

*Western Care Association*

**Guide to the  
Functions,  
Records, Rules  
and Practices  
of the Organisation**



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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
ACT 1997 AND 2003

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**SECTIONS 15 & 16  
REFERENCE BOOK**

February 2004

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Western Care Association is a voluntary organisation founded in the 1960's to provide education, training and services to people with learning disabilities throughout the County of Mayo. It is an organisation representative of the Service Users, their parents, guardians, families and friends and it draws membership and strength from the rural and urban communities within the county. The ethos of the Association is based on the belief that services can best be provided locally in these same communities.

Western Care Association is an accredited agency with the Personal Outcomes Measures. This is an internationally quality measurement system developed by The Council on Quality and Leadership for people with disabilities which is a not for profit organization based in the U.S. with an international presence in countries such as Canada, Australia, Ireland, United Kingdom, Spain.

### **1.1. PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES:**

Personal Outcomes Measures is a person-centred quality system that was developed in the United States by the Council on Quality and Leadership in Supports for People with Disabilities. The Personal Outcomes Measures were developed and validated on outcomes that people with disabilities want from their support or services. These 25 outcomes form the basis of the quality enhancement and measurement system that emphasizes responsiveness to individual needs, rather than traditional compliance with established standards. Outcomes are individually defined person by person. They are used across all services (Day, Residential, Adults and Children 0-5 years and 6-18 years).

Personal outcome measurement is based on two questions: 'What do we measure?' and 'How do we measure it?' Traditional approaches to quality and accreditation emphasized compliance with organisational process standards and regulations. With the Council's Personal Outcomes Measures and review methodology, people with intellectual disabilities become the focus of the quality enhancement process. An outcomes focus encourages the service to identify the individual outcomes for each person served. Definitions of social participation, friendships and respect will vary from person to person. Support staff determine how each person defines each personal outcome for him or herself. Services and supports are then developed to address the person's unique, individual outcomes.

Western Care Association chose the Personal Outcomes Measures quality system because it focuses on the person and the things that matter most to the person receiving services. We believe that with personal outcomes, staff find value and commitment in facilitating outcomes that have real meaning in peoples' lives. We have also found that organisational processes have real value when they are individualised and result in outcomes that are important to each person using services.

## **1.2. INFORMATION ROUTINELY AVAILABLE:**

The Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003 is intended to facilitate public access to information held by public bodies which is not routinely available by other means. Access to information under the terms of the Act is subject to certain exemptions, procedures and time limits. Details on how to make a request for information under the act are provided for in *Section 11*. Western Care Association already makes available certain information on its functions and activities to the public through it's annual report and information leaflets and through discussion with staff members. This information will continue to be available without having to make a formal request under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003.

This guide gives details of contact positions of staff within our organisation who will deal with requests for information informally. Information is also available outside the Act through administrative access i.e. by writing to the appropriate staff member stating the information/record requested.

## **1.3. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 and 2003 (F.O.I)**

The Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003 establishes three new statutory rights:

- **A legal right for each person to access information held by public bodies;**
- **A legal right for each person to have official information relating to him or herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading.**
- **A legal right for each person to obtain reasons for decisions affecting him/herself.**

The Act asserts the right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals.

Western Care Association undertakes to protect any information provided to it by individuals or others on a confidential basis, subject to the Association's obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003. If, for any reason, it is wished that information provided to Western Care Association should not be disclosed because of its sensitive nature, the person or body should when supplying the information make clear this wish and specify the reasons for the information sensitivity. Western Care Association will consult with any individual or body so supplying sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.

## **2. GENERAL OVERVIEW**

### **2.1. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THIS MANUAL (PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15 OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 and 2003)**

This manual has been prepared and published in accordance with the requirements of Section 15 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003. Its purpose is to facilitate access to official information held by Western Care Association. Specifically, the manual provides information on:

- **aims, structure and functions of Western Care Association**
- **classes of records held by Western Care Association**
- **how to make a request to Western Care Association under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003.**

This reference book is available from Western Care Association locations, the Freedom of Information Officer, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar, *Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207, E Mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)*, Public Libraries and Citizens Information Centres within the Mayo area.

### **2.2. GENERAL OVERVIEW - RULES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES OF WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION (PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 16 OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 and 2003.)**

Under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003, Western Care Association is required to make available a reference book setting out any internal rules, guidelines and procedures it uses in reaching decisions that affect the public.

In accordance with this section, Western Care Association has prepared a reference book containing:

- **Guidelines, policies and procedures used by Western Care Association**
- **Legislative background under which Western Care Association Operates**
- **Information regarding eligibility to Western Care Association Services**
- **Information on the complaints/appeals process**

This reference section is published as **PART 2** of this manual.

### **3. MISSION, PURPOSE, AIMS, VALUES, ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

#### **3.1. MISSION & PURPOSE**

##### **MISSION STATEMENT**

“Western Care Association exists to empower people with a wide range of learning and associated disabilities in Mayo to live full and satisfied lives as equal citizens”.

#### **3.2. AIMS & VALUES**

This is achieved through the provision of a comprehensive range of innovative services and supports.

We are a voluntary organisation, made up of parents/family members, service users, staff, supporters and volunteers.

In keeping with our pioneering traditions, Western Care Association believes in:

- **Supporting service users in making choices**
- **Community based services**
- **Partnership with families and service users**
- **The essential value of the voluntary organisation**
- **The vital input of volunteers and friends**
- **The unique contribution of all of our staff**
- **Partnership, unity of purpose and mutual respect in the achievement of our aims**
- **The principle of accountability**
- **Service through partnership and co-ordination with local and national organisations**
- **The pursuit of equality of access**
- **and full service for all**
- **Continually learning to improve the quality of the way we do things**

### 3.3. ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The Organisational Chart for Western Care Association, which reflects its voluntary and management structure is contained in Appendix I of this manual.

#### VOLUNTARY STRUCTURE

The **Voluntary Structure** is made up of 33 Area Branches representing the communities in Co. Mayo. These Branches support a regional structure and also select a Board of Directors which is the governing body of the Association. The Board of Directors is representative of Parents & Friends of people with intellectual disability in Co. Mayo.

**Activities in the Voluntary Sector** The voluntary movement that supports Western Care Association services is involved in the direct provision of voluntary workers and also in promoting awareness in the community in relation to the abilities of people with learning disability.

The **Voluntary Branches** also provide a support to parents and to service users and create an inclusive environment in society for people with learning disabilities.

The Voluntary Sector is also involved in fund raising in support of the capital requirements of the Association.

The **Board of Directors** of Western Care Association comprises of 13 members.

- *2 Elected Representatives from each Region (Northern, Western, Southern, Eastern)*
- *4 Co-opted members who are nominated by the eight elected regional representatives*
- *One Staff Representative*

The term of office of each Director is two years.

The Board of Directors meet at Western Care Association's Headquarters normally on the third Monday of each month, except for May (when the Association's Annual General Meeting takes place) and August.

As Western Care Association is a company limited by guarantee (Guarantee Number 28067), the Board of Directors of Western Care Association is

responsible for managing the affairs of the Association and is therefore the overall decision making body.

In fact, the Company Directors delegate the management of the Association's affairs to the Executive Director and the Management Team and onwards through the structures to the point of service delivery.

The Directors retain unto themselves a number of decision making functions, the main areas being:

- The purchase and disposal of assets
- The approval of annual budgets
- The approval of overdraft facilities
- The approval of leases, mortgages, etc.
- The approval of the annual audited accounts
- The ratification of appointments and dismissals of permanent staff
- The approval of service developments
- The approval of major organisational policy and procedure changes.

In regard to the decision making process in Western Care Association, the Association must comply with various statutory requirements and standards of good practice.

## **SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Western Care Association has from time to time a number of sub-committees who report directly to the Board of Directors. The use of Sub-Committees allows the Association to progress issues concerning the lives of people with disabilities in a consultative manner with their families, advocates and the Association staff.

### ***(a) Sub-Committee on Family Involvement***

#### **Functions of the Sub-Committee**

- To assess the extent of parent/guardian and family involvement at all levels of the Association.
- To assess the adequacy of existing structures to accommodate the required degree of involvement
- To make recommendations to the Board of Directors for consideration in relation to these matters.

**(b) Sub-Committee on Challenging Behaviour**

**Functions of the Sub-Committee**

- To identify the “*client population*”
- To identify the service needs of the “*client group*”
- To make recommendations to the Board of Directors as to how these needs should be met.

**(c) Finance Sub-Committee**

**Functions of the Sub-Committee**

- To evaluate financial implications of the Association’s plans and programmes.
- To evaluate and examine annual budgets.
- To monitor expenditure.
- To make recommendations to the Board of Directors in relation to all of the above.
- To act as an advisory and supportive sub-committee to the Board.

**(d) Sub-Committee on Fund Raising**

**Functions of the Sub-Committee**

- To evaluate the existing promotion and fund raising programmes of the Association.
- To make recommendations to the Board of Directors in relation to the future direction of fund raising and development, and the resources and programmes required to deliver these objectives.
- To source and engage agents and bodies who can be beneficial to the fund raising and development cause.
- To liaise with Mayo Mentally Handicapped Trust as the holding agent for voluntary funds.
- To ensure that all promotions and fund raising are consistent with the ethos of Western Care Association and that none of its activities compromise the values of the Association or the dignity of the Service Users.

**(e) *Planning/Steering Sub-Committee***

**Functions of the Sub-Committee**

- To provide a forum through which the voluntary sector of Western Care Association and the Services Sector of Western Care Association can join together in the development of strategic plans for the Association.
- To provide a forum where both sectors can discuss and familiarise each other with regard to their respective positions, needs and expectations.
- The membership of this sub-committee is such as to advance this process. The sub-committee is jointly chaired by the current Chairperson of Western Care Association and the Executive Director.

