



## **WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG**

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# **ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

## Introduction

Established in 1997, West Limerick Independent Living was setup to develop and deliver personal support services to people with disabilities in the Mid-West, as well as to project a positive image and perception of people with disabilities. As a community based, consumer driven, nonprofit organization, our services are designed to enable persons with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and fully participate in all aspects of community life. West Limerick Independent Living is a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital.

### REGISTERED WITH

Authority	Identifier
<b>Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA)</b>	20037192
<b>Companies Registration Office (CRO)</b>	271412
<b>Revenue (Charities Unit) (CHY)</b>	12592

West Limerick Independent Living supports people with disabilities by way of:

- Providing facilitated Personal Assistant services
- Providing a fully accessible transport service
- Raising awareness on disability issues
- Providing information on personal support services

Under our Customer Service Standards, each and every West Limerick Independent Living service user can expect courtesy and respect, fairness, clarity, accessibility, timeliness and responsiveness.

## ORGANISATIONAL BOARD

BOARD MEMBERS	
<b>Mr. Ben Lenihan, Director &amp; Chairman</b>	IT Department at University of Limerick and is a person with a disability
<b>Mr. John Creedon, Director</b>	Report Technician with Pallas Foods IT Dept. A member of the Irish Wheelchair Association and the Disabled Driver Association. PA Service User
<b>Mr. David Noonan, Director</b>	PA Service User. Retired. Background in business and is a person with a disability.
<b>Mr. John Killowry, Director</b>	PA Service User, studied at NUI Galway and worked in Wyeth Nutrition.
<b>Mr. Donal Cooper, Director</b>	Vast experience in the community and disability sector and former board member of People with Disabilities Ireland.

## HSE Service Level Agreement

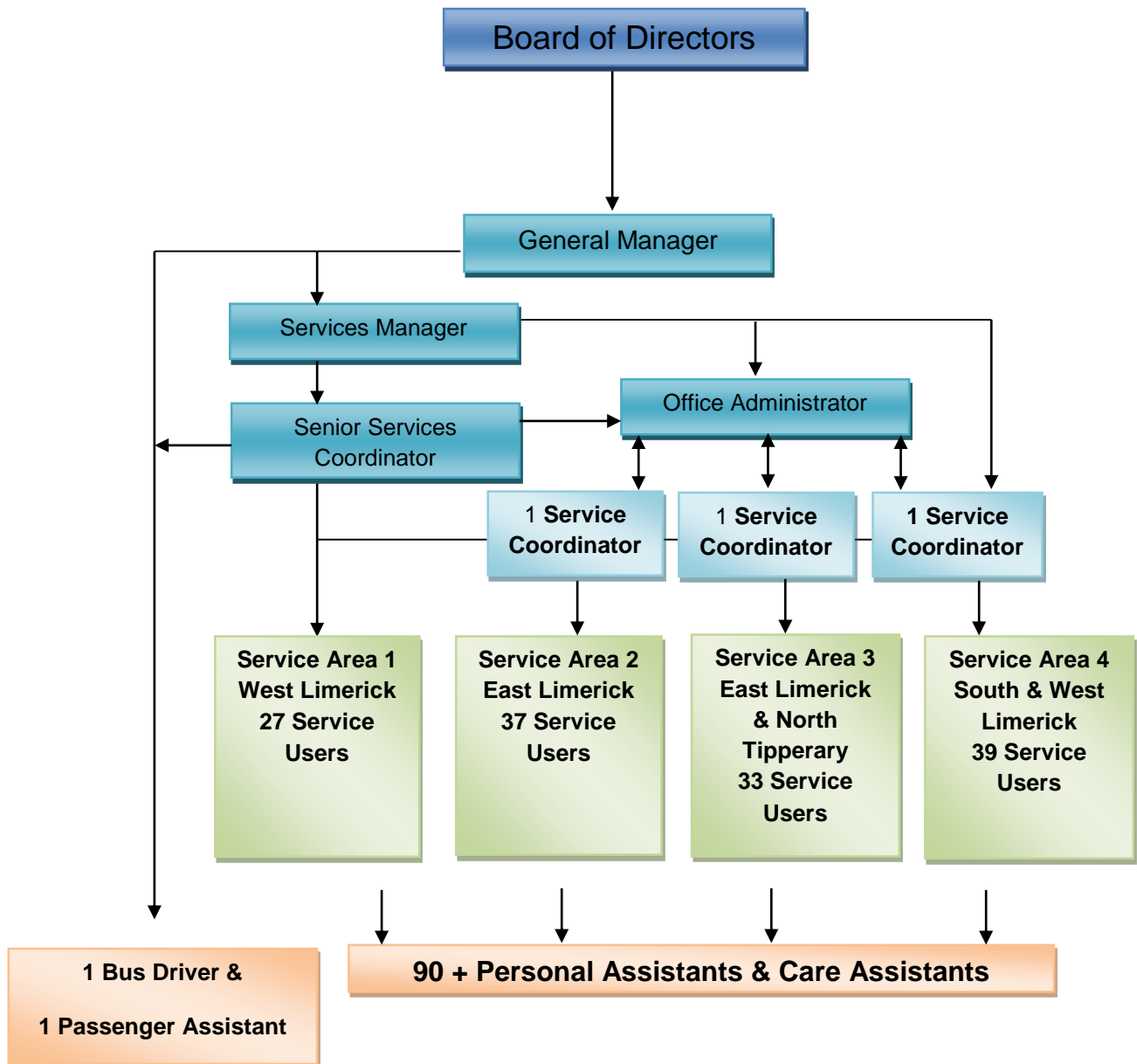
West Limerick Independent Living like many other organisations/agencies that are funded under Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act to deliver a Personal Assistant service (domiciliary care service) which is similar or ancillary to those of the HSE.

