Volunteering in Intellectual Disability Services in Ireland

Supporting People to Live the Life of their own Choice in their own Community

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

Acknowledgements

"States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community….." (Article 19, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006)

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Executive Summary

The services provided to people who avail of intellectual disability services by National Federation member organisations are founded on the values as set out in the O'Brien Principles (1987) of Inclusion, Choice, Dignity, Respect, Participation and Contribution. They are rooted in the rights based perspective that people who avail of intellectual disability services have the right to live full and active lives, and be active participating members of their own community.

A challenge facing many service providers is to find ways of empowering and enabling people who avail of intellectual disability services to participate in a meaningful way in their community, in essence, to live ordinary lives. This aim is achieved in a number of ways, including developing natural supports around each individual person e.g. relationships with families, friends, neighbours, people living in the community etc. and the ongoing development of volunteering activities and supports within member organisations.

For many people, the Special Olympics 2003, in particular, was a very positive catalyst for renewed and rejuvenated interest in volunteering within the community. However, to maintain this interest and attract new volunteers, the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies acknowledged the growing need to recognise, celebrate, support and protect existing volunteers, whilst promoting the concept of volunteering and its value and benefits to the wider community in Ireland.

In April 2005 the Board of the National Federation decided to establish a Volunteering Sub-Committee to plan and prioritise responses to the volunteering needs identified by member organisations and to inform the Board of Directors of the National Federation on priority issues, key challenges and recommendations in respect of volunteering at local and national level.

One of the underlying aims of the National Federation Volunteering Sub-Committee was to establish and collate reliable data on volunteering within its member organisations and in 2006 the sub-committee guided the development of a National Federation volunteering survey. This was the first national study on volunteering to be conducted within intellectual disability services in Ireland.

The findings from the volunteering survey indicate that in thirty three National Federation member organisations, 3,000+ volunteers are contributing approximately 7 hours per month to the social inclusion of people who avail of intellectual disability services, making volunteering an integral part of community activity within these organisations. The contribution of volunteers is greatly valued and respected and their contribution is celebrated by member organisations. Volunteering activities support people to develop new skills and reduce the levels of social isolation and exclusion often experienced by people who avail of intellectual disability services within the community.

The most successful methods of volunteer recruitment are through local bulletins/newsletters, by word of mouth and through advertisements in the local press and posters. Members of Boards of Management, Fundraisers, Befrienders / Best Buddies and Support Workers are the main roles provided by volunteers. Volunteer skills, talents and interests are matched with the needs of the person who avails of intellectual disability services. Volunteering supports are provided by member organisations on both a formal and an informal basis. While the majority of organisations do not have a formal written volunteering policy, a number of these organisations have plans to develop a written volunteering policy in the near future.

While member organisations indicate that there are a number of challenges to be overcome in the provision of volunteering supports, they acknowledge that volunteers contribute to the active citizenship and social inclusion of people who avail of intellectual disability services, and to the organisation's values and voluntary ethos, by:

- Enhancing service delivery
- Enhancing the quality of life of people who avail of intellectual disability services e.g. through developing friendships and maximising opportunities for personal growth
- Enabling people who avail of intellectual disability services to be active citizens in their own communities, thereby achieving their full potential and living the life of their choice
- Promoting social inclusion and community participation of people who avail of intellectual disability services

The recommendations from the survey findings will support:

- National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Strategic Objectives
- National Federation Research Strategy 2008-2013
- Ireland's National Disability Strategy
- Government's commitment to further developing national policy in support of volunteering and their commitment to people who avail of intellectual disability services to enable them to live the life of their own choice in their own community
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular Article 19 which outlines "*States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community…..*" (Article 19, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006).

1.   Introduction

1.1 Background to the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability is a national umbrella organisation for voluntary/non-statutory agencies that provide direct services to people with intellectual disability in Ireland. Our sixty three member organisations (61 member organisations at the time of the survey), listed in Appendix 1, provide services throughout the twenty six counties in both urban and rural areas. Our members employ approximately 15,500 staff covering a wide range of professional disciplines providing services and supports to 22,000 people with intellectual disability.

The services provided to people with an intellectual disability by National Federation member organisations are founded on the values as set out in the O'Brien Principles (1987) of Inclusion, Choice, Dignity, Respect, Participation and Contribution. They are rooted in the rights based perspective that people with intellectual disability have the right to live full and active lives, and be active participating members of their own community.

