



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23

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OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

OUR VISION

To live in a world where disability is not a disadvantage

OUR MISSION

To empower disabled people to live independently in an inclusive society through delivering quality services and campaigning for change

VALUES

- We put people first
- We prioritise independent living
- We lead with authority and responsibility
- We think big



CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Another challenging year has passed since the last annual report and I am delighted with how the board responded to the issues we grappled with; for which I extend my thanks and share my admiration of their dedication. In particular, I would like to mention Mike Hendra, who very kindly stood in as interim treasurer, whilst we searched for a replacement. Replacing a treasurer is never an easy task, and was delighted when Amanda Paul volunteered to take on this enormous responsibility. As a board we have continued to work towards our strategic plan, delivering on the goal that were set out and in this report, you will be able to see how we are fulfilling that commitment.



To that end, working with the senior management team to ensure a smooth operational outcome for the entire staffing team has been working well. We were able to provide finances to cover new projects in policy, advocacy and training across the Independent Living sector and huge thanks should go to Deena, Carla and the entire Independent Living Advisor Team for the exceptional standard of work. Similarly, the Payroll Department rollout of our new Connect service gathered momentum and those using the service are already seeing the fruits of an efficient and streamlined way to manage employee payrolls. Another example of the Centre placing our service users at the heart of everything we are trying to achieve to make independent living as easy as it ought to be. Of course, all of these things do not happen without the support of the folks who look after the administration, working away in the background to ensure that the technical, financial and other ancillary processes run smoothly.

As we continue into the coming year, without the prospect of a sitting executive in sight, the focus on sustaining our future activities has never been so important. All of the board are united in developing strategies to ensure that CILNI has the resilience to meet and work through the issues that we may be faced with and I cannot end without further acknowledgement of the time and dedication given freely by each and every one of them.

Best wishes,
Michael Holden MBE BSc MCMI

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

I am delighted to report on key achievements for the year 2022/23. The year marked the fourth year of our Strategic Plan 2019-2024 with an aspiration to ensure that the message of independent living is clear and that the voice of disabled people is heard.

I would like to thank the board of directors for their support over the last twelve months. We continued to have regular meetings in various locations, both in-person and via a video connection. Our senior management team had another busy twelve months. The enhanced use of digital techniques to engage with people was further embedded within the operations. A number of internal projects including the upgrading of the telephone system and a significant data transfer project to the cloud was completed during the year. The staff team embraced hybrid working arrangements and offered a range of in-person and online services to service users.



We were delighted to organise an artwork commission for disabled artists using some legacy funds. A number of artists submitted work for a small visual art collection on the theme of independent living. Some of this artwork is featured in this report. We were successful in securing a new Department of Health contract for three years from April 2022 to provide a regional advice, information and advocacy service to support people to manage their own care, using Direct Payments as part of the Self-Directed Support framework.

The Payroll Service management team led a successful testing of Connect, the cloud-based employer self-service system. The digital system is now being phased in by offering it to new payroll service clients as part of the payroll set up process. A revised Payroll Service Agreement with new terms and conditions was introduced during the year. This was the first significant revision since 2016. A number of new communication channels were developed as a way of improving information about core services to service users including the production of several “explainer” videos.

CILNI is a user-led disabled persons organisation and we believe engagement at policy level is essential to increase independence, choice and control for disabled people. During the year we were involved in 45 meetings, public consultations and events focusing on policy development. We have not stood still during the year despite local political and economic uncertainty. CILNI has continued its two-fold vital work. Firstly by supporting disabled people and carers in managing the direct payment element of their social care. Secondly standing alongside disabled people who continue to campaign for their rights. Our work in these and other areas will continue in the coming years

Bryan Myles, CEO

STRATEGIC PLAN

The focus of our five-year strategy (2019 -2024) is to make a real difference in disabled people's lives by breaking down the barriers they face and tackling the policies which prevent them from living independently.

Through this strategic framework, we are challenging ourselves to bring about significant and sustainable change for a greater number of disabled people, working and inspiring others to do the same.

Our strategy is underpinned by four values that inspire all aspects of our work:

1. We put people first
2. We prioritise independent living
3. We lead with authority and responsibility
4. We think big



ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2022/23

Disabled people are connected to each other and with other people

CILNI facilitated a meeting with DoH Minister Swan in October 2022 to provide a platform for him to announce the new SDS regional rate for 2022/23 and to meet with a number of PA employers and their PAs. This meeting proved to be very useful as it enabled service users to share personal experiences with the Minister. The meeting was used to highlight a number of the current challenges experienced by service users caused by the administration and policies of the local Trusts.