## **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

### **Management Team – composition of same**

Members of the Management Team are the Executive Director, the Services Director, the Evaluation & Training Officer, the Financial Controller and the Human Resource Manager. The Team meet on a regular basis, usually every second Tuesday of the month.

### **Role & Responsibilities of the Executive Director**

- As Company Secretary, the Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that the Board of Directors and the organization complies with the requirements of the Companies Act.

As Chief Executive of Western Care Association, the Executive Director is responsible for:

- The management of the affairs of the Association as delegated to him by the Board of Directors
- Implementation of the decisions of the Board of Directors
- Ensuring that the financial affairs of the Association are properly managed and that Audited Accounts are prepared annually
- Ensuring that the organisation is properly structured and that proper service plans are in place, and that they are implemented and monitored.
- Ensuring that the staff of the Association are properly supported and managed at all times
- Ensuring that the Association is properly promoted and represented locally, regionally and nationally
- Ensuring that the Association receives and retains accreditation under the Personal Outcomes Measures to ensure the provision of quality services at all times to its service users and their families.
- Generally, the Executive Director is responsible for the total management of all of the affairs of the Association as delegated to him by the Board of Directors and within the constraints of law and good practice.

### **Role & Responsibilities of the Service Director**

The Services Director ensures:

- There is a shared vision of purpose and aims throughout a Personal Outcomes organisation.
- All staff are aware of the values and objectives of the organisation

- All staff understand and recognise the contribution they make to making this vision a reality
- Good communication structures operate within the organisation.
- Service needs are identified and prioritised.
- Plans are formulated and recommendations are made regarding future service development.
- The Services Director will lead and direct the functioning of the service management team.
- All service and support staff will report to the Services Director via the line management structure.
- The Services Director is responsible for staff relations supported by personnel policies and procedures.
- The Services Director is responsible for the fiscal good management following the approval services budgets.

### **Role & Responsibilities of the Financial Controller**

The Financial Controller:

- Is responsible for the control and good management of the Association's Finance including monitoring and control of income and expenditure and other assets.
- Ensures that all requirements in relation to Company Law and audit and also in relation to audit by the Controller and Auditor General are complied with.
- Monitors annual and periodic budgets and ensures that proper monetary controls are in place.
- Ensures that all legitimate sources of incomes are explored and that every effort is made to secure the maximum resources from these sources.
- Assists the Board of Directors, the voluntary sector and the Trustees of the Mayo Mentally Handicapped Trust and also the Fund Raising Manager in the pursuance of fund raising programmes.
- Is responsible for the management of the maintenance programme and staff (annually); and also the staff on the various social welfare schemes employed in his/her area which may be secured from time to time.
- Ensures that building projects are properly managed.
- Ensures that all purchases and sales of property and buildings are properly performed and the necessary legal procedures are observed.

- Ensures that all leases and rents are properly assessed, evaluated and managed.
- Will assess the transportation needs of the Association and prepare annual reports.
- Manages the transport system and transport personnel involved.
- Organises and manages the Administration staff and ensures that staff are well motivated and skilled in the performance of their duties.
- Will assess the technological needs of the areas under his control and will report to the Executive Director on an ongoing basis in relation to the needs in his area.

### **Role & Responsibilities of Evaluation & Training Officer**

- To manage the Evaluation & Training Department so that it is effective in fulfilling its functions in organizational learning and development
- To lead out and co-ordinate the development of the organizational quality system.
- To lead out and co-ordinate the evaluation processes which measures the performance of the organization against the Association's criteria for quality.
- To conduct and co-ordinate the analysis of data obtained from the evaluation process.
- To utilize data from evaluations to facilitate the development of organizational quality improvement plans.
- To co-ordinate the development of key organizational procedures identified in the quality improvement plans.
- To support the development of key organizational procedures through staff training and technical supports.
- To promote best practice by the associations staff through the provision of high quality staff training programmes.
- To continually explore the conditions under which staff training is most effective.
- To support and facilitate research and action learning projects which are geared towards improving the quality of services.
- To represent the interests of the Association through participation in or

- presentation to appropriate regional and national bodies.
- To manage the resources of the department to ensure they are within agreed budgets.

### **Role & Responsibilities of Human Resource Manager**

- To ensure that the H.R. influence is brought to bear in the strategic thinking and development in the Association.
- To ensure that the Association values and supports its staff as per the Mission Statement.
- Responsibility for the development and implementation of a Human Resource Strategy in support of the delivery of current services and service development.
- Responsibility for the recruitment and retention of staff in the Association.
- Responsibility for negotiations with recognised unions.
- Supports line managers in managing day to day staff issues.
- Supports and develops the commitment to partnership working in the Association.
- Development and implementation of H.R. Policies and Procedures in line with employment legislation, best practices and the Association's values and culture.
- To promote equality and opportunity in line with Western Care Policy.
- Manage and support the staff working directly in the Human Resources Department.
- To represent Western Care Association in national negotiations which affect recruitment, retention and conditions of employment of staff in the Association.
- To ensure that Western Care Association is recognised as an employer of choice in the Intellectual Disability Sector.
- To manage the development of Human Resources I.T. Systems that support management information.

- To manage the resources of the Department to ensure they are within Budget.

## **MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

Western Care Association is a member of the following organisations

- National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
- Disability Federation of Ireland
- National Association for the Mentally Handicapped in Ireland (N.A.M.H.I.)
- Irish Business and Employers Confederation
- Irish Society for Quality in Healthcare

#### **4. GENERAL PROVISION**

**Western Care Association in performing its functions must have regard for:**

- the dignity of all persons using the Association supports and services
- the provision of a quality service – the Association has received international accreditation under the Personal Outcomes Measures in respect of its services.
- the need for co-operation with health boards and other public authorities

**As a Government grant recipient Western Care Association must:**

- keep proper and usual income and expenditure accounts
- prepare annual financial statements in accordance with accounting standards
- agree a service plan with the Western Health Board

**As a “limited company” in accordance with the Companies Act, Western Care Association must:**

- prepare Annual Accounts and file copy with the Company’s Office
- hold an Annual General Meeting

## **5. CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

### **5.1. GENERAL CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES - OBJECTIVES**

Child and Family Services consist of two divisions: Early Childhood, 0-6, and School Age 6-18 years. Both divisions work to empower and support children with learning disabilities and their families who are living in County Mayo. In partnership with families the service seeks to provide children with appropriate opportunities to learn, develop their potentials and live as citizens sharing their rights and responsibilities of their peers. We work to achieve this through the provision of quality services; guided by an internationally recognized quality measurement system based on Personal Outcome measures delivered in an individualised innovative and flexible manner, based on the unique needs of each family and child. Child and Family Services are based on the following values:

- Understanding and respecting your personal priorities.
- Empowering you to make choices about supports that will respect your daily routines and needs for privacy.
- Working together to maintain your natural connections, to family and community.
- Assisting you to achieve success for your child based on your priorities one step at time.
- Enable you to identify possible safety concerns unique to your child.
- Offer information that you might need to enable you to make the best possible choices, by helping you to be well informed about your rights.
- Work with families to enable your child have the best possible health.

These objectives are achieved through the following support services.

#### **(a) *Respite and Residential Services for Children***

Respite care offers families the opportunity to have a rest from the daily challenges of caring by having the child stay away from home for a short period. During this time away, the child has an extended opportunity to interact socially with peers, develop independence and participate in local community facilities. Respite options are discussed through the family social worker and children are introduced gradually to help you and your child adapt to this new experience. Respite homes are typical homes in local estates or neighbourhoods which enable children to be integrated and interact with other members of the community.

**(b) Shared Care**

Western Care Association also offers a shared care option to a number of children who may require more frequent periods away from home. This is in keeping with our recognition of the importance of maintaining partnerships with parents.

**(c) Summer Schemes**

Each summer Western Care Association offers summer schemes placements for up to 100 children. Over half of these children avail of local schemes in their own community and are supported by WC family support workers or other staff who work to support the children to enjoy opportunities and activities alongside their non-disabled peers.

In addition to these integrated schemes, a number of smaller schemes are offered at various venues throughout the County, specifically for children who may need smaller groups and specialized supports. These schemes offer the same range of activities which would be typical to any summer scheme which include opportunities to be involved in arts, crafts, water sports, sports, trips to local attractions and opportunities to participate in team games. These activities are designed to enable children to have meaningful positive experiences to learn through play, whilst facilitating the family to enjoy a rest as well.

**(d) Child Development Centre**

Western Care Association in partnership with the Department of Education supports a child development centre for children (0-18 years) who demonstrate a need for higher levels of support due to their more complex needs. The Department of Education focuses on the individualized learning needs of each child. This partnership enables the holistic needs of the child to be addressed through sensory integration and experiential and structured teaching methods.

## **5.2 EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY SERVICES (0-6 YEARS)**

This service is provided by a team of individuals who specialize in the field of early childhood development in the field of learning disabilities. This service works in partnership to empower the family with the supports or specific skills that will assist them to help their child develop to the fullest potential and grow as part of the family and larger community. This team endeavours to work as a trans-disciplinary unit which combines the best practices of many disciplines to address the global development skills of each child. The team recognizes that the parents are also part of the team and together they can address the specific needs, responsibilities and priorities of each child and family. The team may

consist of Social Workers, Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapist, In-Home Advisors, Family Support Workers, one of which will be a Co-ordinator and contact person between the family and Western Care Services.

