



**Derry Well Women**  
*At the forefront of womens' health*

# 35 YEARS OF LEADING A FOCUS ON WOMEN'S HEALTH IN NORTHERN IRELAND

**DERRY WELL WOMEN**  
ANNUAL REPORT 2023



[www.derrywellwoman.org](http://www.derrywellwoman.org)

Charity No.: NIC 101247 LLC: NI 22926



## Contents

### Corporate Overview

Our Strategic Aims & Objectives	2
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### Reports

Vice Chairs Report	4
Secretary's Report	6
Treasurer's Report	8
Manager's Report	10

### Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Activities	30
Balance Sheet	31

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## Our Strategic Aims



### To provide women

with a women-centred health service, which will improve the health and wellbeing of women, families and communities and recognise the changing health priorities for women across the life course.



### To promote social inclusion,

to address health inequalities and improve health by meeting the specific health needs of women generally and specifically marginalised groups of women including women living with the impact of conflict.



### To continue to build

and maintain a strategic complex of collaborative partnerships in particular to develop local, national and inter-national links to support the development of a strategic approach to women's health in Northern Ireland.



### To capture & share

the learning from the work of Derry Well Women with women's health projects at home and abroad especially in post-conflict societies. To take a leadership role in the development of a programme of women's health research.



### To further refine the conceptual framework

and embed the theory and practice of co-producing in the work of Derry Well Women.



# “Women’s longer lives are not necessarily healthy lives”



Committee and Staff presenting Derry Well Women’s 34th Annual Report to its AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022 held in St Columb’s Park House.

**Front Row;** Left to Right Phil Mahon Vice Chairperson, Pauline Mc McClenaghan, Chairperson, Carrie Jain, Philomena Melaugh.

**Back Row Left to Right;** Sarah Kelly, Karen Meehan, Paula Barr, Susan Gibson Manager, Mary Diamond Secretary, Nuala Doherty.

# Vice Chairs Report

**It is my privilege and pleasure as Vice-Chair to present the Chair's Annual Report for the year ending March 2023 on behalf of Pauline McClenaghan, hoping that it reflects, to some degree, her own perceptions and conclusions as to the health and well-being of our organisation, Derry Well Women.**

A key issue in this year was the review and development of a Strategic Plan for the period 2023-26. In the context of significant political, economic, public health and cultural change taking place worldwide, Derry Well Women needed to reflect on its own ethos and core purpose within the local and regional context.

At this period of transition in society the mission of Derry Well Women directs us, firstly, to identify the holistic health needs of women of all ages in the Northwest of Ireland and, secondly, to engage collaboratively with our clients and a range of agencies and public bodies, in order to help deliver the required changes in health-care policy and practice we have identified. Our mission also behoves us to campaign robustly to effect such changes, whilst always adhering to the principles of equality, empowerment, participation and partnership.

Through the partnership approach of Cancer Connected Communities and the reports coming from our counselling service, we know that women are struggling with high levels of anxiety arising from Covid 19. The cost-of-living crisis, real difficulties in accessing healthcare and high levels of domestic abuse are also presenting factors.

The Strategic Plan, which has been named "Managing Transition", needs to take account of these new and unprecedented challenges which are posing untold threats to the quality of women's health. We recognise the urgent need for a N.I. Women's Health Strategy, alongside a Peri-Natal Strategy, and we will be working in close collaboration with our many partners to ensure these issues become a strategic priority for all of us in the coming period.

Derry Well Women's tried and tested social justice model of co-production, in which women cease to be passive clients and become active participants in their own healthcare, will always be at the heart of our

service delivery. To this end, staff in Cancer Connected Communities completed "Effective Listening for Effective Change". This training has also been recently requested by Primary Care Partners. Staff and frontline workers also participated in Cormac Russell's workshop "Asset-Based Community Development", helping them to recognise that the more power control and ownership people have over their own lives, the healthier and more prosperous they and their communities will become.

I would urge you all to become deeply acquainted with the detailed Aims and Objectives of "Managing Transition".

Partnership working continues to be a cornerstone of Derry Well Women practice, as new and innovative partnerships are being forged through the Cancer Connected Communities project, superbly managed by Deirdre O'Neill and Jennifer Turner.

**Our work is dependent  
on all of our funders  
and we thank them  
for their continued  
support.**

A recent contract review with WHSCT resulted in a contract uplift extension. The contract negotiators were impressed by the diversity of Derry Well Women's work and our continuity of service throughout the Covid Pandemic.

We will, of course, continue to strive to meet our funders' requirements, but our relevance and effectiveness will ultimately be assessed by how well we deliver our services to those who need them most, and how we, as a board, position ourselves to find the resources to meet those needs.

Our manager, Susan Gibson, has always adopted a painstaking and persistent approach to this aspect of her management role. No stone is left unturned in the search for resources, no sum is too small, and every single penny finds an appropriate home. Susan is assisted in the management of finances by Fiona Walker and all operate under the gimlet eye of our treasurer, Sinead Callan.

Oonagh Butler and Patricia Villa both play pivotal roles in the day-to-day running of the Centre, whilst Yvonne O'Doherty and Patricia McAdams uphold the highest standards of care for the children attending the creche. The highly valued Counselling Service led by Co-ordinator Ann McDonald, continues to receive positive feedback, despite increases in the volume and intensity of demand.

We would have been remiss in our duties had we not, throughout the year, been engaged in the vital business of succession-planning. We acknowledge the pressing need to recruit younger committee members and staff who possess levels of skills and knowledge that will be required to sustain all our services into the future.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to my fellow committee members, who not only religiously attend monthly meetings but who also make themselves available to provide help and advice, whether that be for programme delivery, strategic planning, or staff support through line management.

Derry Well Women is a unique organisation which, I have no doubt, will continue, through its social justice model of engagement, to honour its commitment to the health and well-being of women and girls in the Northwest of Ireland well into the future.

Thank you.

*Phil Mahon*

**Phil Mahon**  
Vice Chairperson.





# Secretary's Report

**I am delighted to present this year's company's secretary report. As always it has been a pleasure to work with a team of dedicated and hardworking women to ensure a stable committee oversight of the powerful work of Derry Well Women.**

The Derry Well Women Board has met via zoom eight times this year and twice in person.

Dr Pauline Mc Clenaghan is stepping down as Chairperson at this AGM and the position will be taken up by our current Vice Chairperson Phil Mahon.

On behalf of my colleagues on the committee, we thank Pauline for her dedication and commitment over the last three years. She has been an inspirational leader to all the board members and staff of the Centre, and we greatly appreciate her dedication and wisdom.

Two of our long-standing Committee Members are retiring at this AGM, Philomena Melaugh and Carrie Jain. They will be greatly missed by all at Derry Well Women. We would like to thank them both for their long-standing contribution, diligence, inspirational leadership, wise counsel and friendship to all. We wish them good health and happiness in this next chapter of their lives. We sincerely hope that we will maintain links with each of you going forward into the future.

Board Members are elected to serve for a period of up to three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting. Karen Meehan and Pauline Mc Clenaghan are required to step down by rotation, but I am delighted to say they are both putting themselves forward for re-election.



▲ Pictured at the launch of our new website

Derry Well Women's charity work inevitably focuses on women's health, health promotion, and health education in addition to addressing health inequalities. The Board aims to ensure that Derry Well Women has the highest level of good governance and that all staff receive appropriate leadership, support and supervision to most effectively carry out its mission. It also ensures that our service users are listened to and have opportunities to actively participate in shaping the services we provide.

To enable us to do this work effectively it is important that the Board has a range of skills and experiences which currently includes healthcare, childcare, health visiting, nursing, mental health, counselling, accountancy, the law, education, policy development, child development and community development.

**We also continue to undertake training aimed at raising and expanding the committee's skill base.**



This year, Derry Well Women developed its Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2026.

The specific responsibilities of the board are to.

- Formulate policies and maintain an overview of organizational direction.
- Set strategic aims and objectives.
- Provide leadership monitoring and support to facilitate the implementation of aims and objectives together with corporate policies.
- Provide a line of accountability for staff, casual staff and volunteers.
- Ensure good governance and quality assurance.

In maintaining financial stability in 2022/2023 the Board primarily focused on the applications to grant making trusts and attracting charitable giving.

The Board would like to thank Susan Gibson our Manager for her immense contribution to the success of these applications. This has ensured there has been minimal impact on the financial stability of the organization and strengthens our ability and capacity to deliver on our stated aims for the next three years.

This year the committee reviewed and updated the following policies.

- Safeguarding our Children Policy.
- Loan Worker Policy.
- Protection from Abuse Policy.
- Protect Life Policy.
- All Creche Specific Policies.
- Data Protection Policy.
- Management Committee Governance.

I would like to thank all my fellow Board members for their dedication, commitment and friendship.