Section 39 bodies related to agencies / groups undertaking services which are similar or ancillary to those of the HSE and to whom the HSE is providing grant aid to do so. However, the HSE would not be legally or statutorily obligated to provide such services.

Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act titled, 'Assistance for certain bodies' directs that:

All organisations are required to sign a service level agreement which is a contract between the HSE and agency to deliver a service that complies with all relevant standards and legislation.

# ORGANISATIONAL CHART



## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

West Limerick Independent Living seeks to forge meaningful and just social contracts between our service users and those who work within the organization, in a manner that contributes to the common good and helps to create a more equitable society. As one of the largest providers of Personal Support Services to people with disabilities across Limerick City and County, the primary objective of West Limerick Independent Living is to provide support services to people with disabilities in our community. These services include the Personal Assistant service, one of the key services offered by the Independent Living movement. Thus, the organisation seeks to promote self-empowerment to overcome the disadvantage imposed by physical impairments.



*Mr. Ben Lenihan*  
*Chairman*

2019 presented a number of challenges for West Limerick Independent Living as the organisation endured the impact of cutbacks in previous years but after lengthy negotiations, I am pleased to say that a restoration of funding was agreed in May 2019, which is being implemented on a phased basis across 2019 and 2020. On behalf of the board, I would like to thank all those involved for their remarkable efforts in acquiring this restoration with a special mention to Gerard O'Connor who was instrumental in negotiations. We will keep striving to maintain and increase funding so that we can remain competitive in every facet of our organisation. Recruiting and retaining the well-qualified and dedicated staff in West Limerick Independent Living is always a high priority, and maximising our sources of funding in this way will significantly help us in that regard.

At the time of writing, we are in the midst of a pandemic the likes of which most generations will never see. It poses a whole host of challenges to almost every aspect of life, especially to the likes of our organisation where close physical contact with people is a core requirement of the service we provide. This is made so much more significant by the fact that many service users would be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and contracting the virus may be life threatening. For that reason, we continue to take every precaution we can to protect our service users and staff from this virus. On behalf of the board, I would like to thank all staff and service users for their diligence and understanding as we navigate our way through this crisis.