### **5.3 SCHOOL AGE SERVICES (6-18)**

Primary support to school age children is offered through their involvement in:

- Multi-Disciplinary Supports
- After school programs
- Summer schemes
- Respite

#### **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Database of service users

Finance records

Personnel records

Communication records

Project records

Procedures records

Health & Safety records

Training records

Planning records

#### **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Children and Family Services Leader, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar, Telephone: (094) 25133, Fax. (094) 25207 and email [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **6. SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH AUTISM (0-18 YEARS)**

The Childhood Autism Service exists to empower and support children and young people aged up to 18 years of age with Autism and their families, in County Mayo. The service works with the autistic children of all abilities. This service supports families and children to access appropriate opportunities to learn and develop their potential and to live as citizens sharing in the rights and responsibilities of their peers.

We are working to achieve this through the provision of quality services, informed by internationally recognised standards of best practise, delivered in an individualised, innovative and flexible manner to provide comprehensive support to the children and their families. We are committed to providing professional and clinical services that facilitate and enable each family and child to work towards and achieve their unique personal outcomes.

The Service is based on the following core values and beliefs:

- The team strives to work in partnership with children and their families. We respect that the parents are the experts about their child and that they may require support to enable them to make sense of and use this expertise. We will endeavour to enable parents to have access to balanced information to enable them to make informed decisions.
- We recognise the role of other services in supporting these children, both within the Association and from other agencies, statutory and non-statutory and in particular the Department of Education and the Western Health Board and we aim to work in partnership with them to offer quality provision to the children and their families.
- That children, young people and their families require support to ensure that they have a voice and the team strives to promote this in our work with them.
- We are committed to enabling children and young people to become valued members of their community and recognise the importance of working towards inclusion and inclusive opportunities.
- The Service works to utilise and enable communities to accommodate and support differences in young people due to their autism. We endeavour to do this by facilitating change within community-based organisations and general attitudes within local communities.
- The Service recognises the need for accountability, in particular for the quality of the Services offered and the effectiveness of the delivery. We

believe that it is therefore essential to monitor and evaluate the achievements and skills of children and young people using a range of assessment procedures, using approaches that focus on achievements, abilities, strengths and potentials of the children and young people.

- The service is committed to an evidence based approach to the understanding of autism and of interventions and is committed to developing in line with emerging research findings and will seek to contribute to this knowledge base through research and dissemination of our work and experiences.
- Team members bring a unique contribution through their individual experiences and knowledge, providing the resources to enable the Service to work within a multi-disciplinary framework. The Service is committed to the continuing professional development of its members.
- The team works with respect and empathy for children and young people and their families, being open and honest in relationships. Respecting and maintaining confidentiality is an integral aspect of the service.
- The Service is working towards providing equal opportunities for all children and young people and their families.

The Autism Service works with children with autism and their families from the time of diagnosis through to the transition to adulthood.

The Service provides:

- Early Years Programme;
- School age Programme;
- Training;
- Information and resource access;
- Respite service through direct services;
- Residential service through direct services

The service aims to provide the highest possible levels of support and provision, meeting agreed standards of good practice.

**(a) *Early Childhood Programme (0-6 Years)***

This programme works with the child and the family from the point of diagnosis through the transition to primary school. The WCA-CAS early years programme is committed to providing home based services, as the home is the principal and natural environment for the child and family. In addition the programme provides

services within local community facilities and has a specialist, autism specific pre school.

The programme represents the primary intervention service for this group of children. The programme aims to:

- Develop each child's skills, using detailed individually planned learning programmes within the home, the autism specific pre-school and elsewhere.
- Provide information to families to support their understanding and to enable them to make informed choices and decisions.
- Support the family, including siblings to develop mutual understanding and promote changes to accommodate the child.
- Develop the child's experience of the community, especially of local play & pre schools and the skills that support community presence.
- Provide specialist support and advice to the Department of Education and individual pre-schools and schools to enable them to develop appropriate services for the child.
- Support the family to utilise appropriate child care facilities, including the possible use of respite services.
- Lead the joint planning of transition to school and support the family and child through this process.

Throughout the year the programme offers each child up to 20 direct hours per week following an individualised intervention plan. The Early Years Programme ends on the child's admission to school.

**(b)        *The School Age Programme (6-18 years)***

The support programme for school age children aims to provide age appropriate opportunities to enhance the child's personal, social and leisure opportunities as part of an inclusive community. This is seen as an important contribution to the child/youth to develop as an independent and competent adult.

For this group of children, the Department of Education has the primary responsibility for intervention services. However the children and family continue to require access additional specialist, autism specific services.

The WCA-Childhood Autism Services school age programme is committed to providing home and community based services, as these are the principal and natural environments for the child and family outside of school. The programme aims to:

- Develop each child's skills, using detailed individually planned learning programmes.
- Support the family, including siblings to develop mutual understanding and promote changes necessary to accommodate the child.

- Develop the child's experience of the community, recognising the importance of age appropriate activities and the skills that support community presence.
- Provide specialist support and advice to the Department of Education and individual schools to enable them to develop appropriate services for the child.
- Support the family to utilise appropriate child care facilities, including the possible use of respite services and alternative residential placement.
- Contribute to the joint planning of transition of phased school transfer and support the family and child through this process.
- Lead the joint planning of transition to adulthood and support the family and child through this process.
- Encourage and support continuity of experience between schools, home and elsewhere.
- Support the child and family's access to additional medical services, particularly if there are mental health needs.

During the child's participation in the programme, the programme will support the child and family by developing an individualised intervention plan for each child. This will at times include direct work with the child for a number of hours per week; in general this is provided as part of a small group or on a one to one basis at a number of venues after school throughout the community.

### **(c) Training and Support Groups**

Training is a key element of the service; the training provided has three aims:

- To promote the understanding, knowledge and skills of the children, their families and those working with them.
- To promote the understanding of autism and effective practise amongst those supporting people with autism.
- To promote community awareness and understanding and to encourage greater acceptance and accommodation within communities for those with autism.

Training utilises the specialist & multi-disciplinary expertise of the staff group, enabling a broad range of courses and events to be provided. We link with other providers of training in this area to support autism specific training and to avoid unnecessary duplication.

The service is in the process of developing a range of support groups for the children and their families. This involves promoting naturally developing networks of support between children and families as well as

**(d) Respite**

Western Care Association provides respite care for children with autism through our generic respite facilities.

The availability of regular respite affords the family a break from their caring role.

**CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service Users records  
Finance records  
Personnel records  
Communication records  
Project records  
Procedures records  
Health & Safety records  
Training records  
Planning records

**CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Leader of Children's Autism Services (0-18 Years), Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar, Telephone: (094) 25133, Fax. (094) 25207 and email [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **7. ADULT SERVICES**

### **7.1. ADULT DAY AND RESIDENTIAL SERVICES**

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

In fulfilling our Mission Statement, Western Care Association provides a comprehensive range of services to adults with a learning disability in Co. Mayo, in order to empower them to live full and satisfied lives as equal citizens.

These services strive to be innovative in the way that they respond to the individual needs of people using services. They aim to elicit a person's needs across a broad spectrum, including training, social, leisure, employment and residential needs. Adult services put in place the correct level of support to facilitate the individual in meeting those needs.

This service provision includes the input of a variety of community disciplines, in conjunction with the person receiving a service, their family, community agencies and other service providers.

Western Care Association's services are located throughout County Mayo to enable each person have a localised service.

#### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

##### **(a) *Residential***

The Association provides a number of models of residential services. One example is the group home model, where staff are present at all times with the residents in order to provide the level of care they need, to support leisure and recreation activities and to facilitate integration in the local community.

Another model used is where the residents are more independent but need the support of a staff at certain times. This may mean a staff coming to the house for those times or the house being near a group home.

Some people are also supported in living independently in the community. Such support may be connected to social interaction, leisure activities and money management.

The purpose of all these services is to support the individual to live as independently as possible, with the necessary level of support from the Association.

**(b) Respite Services**

Western Care Association offers respite services throughout the county. This service is designed to give service users and families, a break. Such services allow an individual to use a group home for a short period of time. This opportunity supports the person to develop their social activities, to learn some new skills in a different location and to experience the opportunity to live away from the family home.

**(c) Day/Resource Centre**

These services offer a variety of services based on the needs of the people using them. With a strong focus on community integration they offer:

- (i) Training opportunities across a range of skills for individuals. This training can be offered both within the centre and using community-based facilities.
- (ii) personal enhancement including such important aspects as advocacy and person development.
- (iii) the opportunity to experience a range of options in the world of work.
- (iv) leisure and recreation programmes.

**(d) Employment Initiatives**

Western Care Association has developed a number of innovative projects to support adults with a learning disability in the world of work. Such initiatives include the development of enterprises which offer employment to people. Programmes to support people to work in community-based employment have also been developed. This support incorporates training, coaching, monitoring and social support. The level of support is determined by the needs of the person. Many of these initiatives are developed in partnership with local employers.

**(e) Outreach Services**

The Association aims to individualise the service to the needs of the person. Those people who do not need or want to avail of a day centre service, may use support in an employment setting, in leisure and recreation and in social integration. This service involves a support worker spending time with the individual in order to support them.

**Volunteers**

The participation of members of the local community in the activities of each service is welcomed and promoted.

### ***Families are involved at many levels in services through***

- (i) direct contact with services that visit their homes.
- (ii) regular contact with day and residential services
- (iii) formal contact through meetings and discussions about how services can best support them.
- (iv) informal contact through staff they know very well to discuss their concerns and issues as they arise.

The organisation values and relies on family input in forging a future for people with disabilities in Mayo.