On behalf of the Board, I would also like to thank all our staff, counsellors and facilitators who work so hard and diligently delivering psychological, social, physical and emotional support to the many women and children who use our services.

Thank you.



**Mary Diamond**  
Company Secretary



# Treasurer's Report

**I am delighted to once again present the financial position of Derry Well Women for 2022/23. After a challenging couple of years navigating the impacts of the pandemic, Derry Well Women has focussed on raising additional funds through grant making trusts and charitable giving to supplement our core contracts to meet the financial needs of the organisation.**

This year, following a contract review, funding from the Western Health and Social Care Trust has been uplifted to £130.8k to cover core running costs. Our contract with the Victim and Survivors Service was also uplifted to £112.8k to support counselling, complementary therapies and social support programmes. Funding of £169.3k was received in year from The National Lottery Community Fund for the Cancer Connected Communities Partnership led by Derry Well Women to support people in the Western Trust affected by cancer. Derry Well Women also maintained its funding from Children In Need (£21k) for the post of Childcare Co-ordinator, and the creche was further supported by funding of £15k from the Pathways Fund through Early Years towards the Creche Assistant's post.

In relation to fundraising activities, we were successful in securing £6.6k from WHSCT Talking Therapies to deliver additional counselling services whilst the Rosa Women's Thrive Fund provided £12.2k towards salary, programme costs and organisational development. A further £19.5k was received from The Trusthouse Foundation towards child and parenting programmes and core costs. Contributions were greatly appreciated from charitable Trusts Souter Trust, Halifax Foundation, Danske Bank, Enkalon. Foundation, Thompson Trust, Screwfix, Department of Health through CFNI, Esmee Mitchell Trust the SJP Foundation and WHSCT Positive Ageing to support and adapt Derry Well Women services and programmes during 2022/23.

The above contracts, funding and other contributions brought our total income for 2022/23 to £510.7k.

Expenditure in 2022/23 was £534k, a significant increase

of £173.8k from last year. This mainly reflects the staffing and programme costs associated with the Cancer Connected Communities programme, an increased level of activity resulting in higher programme costs as well as much needed maintenance to the roof and the outside play area. The main areas of expenditure continue to be wages, salaries and staffing costs (£244.9 k), programme and facilitation costs (£216.5k), rent (£13.9k) and running costs and overheads which, although were slightly higher than last year, remained in line with budget. Based on this, Derry Well Women recorded a loss of £23.3k.

Our current operating reserves are within bounds for the recommended levels of cash on hand, but going forward we must further concentrate on our fundraising activities and review and rationalise our programmes and services were appropriate to reduce our losses and ensure there has is minimal impact on the financial stability of the organisation. We must also be mindful of the cost-of-living crisis and its impact on the organisation, with rising costs, depreciating income, and its potential effect on charitable donations.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the role of the Financial Administrator in maintaining the day to day administration of the financial activities of the organisation, the dedicated staff and Board, and the strong leadership of Susan in ensuring that robust financial procedures and controls are in place.

*Sinead Callan*

**Sinead Callan**

Treasurer Derry Well Women





# Derry Well Women's 34th AGM



# Managers Report

## Service Delivery 2022/2023

In 2022/2023 we delivered services both in house and outreach to 2609 women and children.

These women were expectant mums, young mothers, young women, older women, carers, women living with domestic abuse, Post Natal Depression, trauma, depression, anxiety, loss and bereavement, relationship issues and anxiety and depression in the aftermath of the Coronavirus pandemic. These were women living with long covid, living with chronic illness, living with a cancer diagnosis. Many were in poverty and facing a year of further hardships.

All were committed to their own health and well-being as well as that of their children and family and viewed Derry Well Women as a lifeline which promoted their health and well – being, put them and their children first and supported them to cope, to hope to thrive.

This is borne out in the testimonials quoted throughout and at the end of this report.

We used a holistic approach to address all dimensions of women and children's well -being and considered all determinants on women's health medicine management, diet, physical activity, risk avoidance, preventative measures, lifestyle and activity management, social participation and wellness as well as considering external factors including housing and money management etc.

### Supporting Women and Children

Derry Well Women Creche provides a safe, welcoming, inclusive, diverse environment focusing on children's mental health ensuring their physical, social, emotional, cognitive and motor development through planned activities and free play in a fun environment with stimulating resources and areas helping the children with social interaction, a sense of belonging and self-esteem, supporting mums enabling strong mother/child relationships.

*Susan Gibson*

**Susan Gibson**

General Manager Derry Well Women

### Crèche Activities

We supported children's development through planned sessions of group activities, free play and themed activities such as sensory play. We purchased indoor and outdoor resources including sensory resources, sensory tent, sensory lighting, construction area items, large hard plastic house, ball run, dance scarves, sensory buddy, sensory chewable, bubble machine. Also purchased was a range of new baby resources including soft black and white floor tiles, two baby bouncers, Baby gym and Tummy time mat.

Activities such as messy play enabled free expression, for example, floor painting, themed tuff trays, water play. Sand play is always available along with painting easel. It has been observed that children seem to have developed a range of sensory issues post covid. Ranging from touch, mess, noise. Staff observed many children were not playing with the sand, water or playdough and paint. Staff observed prior to covid messy activities, sand





and water were the most sought activities by children. Staff made these activities available during each session, never forcing children to participate in the messy/ sensory play. Children like to learn from other children and the mixed age group creche promotes this. Children are encouraged to show their artwork to their peers and staff, staff respond praising, clapping, giving the individual a sense of pride, belonging and boosts their self-esteem. Children are encouraged during story time to tell a story from the pictures. Rhyme time with visual aids and props along with our interactive story wall is part of our daily room plan and takes place after snack. These activities help children develop their speech, language and communication, self-thinking, imagination and promotes a sense of belonging and social interaction.

### Improving the Environment.

The setting has been changed to a brighter, stimulating welcoming environment, with resources and visual displays throughout the setting for example the family wall displaying pictures of children's family and themselves, help children understand families are diverse, of different sizes, different members, and communities. With the help of the children an inclusion wall display was put up and is used as a visual aid talking point.



Staff have developed a Global Warming and Climate change wall display as a visual aid for children to understand, staff encourage children to talk and ask open ended questions relating to simple things we can do to help change climate change. Children helped create their "All about me book" which is kept in the story corner. Children love seeing themselves in photos and this helps build their self-esteem and sense of belonging. Photos of children taking part in activities are displayed throughout the setting. Photos are emailed confidentially to parents through email, so they can see what their child is doing at Creche this enabled parents to recognise activities their child is able to do which encourages extended home learning and family

bonding. Free play is encouraged in different areas of the setting for example the home corner can be a shop, a dentist, a hospital, a vet, staff change the home corner theme based on observing individual children's likes. Our construction area promotes hand eye coordination and self-thinking and social interaction, with large wooden blocks, foam blocks, wooden hospital, wooden garage, hoop stand, train track and tools. The baby corner contains treasure baskets, floor resources, black n white tummy time mat and soft floor tiles, it is stimulating and has low level beams enabling children to pull themselves up, older children are encouraged to interact with the babies, babies who have begun to get themselves into the sitting position take part in snack time secured in strapped low level seating, the seating is also used so they can join in on table top play. Children have access to outdoor play with fun stimulating inclusive resources, for example, trikes, three wheeled scooters, slide, tunnel, mud kitchen, hula hoops and planting in trays, outdoor play is closely supervised by staff. Staff promote taking turns and sharing through planned activities, supervision, resources and encouragement. Staff plan activities and the purchase of new resources through observations and children's likes and abilities. Staff work in close partnership with mums who are the primary caregivers and know their child best Mums and siblings take part in outings and fun days enabling them to interact with their child Activities were planned to be inclusive and age appropriate. We celebrate Cultural occasions through wall displays and visual aids. Children pictures are placed on the birthday wall and peers are encouraged to sing 'Happy birthday' to the birthday child.

With funding secured from Danske Bank and BBC Children in Need the outdoor play area has been transformed with new surfacing creating a safer, flat play space, the fence has been painted to look like large colouring pencils and a new outdoor blackboard was attached to fence, children and mums loved the new outdoor space, mums stated "you would not think it was the same area".

### Respite

A much valued and sought after service for impoverished, vulnerable children and mothers. We have developed a waiting list and each child gets a six-week session, if staff feel a child could benefit from further sessions, the child will be placed back on the waiting list.

#### Example 1

**Request from a mum,** Mum attended the postnatal depression programme within the service, Mum had twins ages 30 months and a baby aged two months, Our setting operates an open door policy for mums to speak with staff, Mum disclosed she was struggling and felt she was having no time to do simple tasks or have a little "Me Time", she was feeling overwhelmed and had not much in the way of family support or friends she could rely upon. We assured her we would support her with two Respite



(Little Explorers) sessions per week, one morning and one afternoon. Mum became so overwhelmed she cried. Mum has also returned to the postnatal depression programme and has participated in another wellbeing programme.