On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge the efforts made by everyone involved to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of those we serve. I would like to acknowledge the unrelenting commitment of the Board Members. Their willingness to devote their time, their dedication and their absolute determination to uphold values like equality and fairness mean that it is a pleasure to work with such an organization. I would also like to thank all the staff whose enthusiasm and work ethic ensure that we continue to provide quality support to clients. I would like to give my personal thanks to all our service coordinators, for once again providing excellent service to our clients. I wish all the best to all our service users and staff, management and members of the board going forward in 2020.

Thank you,

Ben Lenihan

Ben Lenihan

Chairman

West Limerick Independent Living

## Managers Foreword

With this West Limerick Independent Living annual report we hope to provide a comprehensive account on our company's activities throughout the preceding year. With this annual report we intended to give our service users and their families, our staff and our funding agencies and other interested people an overview of the work of the company in 2019, information about the company's activities as well as providing full details of our financial position.



**Gerard O'Connor**  
**Manager**

West Limerick Independent Living welcomes the commitment in the HSE National Service Plan 2020 of €5m from the additional funding committed of €50m will provide 40,000 additional personal assistance hours. Unfortunately the situation regarding many young people with a disability, that need help with certain daily living tasks hasn't changed in 2019. Many young people with a disability get a Personal Assistant when they go to college, however when they return home they spend most of the time at their residence because they don't have a Personal Assistant service. A Personal Assistant would vastly improve their independence, get a job, do voluntary work, or get work experience. It would allow them to live their own life without having to rely on their parents. Unfortunately, the HSE budget to provide Personal Assistants isn't adequate, waiting lists are long and even if people do get a PA, many only get one hour or less a day. In that time period, you could take a shower and put on your clothes, and maybe have breakfast, little chance of someone having a full and fulfilled life.

In recent years, great changes have come about in regulation and governance of services, the issue of over-regulation, the extra administrative and financial burden it places on organizations like West Limerick Independent Living, greater balance is required between the need to account for money invested and the need to ensure that best outcomes are being achieved from that investment. There is a sense among many organisations that there is an over-emphasis on

regulation and accountability, to the detriment of actual outcomes for individuals.

2019 was a challenging year, a year in which we delivered a total of 74,991 personal support service hours to 135 people with disabilities over a wide range of locations across the Mid-West. Comparing to 2018 where a total of 71,906 personal support service hours were delivered to 145 people. One of the main challenges was recruiting and retaining staff due to increased demand for staff by service providers across the care sector.

Financially in 2019, West Limerick Independent Living operating turnover was €1,807,947 which is up from the 2018 figure of €1,709,869. I wish to acknowledge the work of the excellent front-line staff, the Board, Management and all Staff and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them most sincerely for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

Thank you,

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Gerard O'Connor

Manager West Limerick Independent Living



## Transport Service



In overall terms when it comes to transport, the experience of people with disabilities has been largely negative. Accessible transport will allow more people with disabilities to continue living in their own homes and communities, creating savings in other areas such as health and social services.

In 2019 West Limerick Independent Living transport service provided over 2,000 single passenger journeys, delivering the service to passengers with mobility impairments in County Limerick.