### **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Finance records  
Personnel records  
Communication records  
Health & Safety records  
Training records  
Project records  
Employment records  
Procedure records

### **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Local Service Leader for the North Area, Ridgepool Training Centre, Ballina, Telephone (096) 24199; Fax: (096) 70738, E-mail: [mmuldoon@ridgepool.com](mailto:mmuldoon@ridgepool.com)

Local Service Leader for Central area, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar; Telephone: (094) 25133, Fax: (094) 25207, E-mail: [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

Local Service Leader for the East Area, Western Care Association, St. John's Training Centre, Kiltimagh; Telephone: (094) 81110, Fax: (094) 81973. E-mail: [stjohnswca@eircom.net](mailto:stjohnswca@eircom.net)

Local Service Leader for the West Area, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar; Telephone: (094) 25133, Fax: (094) 25207, E-mail: [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **7.2. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Since 1992 Western Care Association has developed a number of innovative projects to support adults with a learning disability in the world of work.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Currently there are five employment facilitators employed who cover the following areas: -

- Belmullet/Erris Region
- Ballina
- Castlebar – Community Based Services
- Castlebar/Newport
- Ballinrobe/Westport

The role of the employment facilitator is to support the adult to gain meaningful paid employment in the community. The supports include work analysis, job matching, on the job training, social skills training and any other support as is deemed necessary for the individual adult to continue in their employment.

Western Care are also involved in a partnership with other agencies throughout the county under FAS and through funding from the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment. This is a three year project and is called Work Web West. The criteria for being referred for this project are: -

- Need to be registered with FAS
- Minimum wage requirement
- Individual has to work a minimum of 15 hours a week.

Referrals for general employment services go to the Local Service Leader for the Central area.

Referrals for Work Web West go to the Project Co-ordinator, Work Web West, 1 Station Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo. Telephone 094-43008; Fax 094-43009; E-mail: [workwebwest@eircom.net](mailto:workwebwest@eircom.net).

## **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User Records  
Employment Records  
Insurance Records  
Procedures Records  
Health & Safety Records  
Communication Records  
Finance Records

## **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Local Service Leader for Central area, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar; Telephone: (094) 25133, Fax: (094) 25207, E-mail: [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **8. COMMUNITY/SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **8.1. SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT**

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Social Work is a confidential family focused and person centred service available to children and adults with a learning disability and their families. The Social Work Department has its professional Social Workers based throughout Co. Mayo to offer a localised and easily accessible service. The Social Worker supports children, adults and families concentrating on the difficulties that arise for a person with a learning disability and the challenges that this brings to them and their families.

The needs of individuals and families are assessed in the supportive professional approach addressing the concerns of the individuals with learning disabilities and their families at any given time. The service is delivered through the provision of a home based approach or within Western Care Association offices.

The focus of the Social Work Department is to enable people to address the difficulties as they arise through the use of 1:1 counselling, family counselling, group counselling, group supports, networking, and other appropriate interventions as required.

The role of the Social Worker is to respond to the emerging needs of the individual and their family (where appropriate) in a planned co-ordinated approach focusing on the particular areas of self esteem, self confidence, independence, individual rights and entitlements.

The Social Work Department operates as part of a community based multi-disciplinary team put in place to support and respond to the needs of individuals with a learning disability and their families.

#### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Within the Social Work Department, Social Workers are assigned to the following developing areas.

##### **(a) *Early Childhood services***

The Social Worker is the first point of contact for all new referrals. The Social Work Department aims to provide families with information around service provision and supports while paying particular attention to the needs of the child and the family at this time. The Social Worker works within a multi disciplinary team framework. The early childhood services focuses on the needs of the child and family up to and including the child's first year at school.

**(b) Children's Services**

Particular attention is given to the area of inclusion and participation in society. Concerns and blockages to this opportunity are addressed and anticipated in partnership with the family, child and Social Worker.

**(c) Autism specific services**

The Social Work Department have assigned a Social Worker to provide Social Work supports to children and their families from the stage of diagnosis up to 18 years of age. The Social Worker operates as a member of a multi-disciplinary team focusing on the needs of the child and their family. The aim of the Social Worker is to address the presenting issues that arise for the children and their families in a partnership approach that focuses on the best interest and outcome for the child and their family.

**(d) Adult Services**

The Social Work Department aims to support adults living in independent or semi-independent settings either with their families, relatives, family placements, shared housing or sole living arrangements.

The Social Work Department aims to support individuals throughout all stages of their lives by addressing the presenting needs and issues through individual casework, group work (parent groups, peer groups, sibling groups, support groups) and community work.

The emphasis of the service is to enable adults to participate, contribute and live in the community focusing on outcomes for each individual.

**(e) Child and Adult Protection**

Where issues of concern around abuse arise for children and adults with a learning disability the Social Work Department respond in accordance with the Associations guidelines for protection and welfare of children and adults with a learning disability.

The role and responsibility of the Designated Person is undertaken by the Principal Social Worker within Western Care Association.

The Designated Person is responsible for acting as

- A source of advice on child and adult protection matters.
- For co-ordinated action within the Organisation.
- For liaising with the Health Board, Garda Siochana and other Agencies around suspected or actual cases of child and adult abuses.

**(f) Family Support services**

The Social Work Department have responsibility for the recruitment support, training and management of Family Support workers. The Family Support services are divided into three defined areas: -

- (i) Early Childhood Support Workers
- (ii) School Age Support Workers
- (iii) Personal Assistants

The main focus of this support service is to: -

- (i) Support clients and their families who require this facility in order to alleviate difficulties and pressures involved in caring for an individual with a learning disability in their home.
- (ii) To support children in availing of pre-school opportunities.
- (iii) To support children and adults to avail of community opportunities.
- (iv) To support adults with a learning disability who are living in independent situations.

**(g) Family Placement services**

The Social Work Department have the responsibility for the recruitment, assessment, training and support of family placement personnel. Family placement is a service where families living in Co. Mayo offer opportunities to children and adults with a learning disability to reside with them over a defined period of time. The family placement provision is offered in the following context:-

- (a) Planned breaks as required and offered on a respite situation. This is available to both children and adults
- (b) The provision of a more long term arrangement so as to enable a person to reside with their original family for periods of time or to offer a permanent new situation if so required.
- (c) There to respond in a crisis situation where applicable and possible.
- (d) To offer holiday breaks during Christmas, Summer or Easter in a planned way.

**(h) Family Placement services**

The Community Facilitator service is there to provide support to adults with a learning disability residing in the community, helping them gain skills and feel comfortable in all areas of daily living. They work towards achieving outcomes from agreed intervention plans under the guidance of the Principal

Social Worker. At the time of writing the community facilitation service is only available in Castlebar.

## **ACCESS TO SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

The Social Work Department operates a Duty Social Work system between 9.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday at Western Care Association offices, Castlebar 094 25133 and Ridgepool, Ballina (096) 24199.

## **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Personnel records  
Communication records  
Training records  
Project records  
Finance records  
Procedure records  
Waiting List records

## **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Principal Social Worker, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo; Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207 and E-mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **8.2. PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Psychology Department in Western Care Association endeavours to provide a range of high quality psychological assessment and intervention services to children and adults with learning disabilities. The Department uses research and innovative approaches based on sound, psychological principles. Services are provided in partnership with families, advocates, fellow staff members and a range of community groups and other agencies. Psychologists work as members of multi-disciplinary teams and these teams work across the age span from early intervention through to adult services.

Inputs are provided directly to service users on some occasions but also indirectly through parents, teachers and other staff members. Direct working will usually involve Psychological Assessment of various issues and counselling/therapy interventions.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

- (a) *Early Intervention***
- (b) *Intellectual Assessment***
- (c) *Autism***
- (d) *Challenging Behaviour***
- (e) *Adult Mental Health***
- (f) *Sexuality and Relationships***

Services are also being provided through training of Western Care Association staff and others most notably in the area of the challenging behaviour, inclusive education and autism.

As the Psychology Department we believe that people with learning disabilities have the right to participate and be included as full and valued members in all aspects of community life. Everything we do is measured against this guiding principle.

## **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Personnel records  
Communication records  
Training records  
Project records  
Finance records  
Procedure records

## **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Principal Psychologist, Western Care Association, John Moore Road,  
Castlebar; Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207 and E-mail  
[info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **8.3. SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY DEPARTMENT**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Speech and Language Therapy is involved with the assessment, diagnosis and remediation of communication difficulties and disorders.

The aim of the Speech and Language Therapist is to support and develop the child's communication skills. Research indicates that these skills are better developed in their natural setting with those that the child has regular contact with, namely families, teachers, friends and community and to this end therapy supports not only the child but the people who make up the child's world.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Early Childhood Services 0-6 years. The Therapist works as part of a multi-disciplinary team.

### **SCHOOL SERVICES**

Children attending either mainstream school or Special School referred to Speech and Language Therapy will be offered a screening appointment. As part of the screening process the Speech and Language Therapist will consult with parents, as well as school team members.

Children attending either main stream or Special School referred to Speech and Language Therapy will be offered a screening appointment as part of the screening process. The Speech and Language Therapist will consult with parents, as well as school team members such as school Principal, Class Teacher, Psychologist, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist and Social Workers.

Following screening, discussion will take place with the family and personnel involved as to the need and availability of future intervention.

### **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service user records.  
Personnel records.  
Communication records.  
Training records.  
Project records.  
Finance records.  
Procedure records.

## **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Speech & Language Therapy Manager, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar; Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207 and E-mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **8.4. PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Physiotherapy is a way of enabling a child to develop his or her physical independence or to help an older child or adult regain independence following illness or injury. Physiotherapists have specialised knowledge and experience in the field of physical development and acquisition of physical skills.