Our Mission

Our aim is to promote the equalisation of opportunities for persons with intellectual disability through the provision and development of high quality, person centred services. We achieve our mission through information sharing and the development and promotion of codes of best practice. We also act as a lobbying agent on a national and international basis and work in co-operation with advocacy organisations on behalf of people with an intellectual disability.

Our Values

We promote and actively pursue four fundamental principles. People with an intellectual disability have:

- The right to a normal pattern of life within the community
- The right to be treated as an individual with dignity and respect
- The right to care and support in developing their maximum potential
- The right to participate in the decision making process on issues affecting their lives

We support the following internationally agreed statements:

- The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and on the Rights of Intellectually Disabled Persons
- The United Nations Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Our Goals and Objectives

While we and our member organisations are constantly open to new challenges and opportunities our goals are:

- The sharing of information relating to the provision, maintenance and development of services
- The development of strategies in areas of common interest
- The provision of information and support to individual members and local groups of members, when required, and supporting member organisations in their advocacy on behalf of individual persons
- Making representations to the Departments of State, other public authorities and national and international bodies on issues agreed by the members
- Entering into negotiations on behalf of National Federation members as required

- Promoting and undertaking public education and information actions, and by issuing public statements on behalf of the members, on matters already agreed
- Appointing or nominating, as appropriate, representatives on deputation's and as members of other relevant bodies, committees, commissions, working parties and boards
- Undertaking the co-ordination of activities agreed by the members which are appropriate to the role and functions of the National Federation
- Drawing up codes of good practice or guidelines for the provision of intellectual disability services by its members
- Stimulating the growth of the voluntary sector in areas of need and promoting the interlinking of voluntary agencies to promote the interests of persons with an intellectual disability

1.2   Evolution of National Federation Member Organisation Services

Voluntary Organisations have been providing services for persons with an intellectual disability in Ireland since the late 1800s e.g. Stewarts Hospital, Daughters of Charity Services etc.   A second wave of development took place in the 1950s and 1960s, a period which witnessed the emergence of a number of smaller organisations - voluntary parents and friends-governed organisations.   These organisations, which were fully managed and organised by volunteers, were set up in recognition that the needs of people with intellectual disability, and their families, were not being met by mainstream health and social services. These organisations were set up mainly in areas where the large service providers were not operational and were also important advocates for people with intellectual disability and their families.

The enactment of the 1970 Health Bill, and its resulting implications for service providers, was the impetus for the formal establishment of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies. The Health Bill proposed the setting up of Health Boards that service providers would be funded by and to whom they would be accountable. The National Federation met on a regular basis throughout the 1970's and 1980's, with no formal membership and no subscription.   These meetings provided an ideal opportunity for its member organisations to compare notes and share experiences.

In 1988 the National Federation Secretariat was set up to provide support to its member organisations.   The development of the Secretariat has enabled the National Federation to continue to enhance and develop strong partnerships and relationships with government and statutory agencies e.g. Department of Health & Children, HSE etc.   This partnership extends across the domains of mapping unmet need, reviewing service models, developing a working consensus around the allocation of finite resources etc.   The formalisation of the National Federation also led to the professionalisation of services and with it the changing roles and contributions of volunteers.   A greater number of paid staff are now being employed in direct support and management roles with volunteers continuing to enhance the development of services through indirect roles, e.g. involvement in fundraising activities, members of Boards of Management and providing friendship supports to people with intellectual disability.

Service provision within the intellectual disability community is distinctive in many respects against the backdrop of health and personal social services. Most significant in this regard has been the move from a medical-and-therapy-focussed model to a social model. This change in orientation has been well embedded over the past 15-20 years. Perhaps the most distinctive feature within our services has been the emergence and consolidation of the commitment to person-centeredness as a guiding principle. At the heart of this version of person-centeredness are the principles of sharing power and self-determination. Authority and expertise reside with the citizen with a disability. Planning is done with, not for, or not to, the citizen with a disability.