Due to demand and waiting list we extended our respite in early June to

6 children x 2 morning sessions per week

6 children x 2 afternoon sessions per week

With child intake rotating every 6 weeks, due to the high demand, mum can re- refer if she feels she and her child need more support. Sessions are delivered within the crèche, which is a safe, inclusive, welcoming, nurturing environment. Staff are welcoming, friendly, and approachable and operate an open-door policy, understanding the family's needs and concerns, treating them with respect and confidentiality. Staff support families to the best of their ability and signpost parents to other agencies if they require additional support. Sessions are delivered indoor and outdoor with family outings, planned session outings of the local area and use of local resources, sessions and outings are planned to be inclusive for all abilities and age.

Our creche has been supported with 'Books Trust' this year where they provided Treasure book packs for all the children attending the service, they also provide a lot of free downloadable resources online.

A healthy snack is provided with fruit and water, or milk and sugar free yoghurt and all allergies are recorded and displayed. Snack time is made fun with Rhyme and props interacting with the story wall.

Sessions are planned to help with children's social/ emotional, physical, cognitive and motor development with a range of activities and stimulating resources encouraging peer interaction, a sense of belonging and pride, freedom to express themselves, self-esteem, speech and language/communication and empathy towards others. All activities are inclusive and planned around the children's likes. Activities include story & rhyme, music & movement, messy play, sensory play, arts and crafts, problem solving and free play. The world around us and nature. The room is planned in areas such as home corner, construction area, shop area, soft play/ sensory, tabletop play, art and messy play area, small world area and role play/dress up and calming and story area. Tuff trays are used for sensory play and themes are changed regular, e.g. sand, fake grass, gulp, jelly, child friendly foam, animals and tractors, cars and trucks, buckets and spades. Children enjoyed outdoor play with our recently purchased outdoor playhouse, ball run, and different sized balls stimulating hand/eye coordination, sensory garden, slide, trikes, slide, see-saw and pushchairs. Children gained stronger social connections, communication, confidence, life skills, and resilience and family relations.



## Summer Scheme

Three x one-week sessions in July/August for 0–4-year-olds, this keeps contact with the families and support socially for the children as programmes during the summer are very limited for this age group within the area. Sessions were planned indoor and outdoor. Outings to local parks and nature trails, family outings were planned, and risk assessed. Indoor sessions included messy play, arts, free play. Story days took place where a mum was invited into tell a story from a book or about her culture. We also included sensory days, role play, group activities, problem solving, and treasure hunts with magnifying glasses searching for bugs and hidden treasure. Sand/water play was included in everyday sensory. Mums, children and staff enjoyed a teddy bears picnics for one of our family outings to coincide with the Crafty Teddies workshop where the mums and children made their own special bear. Special days were celebrated and visually displayed. All activities were planned to be inclusive and centred on children's developmental needs and speech and communication. Family outings enabled families from impoverished circumstances to have a fun family outing during the summer holidays.

## Summer Scheme and Outings

- **30 Summer Scheme sessions** 3 x 1 week sessions July/children per session
- **Family outing via bus to Art Space 2 Campsie/Eglington** 29-06-22,
- **Family outing via bus to Art Space 2 Campsie/Eglington** 30-06-22, 2 staff,
- **Crafty Teddy Workshop** 12-07-22,
- **Teddy bears picnic** 14-07-22, 2
- **Family outing to Bounce House** 10-08-22.
- **Halloween Party** 29-10-22
- **Christmas Party** 14-12-22

One hundred and seventy-seven (**177**) parents and children attended these outings.

In total **94** children attended the creche this year participated and benefitted from the services and programmes we offered this year.

## Stay and Play Programme

We delivered seven x 4 week Stay and Play Programmes to 99 Mums and their children.

These four-week programmes gave parents the opportunity to explore messy/sensory play with their child and gain ideas of what can be done at home to further develop play skills and begin to interact with other children.

The programme made parents aware of how to develop their child's speech through concepts such as: 'commentating' when their child is playing, rather than asking lots of questions. Parents and children explored music and rhymes, through song and instruments.

Parents and children had fun exploring physical play through using a variety of items available in the home, therefore, extending play to items which are low cost or free.

## Mother and Baby Swim Programme

We ran 11 X 6 Week Mother and Baby Swim programmes for 149 mums and their babies.

This was a first for us and demand was enormous with 60 Mums requesting to join.

They aimed to remove any fears parent or child may have in water and create an atmosphere of safety and fun.

The programme was delivered by a qualified and Access NI checked instructor and we hired our local Templemore Sports Complex. All participating babies had received their baby vaccinations.

The programmes enabled parents to support their baby in water confidence and build on skills for gradual child led submersion.



## Breastfeeding Support Group

We delivered 41 sessions to 20 breastfeeding mums.

Facilitated by a health visitor this group provides invaluable practical support and peer support to mums.

### Baby Massage and Baby Reflexology

We ran 14 programmes x 4 weeks x 1 hour Baby Massage Programmes for 109 mothers with their babies and 14 programmes x 1 hour Baby Reflexology for 103 mothers with their babies.

These programmes helped increase long term bonding between mother and child as well as helping with baby's digestive issues such as colic, reflux and constipation.





### Ante Natal Classes

We ran 19 x 3 weeks antenatal classes.

The programmes aimed to support first time parents through pregnancy, and prepare them for labour, birth and the early days of baby's life. It was an opportunity for pregnant mothers and their partners to gain knowledge of health in pregnancy and parent education. This was a particularly well taken up service as access to prenatal support was seriously diminished over this period due to coronavirus.

Three hundred and fifty four (354) parents were supported to:

Think about who is there for support; complete a birth plan; become aware of various birth positions; recognise the stages and signs of labour; have knowledge of pain relief options available; prepare for getting to know your baby; discuss feeding options and become aware of responsive feeding; discuss benefits and concerns regarding breastfeeding.



### Post Natal Depression Programme (Minding Mammy).

We delivered 6 x 6-week programmes

Thirty (30) mums have been attending this group facilitated by a qualified health visitor.

Paediatric First Aid

Two sessions for 20 mums was in response to demand for mothers struggling to access services and who wanted support in handling minor ailments at home for their children.

**Table to demonstrate levels of activity associated with Supporting Women and Children 2022/2023**

Intervention	Number of sessions per year		Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women/children
Mother and Baby Swim	11 x 6-week programmes	66	14	149
Baby Massage	14 x 4-week Programmes	56	7	109
Attachment Programmes	14 x 4-week Programmes	56	7	103
Minding Mammy Group	6 x 6 week sessions	36	6	30
Paediatric First Aid	2 sessions	2	20	20
Nurturing Programme	1 x 1 sessions	1	12	16
Family Time	5 Family Events	5	35	177
Ante Natal Classes	19 x 3 weeks programmes	57	25	354
Crèche	Daily Sessions	382	6	94
Stay and Play	7 x 4-week programmes	28	14	99
Breast Feeding Support Group	41 x Weekly sessions	41	3	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>730</b>		<b>1171</b>



## 8.2 Gender Specific Interventions

There is much evidence to indicate the determining influence of women on family and community health status. We maintain and develop gender specific work which recognizes the role of women in terms of community well-being. We particularly focus on issues peculiar to women including PMS, endometriosis, perinatal support (both ante- and post-natal), miscarriage, menopause and sexual health.

### Menopause Clinic and Information Sessions

The menopause clinic continued to provide a monthly telephone clinic offering information, advice and support to women experiencing menopausal symptoms.

51 women were supported this year.

### CBT Programme for Women living through the Menopause.

One issue to emerge during the Covid 19 lockdown was increased loneliness, isolation and struggles to cope for women who were peri menopausal. Whilst Derry Well Women runs a monthly clinic and telephone support service it became obvious that the one-to-one support alone was not sufficient to meet the increasing demand. So, in addition to doubling our clinics we engaged Dr Sandra McNeill, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist to deliver a second CBT programme for menopausal women with the assistance of Audrey Parke Menopause Nurse and Derry Well Women Clinician. The programme ran for six weeks.

Each session introduced a new topic and built on what had been learnt during the week and in the previous session. Daily diary records were important to assess, how recommended changes participants had made were helping them. Homework was given each week and

participants were asked to make individual goals for each session of the treatment.

The programme addressed menopausal symptoms, the physiology and manifestation of hot flushes, managing night sweats, the role of thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Stress management, healthy lifestyle, problem-solving, relaxation and paced breathing with imagery and goal setting were also addressed.

This programme was attended by twelve (12) women.

### Sexual Health Awareness Schools Programme 2022.

1. St Catherines Strabane Primary School May 2022 4 sessions 63 children.
2. St Marys College Lower Sixth Health and Social Care Students on the uses and benefits of complementary therapies.

### Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement Counselling.