Western Care Association employs chartered physiotherapists who treat numerous conditions. They work in partnership with families and with other professionals to develop suitable treatment programmes for those in their care.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Physiotherapy consists of examination and assessment, treatment, planning and review. Equipment is supplied as necessary and people availing of this service are referred to other disciplines or discharged as appropriate.

### **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Finance records  
Communication records  
Training records  
Procedure records  
Research records

### **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Physiotherapist, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar;  
Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207 and E-mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **8.5. OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Occupational Therapy is the use of purposeful occupation to promote and restore health and wellbeing.

Purposeful occupations include the activities, tasks and roles that are meaningful to the person, and the Occupational Therapist uses these to enable the individual to attain their maximum level of function and independence in all aspects of daily living.

Occupational Therapy can include the use of occupations as a therapeutic approach, education and training approaches, specific treatment approaches, environmental modification and adaptation and the use of adaptive equipment.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Occupational Therapy provides a holistic, person-centred approach to assessment, intervention and evaluation.

The Occupational Therapist works in a variety of settings.

### **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Finance records  
Communication records  
Training records  
Procedure records  
Research records

### **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Occupational Therapist, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar; Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207 and E-mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## 8.6. SPORT LEISURE & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The overall aim of the Sport Leisure and Recreation Department is to promote the **health** and **quality** of the lives of the athletes in Western Care Association, with specific responsibilities for the Special Olympic Programme.

Western Care Association aims to provide the opportunities for all to participate locally, regionally and nationally in sports.

### Benefits of Participation

- Improved physical fitness, increased co-ordination, better cardiovascular fitness and endurance.
- Improved self-esteem, self confidence and pride.
- Improved social skills through integration with peers and people without a learning disability.
- Opportunity to travel and experience other places and cultures.
- Opportunity for family members to recognize abilities of their athletics, leading to greater pride and understanding.
- Provides opportunity for developing friendships which are so important in their lives.
- We focus on people's **ability** rather than their disability.

### SERVICES PROVIDED

The Sport, Leisure & Recreation Department provide an all year round training programme. We provide opportunities to compete in competition. The main areas in the Special Olympics Programme are:

- (1) Motor Activities
- (2) Special Olympics Programme
- (3) Clubs

### Motor Activities

This is a non-competitive programme for athletes who do not yet have the necessary skills and ability to take part in the Special Olympics Programme. This is a specialised programme. There are two main aspects of this: **Gym base and Water base.**

This allows the athletes the opportunity to experience a range of activities, thus helping to improve their physical and psychological well being. It also helps to improve their ability to interact with others.

Special Olympics Programme provides opportunity in many different sports i.e. **Bowling, Athletics, Equestrian, Table-tennis, Basketball, Swimming, Soccer, Golf, (BOCCI – similar to lawn bowls – this is a new sport).**

### **Clubs**

There are three Special Olympic clubs: -

Bowling Club in Castlebar on Tuesdays from 7 – 8 p.m. for Children and 8 – 9 p.m. for Adults.

Basketball Club in Ballina from 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

Table Tennis Club in G.M.I.T. Castlebar. On Thursday evenings from 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Those clubs are very important to the athletes both from a sporting point of view but more importantly from a social aspect. This also provides a great opportunity for family members to meet one another.

### **World Special Olympics Summer Games**

The Special Olympics World Summer Games was hosted in Ireland in 2003. This was the largest sports event ever held in the world that year.

This was a huge success both locally and nationally. There were 18 athletes representing their country, 10 of whom were associated with Western Care Association in 5 disciplines.

There were 10 athletes from Western Care Association involved as volunteers along side their mentors for the duration of the games in Dublin.

There were 9 towns in Mayo associated with 7 international delegations. This was a high success for the people involved in the Host Town Programme locally.

The games are over but the legacy lives on. There are huge developments taking place in the Special Olympics program over the next number of years. There are Special Olympics network groups being set up throughout the county to support existing clubs and to develop new ones. There will be many more opportunities for volunteers to become involved. The theme now is “A Place for Everyone”. If you would like to become involved, we would love to hear from you.

## **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Communication records  
Finance records  
Training records  
Procedure records

## **CONTACT & ADDRESS**

Teresa Ward, Sport, Leisure and Recreation Co-ordinator, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar; Telephone (094) 9029167, Fax (094) 9025207 and E-mail [tward@westerncare.com](mailto:tward@westerncare.com)

## **9. CENTRAL/ADMINISTRATION SERVICES**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Administration Services of Western Care Association are managed by the Financial Controller. The purpose of the Administration Department is to provide high quality administrative services through skilled and motivated staff within the budget provided, in support of the Association's aims and objectives. This includes:

- Providing financial advice to the Executive Director, Finance Sub-Committee, the Board of Directors and Staff
- Preparing and monitoring of annual budgets
- Developing and implementing accounting standards, policies, systems and practices
- Paying funds for payroll, pension scheme, goods and services
- Preparing annual accounts
- Maintaining accounts, records and vouchers for audit
- Recording and safeguarding the Association's assets
- Securing income of the Association
- Cash flow management
- Staff management and development
- Providing daily transport services for service users as required
- Maintaining and upgrading our transport fleet
- Providing a general routine maintenance and repair to all group homes and centres, through direct staff and contract arrangements where appropriate
- Providing secretarial and administrative support to include arranging meetings, typing, faxing, photocopying, maintaining diary appointments, reception/ telephone etc.
- Providing a centralised purchasing function
- Monitoring and updating of the Association's service users database

- Ensuring adequate insurance cover is provided
- Health & safety, staff training, fire safety etc.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED**

### **(a) Accounts**

- Accounts Department processes payments for creditors, travel expenses, telephone/ E.S.B. accounts and petty cash accounts etc.
- Processing of Purchase Requisitions and placing of Purchase Orders.
- Monitoring of tenders and quotations.

### **(b) Wages**

- Wages Department is responsible for payment of salaries/ wages/ pensions, accounting for statutory and non-statutory deductions, issue of P60s and P45s etc.

### **(c) Transport**

- The Transport Department ensures that a daily transport service is provided for service users as required, and also monitors and co-ordinates drivers and the transport system.

### **(d) Maintenance**

- The Maintenance Department provides a general routine maintenance and repair service to all group homes and centres through direct staff and contract arrangements where appropriate.

### **(e) Clerical**

- The Clerical Department provides secretarial support to include arranging meetings, typing, faxing, photocopying, maintaining diary appointments, reception/ telephone etc.

### **(f) Database**

- Monitoring and updating of the National Intellectual Disability Database.

**(g) Record Management**

- The Record Management Department maintain Service User Records which are held in a secure and confidential manner.

**(h) Insurance**

- Ensuring adequate insurance cover for all the Association's properties, staff and service users. Processing of all insurance claims

**(h) Health & Safety**

- The Health & Safety Department provides training, advice and information on health and safety. Prepares safety statements for the organisation and ensures that statutory requirements are complied with.

**(i) Freedom of Information**

- The Freedom of Information Officer deals with the administration of all Freedom of Information requests and advises decision-makers regarding the Freedom of Information Act ensuring that the organisation complies with this Act.

**ACCESS TO ADMINISTRATION SERVICES**

Western Care Association's offices at John Moore Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo are open from 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday,

A member of the public wishing to make a general inquiry may do so at reception and will be assisted by the receptionist or one of the staff members of the organisation who will advise them of the procedures to be followed.

**CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User records  
Personnel records  
Financial records  
Communication records  
Procedure records  
Training records

**CONTACT & ADDRESS**

The Financial Controller, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar, Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207 and E-mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

## **11. EVALUATION AND TRAINING SERVICES**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Evaluation and Training Department performs an organisational support function.

The purpose of the department is to provide evaluation and training support to the organisation in its efforts to achieve Personal Outcomes for people and families using services.

The Evaluation and Training Department facilitates organisational learning by coordinating the development of organisation policies, procedures and practices that promote Personal Outcomes. Organisational policies and procedures are developed through a consultative process with key stakeholders.

The Evaluation and Training Department promotes Personal Outcomes for people using Association services through the development of staff awareness, knowledge and skills using a variety of training and learning supports.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

Staff training is provided in Basic skills, Specialised skills and through supports for Long Term courses of study lasting a number of years.

#### ***Basic Skills Training***

Basic skills' training includes a practical knowledge of putting the values of Personal Outcomes into practice. Basic skills' training also includes training that enables staff to put organisational policies and procedures into practice to assure the Health, Safety and Welfare of people using Association services. These basic skills events include first aid training, fire prevention, protection of the person's welfare, minimal handling, stesolid administration, risk management, and managing challenging behaviours.

#### ***Specialised Skills Training***

Specialised skills refer to more advanced learning in specific topics, or skills that may have particular relevance to a specific profession. Specialised skill development are connected to Outcomes for people. Specialised areas include training in autism, multiple and sensory impairments, augmentative communication and assistive technologies, supported employment, advanced behavioural strategies, clinical training for professionals, early intervention approaches, T.E.A.C.C.H. training, PECS training, làmh signing, the Derbyshire communication system, the Hanan communication system, further professional development courses and computer skills. Specialised skills

training may also include items which have specific relevance to particular outcomes for individuals e.g. film making, quality control for food production.

In addition to the above more in depth training in the values and application of Personal Outcome Measures are provided through one week. Outcomes workshops. Training is also provided in Listening and Information Gathering skills and training in Problem Solving, Negotiation and Facilitation skills which provides staff with relevant skills in promoting peoples Outcomes.

