and development opportunities to all staff working within the HSE and organisations funded by the HSE; - Highlight how the learning experience of those undertaking accredited college programmes can be enhanced by an eLearning / blended learning approach as described through the experience of the Open Training College. The event will be organised as part of the National Federation commitment to the sharing of best practice in training and development and a summary report will be compiled detailing the main themes, learning points and findings arising from the event.
To enhance the capacity of Front Line Managers in intellectual disability services to effectively carry out their role and to contribute to the human resource function within their organisation in partnership with key stakeholders.	- To identify a group of front line managers within National Federation member organisations to participate in an accredited programme - '*Managing for the Future: Building your Skills as a Front Line Manager in a Person Centred Environment*'. Specifically the Programme will aim: - To enhance and clarify learners' understanding of their role as a front line manager. - To develop a specific set of skills and competencies required by front line managers and to build their confidence in their role. - To develop learners' people management skills and knowledge of relevant human resource policies and

	procedures and employment law. - To develop managers' people management skills and ability to lead a team. - To develop knowledge and practical skills in managing change. - To provide a basis from which participants can progress onto further (accredited) training programmes. ■ To deliver the programme in conjunction with personnel from The Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick (UL). The programme will be accredited as a Certificate in Management (Intellectual Disability), Level 6, National Framework of Qualifications. ■ To evaluate the training programme on an on-going basis.
To provide regular updates to and expand the training and development section of the National Federation Website.	■ To provide up to date relevant information to National Federation members regarding training and development initiatives, funding opportunities, events, etc. ■ To explore the potential to develop a 'members only' section of the National Federation website for those involved in training & development activities. This could include the development of a members only / password accessible section e.g. discussion fora, Notice Boards, etc which will facilitate training and development professionals to network on-line.
To liaise with the HSE Performance & Development section on key training and development related actions.	■ To continue to liaise with personnel from the HSE Performance & Development Function in the implementation of training and learning initiatives aimed at supporting employee development within National Federation member organisations.
To support the expansion of the HSE Learning Centre.	■ To participate in the eLearning Project which has been established by the HSE to extend the range of modules available on the HSE Learning Centre website – www.hseland.ie. ■ To support National Federation member organisations to utilize the Learning Centre as a blended approach to learning and to complement other forms of learning occurring within organisations.
To ensure that National Federation members implement the requirements as set out in the HSE 'Management of Complaints Policy & Procedure'.	In meeting its requirements under Part 9 of the Health Act 2004 the HSE, in conjunction with the relevant stakeholders, developed a feedback Policy '*Your Service, Your Say – Your Guide to the Health Service Executive's Feedback Policy*'. The purpose of the document is to detail the guiding principles, statutory requirements and the policy of the HSE in relation to the handling of complaints received by the HSE and organisations who are providing a service on their behalf.

	As National Federation members are funded by the HSE they are bound by the provisions of the HSE Complaints Policy & Procedures Manual and so the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies during 2009 will:- ■ Continue to liaise with the HSE Office of Consumer Affairs in relation to the management of complaints process; ■ Ensure that statistical data is gathered from members in relation to the management of complaints; ■ Arrange training for those appointed as Complaints Officers within organisations as required.
To implement Action Plan for People Management (APPM) related activities.	The APPM focuses on people management within the health service and identifies a range of actions aimed at skill development, employee well-being, best practice regarding employment policies and procedures, partnership initiatives and developing performance management. During 2009 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will: ■ Monitor progress in relation to the implementation of APPM related actions within intellectual disability services ■ Complete a progress report on actions undertaken in 2008 ■ Seek support to implement APPM actions during 2009 and beyond
To organise a range of training and development related programmes aimed at developing specific skills sets for staff working within National Federation member organisations.	During 2009 the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will co-ordinate the delivery of a series of short-term training and development programmes which have been identified as priority areas by National Federation members. These will include as follows: PAS-ADD (Psychiatric Assessment Schedules for Adults with Developmental Disabilities) training programme: ■ To liaise with Dr. Steve Moss regarding the delivery of a PAS-ADD - Psychiatric Assessment Schedules for Adults with Developmental Disabilities - training programme. Cha-PAS (Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Assessment Schedule) programme: ■ A similar Cha-PAS (Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Assessment Schedule) programme for professionals working with children with an intellectual disability will also be delivered during 2009. Training will also be delivered in the following areas throughout 2009: ■ Investigators Training ■ Support Contact Persons ■ Dignity at Work Policy ■ Trust in Care Policy

To support the continued implementation of the SKILL Programme within National Federation member organisations during 2009/10.	The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will continue to support the operation of the SKILL Project in intellectual disability services in 2009. The overall aim of the SKILL Programme is to "..*educate, develop and train support staff in the health services to the optimum of their abilities in order to enhance their role in the quality of service provision*." Specifically the National Federation will: ▪ Co-ordinate the allocation of SKILL Programme quota places to National Federation member organisations for 2009/10. ▪ Continue to liaise with the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) in relation to the operation of the SKILL Project within disability services and the customization / development of SKILL Project Modules to meet the needs of the personnel from disability services that are involved in SKILL Programme Training. ▪ Ensure that member organisations avail of the funding available to cover a portion of the costs associated with learner's engagement in the SKILL Programme. ▪ Complete regular reviews with organisations in relation to their experience of the SKILL Programme and to support the national evaluation undertaken by the SKILL Project Team.
To liaise with the Health Services National Partnership Forum (HSNPF) on various skill development initiatives.	The HSNPF is a joint management / trade union steering committee for workplace partnership within the health service. It aims to promote a partnership approach to change and problem solving in the health services and the following are the key training and development related activities that the National Federation will be liaising with the HSNPF on during 2009: **Managing Change Programme:** ▪ To continue to participate on the Steering Committee which is overseeing the development and implementation of a 'Managing Change Programme' in conjunction with the National College of Ireland (NCI) and the Labour Relations Commission (LRC). **Managing Transformation Programme – HSE West:** ▪ To represent the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on the Programme Steering Committee and to support the delivery of the Managing Transformation Programme and the participation of nominees from intellectual disability services in the programme.
Explore opportunities for shared learning by supporting student development and education.	The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will continue to support and develop student placement and professional development through student placement and mentoring. Specifically this will include: ▪ Initiating a student placement from University of Limerick ▪ Supporting a student placement from NUI Galway Law Department ▪ Supporting a student placement from Harvard Medical School