Looking to the Future
The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies envisage a service-provision world unfolding over the next decade which is more complex, more differentiated. Self-directed services will have a much larger presence. Configurations of support combining and blending informal supports, non-

Department of Health & Children statutory supports, generic primary care supports, and specialist-provider supports will be much more evident. The future will be about extending choice and control. Control will ultimately reside with the fund holder. There will be a very significant increase in the numbers of citizens with disability who opt to control and direct their own funding, many through family-governance mechanisms. We welcome such changes – confident of our capacity to meet this challenge and to retain relevance and value in this radically different world. Research, including the findings from this volunteering survey, will assist us to meet this challenge in a coherent and appropriate fashion.

1.3   National and International Developments in Volunteering

National Developments in Volunteering

While there are no specific pieces of legislation that apply exclusively to volunteers within Ireland, there are policies and research studies that support the development of volunteerism, including:

- ***White Paper Supporting Voluntary Activity (2000)***
  The Irish Government White Paper "Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity" highlighted the importance of and the need to reinforce, support and extend volunteering in Ireland. The White Paper aimed to clarify the relationship between government and the voluntary and community sector. It described the current context in which the voluntary sector works, promoted framework principles and best practice models, and made recommendations to support voluntary activity more generally, in addition to the State accepting that the importance of volunteering goes beyond the provision of services and goes to the very heart of our society. Reference to the Governments intention to establish a National Committee on Volunteering was also referenced to coincide with 2001, UN International Year of the Volunteer in the White Paper.

  The White Paper defines volunteering as: "the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society, local communities, individuals outside the immediate family, the environment or other causes. Voluntary activities are undertaken of a person's own free will, without payment".

- ***National Committee on Volunteering (2000)***
  The National Committee on Volunteering was established in December 2000, as part of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness and the 2000 White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity with the view of developing a long-term strategy to promote and extend volunteering. The Committee undertook a number of initiatives to celebrate and promote volunteering during its first year and in 2002, this process led to the publication of the report "Tipping the Balance".

- ***Tipping the Balance (2002)***
  The 'Tipping the Balance' report examined the historical and contemporary landscape of volunteerism in Ireland, trends and patterns in volunteering, the organisational status of volunteers, youth, accreditation, recognition, infrastructure, the international context and policy development.   The report set out 51 recommendations designed to support and promote volunteering for the future.   The report supports the inclusion of ongoing data collection on volunteering in the Census of Population and the Quarterly National Household Survey.

- ***The Policy Implications of Social Capital (2002)***
  The National Economic and Social Forum published a report 'The Policy Implications of Social Capital' (2002) which addressed a number of issues pertinent to volunteering including the estimated number of volunteers in Ireland, the number of full time equivalence volunteers, imputed value of volunteers and the concept of social capital and more. It defines "social

capital" as "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups". It places "active citizenship at the core of the Forum's statement of broad values and principles for a just and inclusive society".

- ***Special Olympics (2003)***
From 21st - 29th June 2003 the whole island of Ireland played host to the Special Olympics World Summer Games, the largest sports and multicultural event in the world. It was the first time the Games were held outside the United States and it was the largest international sporting event in Ireland's history. There were some 7,000 athletes, 3,000 coaches/delegates and 28,000 families and friends at the Games. In addition to over 30,000 volunteers and 166 host towns that were actively involved in supporting the 2003 Special Olympics. This event marked the value of volunteers at a local, regional and national level.

- ***Individuals and Organisations: An Exploration of the Volunteering Process in Health and Social Groups (2004)***
This study of volunteering, by Dr. Pádraig Mac Neela, examines the volunteering experience in health and social care settings - including COPE Foundation in Cork, an organisation providing services to people with intellectual disability - at the levels of the individual volunteer, voluntary sector organisations and society. Volunteers in each of the health and social care settings were interviewed for the survey. The research identifies a set of 14 dilemmas and issues relating to organisations availing of the contribution of volunteers including: motivations of volunteers, volunteering role identity, benefits to volunteer, organisational level issues, e.g. relationships/power balance between volunteers and paid staff, future role of volunteering etc. and societal-level issues e.g. reliance on volunteering.
This study discusses the expectations of people who access services and the general public, the effect of the formalisation and professionalisation of services and the changing role of the volunteer in the evolution of services.