### ***Long Term Training***

The department also supports staff to attend a range of long term training programmes leading to a recognised qualification. This reflects the association's commitment to developing staff by creating opportunities for growth and progression within their careers. These long term courses include:

- The National Diploma in Vocational Rehabilitation Studies
- The Diploma in Supported Employment
- The Certificate in First Line Management
- Studio III Train The Trainers programme in Managing Challenging Behaviour
- The Certificate of Higher Education in Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- The Diploma of Higher Education in Autistic Spectrum Disorders

The department also provides training in Support and Supervision to Frontline Managers, and coordinates External Consultant facilitation on service delivery, service design and emerging models of best practice.

### ***Building Internal Training Capacities***

The Evaluation and Training Department is committed to building internal organisational learning capacity and promotes the development of internal staff trainers across a range of topics and areas.

Currently Western Care staff provide the following range of training events directly within the association; Personal Outcomes and associated skills, abuse prevention, risk management, managing challenging behaviour, minimal handling, stesolid administration, specific communication strategies, approaches to autism, support and supervision. The use of a wide range of internal staff trainers reflects the association's commitment to the development of our staff and to continually expanding our learning potential.

### ***Supporting Projects and Innovations***

The Evaluation and Training Department promotes innovation and best practice through support to a range of projects and strategic initiatives such as the development of an Individual Planning process using the Outcome Measures, exploring and designing strategies for service coordination, projects to promote peoples rights in practice, applying evidence based approaches to risk management, designing a strategy to support best

possible health for people in services, exploring organisational strategies for effective learning. Department members are represented on sub committees of the Board of Directors and on a range of working groups.

### ***Service Evaluation***

The Evaluation and Training Department coordinates the service evaluation function through the systematic gathering of data through Personal Outcomes reviews. This data is used to inform organisational decision making on the basis of individually expressed priorities. The department also coordinates the external review and accreditation processes by the Council on Quality and Leadership which occurs at predetermined intervals. The next accreditation review is due in May 2004.

### ***Working with the External Environment***

The Evaluation and Training Department has significant input to national bodies and is involved in organising and presenting at a range of groups and conferences nationally and internationally. Department membership of national bodies includes chair of the Task Group on Quality of the Federation of Voluntary Bodies, member of the Outcomes Network in Ireland, member of the Irish Association for Behaviour Supports, member of the Federation sub committee on Training and Development, member of the National Disability Authority Standards Advisory Committee.

## **CLASS OF RECORDS HELD**

Service User Records  
Personnel Records  
Finance Records  
Training Records  
Communication Records  
Procedure Records  
Project Records  
Research Records

## **CONTACT AND ADDRESS**

Evaluation & Training Manager, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar;  
Telephone: (094) 25133, Fax: (094) 25207 and E-mail  
[thughes@westerncare.com](mailto:thughes@westerncare.com)

## **11. HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of the H.R. Department is to manage the area of recruitment, retention and employee relations in the Association. To provide support to line managers in their role of managing staff team. To contribute to the overall management of the Association with a particular emphasis on human resources .

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

The Department is involved in all aspects of work relating to the employment and retention of staff in the Association.

- Recruitment services for the Association, from advertising, interviewing and appointment.
- Provision of information and support to potential applicants for positions in the Association.
- Ensuring the Association operates fairly in the selection process.
- Ensuring the Association promotes equality and opportunity in the area of recruitment and ongoing relationship with employees.
- Management and co-ordination of the Fast Community Employment Scheme in the Association.
- Negotiation with the recognised unions on behalf of the Association in relation to staff issues
- Advocating and representing Western Care Association at national level in relation to employee rights and entitlements.
- Development and maintenance of a comprehensive computerised HR system to support managers with the day to day management of staff.
- To produce, co-ordinate and monitor data relating to H.R. Planning and information.
- Record and maintain attendance records for all staff in the Association
- Implement statute legislation relating to employment and ensure the Association complies with same.
- Development and implementation of H.R. Policies and Procedures in the Association.

- Providing appropriate information to wages and salaries to ensure staff are paid correctly and in a timely manner.
- Managing the sick leave records and employees entitlements to same.

### **CLASS OF RECORDS**

Personnel Records  
Recruitment Records  
Procedure Records  
Finance Records

### **CONTACT AND ADDRESS**

H.R. Manager, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar.  
Telephone: 094 25133 Fax: 094 25207  
e-mail [pbrennan@westerncare.com](mailto:pbrennan@westerncare.com)

## **12. HOW TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION OUTSIDE THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 and 2003.**

The staff of Western Care Association will make information available to the general public or respond to an individual request for information to the greatest extent possible taking into consideration the public interest and the right to privacy.

Chapter 1 describes how information is made available to the general public through Western Care Association's annual report and through a range of information leaflets.

One to one discussion with us is an important way to obtain routine information and it may be beneficial that the initial request for information be made on a one to one basis.

In releasing information Western Care Association staff will always have regard to the individual's privacy, confidentiality and the public interest. The requester will be required to produce proof of identity if necessary. If appropriate the requester will be advised to make a formal request for the information sought, such as an application under administrative access.

Administrative access may not be appropriate where sensitive records, third party information or confidential information is involved.

### **12.1. MAKING AN ADMINISTRATIVE ACCESS REQUEST**

- the request must be in writing
- address it to the Executive Director
- give sufficient information to facilitate efficient identification and processing of the information sought
- staff who wish to request information in relation to their personnel records address your request to the manager at your centre

## **12.2. EXCEPTIONS TO ADMINISTRATIVE ACCESS**

A situation may arise where it would not be appropriate for Western Care Association to release the information requested through administrative access. This will be explained to the requester and he/she will be advised to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2003 and helped to make such a request.

## **12.3. OTHER MECHANISMS FOR ACCESS**

There are other legal means of access used for example Order of Discovery, Garda Investigations, Post Mortems, Court Subpoena, Search Warrant, Court Orders, Request/Investigation of Information Commissioner or Ombudsman or an Officer authorised by the Minister for Health and Children.

Current statutory secrecy provisions in health legislation may apply to the disclosure of information. Therefore the release of such records/information will be made on the grounds of public interest and on the basis of upholding enforcing and /or administering the law.

## **13. ACCESS TO INFORMATION VIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 and 2003.**

### **13.1. INTRODUCTION**

The Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2003 was passed by the Houses of the Oireachtas on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 1997 and 2003 to come into effect from 21 April, 1998 for Government Departments and other Government Agencies; from 21 October 1998 for Health Boards and Local Authorities; and from 21 October 1999 for Voluntary Agencies who are funded above £2m by Government.

### **APPLICATIONS UNDER THE FOI ACT**

Under the FOI Act, anyone is entitled to apply for access to information not otherwise publicly available. Each person has a right to:

- Access records held by Western Care Association.
- Correction of personal information relating to oneself held by Western Care Association where it is inaccurate, incomplete or misleading.
- Access to reasons for decisions made by Western Care Association directly affecting oneself.

### **The following records come within the scope of the Act:**

- All records held by Scheduled Voluntary Bodies which were created after the coming into force of the Freedom of Information Act on 21 April 1998.
- Any record created before the 21 April 1998 if this record is necessary for the understanding of a record created after the 21 April 1998.
- All personal information about you which is held by the Scheduled Voluntary Body, regardless of when the records were created.
- Personnel records of the Western Care Association staff created after 21 April 1995 or earlier records liable to be used in a way that might adversely affect the interests of the member of staff concerned.

In addition the Act provides for the establishment of an independent office of Information Commissioner to review decisions relating to Freedom of Information made by public bodies.

### **13.2. MAKING AN APPLICATION UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 and 2003.**

**The request for access to records under the Act shall:**

- be in writing
- be addressed to the Freedom of Information Officer, Western Care Association, John Moore Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
- State that the request is being made under Section 7 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003.
- Give sufficient particulars to enable the record to be identified.
  - (a) if relating to a client/student or member of staff, please give date of birth, current and previous addresses, where service was received etc
  - (b) details of records sought
  - (c) if access to records of third party is sought, written consent from the third party is normally required.
- State the manner of access sought.
  - (a) a copy of the record
  - (b) a transcript of the information concerned
  - (c) a computer disc or other electronic device containing the information
  - (d) a reasonable opportunity to inspect the record
  - (e) in case the record is of sound or visual image, a reasonable opportunity to hear or view the record.
  - (f) The information in such other form or manner as may be determined, or
  - (g) The information in a combination of any two or more of the foregoing.

You do not have to give reasons for requesting access to records and no person has the right to demand such reasons from you. If you have difficulty in identifying the precise records which you require, the staff of Western Care Association will be happy to assist you in preparing your request.

A request for reasons for decisions is made under Section 18 of the Act. A request for amendment of personal information is made under Section 17 of the Act.

### **13.3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REQUEST**

The Decision Maker dealing with the request shall **acknowledge in writing the request within two weeks of receiving it**. The letter of acknowledgement shall state the period within which a decision must be made, the rights of review, the procedure governing the exercise of those rights and the time limits which apply.

### **13.4. DECISIONS IN RELATION TO REQUESTS**

Within four weeks (or such longer period as provided for in exceptional cases under the Act) of receiving a request for access, the Decision Maker shall:

- Decide whether to grant or refuse to grant the request or to grant it in part.
- If he or she decides to grant the request whether wholly or in part determine the form and manner in which the right of access will be exercised.
- Notify in writing or such other form as may be determined the decision to the requester concerned.
- In the case of a decision to refuse, give reasons for refusal.
- Give notice of right of appeal.