During the year more meetings took place in person and relationships were strengthened. We maintained direct service user involvement through conventional phone calls and the use of digital technology including social media platforms. We interacted with service users directly through our website and by using video technology. The signposting nature of social media makes it a great channel to post quick updates and information to our followers. We use both Facebook and Twitter to engage with service users, providing advice and sharing informative articles relevant to our sector. In addition, we receive enquiries and feedback from Direct Payment employers in relation to their PA recruitment needs from a number of private Facebook Groups. Online training delivery has made it much easier for service users to join sessions and access the information being shared, but unfortunately limits opportunities for informal networking and sharing of experiences/ideas.

The 2022 user survey provided a welcome review of the experience of all respondents who have come into contact with CILNI's services. With a sample size of 176 respondents, the survey evidenced a high level of satisfaction that echoes the findings of the three previous surveys and is testament to the need and value of the work done by the organisation. It was particularly pleasing to note that 82% felt confident in recommending CILNI's services to others. All the feedback provided helps the organisation to continue to develop and improve the way it supports individuals in their independence.

How much did we do?

CILNI Newsletters were circulated four times a year **2,151**

Hits on the CILNI website **19,642**

Twitter followers **755**

Facebook friends **944**

How much did we do?

45

meetings in collaboration with other organisation to discuss disability issues

20

meetings led by disabled people to discuss independent living

86%

of service users were satisfied with the way we listened to them

86%

of service users found the advice service information very helpful

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2022/23

CILNI is promoted through listening and providing opportunities for the voices of disabled people to be heard



We met regularly with policy makers and senior staff across the Health and Social Care Trusts while policies were being developed. We brought the personal assistants and carers workforce to the attention of politicians. As small employers, it is extremely difficult for them to make their voice heard. We supported the campaign to increase the SDS hourly rate and were pleased to host Health Minister, Robin Swan for the announcement of the largest ever rate uplift.

CILNI members attended the second Northern Ireland Disabled Persons Parliament in the NI Assembly Chamber on the International Day of Disabled Persons in December 2022. The event was hosted by the Speaker, Alex Maskey MLA in Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

Disabled people helped to plan the event, set the agenda and used personal stories to highlight the importance of adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. We attended the Harkin International Disability Summit in the Belfast ICC. The Summit is internationally recognised as a platform that brings together leaders and activists across business, government, voluntary sector and academia to highlight and address disability employment issues.

We attended regular online meetings with politicians, many facilitated by voluntary groups. We were a representative at a number of All Party Working Groups, including Physical Disability and Learning Disability. These are political cross-party working groups set-up for discussion and to be informed on relevant topics.

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2022/23

Personal experience is used to help inform and influence government policy

CILNI worked collaboratively with Department of Health and HSC Trusts on issues impacting the direct payment policy for users and carers. We participated in a roundtable discussion with Peter May, DoH Permanent Secretary. We provided a response to the Department of Health's Reform of Adult Social Care consultation.

We participated in two IMPACT (Improving Adult Social Care Together) action research projects. The first was facilitated by Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) to explore ways to improve recruitment and retention with a particular emphasis on valued based recruitment. The second was facilitated by ARC NI to explore approaches that offer a 'middle way' between commissioned services and direct payments for people with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

We were represented on the Department of Community's Disability Strategy co-design group working alongside the civil servants and an expert group. In addition, we were consulted on the Department's emerging Housing Supply strategy.

We were represented on the Disability Forum set up by the UNCRPD Independent Mechanism in Northern Ireland. The role of the Forum is to provide a dedicated space to ensure disabled people are at the core of IMNI's work in promoting, protecting and monitoring the implementation of the UNCRPD in Northern Ireland.

CILNI continued to support the campaign to re-open the Independent Living Fund for new applicants in Northern Ireland and ongoing discussion with the ILF Scotland team on policies and shared activities.



How much did we do?

policy development activities 50

advocacy support requests 261

information and awareness raising events 5

How much did we do?

9,801

advice and
information
enquiries

3,819

service users and
carers supported

885

face to face office-
based advice
service enquiries

2,661

DP employers
using payroll
service

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2022/23

Our services are appropriate and of a high quality

CILNI was successful in securing a new Department of Health contract for three years from April 2022 to provide a regional advice, information and advocacy service to support people in managing their own care. The service supports people to manage their own personal assistance, using Direct Payments as part of the Self-Directed Support framework, how to be a good employer, recruitment support and broader advice on living independently. The Advice Service responded to 31% more enquiries than that required under the service contract. It undertook more than five times the number of independent advocacy enquiries as required under the service contract. Face-to-face home visits and office visits have grown steadily.