In 2022/2023 14 women were supported by our pregnancy loss and bereavement service.

All women are referred through the Childbirth and Pregnancy Loss Specialised Midwife with leaflets also available for women to access prior to discharge from hospital following a pregnancy or childbirth loss.

Women self-referred to Derry Well Women to seek counselling for a specific pregnancy or childbirth loss. The benefits that this service has provided these women have been simply invaluable in aiding their healing and recovery process. The support that women have received from Derry Well Women has enabled several of them to contemplate and even enter into any future pregnancies in a more positive state of mind thus reducing maternal anxiety which has been shown to positively impact birth outcomes.

**Table to demonstrate levels of activity associated with Gender Specific Interventions. 2022/2023**

Intervention	Number of sessions per year		Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women
Menopause Clinic	51 hours x Telephone and face to face Clinic	51	1	51
Menopause Talks	4 Talks	4	12	12
Menopause Management using CBT	4 x 2-hour sessions	4	12	12
Pregnancy Loss and Bereavement Counselling	58 Counselling Hours	58	1	14
Sexual Health Schools Programme	4 x 2-hour sessions	4	31	63
Cost of Living Resilience Programme	2 X Sessions	2	25	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>123</b>		<b>177</b>

## Cost of Living Resilience Programme.

We delivered a one-day Cost of Living Programme to 25 women.

The Cost-of-Living Resilience Workshop was delivered on Thursday 24th November 2022, in response to the cost-of-living crisis, to 20 participants and focused on Building Resilience in a Changing World by using taught techniques and methods to:

- Learn how to adapt and bounce back quickly when faced with challenges.
- Develop coping mechanisms on how to deal with stressful situations.
- Learn how to survive and thrive through these times.

Content of the Programme focused on 4 areas.

1. Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation
2. Self-Belief and Self-Confidence
3. Financial Wellbeing
4. Changing Habits and Behaviours

## Chronic Illness Management

Within this category we addressed Chronic Diseases (Cancer, Respiratory, Cardiovascular, Diabetes), Mental Health (treatment and prevention of Stress/Depression/Anxiety) and Accidents and Pain Management.

The provision made by Derry Well Women in respect of these issues is complementary to a range of other statutory and voluntary sector services available to women for prevention, detection and treatment of illnesses categorized under these three broad headings. Our specific interventions across each of the three causes of Mortality/Morbidity fall into five broad strands.

## Cancer Services

1. Our services provided women with the ability to maximise their wellbeing and to make the best possible choices for their own health and the health of their families during a time of uncertainty reduced access to health services and isolation and loneliness. Peer support is at the heart of all our programmes.

This year Derry Well Women delivered cancer counselling to 7 women new to this service. We delivered 3 Well Programmes to 40 women. We delivered 86 complementary therapy sessions to 45 women. 54 women are registered on our cancer support group with an average of 14 attending fortnightly.

## Mental Health & Wellbeing Programme

We also delivered a Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme for 10 women.

This was an 8-week course delivered to women living with and/or having had a cancer diagnosis.

The purpose of the programme was to help improve mental health and well-being.

Some of the topics covered included:

- Emotional Awareness – learning to identify and manage our emotions more effectively
- Living with change and Uncertainty
- Identifying Support
- Prioritizing our lives
- Relationships
- Mindfulness
- Aromatherapy
- Enrichment session
- Creative Expression: journaling, art, movement to music.

## Additional Activity Within Cancer Services Category under Cancer Connected Communities (for information only).



CANCER CONNECTED  
COMMUNITIES

### Project Background

Cancer Connected Communities is a partnership led by Derry Well Women with Action Cancer, Advice NW, Cancer Focus, Care for Cancer, Omagh and SWELL Enniskillen.

The partnership is dedicated to supporting people affected by cancer in the Western Trust area by connecting them to each other, to sources of support within their communities and to those who can make a difference to how and where they receive services.

It is a three-year project funded by a grant of £465k from the National Lottery Community Fund and it engages marginalised groups where cancer services are limited and where there are barriers to access relating to rurality, poverty, and fear.

Although they do not benefit from the funding the project also has the partnership of the WHSCT and Macmillan.

This programme will ensure cancer patients take the lead in creating a change agenda to integrate cancer care in the WHSCT using coproduction and an engagement model to connect people living with cancer across communities to each other and organisations with the capability to improve their lives. The project will engage marginalised groups where cancer services are limited and barriers exist due to rurality, exclusion, fear; deliver support programmes; listen to cancer programme

participants; set priorities for improved cancer services; directly articulate priorities to service planners to influence strategic change.

The Cancer Connected Communities Project is based on a four tier Model of engagement developed by Derry Well Women. The essence of the model is that those providing health and social care services (in this case community-based support services) listen to those they are caring for throughout the caring episodes.

**Tier One** - Provision of community programmes across this Trust area in which facilitators and care givers are gathering and recording knowledge based on client experience at the point of delivery.

**Tier Two** - Gathering Sessions were the partners and the Western Health and Social Care Trust bring together participants and facilitators to tell us what is being experienced and what is being heard to capture the common themes that would shape a change agenda.

**Tier Three** - Finally at tier three the partners meet with Trust representatives and commissioners and agree actions and commitments in respect of the main themes that will then be announced at a stage 4

**Tier Four** - At Tier Four Partners, participants, focus group members, health service providers and planners and other relevant agencies will attend a Commitment to Change Conference to address and make public their commitments. Commitments made will be recorded and action against each one will be monitored to assess progress which will be fed back to those who participated.

### Project Milestones: April 2022 – March 2023

#### Programme Delivery

As of March 2023, the Cancer Connected Communities West partnership has reached 1036 people currently living with cancer or affected by cancer. Across the Partnership there is a range of 16 interventions tailored to meet the needs of people living with cancer. The support provided to date includes 36 therapeutic programmes, 352 counselling sessions, 428 complementary therapy sessions, 58 specifically tailored welfare benefit support sessions and many others.

The profile of participants includes men and women aged 20 to 90 coming from Derry, Limavady, Omagh, Enniskillen and surrounding areas. We have people from largely rural areas, living with a disability, from single parent households; members of the LGBTQ+ community, the travelling community, Chinese, Indian and other ethnic groups.

All the participants have presented with a cancer diagnosis, including those currently living with cancer, are in remission or are at palliative or end of life stages. Types of cancer include breast, bowel, anal, thyroid, ovarian, Hodgkin's Lymphoma, prostate and brain.

#### Training:

**Effective Listening for Effecting Change (ELEC):** A 2-day bespoke training programme was designed and delivered in October 2022 for the facilitators, counsellors, complementary therapists, staff, and volunteers of the CCCW partnership. The purpose of the training was to support them in their roles to have informal conversations with a purpose, identify key trends and issues in cancer care and how to effectively record and feedback this information to influence change.



#### Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

workshop: Cormac Russell delivered a ABCD workshop at the Balmoral Hotel in Belfast on 3rd February 2023. This was attended by representatives from the CCCW partnership, as well as Macmillan, WHSCT, Compassionate Communities NI and Clarendon Medical Practice.





**Listening Ear:** Listening Ear training was delivered to WHSCT staff working within cancer services facilitated by Marina Sweeney in the MacMillan health and well being centre.



## Gathering Sessions

**Gathering Session 1:** The first Gathering Session was held in the Silver Birch Hotel Omagh on 22nd November 2022. This is where the themes and trends identified so far via our Programme Delivery phase were summarised and presented to the participants in attendance. The purpose of this event was to build consensus on these themes as well as identify new themes and suggest solutions or opportunities for improvement.

**Gathering Session 2:** The second Gathering Session was held on 28th April 2023 in The Waterfoot Hotel Derry and was focused on hearing the voice of the key Cancer Care Providers within the WHSCT including the Oncology teams, MDT leads, Nursing Staff, AHP staff, Primary Care, receptionist staff, community care staff etc.

**Negotiating Change:** This process was initiated in January 2023 and actions have already been taken to investigate current processes and design solutions.



## Evaluation

Fiona Boyle, of Fiona Boyle Associates, has been appointed as the Project Evaluator for Cancer Connected Communities West (CCCW). Fiona has begun a desk-based review of the project data, reports and milestones recorded to date and is in the process of scheduling 1-1 meetings with each of the CCCW partners in the coming weeks.

## Gathering Session & Negotiating Change

The most recent Gathering Session at The Waterfoot Hotel was aimed specifically at WHSCT staff working within cancer services. The event was attended by 66 representatives from areas within Primary Care, Department of Health, Strategic Planning Performance Group (SPPG), Macmillan, District Nursing, Consultants, Radiographers, Palliative Care Facilitators, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Northwest Cancer administration staff and many others. One staff member commented "feeling valued and listened to was a breath of fresh air".