### **13.5. RIGHT TO REVIEW AND APPEAL**

The Act sets out a series of exemptions to protect sensitive information where its disclosure may damage key interests of State or of third parties. Where an Agency invokes these provisions to withhold information, the decision may be appealed. Decisions in relation to deferral of access, charges, forms of access etc may also be subject to appeal. Details of the appeals mechanisms are as follows:

**Internal Reviews:** You may seek internal review of the initial decision which will be carried out by an officer at a higher level if:

- a. you are dissatisfied with the initial response received i.e. refusal of information, form of access, charges, etc, or
- b. you have not received a reply within 4 weeks of your initial application. This is deemed to be a refusal of your request and allows you to proceed to internal review.

**Requests for internal review should be submitted in writing to :**

*Freedom of Information Officer  
Western Care Association  
John Moore Road  
Castlebar  
Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207,  
E Mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)*

Such a request for internal review must be submitted within 4 weeks of the initial decision. The Agency must complete the review within 3 weeks. Internal review must normally be completed before an appeal may be made to the Information Commissioner.

**Review by the Commissioner:** Following completion of internal review, you may seek independent review of the decision from the Information Commissioner. Also if you have not received a reply to your application for internal review within 3 weeks, this is deemed to be a refusal and you may appeal the matter to the Commissioner.

Appeals in writing may be made directly to the Information Commissioner, Office of the Information Commissioner, 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2. Phone: 01-6785222; Fax: 01-6610570; E-mail: [foi@ombudsman.irlgov.ie](mailto:foi@ombudsman.irlgov.ie);

**Appeals to the High Court:** A party to a review under Section 34 or any other person affected by a decision of the Commissioner following such a review may appeal to the High Court on a point of law from the decision.

### **13.6. FEES**

Section 47 of the Freedom of Information Act provides for fees.

“Up-Front” Fees may be charged as follows:

#### **Requests for Records**

- A standard application fee of €15 must accompany an FOI request under Section 7 for a record or records containing non-personal information.
- A reduced fee of €10 applies if the person making the request is covered by a medical card.
- The following requests/applications are exempt:
  - a A request under section 7 for a record or records containing only personal information related to the requester.

- b An application under section 17 (right of amendment of records relating to personal information).
- c An application under section 18 (right of person to information regarding acts of public bodies affecting the person).

### **Internal Review**

- A standard fee of €75 must accompany an application for internal review under section 14.
- A reduced fee of €25 applies if the person bringing the application is a medical card holder or a dependant of a medical card holder.
- The following internal review applications are exempt:
  - a An application in relation to a decision concerning records containing only personal information related to the application.
  - b An application in relation to decision under section 17 (right of amendment of records relating to personal information).
  - c An application in relation to a decision under section 18 (right of person to information regarding acts of public bodies affecting the person).
  - d An application in relation to a decision to charge a fee or deposit, or a fee.

### **Review by Information Commissioner**

- A standard fee of €150 must accompany an application for Review by the Information Commissioner under section 34.
- A reduced fee of €50 applies if the person bringing the application is a medical card holder or a dependant of a medical card holder or the person is specified in section 29(2) i.e. a third party with the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner where a public body decides to release their information on public interest grounds.

The following applications to the Information Commissioner are exempt from up-front fees:

- a An application concerning records containing only personal information related to the application.
- b An application in relation to decision under section 17 (right of amendment of records relating to personal information).
- c An application in relation to a decision under section 18 (right of person to information regarding acts of public bodies affecting the person).
- d An application in relation to a decision to charge a fee or deposit, or a fee exceeding €25.00 under section 47 in respect of search and retrieval and photocopying of records (decisions

in relation to the charging of fees or deposits for search and retrieval and/or copying of less than €25 are not subject to review by the Information Commissioner).

- e An application in relation to a decision to charge a fee under section 47(6A), or a fee of a particular amount under section 47(6A), on the grounds that the records concerned do not contain only personal information related to the requester or the requester is not a medical card holder or a dependant of a medical card holder.
- f An application which arises where a decision to refuse a request is deemed to have been made by virtue of non-reply.

### **Fees for Search, Retrieval and Photocopying**

- In respect of personal records, no fees will be charged for copying the records requested unless a large number of records are involved.
- In respect of other (non-personal) information, fees may be charged for the time spent in efficiently locating and copying records, based on the standard rates in operation at the time of the request. No charges may apply in respect of the time spent by voluntary bodies in the time considering the requests.
- A deposit of 20% may be payable where the total fee is likely to exceed €50.00. In these circumstances, the Western Care Association must, if requested, assist the member of the public to amend the request so as to reduce or eliminate the amount of the deposit.

### **Charges may be waived in the following circumstances:**

- Where the cost of collecting and accounting for the fee would exceed the amount of the fee.
- Where the information would be of particular assistance to the understanding of an issue of national importance.

In the case of personal information where such charges would not be reasonable having regard to the means of the requester.

Fees are currently set as follows in accordance with Statutory Instrument Nos. 139 of 1998 and 522 of 1998.

€20.95 per hour – search and retrieval  
€0.04 per sheet for a photocopy  
€0.51 in relation for a 3 and a half inch computer diskette  
€10.16 for a CD Rom  
€6.35 for a Radiograph (X-ray).

## 13.7 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – DECISION MAKER, INTERNAL REVIEW & EXTERNAL APPEALS

### **Decision Makers in Western Care Association**

#### ***Services Director***

*Western Care Association*

*John Moore Road*

*Castlebar*

Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207,

E Mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

#### ***Evaluation & Training Officer***

*Western Care Association*

*John Moore Road*

*Castlebar*

Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207,

E Mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

#### ***Financial Controller***

*Western Care Association*

*John Moore Road*

*Castlebar*

Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207,

E Mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

### **Internal Reviewer in Western Care Association**

#### ***Executive Director***

*Western Care Association*

*John Moore Road*

*Castlebar*

Telephone (094) 25133, Fax (094) 25207,

E Mail [info@westerncare.com](mailto:info@westerncare.com)

### **External Appeals**

Information Commissioner, Office of the Information Commissioner, 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2; E-mail [foi@ombudsman.irlgov.ie](mailto:foi@ombudsman.irlgov.ie);  
Phone: 01 67852222; Fax: 01 6610570

## PART 2 SECTION 16

Section 16 is an information Guide to the Administration of Western Care Association, the Services it provides and the Policies it operates under. The provision of any service or scheme by Western Case Association is subject to resource availability at any given time.

### 1. GUIDELINES, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

**The following Guidelines, Policies & Procedures are available to the public and a copy can be obtained from the Freedom of Information Officer at Western Care Association, Head Office, John Moore Road, Castlebar who will liaise with the Evaluation & Training Department.**

	CODE ID	DATE
<b>SERVICES</b>		
A Procedure for the Resolution of Family Concerns & Complaints	SP-06	27/04/01
Guidelines for the Protection & Welfare of Children & Adults with a Learning Disability	SP -08	05/06/01
Individual Planning Procedure	SP-05	21/02/02
Policy & Guidelines on the Use of Physical Restraint & Managing Challenging Behaviour for People using Association Services	SP-12	16/04/02
Medication Procedure		21/02/01
Policy Guidelines on Positive Approaches	SP-04	22/04/02
Referral Procedure for Children and Adults		April 1998
Policy Guidelines on Risk Management for People using Association Services	SP-09	11/06/01
Best Possible Health Guidelines		DRAFT
Minimal Handling		DRAFT
Principles & Practice in Intimate Physical Care		DRAFT
Service User's Complaints Procedure		DRAFT
Service User's Records Policy		DRAFT
Service Users Charter of Rights		DRAFT
Transport Policy		DRAFT

	<b>CODE ID</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<b>H.R. &amp; STAFF DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Staff Handbook containing (a) Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures (b) Leave Entitlements (c) Conditions of Employment		April 2001
Policy on Job-Sharing	P&D.001	29/06/99
Guidelines on Staff Screening Procedures for Recruitment	<b>Query Status</b>	
Staff Development Procedure	SD 971	24/02/97
Temporary Relief Sick Pay Policy	P&D.002	30/06/00
Policy on Replacement of Staff of Grades above Assistant Level		
Supervisory Support		DRAFT
Induction		DRAFT
Policy on Recognised Qualifications in Western Care		DRAFT
<b>FINANCIAL &amp; PURCHASING</b>		
Purchasing and Invoice Processing Procedure	WCA/FR5	01/12/93
Policy Guidelines on Regulations for Service User Monies, Disability Allowance and Blind Pensions	WCA/FR 9	29/01/02
Regulations for Tenders and Quotations	WCA/FR 4	23/07/90
Petty Cash/Imprest Account Regulations	WCA/FR 6	08/01/90
Budget Monitoring	WCA/FR 10	
Regulations for Income/Receipts	WCA/FR 8	
Post Opening Regulations	WCA/FR 7	
Payroll Systems Regulation	WCA/FR 1	
Regulations for Travelling Expenses & Subsistence Allowance	WCA/FR 2	28/06/99
Capital Expenditure & Income Regulations	WCA/FR 3	
<b>HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</b>		
Organisational Safety Statement		09/05/02 Reviewed Annually
Department Safety Statement		09/05/02 Reviewed Annually
Maintenance Procedure		01/07/96
Policy Guidelines on dealing with Environmental Emergencies	SP-10	29/01/02
Fire Safety Guidelines	SP-07	09/05/01
Policy Guidelines on Regulations for Incident/Injury Reporting Policy	SP-13	29/04/02

Western Care Association employ qualified professionals, who are guided by their individual professional bodies' codes of ethics and practices at national and international level.

