

## IRISH AFTERCARE NETWORK

*Providing Support to People Working With Care Leavers*

We are very excited about this years' Conference, our first one since 2019 and are thrilled that places are filling up fast. There are still places available here if you haven't got around to booking yet. <https://aftercareconf2022.eventbrite.ie>

**Irish Aftercare Network, Annual Conference 2022,**  
**'Looking Forward – Working with Young People Leaving Care'**  
**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October, Sheraton Hotel, Athlone.**

So far here is the list of organisations that have colleagues booked on to attend the conference:

An Garda Siochana, Attuned Programmes Ireland, Care Leavers Network, Cork Life Centre, Crosscare, Daffodil Care Services, Don Bosco Care, Empowerment Plus, EPIC Empowering People in Care, Focus Ireland, Foster Care Ireland, Fostering First, Health Information and Quality Authority, Merchant Quay Ireland, New Horizon Refugee Support, Orchard Fostering, Peter McVerry Trust, SETU Carlow, Smyly Trust Services, Social Care Ireland, Teach Osaile FRC, TU Dublin and Tusla Child & Family Agency.

The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Mr Roderic O'Gorman, TD, will speak along with Psychotherapists, Lecturers and Social Care Workers. There will also be three inspiring young men who are care leavers themselves, and advocates working for a better future for those leaving care.

For those who register early you will get your own Goodie Bag!

<https://aftercareconf2022.eventbrite.ie>



On the day there will be Exhibition Stands from:



Empowering People in Care, Focus Ireland, Social Care Ireland, Technological University Dublin, Daffodil Care Services and Irish Aftercare Network.

## Members Information Event

The Irish Aftercare Network hosted an online informative event on 13<sup>th</sup> September which was presented by Charlotte Burke, CPD Coordinator, Social Care Ireland on “Social Care Workers Registration Board and the benefits of CPD”, followed by Q&A.

Charlotte spoke on Statutory Regulations for Social Care Workers and on reflective practice prior to looking at reflective writing.

SCI endorses the Irish Aftercare Network Conference as being of high quality and relevant to the CPD needs of Social Care Workers.

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## TUD: Care experienced young people and ‘automatic eligibility’

### Who are the Access Service?

TU Dublin are committed to ensuring that students of all backgrounds and nationalities can find a pathway to higher education that suits their circumstances at different stages of their lives. TU Dublin’s Access Service are dedicated to providing focused supports to facilitate underrepresented students entry to and transition through university life, we do this by providing pre entry and post entry supports.

One key way that TU Dublin work to widen participation and reduce barriers to access is through the provision of Access Entry Routes. Access Entry Routes are supported admission routes for school leavers and young people who may be faced with additional challenges and difficulties in accessing higher education. See our website: [TU Dublin Access Routes | TU Dublin](#)

### Care experienced young people and ‘automatic eligibility’

While other applicants have to meet a minimum of three indicators, care experienced young people do not.

A Care experienced student is an applicant who is a foster or separated child who is/was in the care of TUSLA (the Child and Family Agency). Once an applicant can provide a letter from TUSLA, or an After-Care agency they are screened as ‘automatically eligible’ which means they do not have to go through the same initial screening process. Please note this does not guarantee an access quota place but allows them to compete for a place. Course specific minimum entry requirements must be met.

Access Entry Routes	
Access TU Dublin	Unique to TU Dublin Students (under 23 on 1st January in the year of entry) who are applying to TU Dublin through CAO on the basis of their Leaving Cert results
QQI Access TU Dublin	Unique to TU Dublin Aimed at students (under 23 on 1st January

	in year of entry) who are currently studying for or have completed a linked QQI Level 5 Award.
Access Foundation Programme	Unique to TU Dublin 1 year preparation course for students who feel they need a year to prepare for college, have been out of education or have been unsuccessful in accessing 3rd level through CAO or other Access Entry routes. Award: Certificate in Foundation Studies (Minor Award Level 6) and are guaranteed an offer of one of their TU Dublin CAO course choices the following year.
HEAR	National Schemes. <a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie">www.accesscollege.ie</a>
DARE	National Schemes. <a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie">www.accesscollege.ie</a>

### Contact Us:

We are really looking forward to seeing you at our stand at your Network's Conference on 7<sup>th</sup> October.

In the meantime, if you would like to discuss how we can support care experienced young people as they apply to TU Dublin please get in touch [access.city@TUDublin.ie](mailto:access.city@TUDublin.ie) or phone 086-441-1062 (Claire) or 087-799-3194 (Dolores).

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## New National Access Plan

This Plan will drive equality of access to higher education and for the first time those with experience of the care system are prioritised.

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris stated while launching the [fourth National Access Plan](#) - 'This new National Access Plan is the most ambitious plan for access to Higher Education. The statistics don't lie. It is clear those from disadvantaged areas have a lesser chance of accessing higher education than those from more affluent areas. There are a number of new groups who we have never put a focus on before including those in the care system and those with intellectual disabilities. Today, that changes.'

It is a national priority and a key commitment in the Programme for Government with €35 million being ringfenced for the Plan.

The Plan names 3 priority groups: students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, who are members of Irish Traveller and Roma communities and students with disabilities including intellectual disabilities. Under the first cohort, an additional focus will be on students who have experienced homelessness, are survivors of domestic violence, have experience of the care system, are carers and have experience of the criminal justice system.

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## *The Ombudsman for Children's Office Report*

The Report, published in September entitled 'Pieces of Us' recalls young peoples' experiences of the care system and what they feel needs to change. Problems they encountered were upheaval from the family home, being placed in multiple settings, long waiting lists to see play therapists and not enough young foster parents. One young person said that telling the (age appropriate) child the reason that they were being taken into care at the start of the process would help.

Some changes they suggested were having care packages for children who did not have many belongings or were not able to bring their belongings with them and having an allocated social worker, especially over the weekend.

For more information - [Pieces-of-Us-Childrens-Report-Ireland.pdf \(oco.ie\)](https://oco.ie/Pieces-of-Us-Childrens-Report-Ireland.pdf)

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### *Way 2 Work Ireland*

#### **Creating opportunities for all young people irrespective of privilege or background**

Way 2 Work Ireland is a not for profit, fully funded organisation created in partnership with Tusla the Child and Family Agency on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, to create opportunities of work experience, apprenticeships and overall fulltime employment for all young people with a care experienced background. W2W presently covers the Leinster, Munster and Connacht regions working with young people aged between 16 to 21 years of age who are referred through various Tusla departments. W2W operate two different programmes presently to support ambitious and motivated young people entering the employment market.

#### **Mentor programme**

W2W operate our mentor's programme which supports and assists young people who have an ambition to find meaningful employment opportunities across the private sectors, which include construction, motor, hospitality, retail etc. W2W offers all young people an equal opportunity and access to our wide range of private partners nationwide to access the best opportunities of employment and traineeship craft trades.

#### **W2W criteria**

All young people who are referred to our programmes through Tusla need to have a level of motivation and clear understanding of what it is they want to do in terms of employment or the W2W teams support.

#### **Training programme**

Our training programme was established in August 2021 which addresses practical training and short educational courses in preparation for employment, either through W2W network of private employers or externally. All training provides our team work with nationwide offer certified courses in any areas identified by the young person who has been referred. Our team

uses training providers in all industry such as construction, beauty, motor, hospitality etc. W2W is also happy to discuss any additional options requested by the young person social worker or aftercare workers.

For more information - [info@way2work.ie](mailto:info@way2work.ie)

### **Network Support**

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.

**Here's a reminder to book your place at the Conference:**

<https://aftercareconf2022.eventbrite.ie>