The payroll service continues to offer a bespoke and practical payroll solution for employers of personal assistants. As the number of employers administered by the payroll service continues to grow, the team responded to a larger number of enquiries than in previous years. After the successful testing of Connect, the cloud-based employer self-service system is now being phased in by offering it to new payroll service clients.

This digital development has brought significant benefits to the service users, their employees and the operation of the payroll bureau. A revised Payroll Service Agreement with new terms and conditions was introduced during the year. A number of new “explainer” videos were developed as a way of improving information about core services to service users.

The Independent Living Accounts facility supports the budget work undertaken by the advice service. The announcement of the large percentage increase in the SDS hourly rate resulted in a surge in the number of enquiries for budget reviews from service users. In 2021, there were around 400 enquiries. In 2022, this increased to almost 1,000 enquiries.





How much did we do?

New CILNI members during the year

4

Total number of full CILNI members

50

Total number of associate CILNI members"

48

Number of people attending CILNI's 21st AGM

29

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2022/23

Our membership expanded through recruiting new members and retaining existing members

Full membership is open to disabled people who support the ethos of the independent living movement. It enables disabled people to contribute their expertise and personal experience and have a say in the future direction of the work of the organisation. Associate membership is available to non-disabled people who support the principles of independent living.

We provided opportunities for a number of members to participate in different aspects of the charity including as board members. We benefit from the time they give to the organisation and from the utilisation of a diverse skill set. We were pleased that a number of our members are regular service users and are always available to provide invaluable feedback on the quality of the service.

CILNI held its 21st Annual General Meeting during the year as part of a conference on the theme of "Our future, our lives – what is happening?". The event enabled members to listen to a number of inspirational speakers and network with other disabled people in the surroundings of an historic estate.

We facilitated a Christmas drop-in in the Belfast office to provide a welcoming space for people to meet each other and share stories. This small-scale event enabled members to meet informally with board members and the management team. The focus for the entire CILNI staff team was to support our members and service users and to help maintain the organisation's service levels. We welcome the small increase in membership during the year and look forward to being able to engage more fully with all of our members in the coming year.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2022 – 2023

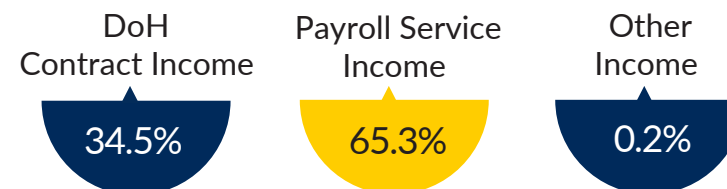


A full set of the charity's audited accounts for the period is available on the Charity Commission NI website. However, an overview of the organisation's financial position of the year 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 is provided below.

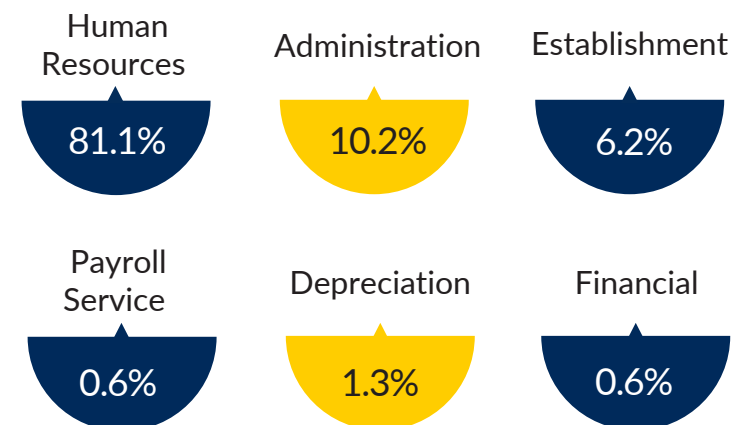
The charity's income exceeded its expenditure by £7,902 which is an improved financial position on the previous financial year. The income from the payroll service continued to grow as more employers of personal assistants are attracted to the one-stop shop facility offered by the charity. The contract with the Department of Health for the provision of the regional advice, information and advocacy service, was secured at a similar fixed price as the previous contract. In response to the growing demand for support to arrange direct payments by service users, the advice service continued to exceed its targets.