9. Compliance with Regulatory Requirements

Corporate Governance, Compliance Facilitation and Co-Ordination

As an Incorporated Company Limited by Guarantee it is important that the National Federation meets all of its obligations under the Companies Acts and other relevant legislation. In this regard it falls to the National Federation Secretariat to fulfil these obligations under the following headings:

Objectives	**Key Actions:**
To provide Freedom of Information statistics to the Department of Finance and the Office of the Information Commissioner.	■ To gather quarterly Freedom of Information statistics from the relevant member organisations ■ To collate statistics into a template and forward quarterly reports to the Department of Finance and Office of the Information Commissioner ■ To collate end of year statistics for inclusion in the Annual Report of the Information Commissioner
To complete performance verification process for intellectual disability services.	The Performance Verification Process requires that all organisations within the Health and Social Care sectors who receive public funding submit progress reports on the attainment of objectives set out under the modernisation agenda of the latest National Social Partnership agreement Towards 2016. In the case of the voluntary intellectual disability sector, the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is requested by Government to co-ordinate and prepare the sector report. Assessment of verified progress is undertaken by the Performance Verification Group (PVG) in respect of the sector as a whole and the organisations and grades within the sector. Following receipt of the reports an assessment on progress is made by the Secretary General of the Department of Health & Children. ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will co-ordinate the completion of the Performance Verification report in respect of each of its individual member organisations ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will prepare and submit an overall sector report to the PVG encompassing the contents of the individual organisation reports submitted. ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will arrange one site visit for the PVG as required ■ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will make a presentation on change within the sector to the PVG as required.

To identify key health and safety issues for the healthcare sector and determine goals and objectives for actions that the HSA may carry out itself or in conjunction with other relevant organisations over the next five years.	The Health & Safety Authority (HSA) Strategic Review has announced its intention to carry out a strategic review of its involvement in the Health & Social Care Sectors over the 5 year period 2009-2014. The review will identify key health and safety issues for the healthcare sector and determine goals and objectives for actions that the HSA may carry out itself or in conjunction with other relevant organisations over the next five years. Wide consultation with stakeholders in the Healthcare sector is an integral part of the review: ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will engage with the HSA in the conduct of this strategic review ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will establish a Health & Safety Sub-Committee to consider the particular issues which arise in the intellectual disability sector in this context ▪ The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will arrange to submit the findings of the work of this Sub-Committee for consideration by the HSA in the context of their review.
To comply with the requirements of the Companies Act	Each year the National Federation submits its Annual Financial Statements to the Companies Office
To comply with new Charities Legislation	During the course of 2009 the National Federation will meet any new obligations arising for it in the context of the new Charities Legislation.

Appendix 1: National Federation Member Organisations

Ability West, Blackrock House, Salthill, Galway (formerly known as Galway Association)
Ard Aoibhinn Centre, Belvedere Road, Wexford
Association of Parents & Friends Carrickmacross, Corcrin, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan
Beam Services, Chestnut Court, Royal Oak Road, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow
Brothers of Charity Services Clare, Banner House, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Brothers of Charity Services Galway, Woodlands, Renmore, Galway
Brothers of Charity Services Limerick, Bawnmore, Limerick
Brothers of Charity Services Roscommon, Lanesbro Street, Roscommon
Brothers of Charity Services South East, Belmont Park, Waterford
Brothers of Charity Southern Services, Lota, Glanmire, Co. Cork
Cairdeas Centre, Tullow, Co. Carlow
Camphill Communities of Ireland, Ballytobin, Callan, Co. Kilkenny
Carriglea Cairde Services, Carriglea, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford
CASA - Caring & Sharing Association, Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7
Cheeverstown House, Templeogue, Dublin 6W
Children’s Sunshine Home, Leopardstown Road, Foxrock, Dublin 18
Clann Mór Ltd., Clann Mór House, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath (formerly known as Meath Association)
Clones Branch, Cairde Activation Centre, Canal Stores, Clones, Co. Monaghan
CoAction West Cork, Slip, Bantry, County Cork
COPE Foundation, Bonnington, Montenotte, Cork
Cork Association for Autism, 61 Oliver Plunkett Street, Cork
County Wexford Community Workshop, Beelefield, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
County Wexford Community Workshop, Marshmeadows, New Ross, Co. Wexford
DARA Residential Services, Unit F12, Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
Daughters of Charity Service, St. Vincent’s Centre, Navan Road, Dublin 7
Delta Centre, Strawhall, Carlow
Drumlin House, Cootehill, County Cavan
Gheel Autism Service, Milltown Road, Milltown, Dublin 6
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 Association, Old Monastery, Port Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry
L’Arche Ireland Secretariat, 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, 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
SOS Kilkenny Ltd., Seville Lodge, Callan Road, Kilkenny
St. Aidan’s Service, Millands, Gorey, Co. Wexford
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, Provincial Administration, 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 Intellectual Disability Association, Ashley Drive, Spring Garden, Cherrymount, Waterford
Western Care Association, Pool Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit, Larkins Lane, South Main Street, Wexford