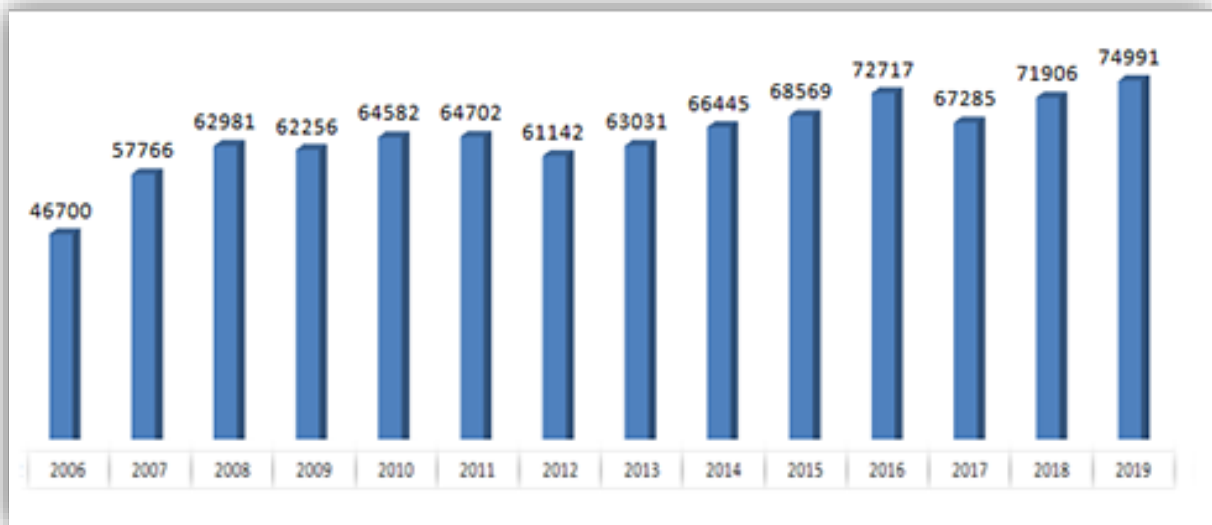
No major changes to our transport operations in 2019, the majority of the passengers who use the service go to Enable Ireland services on a daily basis, the remainder attends Headway and HSE Training Center and other once off passenger trips.

The day to day funded of this service is met by the Health Service Executive – West under their transport and socialization support program and West Limerick Independent Living.

## PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (PSS)

West Limerick Independent Living delivered Personal Support Services to 135 people with disabilities during 2019. Planning and delivery of Personal Support Services was developed and implemented in partnership with the HSE. In total West Limerick Independent Living delivered 74,991 hours Personal Support Services to people with disabilities during 2019.

Table of PSS Hours delivered from 2006-2019



HSE Limerick & North Tipperary Personal Support Services Monthly Hours

	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Personal Assistant	4269	3655	3636	4474	3606	3492	4161	3289	3270	4057	3261	3194
Home Care	606	501	500	727	555	569	644	535	505	833	664	624

	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Personal Assistant	1230	1164	1203	1339	1080	1093	1379	1129	1133	1465	1199	1191
Home Care	560	531	548	904	689	697	896	720	713	947	799	755

In the Limerick community care area we delivered 44,364 personal assistant hours and 7,263 home care hours and in the East Limerick and North Tipperary community care area we delivered 14,605 personal assistant hours and 8,759 home care hours to 135 people with disabilities in 2019.

## Staff Levels in 2019

Year ending 2019, West Limerick Independent Living had 112 staff members on the company payroll, this figure include management. High staff turnover continues to be a pressure point, PA recruitment is proving very challenging, we have been advertising on an on-going basis with mixed results.

## Staff Training

FETAC (QQI) Level 5

As part of our Service Level Agreement (SLA), all newly recruited staff i.e. if the person has started the Fetac Level 5 Qualification Award or indeed agrees to have it completed by a certain date they will be allowed by the HSE to be recruited by an agency after January 2017.

- 43 Personal Assistants have full QQI Level 5 Care Skills or higher award.
- 36 Personal Assistants have a number of QQI Level 5 modules completed.
- 14 Personal Assistants have no QQI Level 5 Care Skills completed.