### **3. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND**

#### **ACTS UNDER WHICH WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION OPERATES**

The Companies Act (1963-1990)  
Mental Treatment Act 1945 (and Amendments)  
The Health Act 1947, 1953 & 1970  
Health Amendment Act 1996 (and Amendments)  
The Child Care Act 1991  
Health (Nursing Homes) Act  
Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003  
Health Safety & Welfare at Work Act  
Financial Regulations  
Fire & Safety Regulations  
Health (In-Patient charges) Amendment Regulations, 1997 and 2003  
Health (Out-Patient charges) Amendment Regulations, 1997 and 2003  
Health (Charges for In-Patient Service) Regulations, 1976  
Misuse of Drugs Act, 1984 (as amended 1993)  
Public Assistance Regulations, 1954  
Control of Clinical Trials Act 1987  
Data Protection Act 1988  
Data Protection (Access Modification – Health) Regulations 1989  
Food and Hygiene Regulations 1950-1989  
Health Service (In-Patient) Regulations 1991  
Mental Treatment Act 1961  
Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1988  
Misuse of Drugs (Scheduled Substances) Regulations 1993  
Poisons Act 1961 and Regulations 1991  
Social Welfare Consolidation Act 1981  
Institutional Assistance Regulations 1954 & 1976  
The Tobacco (Health Promotion & Protection) Regulations 1990  
Nurses Act 1950  
Nurses Act 1985  
Children's Bill 1999  
The Child Abuse Guidelines, 1987 – Department of Health.

**Copies of Act & Regulations are available from Government Publications Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2, phone 01 661311.**

### **3. INFORMATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY TO WESTERN CARE SERVICES**

#### **ACCESS AND ADMISSION TO SERVICES**

In Western Care Association there are two categories of referrals to the Organisation:

- (a) Referrals made by an outside agency to Western Care Association for the first time which are known as External Referrals
- (b) Referrals for services for an individual already on Western Care Association files which are known as Internal Referrals.

#### **EXTERNAL REFERRALS**

External referrals are often made directly to Western Care Association by parents, family members, the family general practitioner or an outside agency.

All external referrals are made directly to the Service Director who acknowledges the referral to the referee and passes the referral to the Children's Service Leader, Leader of Children's Autism or the Local Service Leader, depending on what services the individual requires. A letter requesting authorisation for information to be held on Database is forwarded to the family, or in the case of adults to the individual themselves. The Clerical Officer responsible for Data Base and the Central Filing System will open a file and, pending authorisation from the family/individual, will enter the information on the referral onto Data Base. The relevant Service Leader acknowledges the referral to the family/Individual and advises them that contact from the disciplines is forthcoming.

All new referrals are discussed at the Services Referral Meeting by the Referral Committee who meet every three weeks at head office. This committee consists of the Children's Service Leader, Leader of Children's Autism and Seniors of the Disciplines, namely Psychology, Social Work, Speech & Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. The role of this committee is to discuss each referral and decide on the progress of the referral, what personnel will be involved and the appointment of the "Case Co-ordinator". The time to process a referral including initial visitations from personnel involved should be no longer than 12 weeks from first point of contact with Western Care Association.

In the case of adults the above procedure also applies with the Local Service Leader meeting the relevant disciplines to progress the referral.

The Case Co-Ordinator is responsible for liaising with nominated team members. The Case Co-Ordinator must make contact and convene and chair

initial case meeting among nominated team members. He must also advise the Children's Service Leader or Local Service Leader of the outcome of the referral process.

## **INTERNAL REFERRALS**

This refers to referrals for specific services for an individual already on Western Care Association files. There are varying types of internal referrals. These have been identified as follows:

- Referral to Community Services – Social Work, Speech & Language Therapy, Psychology, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy.
- Referral to Centre from Individual living in the Community
- Referral to Residential Respite Services
- Referral from Children's Services to Adult Services
- Referral to Supported Employment

Admission to services may be delayed until places and/or resources become available. Until such time individuals are put on a waiting list and listed in order of priority and date of request. Local Service Leaders are responsible for the waiting lists in their area and forward same to Services Director who holds overall waiting list.

**For further information in relation to access to our services contact the Service Director.**

#### **4. DECISION MAKING PROCESS IN RESPECT OF SERVICE PRIORITISATION**

1. A statement of unmet need exists in the Association and indeed for the county and this is up-dated annually, normally in November of each year. This statement is based on the individual needs of each service user.

The method of up-date is two fold.

- (a) The Services Team, using their local knowledge and expertise prepare this statement and
  - (b) The database is a permanent source of statistical information.
2. There is in place an ongoing rolling services plan and this is up-dated annually as well having regard to the revised service needs as identified by the process at No: 1.
  3. The Services Team, having considered the up-dated statement of unmet need, revises the service plan and this is put to the Management Team for consideration. The Management Team will also consider development proposals and needs in relation to the other functional areas i.e. Administration, Finance, Transport, Maintenance, Human Resources, Health & Safety etc.
  4. The Management Team having considered all of these proposals will prioritise same and present the revised plan to the Board of Directors for approval.

This may be preceded by consideration of the plan by the Planning/Steering Sub-committee of the Board.

5. The revised plans are then submitted to the Western Health Board for consideration by the Consultative Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services, and the Development Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services, who will consider them in conjunction with the plans for the other service areas of the Board.
6. Prior to submission to the Consultative Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services, and the Development Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services the plans of both Western Care Association and Aras Attracta will be jointly considered and submitted as one schedule to the above mentioned committees.
7. When the Development Funds available for the given year or years are made known to the Association, it may be necessary to re-prioritise the original plan and this is done by the Services Team and the other functional areas in the organization and submitted to the Management Team for consideration.

The Management Team, having considered same will submit its proposals to the Board via the Steering/Planning Sub-Committee for approval.

8. When the Board approves of these revised priorities discussions will then take place with Aras Attracta as regards its priorities and a revised agreed schedule will be submitted to the Consultative Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services, and the Development Committee on Intellectual Disability and Autism Services of the Western Health Board for consideration and adoption.

When this group has agreed same and the Department has approved of the Western Health Board's overall priorities, the Association will then implement the proposals in its region.

It may be necessary to review the final position having regard to emergencies which might arise or changes in circumstances at local level.

This is normally accepted by the Western Health Board, but notification of same is required for consideration by the Consultative Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services, and the Development Committee for Intellectual Disability and Autism Services.

## **5. INFORMATION ON THE APPEALS/COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**

#### **5.1 FAMILY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

A complaints procedure is in operation in the Organisation which provides a mechanism to facilitate a family who wish to have their concerns addressed expediently and efficiently.

#### **5.2 SERVICE USER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

A complaints procedure project is currently being piloted within the Organisation's Self Advocacy Groups with a view to the introduction of a Service User Complaints Procedure.

#### **5.3 APPEALS UNDER FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

The procedure with regard to appeals under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003 is outlined in Section 11 of this manual.

## **APPENDIX 1**

## APPENDIX 2

### LIST OF CENTRES & WCA LOCATIONS

<b>GROUP HOMES – CHILDREN’S</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Blath na Hoige, Pontoon Drive, Castlebar	094 9026969
<b>RESPIRE HOMES – CHILDREN</b>	
St. Stephen’s, Castlebar	094 9023440
9, Carrownurlaur, Castlebar	094 9035737
Teach na hOige, Ballina	096 21248
<b>GROUP HOMES – ADULTS</b>	
Knockaphunta No 84, Castlebar	094 9026919
St. Francis, Castlebar	094 9021026
St. Kevin’s, Castlebar	094 9021081
St. Rita’s, Claremorris	094 9371153
Hazel View, College Road, Ballyhaunis	094 9630955
Pinegrove, Kiltimagh	094 9381789
Riverside, Kiltimagh	094 9381788
Highland Lodge, Kilkelly	094 9367147
Cois Na Robe, Baltimore	092 9541954
Aisling Gheal, Ballinrobe	092-9520750
Barrack Hill, Newport	098 41446
Seaview Park, Newport	098 41474
Cois Abháinn, Newport	098 42947
Pinewoods, Westport	098 26337
The Paddock, Westport	098-29983
Aras Aóibhinn, Ballina	096 21174
Castlecourt, Ballina	096 22618
Orchard Grove, Ballina	096 77929
Abbeytown, Crossmolina	096 31224
Belass, Foxford	094 9256909
Mulhern Crescent, Belmullet	097 81880
<b>RESPIRE HOMES - ADULTS</b>	
Curlew Hill, Belmullet	097 20911
Moy Heights, Ballina	096 70943
Aglish, Castlebar	094 9028994
4 Abbeyvale, Ballyhaunis	094 9632033
Lakelawns, Ballinrobe	092 9542398
<b>DAY CENTRES – CHILDREN’S</b>	
St. Hubert’s, C.D.C., Castlebar	094 9025000
<b>DAY SERVICES – ADULTS</b>	
Belmullet Day Centre	097 81353
Erris Eggs, Belmullet	097 81353
Ballyhaunis Day Centre	094 9630502
St. Rita’s Claremorris	094 9371153
Carrowbeg Enterprises, Westport	098 26873
Newport Resource Centre	098 41379

<b>DAY SERVICES – ADULTS (cont'd)</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Rural Training, Newport	098 41827
Crann Mór Training Centre, Ballinrobe	092 9541472
Beehive, Ballina	096 70087
Cluainín Day Centre, Crossmolina	096 30100
St. John's Resource Centre, Kiltimagh	094 9381504
Shalom, Kiltimagh	094 9382152
Ridgepool Training Centre, Ballina	096 21016
Moy Chocolates, Ballina	096 21016
Shanaghy Heights, Ballina	096 71306
Vocational Training Centre, Castlebar	094 9025133
<b>Autistic Services – (Day &amp; Res.)</b>	
St. Eithne's, Foxford	094 9256185