

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: NI661550

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: NIC107581

Informing Choices NI (Trading as ICNI) Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2024

Informing Choices NI (Trading as ICNI) Ltd

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

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Informing Choices NI (Trading as ICNI) Ltd

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Informing Choices NI (Trading as ICNI) Ltd	
Charity registration number	NIC107581	
Company registration number	NI661550	
Principal office and registered office	3rd Floor Ascot House 24-31 Shaftesbury Square Belfast BT2 7DB United Kingdom	
The trustees	Ms C Bailey	(Resigned 15 November 2023)
	Ms G Clarke	(Resigned 31 August 2023)
	Ms M Crawford	
	Ms G McCormick	(Resigned 31 August 2023)
	Dr A Simpson	
	Mr R Gowdy	
Independent examiner	Dr S McDermott	
	Mr L Allamby	(Appointed 15 November 2023)
	Paul Leathem FCA	
	Muir & Addy Chartered Accountants	
	Muir Building	
	427 Hollywood Road	
	Belfast	
	BT4 2LT	

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The organisation is a company limited by guarantee with charity status. It was incorporated on 20 May 2019 following the closure of the Family Planning Association (FPA). Through their Board of Trustees and staff team they hold much of the history associated with FPA in Northern Ireland (FPA NI) and the role it played in contributing to the improvement and change in societal attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health. This work continues and evolves through Informing Choices NI (ICNI).

The company is governed under its Articles of Association which established the objects and powers of the company. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance and management *(continued)*

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association the number of trustees shall not be less than five nor more than nine persons appointed by the board. The initial term of office will be two terms of three years. Upon satisfactory completion of two terms Trustees are eligible for one further term of up to three years at the Board's request.

The trustees of the company have a mix of skills. In the event of particular skills being lost due to retirement or resignation, suitable individuals are approached to offer themselves for appointment as trustees.

Trustee induction and training

Most new trustees are already familiar with the work of the charity. New trustees are encouraged to attend suitable training courses to familiarise themselves with both the work of the charity and their responsibilities as directors.

Risk management

The trustees have carried out a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and where appropriate have put in place systems and controls to mitigate the effects of those risks.

Key management

During the year in review the day to day running of ICNI was overseen by the CEO in conjunction with a Senior Management Team reporting to the Board of Trustees.

Objectives and activities

ICNI aim to champion informed choices around sex, sexuality and reproductive health and emotional wellbeing.

We value integrity, equality and diversity as well as open and honest communication and are committed to providing high quality standards and innovative practices in everything we do.

We are committed to delivering the above through advocacy, counselling, education, information and training.

Informing Choices NI (Trading as ICNI) Ltd

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance

Strategic goal one - Improve the quality, consistency and accessibility of ICNI's services so we can continue to support and serve the diverse society in which we live

In 2023/24 our specialist pregnancy counselling service provided 423 sessions, representing an 29% increase compared to the previous financial year. Of these 374 were for post pregnancy counselling and 57 for pregnancy choices counselling. Our counselling service continues to show an above average attendance rate at 88% and clinical outcomes and routine evaluation reported 81% clients showed clinical or reliable change as a result of the counselling support they received. This places ICNI in the top 25% of UK psychological services. The waiting list for the service was eradicated by early 2024, following investment from the Department of Health Strategic Planning and Performance Group. Our Big Sexy Talk podcast continued to produce in-depth interviews around sexual health and relationships and was Highly Commended at the Irish Podcast Awards 2023. We distributed 155,000 sexual and reproductive health patient information leaflets to healthcare settings and community organisations, our website gained over 42,000 hits and our helpline answered almost 1,200 calls and continued to provide information, support and reassurance around all matters relating to sexual and reproductive health.

Strategic goal two - Sexual and reproductive health services will be readily accessible to meet the needs of all citizens in Northern Ireland

The commissioning of abortion care in December 2022 unlocked the development of local services in 2023/24, with treatment for pregnancies less than 12 weeks now fully established in all health Trusts, with medical and surgical options provided. A regional surgical service commenced within the South Eastern Trust, providing care up to 20 weeks of pregnancy. Medical abortion is available for pregnancies up to 24 weeks, and over 24 weeks in limited circumstances, and work is ongoing to expand surgical services to 24 weeks gestation. Safe Access Zones were also introduced in eight locations across Northern Ireland. ICNI continue to play an active role within the Northern Ireland Abortion and Contraception Taskgroup (NIACT) to promote the existing service provision, highlight the existing barriers to services, and lobby for sexual and reproductive health services to meet the needs of all citizens living in Northern Ireland. ICNI also campaigned against the funding cuts to the Primary Care Vasectomy service, resulting in funding being transferred from secondary care to primary care on a permanent basis.