Training Course	Staff Numbers	Cost
<b>Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons</b>	36 person	Costs for wages of attendees €6,610.00
<b>Manual Handling Training</b>	47 person	
<b>Risk Assessment Training</b>	1 people	Trainer Cost €2,495.00
<b>QQI Training 50%</b>	3 people	Venue Costs €740.00
<b>Sexuality Training</b>	11 people	
<b>ID Awareness</b>	12 people	Free

## Company Offices Redevelopment

The redevelopment of our existing offices on Sheenan's Road has progressed in 2019 with the following:

- We successfully completed purchase of site/land from Shannon Properties for proposed car park. After negotiations, Shannon Properties agreed to sell site to West Limerick Independent Living for €18,000 excl VAT.
- Pat O'Connell Design & Drafting Solutions prepared new design options for the office redevelopment and car park.
- Limerick City & County Council agreed planning permission to commence work on site car park and building renovations.
- Bermingham Brendan F & Associates prepared the tender documents and specifications. Tender documents and specifications complete by July 2019.
- Following the tender process, a builder was selected with an agreed start date the project of February 2020.

## Annual Health and Safety Report

This report provides information on the performance of West Limerick Independent Living against its safety objectives. This is set in a context of the organisations safety statement, range of activities with corresponding risks, and arrangements put in place to control these.

On an annual basis, WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING evaluates the extent to, which the Safety Statement, Policies and Procedures were effective during the previous twelve months. This report will show the level of resources committed to Safety, Health and Welfare, any special preventative measures taken and data on occupational injuries and ill-health in the workplace and include details such as:

- Safety Statement reviews
- Risk Assessment reviews
- Health & Safety Training completed
- Numbers of recorded incidents
- New safety arrangements put in place during the year

### **Safety Statement & Risk Assessment Review**

The Safety Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed in 2019 and there was a number of updates made to the Risk Assessment by management.

### **Assigned Safety Responsibilities:**

First Aiders: Ms. Trish Cunningham & Trish Kavanagh

Fire Wardens: Ms. Laura Denihan

Health and Safety Coordinator: Ms. Margaret O'Brien

Safety Representative: Lynda McElligott, Margaret O'Brien,  
Trish Kavanagh and Laura Denihan

### **West Limerick Independent Living and Safety Policy**

West Limerick Independent Living will continue to review annually and communicated Health and Safety policy that provides a clear statement of commitment to provide a safe and healthy place of work. The Policy contains commitment to ensure that:

- West Limerick Independent Living complies with current safety legislation,
- hazardous activities are identified, risk assessed and controls implemented,
- suitable training, information and instruction is provided,
- there are arrangements for consultation between staff, and management on health and safety issues,
- resources are made available for safety.

West Limerick Independent Living has a range of activities and a correspondingly range of risks to be managed. The range of risks can be summarised as follows but is not exhaustive:

- Activities involving manual handling and lifting.
- Activities where people work alone.
- Frequent and prolonged use of workstation equipment.
- Areas where there is potential for people to slip, trip or fall.

West Limerick Independent Living manages these risks through the implementation of general arrangements for safety that include:

- Arrangements for reporting incidents, near miss incidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Fire risk assessment and fire safety precautions.
- Safety training and instruction.
- Workstation assessment and provision of eyesight screening.
- Communication and consultation on safety matters (Safety and Health Committee).

### **Health & Safety Training**

47 staff undertook training in good manual handling technique and risk assessment to reduce or eliminate manual handling associated injuries. Manual Handling training was provided to staff members who required instruction, by Optima Training an offsite Manual Handling company's when required, the training is refreshed on at least a three yearly basis or more frequently, if identified through the review of accident and illness records.

In 2019 Health & Safety Training was organised for company employees over five training days, a total of 47 employees completed the training. The cost of the training was as follows:

<b>Training Course</b>	<b>Staff Numbers</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Manual Handling Training</b>	47 person	Costs for wages of attendees €6,610.00
<b>Risk Assessment Training</b>	1 people	Trainer Cost €2,495.00
		Venue Costs €740.00

People attending these courses were reminded and encouraged to report injury from manual handling activities so that the full extent and potential of manual handling injury is known. This information is used by the organisation to consider the effectiveness of their manual handling risk assessments and control measures and whether more can be done to further reduce the risk from manual handling activities.