On 29th June, Cancer Connected Communities West will host their third Gathering Session in Derry for service users with a specific focus on the experiences of those caring for cancer patients and their family members. The fourth Gathering Session will be hosted in Fermanagh to capture the experiences of those living in the southern end of the Western Trust.

From September onwards, CCCW will enter the Negotiating Change phase of the project. Following co-production principles, cancer patients, carers, family members and health professions working within cancer services will come together to prioritise the change requests raised at the four Gathering Sessions and engage in discussions with the service planners and providers responsible for delivering change within these areas.





### Gathering Session WHSCT cancer services staff – Evaluation

Out of the 66 attendees, 52 completed evaluation forms.

Evaluation	% (of completed forms)
Enjoyed the event	100%
Felt listened to at their table	100%
Felt the event improved their understanding of the CCCW project	100%
Would like to stay connected to the CCCW project	100%
Gained something from the event	99%



### Staff Member Quotes

“Feeling valued and listened to was a breath of fresh air.”

“Really love how community services are working together... making such a positive difference.”

“Meeting & interacting with so many who are often working independently from each other.”

“Great overview, excellent & exciting project. Great to see DOH/commissioner colleagues buying in.”

“The project has great benefits to offer the social work profession in terms of MDT working.”

“A great example of co-production.”

“Positivity from colleagues in a room who want to give best service possible to patients/families living with cancer.”

### Tables to demonstrate levels of activity associated with Mortality, Morbidity and Chronic Disease Management 2022/2023

Intervention	Number of sessions per year	Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women
Cancer Support Group	22x 2-hour sessions	22	14
Complementary Therapy Treatments	86 x 1-hour treatments	86	1
Mental Health and Well Being	9 weeks x 2 hours	9	10
Cancer Counselling	147 x counselling sessions	147	1
The Well Programme for Women Living with Cancer	3 x 10-week programmes	30	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>294</b>	<b>156</b>

## Managing Long Term Conditions

### Women Experiencing Long Covid

We delivered 74 sessions of gentle restorative yoga for 212 women living with Long Covid an increase of 83 women on last year.

These were women who continued to feel the debilitating effects of Covid for between twelve weeks and over a year beyond the initial illness.



The programmes were facilitated by a health care professional who herself is living with Long Covid.

Restorative Yoga aimed to provide:

- A supported, calm place for participants to relax and rest.
- Gentle breath awareness to support diaphragmatic breathing.
- Gentle seated or lying stretches specific for muscles which may be affected by Covid;
- Deep relaxation and rest in restorative yoga to reduce stress, improve fatigue levels, reduce pain and improve sleep quality.

- The following tables outline the percentage improvement across 25 participants in levels of fatigue, pain, breathlessness, sleep and anxiety levels.
- Results for fatigue, pain, breathlessness and sleep relate to all 25 assessments.
- Results for levels of reduction in anxiety related to only those ten.

### Endometriosis Support

The Endometriosis Support Group returned to in house meetings on the last Tuesday of the month. They had 10 two-hour sessions with 15 women registered onto the group.

This support group enabled endometriosis patients to share their experiences and help others with the condition. The group covered the following issues:

- Pain management
- Self-Care
- Nutrition
- Complementary therapies
- Emotional Support

*"I would love to discuss more on pain management and how to live with a chronic disease. I want us all to come together to make endo more aware to others and educating them exactly what it is and how to look out for signs and symptoms. I want the group to be something that feels safe and comfortable for us to share and not feel like we are being judged, and that's exactly why I love it."*

*"Endo has been a massive part of my life, I started symptoms at age 9, and only now at 34 have I come to accept it as being part of my life journey and not just my life. I will participate fully in any Awareness Raising, information giving any pro-action for younger girls to get a quicker diagnosis but for me simply having that two hours a month to come and have a cuppa, talk if I feel like it and listen to others has helped me enormously."*

**Table to demonstrate levels of activity associated with Managing Long Term Conditions 2022/2023**

Intervention	Number of sessions per year	Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women
Gentle Yoga for Long Covid	74 x 1 hour sessions	74	20
Introduction to Yoga	32 x 1.5hour sessions	32	10
Endometriosis Support Group	10 x 2-hour sessions	10	7
		<b>116</b>	<b>269</b>



## Mental Health and Well Being Services

Derry Well Women provides a range of transformative Mental Wellbeing Programmes and Counselling Services ensuring choice, graduated access from gentle to more challenging interventions with each intervention being strength, not deficit, based and focused on the person not the presenting problem. Derry Well Women's progress has been marked by efforts to define a "Woman Centred Approach" as an entity. All mental health improvement and well - being programmes returned in house this year.

### Counselling Service

We continue to offer counselling through telephone Zoom and face to face. 95% of women are now choosing a face-to-face service which is improving their social contact post covid.

This year we received 127 requests for generic



counselling. Eighty-Nine (89) women have received 998 sessions of generic counselling.

The issues presented included Relationships, Isolation and Loneliness, Domestic Abuse, Bereavement and Loss, Homelessness, Re-location, Employment Issues, Anxiety and Depression.

We are now operating with a team of fourteen counsellors of which eleven are accredited and we are currently recruiting to expand the team. Nine counsellors have completed a twelve-week training programme in an ACTO /BACP approved Certificate in Online Counselling and are now competent to work online.

### Psychological Hub Referrals 2022/2023

In April 2022 Derry Well Women was contracted by WHSCT to deliver counselling for women referred with mild to moderate depression from the Psychological Hub.

In 2022/2023 Derry Well Women received forty-nine referrals the majority of whom requested face to face counselling. Following the re-introduction of in-house counselling we provided 167 sessions of counselling to 47 clients living with mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

### Emotional Detox

Emotional Detox helps women understand the concept of an emotional detox and its benefits. It teaches how to take care of negative feelings and provides a road map for living a happy, fulfilled life. Women learn simple, powerful techniques for letting go of negative emotions and find out how to rid of fear and stay calm and confident.

22 women completed two x 8-week programmes.

#### Aims of the programme:

To introduce a way of bringing peace into our lives through non-violent communication.

To enable participants to discover the language of peaceful living.

To help women understand the concept of speaking peace as taught by Rosenberg.

#### Benefits of the Programme:

This programme was successful in that it encouraged individuals to look within for answers and listen to their body dialogue, recognize their unhealthy coping mechanisms, and replace them with more healthy ones. They learnt or developed skills in medication, mindfulness, body dialogue, connecting to the self and becoming more self-aware.

### Coping with Anxiety and Depression.

This course is designed to support women who may be experiencing depression or underlying anxiety. Its aim is to teach coping skills which women

affected by depression/anxiety can employ to help deal with the symptoms that affect them personally. Information regarding complementary therapies, diet and sleep is also given.

The facilitator also discusses the use of prescribed drugs.

10 women attended this 6-week course.

### Self Esteem

We delivered three x eight-week Self - Esteem programmes for 31 women.

The programme addressed self- efficacy, addictive relationships, self -care positive/negative self-talk and equipped participants with the necessary tools and skills to maintain and build good self

**Table to demonstrate levels of Activity Associated with Mental Health 2022/2023**

Intervention	Number of sessions per year		Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women
Coping with Anxiety and Depression	1 x 6-week programme	6	10	10
Emotional Detox	2x 8-week sessions	16	11	22
Self Esteem	3 x 8-week programmes	24	6	31
Yoga	35 classes	35	16	47
1 to 1 Counselling	998 counselling hours	998	1	89
1 to 1 listening ear	28 hours help line	28	1	17
Assessment Interviews	184x 1-hour assessments	184	1	184
Promoting Mental Health through Cycling	3 x 5-week Training Programmes	15	6	23
		<b>1306</b>		<b>423</b>

## Accident Prevention Young at Heart Group

The Young at Heart Group which has an enrolment of 54 women meets weekly.

Derry Well Women designed specific activities to reduce loneliness, social isolation and promote health and well-being for older women by reducing isolation, increasing social connection, uplifting mood and improving emotional health and well-being.

The activities delivered were co-designed with the participants and were based on the issues which were raised and included the following:

Chair Based Yoga funded by the WHSCT Positive Aging Grant.

## Podiatry Foot Clinic

147 women attended the monthly podiatry clinic

**Table to demonstrate levels of Activity Associated with Accident Prevention. 2022/2023**

Intervention	Number of sessions per year		Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women
Practical Supports in Later Life Keeping Young At Heart	3 x 10-week Programmes	30	30	55
Podiatry Foot Care Advice	147	147	1	147
		<b>177</b>		<b>202</b>



## Local Expressed Need

### Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Everyday Use

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is an eight-week course which is aimed at women from all backgrounds and all levels of education. The course is a psycho educational based course which means that it is not a therapy group as such. The main aim of the course is to provide participants with the skills to deal with their emotional and psychological problems through developing an awareness of how their cognitions affect their emotions and behaviour. Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) has been reported to be an effective treatment for anxiety disorders and depression in older adults, typically leading to reductions in worry, anxiety, and depressive symptoms (Gould et al., 2012).