Strategic goal three - High quality, consistent and inclusive relationships and sexuality education will be available within all schools and expanded within community settings

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland introduced Regulations to make age-appropriate, comprehensive, and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights a compulsory component of the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum for adolescents. ICNI held an event in Parliament Buildings to discuss this change which was attended by 12 MLAs, and received excellent feedback. Our Speakeasy project continued to exceed targets with the programme delivering a total of 118 sessions to 186 participants in the Belfast and South Eastern Trust areas. The project also worked with SlackPress on the design of an animation for parents and guardians highlighting the work of the Speakeasy project, and the need to engage with children and young people around relationships and sexuality. ICNI again successfully applied to the PHA Making Life Better Through Short Term Funding Programme. This grant enabled us to provide our Understanding Masculinity: Emotional Wellbeing and Men programme to 72 men and boys within the Northern and South Eastern Trust areas. During the programme we utilised the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, which showed improved mental wellbeing in 99% of participants.

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance *(continued)*

Strategic goal four - People with learning, sensory and/or physical disabilities will have access to high quality information, educations, support and training programmes

As usual our Just Ask programme was in high demand, delivering 305 sessions, to 423 individuals. The project continues to receive referrals from all Health and Social Care Trust areas which far outreach our agreed project targets. While we received an addendum from the PHA to enable us to provide additional sessions, we still have a waiting list for one-to-one work which extends into 2025. Our Talk Together project received additional support from the Ideas Fund to design and deliver a training programme for professionals who support individuals with a learning disability and autistic people following loss and bereavement. The project finished in January 2024 an updated report was produced. ICNI also successfully secured funding for a project idea around menopause and women with a learning disability from Round 2 of the Ideas Fund's grant cycle. This project was also in partnership with Ulster University and a project report will be launched in Spring 2024. ICNI delivered training to 173 participants, and our CEO worked with the HIV charity Positive Life to develop their sexual health training programmes for businesses, as well as facilitating conversations with their service users.

Strategic goal five - Be a resilient and robust organisation equipped to respond to demands of external environment

ICNI is a non-profit making organisation and the Statement of Financial Activities can be found within the Independent Examination of our accounts. Net incoming resources for the year were £22,726 increasing the charities total funds to £91,581, of which £63,586 are unrestricted. This is sufficient reserves to cover six months running costs. ICNI's training department continued to generate unrestricted income, with a combination of in-person and online training. Cashflow also remained strong throughout the year with all funders continuing to pay on time. Despite increasing costs and utility charges, we continued to monitor expenditure and kept costs to a minimum. At the end of the financial year, ICNI began the process of an organisational restructure. Our Director of Clinical Services, Carrie Montgomery, joined the senior management team to provide clinical and strategic financial leadership experience. Another member of our senior management team, Director of Advocacy and Policy, Ruairi Rowan, completed a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management. These changes will ensure ICNI's continued growth as a financially resilient organisation, and a leading sexual and reproductive health brand.

Financial review

The company is a non-profit making organisation. The results are set out in detail on page 7. The company had net incoming resources for the year of £22,726. The principal funding sources of the charity are by way of grant, principally from the Department of Health, Ideas Fund, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Public Health Agency.

Reserves policy

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the funding of the organisation. Unrestricted free reserves are currently £63,586, as detailed in note 18, and this level of reserves would be sufficient to fund the organisation's running costs for a period of six months at current levels of spending and cover redundancy payments for the current staff. The primary aim of the charity is to use the resources at its disposal to further its charitable activities, and any increase in reserves will occur only if appropriate.

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Plans for future periods

Following the commissioning of abortion services ICNI will continue to provide our specialist pregnancy counselling service. We will also take steps to tackle the stigma surrounding pregnancy loss in Northern Ireland. This will include the introduction of an organisational Pregnancy Loss Policy. Creating supportive workplaces following pregnancy loss is an issue that we intend to champion, and we'll be encouraging other employers to adopt similar policies, as well as supporting them through the process with the development of Pregnancy Loss Awareness training.

With the introduction of the Relationships and Sexuality Education (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 ICNI will work with politicians and civil servants to ensure that children and young people receive age-appropriate, comprehensive, and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights within all school settings.

We have also secured a two-year grant from the FORE to develop and expand our training output. This will include the design of new courses such as Access to Abortion and Contraception Awareness Training and Masculinity Awareness Training. Following the completion of our Talk Together Project we will also offer Loss and Bereavement Training to professionals working with individuals with a learning disability and autistic people across Northern Ireland.

We will continue to develop our education programmes, and will seek funding to expand our Menopause Project. We will also work in collaboration with others to achieve our objectives. This will include a partnership with Queen's University to develop a resource that would be used to measure learning and retention of relationships and sexuality education information with young people within Special Educational Needs Schools.

ICNI also intend to hold a conference focusing on the gaps and barriers faced by individuals with a learning disability and autistic people when accessing services in Northern Ireland.

We will seek to reach new audiences in 2024/25 by growing our social media presence, making our sexual and reproductive health leaflets more accessible, and producing dynamic, high-quality podcasts featuring a range of expert guest interviews.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 27 November 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Dr A Simpson
Trustee