The Board continues to follow a strategic financial policy of maintaining a level of reserves sufficient to cover six months of running costs. The operational surplus and an unfortunate downturn in investments has resulted in accumulated funds at the end of the year decreasing from £787,460 to £780,746. These investments are managed on CILNI's behalf by Evelyn Partners.

CILNI Income 2022/23



CILNI Expenditure 2022/23



WHAT USERS SAY ABOUT OUR SERVICES

We are committed to listening and responding to the experiences of service users

Paula McC

Excellent experience with the Advice Team - so patient with our questions! This makes a stressful situation so much easier. Thanks

Geraldine G

Excellent experience, the CILNI staff are so helpful and respond very quickly with any questions that need answered.

Patricia D

I was very anxious regarding payments required to HMRC. After a phone call with CILNI the issue was resolved the same day. Many thanks for your help, I can now sleep tonight.

Edith M

The CILNI Advisor answered all our questions and took time to explain things to us in detail.

Eric G

You have been very efficient and a pleasure to deal with. I've seen a tremendous improvement in the delivery of service compared with previous years!

Marie V

The CILNI team were very nice to talk to and extremely helpful.

Geraldine McC

The CILNI Advisor was very helpful and gave lots of useful information, great service!

Elizabeth McS

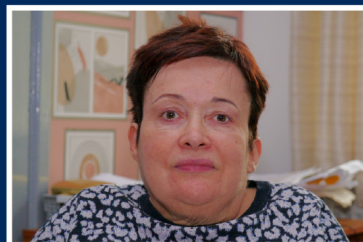
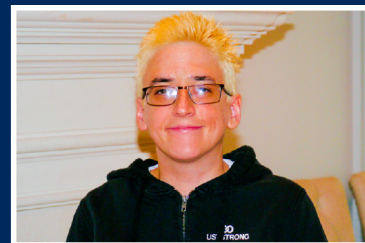
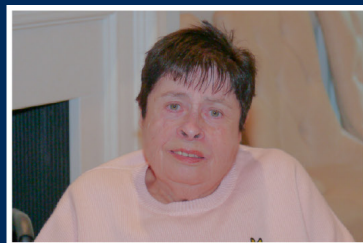
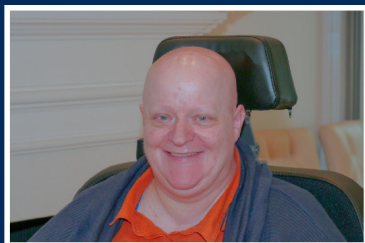
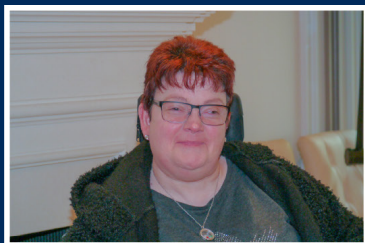
The CILNI Advisor explained everything very clearly and responded to each of my questions with knowledge and professionalism. I am very confident using CILNI.

Marie V

Very helpful I tend to get nervous in these situations and the CILNI Advisor helped to alleviate that so thank you.

Eileen McN

Excellent service all round. Thank you! All queries answered promptly in a concise and precise manner.



CORPORATE INFORMATION

Board of Directors

Alison Lockhart
Amanda Paul
Angela Hendra
Caitriona Graham
Michael Hendra
Michael Holden
Patricia Millar
Ronan Murray

Chief Executive

Bryan Myles

Deputy Chief Executive

Liz Esler

Independent Living Services Manager

Deena Nimick

Payroll Service Manager

Kevin McKegney

Registered Office

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www.cilni.org

Auditors Bankers

Harbinson Mulholland, Belfast
Ulster Bank, Crumlin

THANK YOU TO SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals who have supported our work over the past year. Through their support we have been able to ensure many more disabled people have received answers to many of their questions and services to help them live more independently. We remain committed to living in a world where disability is not a disadvantage.

- Ruth Donaldson, Department of Health, SPPG
- Colin Dunlop, Department of Health
- Peter Scott, ILF Scotland
- David McDonald, Omnibus Project & ILF NI Stakeholders Group
- Alex Wade, Mark Bates Insurance
- Chris Griffen, Lockton Insurance
- Jane Fyffe, Harbinson Mulholland
- Chris O'Neill, Smith & Williamson
- Colin Lively, MyIT Department



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www.twitter.com/cfilni
www.facebook.com/centreforindependentlivingni

Centre for Independent Living NI

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