24 Women attended CBT therapy this year.

#### 1. SingTonicity

'SingTonicity' is an 8-week programme using an innovative approach which was developed in Sweden. It acknowledges that the voice is a part of the human physicality, and it becomes small, lacking in confidence and even silent when we are traumatised or hurt or

prevented from speaking out. It is a non-threatening, powerful way of helping people connect with their feelings, find expression and develop their confidence. 68 women attended this year.

#### 2. Mindfulness

'Mindfulness' is a 8 week programme which aims to benefit each woman's emotional and physical health. Mindfulness is the practice of becoming more aware of the present moment rather than dwelling on the past or focusing on the future. This helps with stress management and to prevent rumination and negative thoughts. Mindful-based therapies have been reported to be effective treatments, even as an alternative to behavioural therapies (Ziegerska et al., 2009) and have been found effective to remove stress (Witkiewitz, Greenfield & Bowen, 2013).

15 women attended this programme which delivered via Zoom.

#### Sound Meditation Programme

Healing using the power of sound and vibration is one of the most ancient and oldest ways of healing practices in the world. There are many kinds of sound healing, but one of the most effective practised is Singing Bowl Therapy.



Singing Bowls have been used worldwide for healing, meditation purpose and deep breathing. This therapy is based on the belief that energy vibrates at different rates in the body. The vibration of the bowl can have profound effects on the mind, body and spirit promoting harmony within a person's body. The vibrations balance the right and left hemisphere of the brain which help restore your body's balance which in turn helps you heal.

16 women attended this 8-week programme.

### Journey to Inner Peace

Journey to Inner Peace is a programme that introduces an alternative way of managing unhelpful patterns of behaviour and negative thinking.

It will help turn around the alarming statistics of anger, violence and quiet desperation in our community / society and in their place, to plant the seeds of positive expectations, self – responsibility, higher self-esteem and to seed hope.

32 women attended over 2 x 8-week programmes.

### Stairways to Well Being

Stairways is a program that has been created to provide people within our communities with a toolkit to manage their mental and emotional well-being through a Holistic, person-centered approach.

We aim to guide people through the experience of the benefits of mindfulness and various Holistic therapies in order to be able deal with the everyday stresses of life in immediate and measurable ways.

Having completed the Stairways to Well-Being program participants will have learned different tools in which to evolve from old thinking habits and begin a journey of

awareness of themselves breaking free from old patterns of behaviour. Participants will have gained skills such as.

- The power of thought and effective thought management
- Accommodate specific practices into daily life for the purpose of replenishing, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.
- Self-love and personal boundaries
- Using skills such as mindfulness, meditation & sound healing, EFT (emotional freedom technique).
- Awareness of our chakras and auric field.
- Working with our angels
- To become more visible in the world and to recognise your own uniqueness.
- Rejuvenate your life and nurture playfulness, light-heartedness joy and fun.

16 women attended this 8-week programme.

### Actions For Happiness

Action for Happiness is an 8-week programme based on teaching people the ten keys to happier living based on the latest scientific research relating to happiness. The programme teaches a range of CBT techniques to help people be able to put the 10 key areas into practice in their own lives. The theory is based on the fact that people who are happy and fulfilled in their lives are content and not suffering from distress, anxiety or depression. If we can learn how to promote and apply happiness in our own lives, then the quality of our lives will improve.

30 women attended this 8-week programme

**Table to demonstrate levels of Activity Associated with Local Expressed Need. 2022/2023**

Intervention	Number of sessions per year		Average Attendance per session	Numbers of women
CBT for Everyday Use	3x 8 week sessions	24	6	24
Practitioners Training	2 sessions	2	10	10
Mindfulness	1 x 8 weeks	8	15	15
Journey to Inner Peace	2 x 8 weeks	16	12	32
SingTonicity	2 x 8weeks 1x 6 weeks	22	25	68
Actions For Happiness	1x 8 weeks	8	25	30
Stairway to Wellbeing	1x 8 weeks	8	16	16
Sound Meditation	1x 8 weeks	8	16	16
		<b>96</b>		<b>211</b>

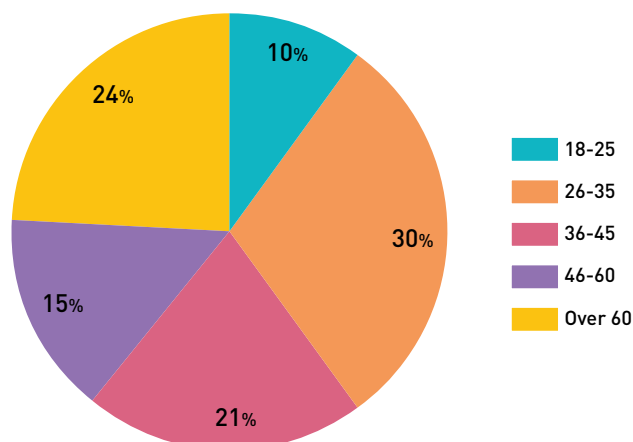
## Summary of Service Provision 2022/2023

Total Number of Programmes Interventions	Total Number of Sessions	Total Number of Women and Children
43	2842	2609

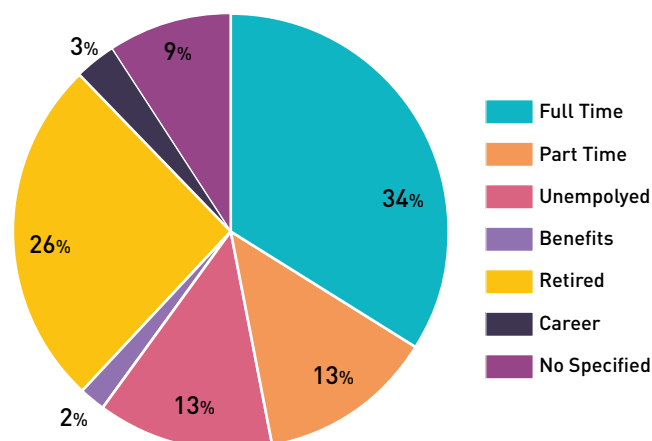
In 2022/2023, therefore, we delivered 43 interventions within the following range of activities to 2609 women and children through 2842 sessions of delivery.

- Women and Children Programmes.
- Childcare Services and Programmes including Crèche facilities.
- Emotional Health and Mental Well Being Programmes
- Cancer Programmes including the Well Programme, Complementary Therapies Support Group and counselling.
- Chronic Illness Management Programmes including Pain Management of Endometriosis.
- Gender Specific Programmes (Menopause Clinic, Post Natal Depression; Ante-natal & Sexual Health Education for schools)
- Counselling Services (Generic, Trauma, Cancer, Listening Ear, Pregnancy and Bereavement Loss)
- Practical Supports in Later Life a Health Improvement Programme for women 65-90 years
- Three Support Groups (Breastfeeding, Cancer, Endometriosis)
- Clinical and Screening Services
- Health and Well Being and Social Support Programmes for women directly affected by The Troubles including Counselling, Complementary Therapies, Social Support Programmes and Listening Ear
- Promoting Positive Mental Health Through Physical Activity (Cycling)
- Programmes for the frail elderly including Namaste.
- Programmes for women living with long covid

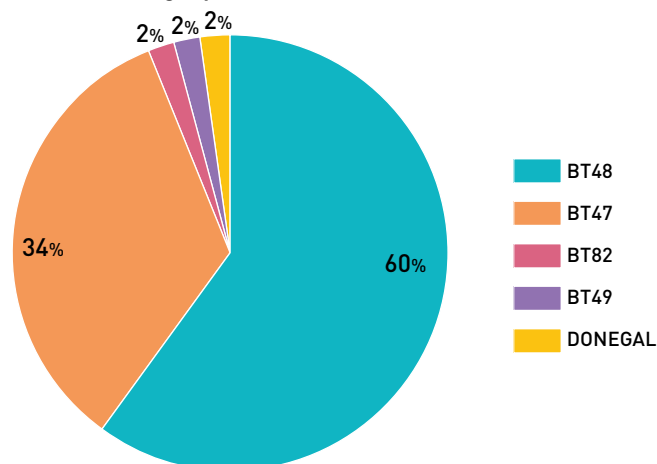
Participants Age



Employment Status



Geographical Area's of Users 2022/2023



## Testimonials

### Mother and Baby Programmes

#### Minding Mammy PND Group

"I never knew there were other mothers feeling the same way I was, and it was really comforting and made me feel sane".

"Made me more aware of anxiety and how to manage the symptoms".

"Never so glad that I decided to attend this group. I am a lot further on in my journey but didn't realise I still needed some support and understanding, from girls going through the exact same thing. I needed to know that others knew what I was going through. S has been amazing very good at her job so caring and considerate. Genuine woman that honestly wants women to be listened to and get better."