### **Review of Hazards/risk assessment and risk control procedures**

In 2019 an office risk assessment was completed by Service Coordinator's, and no issues were identified. All work locations where staff including lone workers work were risk assessed on an annual bases and more frequently if an health and safety issue was raised by an employee or client.

### **Number of Recorded Incidents**

The Health and Safety Authority, the organisations Management and the West Limerick Independent Living insurers require the immediate reporting of accidents, dangerous occurrences and property damage incidents. All employees are obliged to immediately report all such events to their Services Coordinators.

In addition, staff are required to complete an accident report or dangerous occurrence report form. These forms are available from West Limerick

Independent Living website or office and must be submitted within 24 hours of an accident/ incident.

Services Coordinators must also conduct and submit an investigation report for each incident and identify the corrective measures required \ learn from the incident so as to prevent recurrence. The Health and Safety Coordinator reviews all Accidents \ Dangerous Occurrence forms submitted, reviews the importance of the actions arising, collates statistics and monitors trends.

#### **Incident reports 2019 & Actions Taken**

PA	Service User	Date	Incident	Action Taken
No incidents				

#### **New Safety arrangements put in place during 2019**

West Limerick Independent Living Safety Statement was reviewed in 2019 with no changes to document. The Safety Statement, in accordance with Section 20, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, outlines the policy of WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING in relation to the management of health and safety.

West Limerick Independent Living Risk Assessment completes regular health and safety inspections in all areas. All Service Coordinators complete at least one inspection annually in their relevant areas in accordance with the Risk Assessment checklist and they ensure all necessary corrective actions are implemented.

#### **Fire Safety Arrangements**

Fire Safety training was carried out by West Limerick Independent Living staff in 2017. There were no fires in 2019, work continued on the review and update of the fire risk assessments and serviced annually the fire extinguishers.



## Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee Annual Report 2019

### **Annual report to the HSE**

West Limerick Independent Living has established a complaints procedure by agreement with the HSE and acknowledges that it must provide the HSE with a general report on the complaints where those complaints are made in relation to matters which fall under the scope of the Health Act 2004 i.e. complaints relating to activities or services which are funded by the HSE in whole or in part. The report will specify all relevant complaints received by the service provider during the previous year indicating:

- The total number of relevant complaints received
- The nature of the complaints
- The number of complaints resolved by informal means
- The outcome of any investigations into the complaints

As well as providing an Annual report it is envisaged that the Health Service Executive will collect statistics / details of complaints on a half yearly basis. It is also requested that where a serious complaint is made that the Local Health Manager will be made aware of same.

### **Background**

The Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee is a sub-committee of the West Limerick Independent Living Board, and as such provides a regular report to the Board on the main issues raised and discussed at its meetings. Good practice states that the West Limerick Independent Living Board should review the performance of its Committees annually to determine if they have been effective, and whether further development work is required.

This Annual Report summarizes the activities of the West Limerick Independent Living's Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee (the Committee) for the financial year 2019 setting out how it has met its Terms of Reference and key priorities.

The purpose of the Committee is laid down in its Terms of Reference. In summary it is responsible for providing the Board of West Limerick Independent

Living with assurance on all aspects of quality including delivery, governance, risk management and workforce; and the regulatory standards of quality and safety.

### **Compliments received from clients**

8 Compliments received during 2019 came directly from clients who wished to express that their Personal Assistants deliver quality support and are integral to their lives.

### **Membership and Attendance Record**

During 2019, the Committee met nine times with attendance recorded in the table below. This demonstrates that every meeting of the Committee during the year was quorum.