- ***Volunteering and Volunteering in Ireland (2005)***
The Joint Committee on Arts, Sport, Tourism, Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs launched its Report on Volunteers and Volunteering in Ireland on the 25th January 2005. Prior to the launch of this document, the Joint Committee consulted widely among voluntary organisations with the aim of establishing what they considered the main issues affecting volunteering in Ireland.

The great success of the Special Olympics has highlighted the issue of volunteering on a national basis. Upon completion of the consultation process, the Joint Committee engaged DKM Economic Consultants to review and analyse the contributions made by the voluntary groups with particular emphasis on the social and economic implications of volunteering in Ireland and to suggest directions for the future.

Many voluntary organisations participated in the preparation of the White Paper and the "Tipping the Balance" report, both of which were very positive about volunteering. However, many in the sector felt that nothing had changed and the contributors to the Joint Committee's hearings complained of low morale on the ground. The Joint Committee recommendations can be categorised into three main headings (a) Volunteering Policy, (b) Volunteering Infrastructure and (c) Funding issues.

- ***Towards 2016: Ten-Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015 (2006)***
The Government reiterated its commitment to volunteering in the current social partnership agreement "to further developing policy to support volunteering …………….. and informed by the recommendations of the Task Force on Active Citizenship".

- ***National Development Plan 2007-2013 "Transforming Ireland: A Better Quality of Life for All".***
In the National Development Plan which was published, the Government committed €197m investment to support volunteering activity over the period of the Plan and highlighted the

"constructive role of voluntary activity in improving the quality of life in local communities."
"Schemes will be designed to support, resource and recognise volunteers and volunteering both in terms of funding and capacity. The broad objective is to enable the improvement of the provision of services at the coal face."

- ***Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship (2007)***
  The Taoiseach established the Taskforce on Active Citizenship in April 2006, to review the evidence regarding trends in citizen participation across the main areas of civic, community, cultural, occupational and recreational life in Ireland. Through an extensive consultation process, the Taskforce compiled a set of recommendations to enhance the work already being done to develop a strong, independent and inclusive, civil society.

  The main recommendations from the Taskforce relate to increasing participation in the democratic process; improving the interaction between the citizen and state institutions at local and national level; measures to promote a greater sense of community and community engagement; further education on the issues around active citizenship; and measures that provide increased opportunities for the inclusion of ethnic and cultural minorities in an increasingly diverse society.   The Taskforce also recommended the establishment of an Office of Active Citizenship which will build on the relationships already established with Government bodies, the corporate sector and with community and voluntary organisations and groups.

- ***Programme for Government 2007 - 2012***
  The 2007-2012 Programme for Government also includes a number of recommendations to enhance Active Citizenship and Volunteering including implementing the recommendations of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship

- ***Law Reform Commission Consultation Paper on the Civil Liability of "Good Samaritans" and Volunteers (2007)***
  The Commission prepared this Consultation Paper to consider the civil liability of: (a) those who intervene to assist and help an injured person ("Good Samaritans") and (b) voluntary rescuers and other volunteers. The Commission concluded that it would not recommend imposing any further positive duty on citizens over and above what already exists in law e.g. under health & safety legislation. The Commission concluded that it was unlikely that "any such duty would promote volunteering or active citizenship". The Commission will publish their final report and recommendations once the consultation process is complete.

These policies and procedures, and the setting up of the Office of Active Citizenship at the end of 2007, underpin the Government's commitment to further developing policy in support of volunteering, informed by the recommendations of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship.

International Developments

A number of key activities and events at international level have attempted to influence and stimulate volunteering by exploring possibilities for providing support, including:

- ***Resolution of the European Parliament, 1983***
  This resolution recognised the general-interest nature of volunteering and the contribution of an adequate infrastructure to effective policies on volunteering. The Resolution also called for a European 'Statute for voluntary work', to cover the reimbursement of expenses and social insurance for volunteers.
- ***Communication of the EU Commission on 'Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organizations and Foundations' 1997, COM (1997) 241***
  Through this the political, economic and social significance of voluntary action for 'developing a cohesive and inclusive European Society based on active citizenship' was recognised.