"I get excited to get to the group and talk and see how the other girls have got on that week too. It has given me great relief and satisfaction that I too am helping my peers in the group too".

"Being able to talk to understanding people. It was great to find different methods for relaxation and services for anxiety/depression. Loved this course, wish it was longer".

#### Breast Feeding Support Group

"I feel supported by other breastfeeding mothers. I enjoy time with the baby while my toddler is happy playing in the creche. It gives me something to look forward to. The company is important as motherhood can feel lonely at times. It is the only group in this City that provides creche for the older child which is vital for me because I do not have lots of family support nearby."

"Really enjoyed getting out of the house and meeting other mums, plus the advice from the health visitors was really useful."

"Provided me with a safe comfortable space to express milk and continue my breastfeeding journey. Opportunity to chat to other breastfeeding mums and access professional support and advice".

"Good to meet up and talk to other mums and share experiences. Feel less isolated".

"It has been very supportive and informative. It has been great talking to health visitors and other mums in a safe and supportive space".

#### Stay and Play

"A few hours where we didn't have to worry about heating the house, it's so difficult now".

"My child learned new play ideas and speech improvement – we learned to play with household item and imaginative play- we will play less with plastic toys".

### The Well Programme

"Patricia is a fantastic workshop leader. I have had so much fun. I will take these skills with me for life. Thank you to Derry Well Women for this course. I found other organisations very weak in comparison".

"Great charity never realized it done so much for women."

"I really feel every workplace should make courses like this mandatory as it would lead to lower sickness levels."

"Would just like to thank everyone at Derry Well Women centre. This was such a great course to be part of and have made some lovely friends that I never would have met only for this centre".

"Brilliant programme. I felt welcome from the time I entered the programme. There was flexibility when I was not able to attend due to sickness/treatment. Thank you, Patricia, for your kindness and going over and above for our group".

"It has made such a difference to my day-to-day life. My anxiety which was 10/10 at the start is now a comfortable 2, and I can manage it when it is bad".

"I feel a lot healthier from starting the Well programme and have received a lot of useful information and learnt so much. 3 things I will take away from the course are homeopathic remedies; meditation techniques and tools on how to handle stress and worrying situations."

### Cost of Living Resilience Workshop

"Good connection and ideas/resources for wellbeing".

"It felt like it was something beginning, a great energy with it and I'd love a follow up or day 2".

"It was more than a cost-of-living workshop, it addressed so much more".

"Excellent advice, strategies and support – very motivational. Could we have another workshop, 3 hours was not enough. It would be a huge benefit".

"I gained so much. Thank-you Derry Well Women for sourcing this course".

"Helpful tips on budgeting and money, positive thinking, encouragement, fun/laughter, new ways of thinking/approaching life".

"Better ways of controlling negative thoughts, good connection with group".

"Thank-you so much, I gained a few words/tools to help me understand my thoughts which I can help with my family also". Knowledge is power".

"Connection - This connection is so important.

Support - I need this support group.

Laughter - I forgot how much I love laughing".



## Care for Carers Day, 26.08.22

"A great day, yesterday, any woman going through or having had a cancer diagnoses the Derry Well Women has a lot of help and support for you".

"Thank you so much for today, it was amazing to get time for me".

## Mental Health and Well Being Programme. May – July 22

"I loved this class and really look forward to coming every week."

"Every topic covered taught me something new and encouraged me to challenge my thinking and look at alternative perspectives".

"Thank you so much Tracy I would do this programme over again and look forward to attending other programmes you facilitate".



## (Counselling Service 28.11.22)

"Derry Well Women is invaluable; my counsellor was superb and stayed with me emotionally at every stage of my changing emotions."

## Emotional Detox

"I am so happy I have completed this course as mostly I leave halfway through and then be angry at myself. Thank you for your support."

"This programme has taught me the value of listening to myself and setting boundaries."

"I am finally beginning to believe in myself and put the past behind me, thank you Tracy for being there."

## Sing Tonicity

"Connection and relationships are invaluable. I've learnt techniques for meditation, breathing and self-care. A very informative and enjoyable programme each class is very stimulating, and I love coming."

"Attending the group has had a positive effect on my mental health and well-being."

"I am improving in my emotional wellbeing after the loss of spouse thanks to my attendance at Tonicity, under the kind professional leadership of Siobhan. This group is a lifeline for us."

## Self Esteem

"I am doing your course for the second time as the first one helped me to get out of an abusive relationship – so thank you."

"I am now volunteering 3 times a week; thanks to the confidence I have gained on this course."

## Actions For Happiness

"My first ever experience of this type of course. So worthwhile and especially helpful at this time of my life. Last year my daughter died suddenly as a result of poor mental health. A traumatic experience for our whole family. The journey of grief and bereavement is a tough one. This course has helped me recognise essentially that 'Acceptance' come first so I can begin the journey. 'Thoughts are not facts' helps me when I find myself asking these questions that every parent must ask. "Could I have prevented my daughter's death, did I do enough, did I do the right things when she was ill". I keep thinking I am responsible for everyone else and now know I am not totally in control of all that happens."

"Overthinking' is my challenge. Thank you for the literature so I can read and re-read the useful information provided."

"This workshop has been more educational and beneficial to my personal growth and healing than any health professional I have sought help and assistance within the past. I not only have learned valuable skills and tools but making small adjustments to increase happiness in my life has helped me an indescribable amount."

"Over the past 8 weeks I have found this course fantastic. I have been equipped with lots of tools to help me with my day-to-day life. I am suffering with PTSD and I have found this course has helped me to move forward and deal with things in a more positive way. The content and delivery of the course has been outstanding. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

## Journey to Inner Peace

"Coming from a recent traumatic event in my life as well as from an experience of loss of twins and of intense grief, I have come to understand my strengths and the resources that I have to help me carry on."

"Learning the skills of 'Non-Violent Communication' has taught me a whole new way of processing and of communicating".

"This is certainly a journey of healing"

# Counselling Report 2022 to 2023

**Derry Well Women counsellors hear from clients first hand, how they have ignored and denied their traumatic experience because they didn't recognise it and did nothing about it for years. This year our counselling service received 355 requests through our counselling service. Unfortunately, our service was not appropriate for 2 of these referrals and so suitable services were sourced for them.**

Women were traumatized through various experiences and their main presentation in counselling were:

Anxiety, as a primary presentation for counselling, has more than doubled in the past 5 years and this is supported by The Mental Health Foundation which informs us that "the incidents of Anxiety have increased markedly in recent years, as a result of Covid-19 and the current Cost of living crisis which is provoking real fear and challenges for clients".

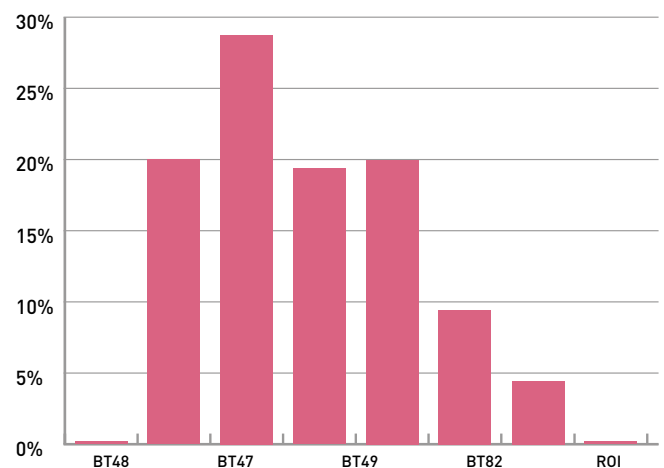
Anxiety puts pressure on relationships which increases stress which causes Anxiety and so we can see the vicious circle.

Relationship breakdown, through Addiction, Gambling, and debt and/or Domestic Abuse, has resulted in several women losing their home and re-locating. Derry Well Women has become their safe space to explore their experience and build resilience and confidence to move forward.

"Trauma is perhaps the most avoided, ignored, belittled, denied, misunderstood and untreated cause of human suffering."

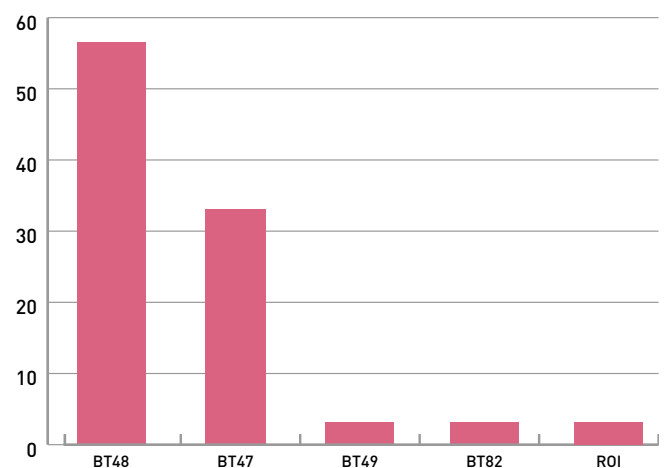
- Dr Peter Levine

Client Age Range



We note that there are now more younger women, in the 30's, engaging in counselling than 5 years ago when the highest percentage of clients were in their 50's.