	Manager	Service Manager	Office Administrator	3 Service Coordinator's	Personal Assistant	Chairman / Director
07/01/2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
19/02/2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	X
09/04/2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
11/06/2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	X
18/09/2019	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x
20/12/2019	✓	✓	x	✓	x	X

Key: ✓ = In attendance X = Absent ✓\* = Deputy in attendance

### **Significant issues brought to the attention to the Board**

The following issues of interest have been highlighted and addressed at West Limerick Independent Living Board level:

#### **Staff Availability**

One complaint was received from a client and this related to a lack of staff availability to cover a shift due to Personal Assistant sick leave. Alternative arrangements were made for the client as soon as possible and a new Personal Assistant was introduced. A number of clients raised the issue of unavailability of staff to cover shifts and changes in shift times, this is due to an ongoing issue, the recruiting, hiring, and retain of Personal Assistants, staff shortages is a serious issue across the health care sector.

Summary: complaints noted, current measures in place include recruitment drives and job advertisement and these measures are ongoing. This complaint with dealt with under local resolution and dealt with informally.

### **Personal Assistants Timekeeping**

No complaints in 2019 relate to staff timekeeping, however a number of clients raised timekeeping as an issue.

Issues that would impact on the timekeeping are:

- The geographical area we deliver services in is both urban and rural and the rural areas pose their own challenges to staff, for example farm animals and machinery using roads at certain times of the year.
- Poor road network.
- Staff being delayed in one service user's home, therefore delaying all subsequent visits to all other service users.

As a lot of timekeeping issues are beyond our control as a service provider we continually communicate with our service users to ensure they are aware of any delays and reasons for delays.

### **Pressure Ulcers**

A number of our clients had issues with pressure ulcers, also sometimes known as bedsores or pressure sores. Clients that have known risk factors for pressure ulcers, PA's are required to check your skin on a daily basis for any signs of pressure ulcers, such as discoloured areas of skin.

If PA notice any damage, they are required to report it to their Service Coordinator who in turn reports the issue to the client's community nurse, who arranges a home visit to inspect the skin and where necessary commence treatment.

### **Communication breakdown between a client with an Intellectual Disability and Personal Assistant**

A client next of kin raised the concern of communication breakdown between the Personal Assistant and the client. West Limerick Independent Living Management reviewed the complaint and held an investigation of all aspects of the complaint. The complaint was not upheld – but further action required.

People with intellectual disabilities can be vulnerable and may need more time and consideration when supporting and assisting them with the tasks of daily

living. Anyone who has contact with a vulnerable adult may unintentionally cause distress by something they may say or do or not allowing them enough time to complete a task or by not finding out about their likes and dislikes.

As a Service Provider we have a duty of care to all our clients. Even though the findings of this investigation are inconclusive we adopt the position that something occurred to give rise to the complaint.

Based on this conclusion the following actions are recommended:

- Continue to encourage client to contact his Service Coordinator if he has any concerns or if he needs clarification regarding his service.
- To remove employee from this service as there could be some communication difficulty that lead to this complaint.
- Identify suitable training for employees prior to being assigned to work with clients with intellectual disabilities.
- Ensure that employees working with clients with intellectual disabilities take time to communicate to ensure there are no misunderstandings regarding any aspect of his service.

The investigation team noted that the employee is Polish; English is not her first language and formed the opinion that she does not have highly-developed, flexible communication skills to work with an individual with Intellectual Disabilities. A Personal Assistant should have excellent communication and listening skills, and excellent observational skills to identify signs of physical or emotional problems.

The investigation team recommend that West Limerick Independent Living consider; are their staff equipped with the necessary skills to assist individuals with Intellectual disabilities. Personal Assistants who are trained to support people with physical disabilities may not be equipped with the skills to work with people with Intellectual Disabilities. Everyone who works with the Intellectual disabled needs specialized communication skills, they must understand the developmental issues facing the Intellectual disabled and possess a variety of techniques for communicating verbally and physically.