- *International Year of Volunteers (IYV) 2001*
  The United Nations IYV 2001 was an important catalyst for increasing attention for volunteering, and it provided an opportunity to highlight the achievement of volunteer work. In addition, IYV generated many suggestions based upon actual experiments for the further support and development of volunteering potential. Nearly 130 countries took part in IYV 2001, and more that 500 committees were established at the national, regional and local levels to plan and coordinate a host of activities and events. The ITV 2001 goals – promotion, recognition, facilitation and networking, provided the framework for significant achievements and measures that are contributing to strengthening the global volunteer movement. (See also "Shaping Policy for Voluntary Service through Service" below)

- *General Assembly UN 2002*
  In November 2002, 142 Member Countries of the United Nations co-sponsored a General Assembly resolution (RES 57/106) on follow-up to the successful International Year of the Volunteer 2001. Its recommendations include the following: (a) Governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the private sector and researchers must promote volunteer work, (b) improvements are needed in volunteer working conditions (e.g., laws and regulations, research, volunteer centres, internet and corporate volunteering) and (c) volunteering should be factored into reports on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

- *Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe (CEV) 2003*
  CEV is a European umbrella organisation of National and Regional Volunteer Centres across Europe. In 2003, it published a Manifesto that outlines ways in which members of the European Parliament can approach volunteering strategically as a means of enhancing resources, addressing local, national and global needs and issues, while improving the quality of life for all residents of Europe. (NOTE: A revised version of this manifesto was launched in April 2006).

- *Eurofestation 2004 - three-day European conference and exchange forum on voluntary work and corporate community involvement*
  Eurofestation 2004 proposed a shared European Roadmap to 2010 for the EU, national member states, (multi) national corporations, national volunteer centres, (national) volunteer – involving organisations and supporting infrastructure. The Roadmap to 2010 is intended to be an influential tool for further policy developments, events and activities in Europe around the theme of volunteering. In particular focusing on the promotion and recognition, support and facilitation and networking of volunteers at a European, national and local level, including the volunteering involving organisations and the corporate sector.

- *European Parliament Volunteering Interest Group (2006/2007)*
  In June 2006, Marian Harkin, MEP, set up the European Parliament Volunteering Interest Group. The group is currently working towards getting 2011 designated as the European Year of Volunteering. The Volunteering Interest Group is developing a draft paper on 'The Role of Volunteering in Contributing to Economic and Social Cohesion' which will be presented to the European Parliament's Committee on Regional Development for approval. The report "covers a wide range of issues including intergenerational volunteering, insurance for volunteers, the need to cut bureaucracy and ensure core funding to support voluntary activity, the need to recognise voluntary activity as a contribution to co-financing projects and the adoption of a European Charter for Volunteers. The report also points to the significant savings for public services derived from volunteering and on the need to ensure that voluntary activity is additional to what is supplied by the public services and not used as a replacement for paid work." If approved, this paper will act as a stimulus to the European Commission to place far greater emphasis on Volunteering in EU policy in the future.

- *European Economic and Social Committee (EESC): Opinion on Voluntary activity - its role in European society and its impact adopted (January 2007)*
  On December 13, 2006 consulted by the European Commission, the EESC adopted an opinion on "Voluntary activity - its role in European society and its impact" (CESE 1575/2006;

SOC 243), which contains significant conclusions and recommendations, some of which are based on the CEV Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe and the Facts & Figures reports.

- *"Shaping Policy for Voluntary Service through Service" – investigating the effects of research in the field of voluntary service for forming global and European policies, European Parliament, Brussels (2007)*
  The aim of this conference was to present the latest research projects in the field of voluntary service and volunteering, and to hear from policy makers about their take on research and how research results could be fed into policy-making. The conference highlighted the gap between policy statements and what is happening in reality i.e. in order to encourage European active citizenship, more funding and investment is necessary. At this conference, a representative from the United Nations Volunteers announced that work will begin in the very near future on a report to the UN General Assembly on the status of volunteerism since the International Year of the Volunteer. This will be a great opportunity for the research community and its partners to propose a global agenda for knowledge building to inform volunteerism for development policies.

1.4   Volunteering in Intellectual Disability Services in Ireland

The services provided to persons with an intellectual disability by National Federation member organisations are founded on the values as set out in the O'Brien Principles (1987) of Inclusion, Choice, Dignity, Respect, Participation and Contribution. They are rooted in the rights based perspective that people with intellectual disability have the right to live full and active lives, and be active participating members of their own community. A challenge facing many service providers is to find ways of empowering and enabling people with intellectual disability to participate in a meaningful way in their community, in essence, to live ordinary lives. This aim is achieved in a number of ways, including, developing natural supports around each individual person e.g. relationships with families, friends, neighbours, people living in the community etc. and the ongoing development of volunteering activities and supports within member organisations.