Demographic Areas



The demographic area has not changed in the past 5 years.

We appreciate recommendations and sign posting made by previous clients as well as other professionals including GPs, Dentists, Psychotherapists, Mental Health Practitioners, Health Visitors, Social Workers, Counselling Tutors, Solicitors and Support Workers.

Other organisations directed women to our services this year:

Action Cancer, Altnagelvin Hospital, Autism Society, Aware Defeat Depression, City Hospital Belfast, Cunamh, Dove House, Foyle Women's Aid, Lifeline, Management Committee Members, Mind Yourself, RNIB, RNID, The Waterside Women's Centre, Samaritans, Sure Start, Victim Support, Wave, Zest.

Our team of 14 counsellors continue to engage in Trauma Training offered through the VSS, Action Trauma and the Clear Project and on-line training with world renowned professionals to ensure their skills and knowledge are current and relevant to client needs so that clients can understand their traumatic experience and reduce their suffering.

Some counsellors have also engaged in other training:

- Petal's Training for Child and Pregnancy Loss
- Understanding Palliative and End of Life Care
- Hope Matters

#### Some clients provided feedback on how Counselling helped:

**"I am less stressed because I've been able to share my problems".**

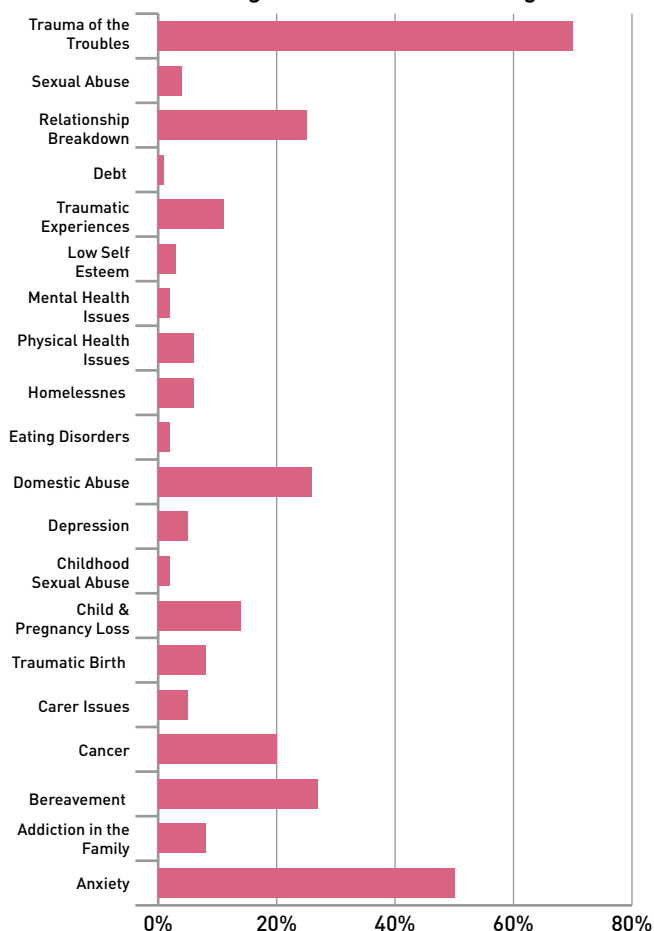
**"I have learnt about me, discovering who I am and loving myself".**

**"I am feeling much more confident and happier in general".**

**"I now accept my anxiety and recognise that it is not always a negative trait".**

**"It has helped me process what happened and now I feel stronger and more capable of coping with everyday life".**

#### Presenting Issues for Counselling



*Ann McDonald*  
**Ann McDonald**  
 Counselling Coordinator





# Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)  
For the year ended 31st March 2023

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2023 Total	2022 Total
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Incoming resources from generating funds:					
Voluntary income	2	7,686	-	7,686	15,444
Investment income	3	11	-	11	-
Incoming resources from charitable activities	4	1,000	502,004	503,004	340,114
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<u>8,697</u>	<u>502,004</u>	<u>510,701</u>	<u>355,558</u>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Costs of generating funds:					
Charitable Activities	5	21,297	508,803	530,100	356,372
Governance costs	5	-	3,913	3,913	3,840
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<u>21,297</u>	<u>512,716</u>	<u>534,013</u>	<u>360,212</u>
<b>Net incoming (outgoing) resources for the year</b>	13	(12,600)	(10,712)	(23,312)	(4,654)
Transfer of Funds		(8,339)	8,339	-	-
		<u>(20,939)</u>	<u>(2,373)</u>	<u>(23,312)</u>	<u>(4,654)</u>
Total funds brought forward		<u>191,743</u>	<u>7,277</u>	<u>199,020</u>	<u>203,674</u>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<u>170,804</u>	<u>4,904</u>	<u>175,708</u>	<u>199,020</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

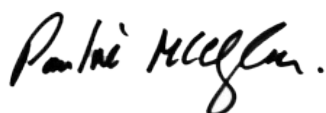
All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

# Balance Sheet

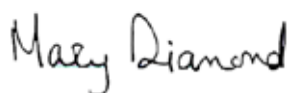
as at 31st March 2023

		2023		2022	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	9		147,050		152,570
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	10	6,108		1,854	
Cash at bank and in hand		154,070		174,664	
		<u>160,178</u>		<u>176,518</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	11	<u>(131,520)</u>		<u>(130,068)</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>28,658</u>		<u>46,450</u>
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>175,708</u>		<u>199,020</u>
<b>Funds</b>	12				
Restricted income funds	12		4,904		7,277
Unrestricted income funds	12		<u>170,804</u>		<u>191,743</u>
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>175,708</u>		<u>199,020</u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board 1 June 2023 and signed on its behalf by



**Pauline McClenaghan**  
Director



**Mary Diamond**  
Director

**Company Number: NI022926**

# Derry Well Women Team

## 2022 - 2023

### Committee

Pauline Mc Clenaghan (Chair)  
Mary Diamond (Secretary)  
Sinead Callan (Treasurer)  
Philomena Melaugh  
Nuala Doherty  
Phil Mahon  
Grainne Mc Laughlin  
Sarah Kelly  
Tara Boyle  
Karen Meehan  
Paula Barr  
Carrie Jain

### Staff

Susan Gibson  
Ann Mc Donald  
Patricia Villa  
Patricia McAdams  
Yvonne O Doherty  
Fiona Walker  
Oonagh Butler  
Deirdre O'Neill  
Jennifer Turner

### Clinical Team

Audrey Parke  
Nigel Nutt

### Generic Counselling Team

Ann McDonald  
Majella McWilliams  
Moira Smith  
Anne Flanagan  
Tracy Harrison  
Madeline Callaghan  
Marie Clare Murphy  
Ellen Factor  
Sharon Laird  
Karen Mc Gillion  
Valerie Long  
Jeanette Mc Cole  
Cora Mc Laughlin  
Claire Kent  
Francesca Pagliari

### Cancer Counselling and Cancer Complementary Therapy Team

Mary Diamond  
Tracey Harrison  
Anne Flanagan  
Geraldine Duddy  
Patricia Swann  
Brigean Byrne  
Nolene Mc Cauley

### Support Group Facilitators

Mary Diamond  
Tracey Harrison  
Sinead Mc Daid  
Deirdre O'Hara

### Tutors & Facilitators

Siobhan Heaney  
Marie Hone  
Anne Browne  
Marina Sweeney  
Patricia Swann  
Aileen Mulheron  
Karen Baldwin  
Deirdre O'Hara  
Tracey Harrison  
Orla O'Brien  
Dawn Bradley  
Philomena Mc Dermott  
Sandra Mc Neill

### Crèche Volunteers

Michelle Kennedy  
Catherine Doherty

### Complementary Therapists

Brigean Byrne  
Marie Hone  
Ellen Hastings  
Cathy Cregan  
Rose Mc Cartney  
Patricia Swann  
Nolene McAuley  
Jean Mc Cafferty  
Shiela Mc Corkell  
Elaine Carlin  
Joan Friel  
Jennifer Mc Clements  
Caroline Harkin.

### Derry Well Women

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E: [info@derrywellwoman.org](mailto:info@derrywellwoman.org)  
[www.derrywellwoman.org](http://www.derrywellwoman.org)



The Esme Mitchell  
Trust



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E. [info@derrywellwoman.org](mailto:info@derrywellwoman.org)

Charity No.: NIC 101247  
LLC: NI 22926

[www.derrywellwoman.org](http://www.derrywellwoman.org)

