

# IRISH AFTERCARE NETWORK

*Providing Support to People Working With Care Leavers*

**July 2021**

Dear Irish Aftercare Network Member

I hope you have all been keeping well since our last newsletter in March.

Due to the on-going public health restrictions, the committee have made the decision to cancel this year's conference until next year when we hope it will be worth waiting for and let's hope we can all finally meet face to face when the time comes!

We are planning a number of support events over the coming months for members and will be in touch as soon as details have been finalised.

The network is always here to support you, please get in touch if we can help in any way or if you have content you would like to share in the newsletter. On behalf of the Irish Aftercare Network I would again like to acknowledge the outstanding commitment shown by all our members throughout the country in these strange times, in continuing to provide outstanding care and support for so many young people in aftercare. The dynamic and creative ways in which this is happening on a daily basis is testament to the dedication all our members have continually shown to those young people we are privileged to work with.

Wishing you all an enjoyable summer.

Kind regards

*Ciaran Kenny*

Ciaran Kenny  
Chairman

# Irish Aftercare Network News

## *Irish Aftercare Network Regional Meetings*

We would like to thank all IAN members who participated in our online regional meetings in May. Many issues were discussed and priority issues were highlighted for each region. A summary of those regional issues are included below.

### **7<sup>th</sup> May – The Western Regional Meeting**

- Working of joint protocol.
- Different methods of filing systems in each area.
- Beyond the pandemic – Preparing for what's coming.

### **14<sup>th</sup> May – The Leinster Regional Meeting**

- SUSI, in particular the impact that certain immigration status such as stamp 4 are having in accessing SUSI and other entitlements available to young people leaving care that can assist them in their progression through education.
- Housing: There is still huge uncertainty for many care leavers regarding their long term housing options going forward. At present there are very few CAS properties coming on stream due to increasing cost of properties and a lack of supply of appropriate housing in the market.
- Access to personal information. Some young people are requesting information from their files and are being denied due to GDPR regulations at present. This has caused huge hurt and anger from those young people now in aftercare looking to gain further insight and information into their past.

### **21<sup>st</sup> May – The Munster Regional Meeting**

- Intellectual Disabilities and Complex needs. Need for move on services and wrap around support mental health services.
- Ring fence follow on accommodation.
- Getting an Aftercare worker at an early age in order to build relationships. The one good adult approach. Consistent wrap around supports required. Build resilience at an early age.

### [A warm welcome to committee member Dan Keogh](#)

Dan is an aftercare worker with Focus Ireland. He has been working in Aftercare since 2017, before which he worked across a range of homeless services as a case-manager and advocate since 2008. We are delighted to welcome him as an Irish Aftercare Network committee member. The young adults we are privileged to work with need a strong voice and advocacy platform and Dan hopes to bring his experience and energy to moving this forward.

### [Aftercare Drama Project- Life in aftercare 2021](#)

Irish Aftercare Network Chairperson, Ciaran Kenny along with his colleague aftercare worker Stuart Lynch from Don Bosco Care are working on an upcoming project that hopes to provide a space for young people in aftercare to reflect what life is like for them in 2021.

They are looking to create a wonderful opportunity for young people in aftercare to come together over a number of weeks and collaborate to produce a short play that will allow them express their day-to-day experiences of life in 2021. Overseeing this project will be the wonderful actor Johnny Ward (Love/Hate and Fair city) who has a wealth of knowledge in working with such groups. The environment will be fun, friendly and really is about putting a smile back on people's faces after what has been such a difficult year for everyone.

It would be brilliant to see as many young people as possible get involved and if you require any further information on this you can contact us on [info@breakingthrough.org](mailto:info@breakingthrough.org)

Lights, camera, action!!

### [European Child Guarantee](#)

Some good news. The European Commission has adopted a European Child Guarantee which means every member state must meet the needs of vulnerable children. The Guarantee includes supporting young people leaving care.

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1428&furtherNews=yes&newsId=10024>

### [Educational bursary scheme for care-experienced young people in aftercare](#)

Minister O'Gorman and Tusla have launched an educational bursary scheme for care-experienced young people in aftercare.

Please click on link below for further information

[gov.ie - Minister O'Gorman and Tusla launch an educational bursary scheme for care-experienced young people in aftercare \(www.gov.ie\)](#)

Tusla welcomes applications from young people with a minimum of six months care experience. Applications will be considered for fees for an education or training course, not funded by the State, or practical supports required to complete a course the young person has enrolled in. Examples of these might be IT materials, tools, or other equipment. The closing date for receipt of applications is 31st October 2021.

### *Care leavers say supports should continue to age 26*

Young people who aged out of State care at 18 have said that accommodation and supports should be available up to age 26 to prevent care leavers falling into homelessness and unemployment.

[Care leavers say supports should continue to age 26 \(rte.ie\)](http://www.rte.ie)

### *Meeting with Minister Roderic O'Gorman*

The network has been liaising with the Ministers office and is optimistic that a further meeting with Minister O'Gorman will take place later in the year.

### *Meetings with Tusla*

Due to ongoing IT issues these meetings will be rescheduled when it is feasible to do so.



*We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a very enjoyable summer.*