Intellectual disability service providers fully support the Government's vision in its National Action Plan for Social Inclusion of "an Ireland where people with disabilities have, to the greatest extent possible, the opportunity to live a full life with their families and as part of their local community, free from discrimination" (2007). This commitment from Government is also reinforced in their Social Partnership Agreement Towards 2016 and in the current National Development Plan (2007).

Volunteering is an integral part of community activity within many of the member organisations of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies. Volunteering plays an important and vital role in strengthening our communities, increasing social involvement, stimulating active citizenship and improving the quantity and quality of services provided by our member organisations, whilst supporting individuals to develop new skills and reduce the levels of social isolation and exclusion often experienced by people with intellectual disabilities within the community.

Volunteering Survey
In April 2005 the Board of the National Federation decided to establish a Volunteering Sub-Committee to plan and prioritise responses to the volunteering needs identified by member organisations, whilst informing the Board of Directors of the National Federation on priority issues, key challenges and recommendations in respect of volunteering at a local & national level. One of the underlying aims of the National Federation Volunteering Sub-Committee was to establish and collate reliable data on volunteering within the member organisations.

A volunteering survey was carried out in 2006 and this was the first national study on volunteering to be conducted within intellectual disability services in Ireland. One nominated staff member was identified within each organisation to respond to the questionnaire. The nominated staff member was either the Volunteer Co-Ordinator/Volunteer Manager or had responsibility for recruiting or managing volunteers within their organisation.

The questionnaire was first piloted among 4 of the member organisations. Following completion of the pilot, the questionnaire was reviewed and edited accordingly. A comprehensive survey questionnaire was then circulated to a nominated person in each of our 61 member organisations. The questionnaire contained 14 sections:

- Section 1:   General Information
- Section 2:   Demographics of Volunteers
- Section 3:   Scope of Volunteering
- Section 4:   Volunteering Policy
- Section 5:   Recruitment and Training of Volunteers
- Section 6:   Insurance & Volunteers
- Section 7:   Retention of Volunteers
- Section 8:   Risk Assessment & Risk Management of Volunteers
- Section 9:   Vision and Commitment to Volunteering
- Section 10:   Volunteer Involvement in the Decision Making Process
- Section 11:   Key Volunteering Issues & Challenges
- Section 12:   Future of Volunteering
- Section 13:   National and International Volunteering Events
- Section 14:   Conclusion

Two follow-up emails were issued to the nominated persons of each member organisation who did not respond within the allocated timeframe and further responses were received.

In appreciation of the support of our member organisations in completing and returning the questionnaire, the National Federation Volunteering Sub-Committee entered the names of all the Member Organisations who completed the survey into a draw and two entries were randomly selected for €25.00 book vouchers. In addition, all of the Member Organisations who completed the questionnaire received a complimentary copy of the Special Olympics 2003 DVD.

2. Survey Findings

There was an overwhelming response rate from member organisations to the survey questionnaire – over 82% (50) of organisations responded.

Of these 50 respondents:

%	n	Details
62%	38	completed the questionnaire
20%	12	responded that it did not apply to their organisations
18%	11	of our member organisations did not respond in any way to the survey

2.1 Definition of "Volunteer"

While some respondents did not provide a **definition** of "a volunteer" within their organisations, twenty five respondents provided definitions, including the following:

- *"The volunteer is someone who gives of his/her free time and energy for the benefit of the service-user. It is undertaken freely by choice without any concern for financial gain."*

- *"A volunteer is one who gives of their time and talents freely for the benefit of others and who works within the policies and procedures of our organisation."*

- *"A member of the community who is willing to give of their time for the benefit of the organisation without pay."*

- *"A valuable cost effective resource who provides a commitment of time and energy supporting our aims, purposes and values."*

- *"A volunteer is anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of his or her volunteer duties, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of an organisation. A volunteer must be formally offered a position by the organisation prior to the performance of the task. "*

All of the respondents who provided a definition of "a volunteer" within their organisations highlighted the "non-payment" element of the role.

2.2 General Information

This section returned information on the following for each of our member organisations:

- Name of Organisation
- Address
- Name of Respondent
- Job Title
- Email Address
- Telephone Number

2.3 Demographics of Volunteers

Question	No. of Respondents	Yes		No	
		n	%	n	%
Does your organisation **currently have volunteers**?	38	33	87	5	13
Does your organisation have **a full-time Volunteer Co-Ordinator?**	31	5	16	26	84
If you do not have a full-time Volunteer Co-Ordinator in your organisation, does someone else take on this **responsibility part-time?**	26	11	46	15	54
Of the organisations who indicated that they did not have a full-time Volunteer Co-Ordinator, responsibility for volunteering lies with various staff, including HR Manager, Director of Services, Co-Ordinator of Training & Education, Leisure Buddy Co-Ordinator, Community Liaison Officer, Administration Manager etc.					

- Over **3,029** people are currently volunteering in thirty three member organisations

- Almost 30% (841) of these are in the 60 years plus **age** group

- **70%** (2,116) of the volunteers are **female** and **30%** (913) are **male**

Age Groups (approx.) of Volunteers

- 12%
- 9%
- 29%
- 13%
- 17%
- 20%

Legend:
- Under 18 - 374
- 18-30 years - 283
- 30-39 years - 399
- 40-49 years - 602
- 50-59 years - 530
- 60 years plus - 841
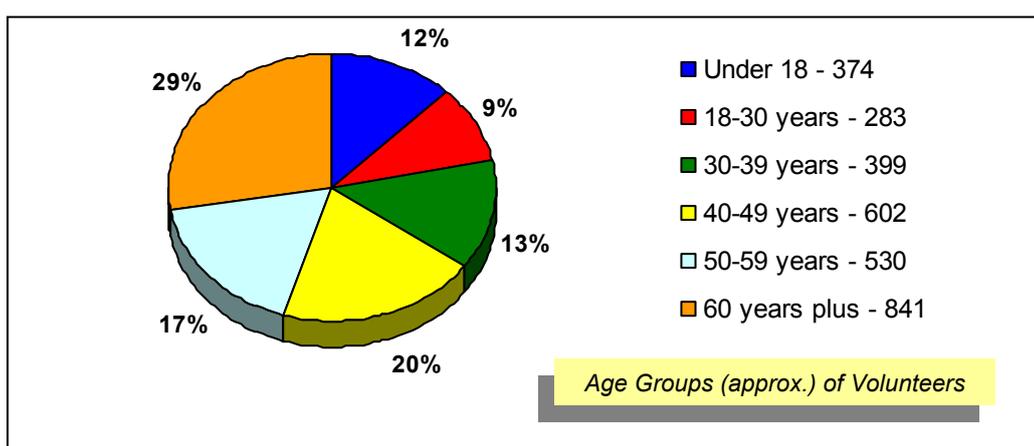
Respondents reported that each of these volunteers contributes approximately **7 volunteering hours** to member organisations **per month**.

Twenty nine respondents indicated that approximately 232 volunteers have become **paid employees** in the last five years within their organisations. Of these 189 are full-time employees, 31 are part-time employees and 12 are temporary employees.

Twenty one respondents reported that their organisations provide access to **internal job advertisements** for volunteers within their organisation, seven respondents reported that their organisations don't provide access to internal job advertisements and two organisations reported that that they didn't know if volunteers had access to internal job advertisements.

Respondents indicated that the main **roles** played by volunteers within member organisations are:

- Members of Boards of Management , Fundraisers, Befrienders / Buddies, Support Workers

Volunteer Roles within Member Organisations
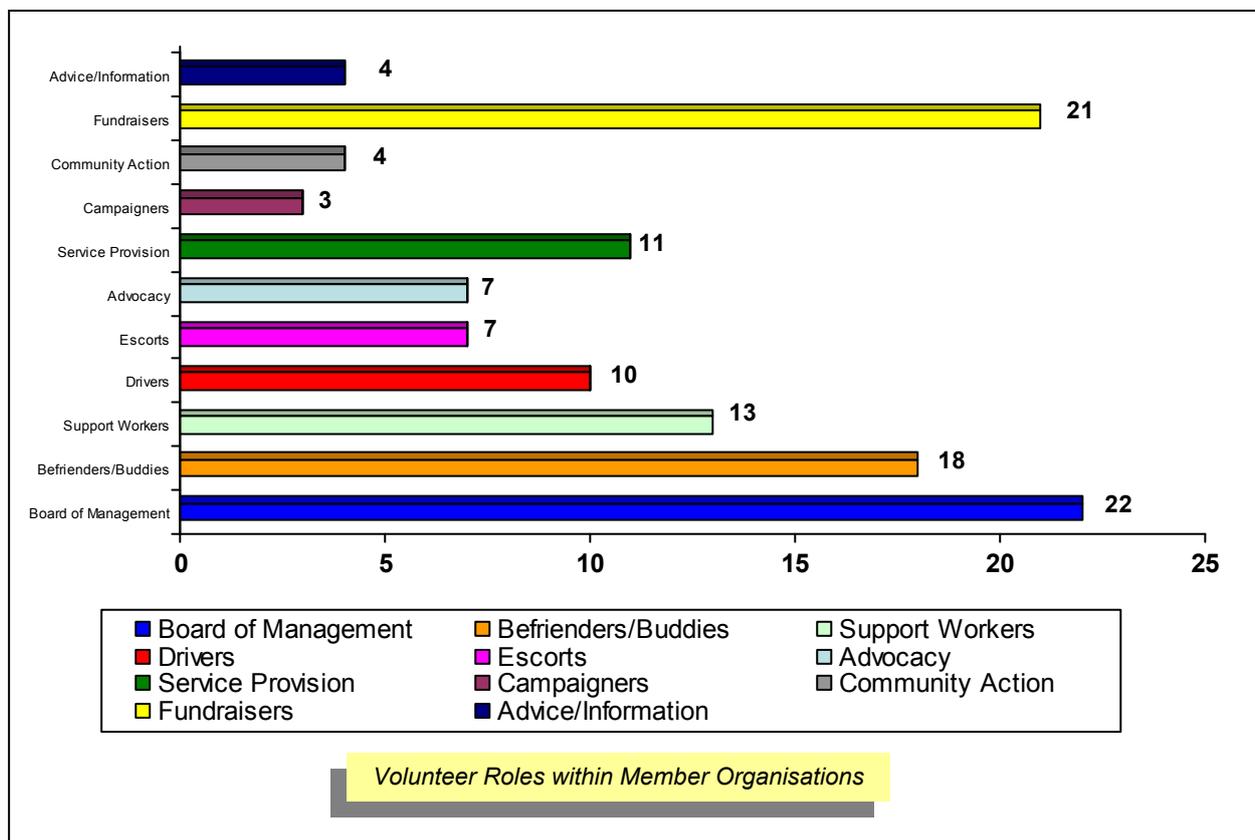
These volunteers were **recruited** through: word of mouth, local media, family members, friends of staff members and through parish newsletters. They were screened by using garda clearance, references, interviews and through completed application forms. The main selection criteria included: interviews, garda clearance, application forms, matching activities with people and suitability for volunteering within the organisation.

2.4   Scope of Volunteering

When asked to outline the main reasons **why people volunteer** within their organisation, thirty one respondents reported that, in their opinion, volunteers:

- Wanted to give something back, to help others
- Saw their volunteering role as a stepping stone to work experience or employment
- Had a family member who was availing of the service
- Considered that volunteering was a worthwhile use of their spare time e.g. in retirement
- Experienced a feel-good factor / personal satisfaction from their volunteering activities

When asked what were the main **benefits** that volunteers bring to the organisation, respondents reported that the main benefits were:

- Providing friendship/companionship/circle of friends to people with intellectual disability
- Sharing their talents and ideas
- Enhancing community integration and social inclusion of people with intellectual disability
- Offering new experiences and variety of choice to people with intellectual disability
- Contributing to a better quality of life to people with intellectual disability

When asked what were the **obstacles** encountered in the realisation of this benefit, twenty eight respondents reported that the main obstacles were:

- Managing and monitoring of volunteers e.g. policies, co-ordination, staff resources
- Experiencing long delays in garda clearance / vetting
- Inconsistency / lack of continuity within organisations
- Lack of information and training
- Shortage of volunteers

When asked to outline what volunteers contribute to the **active citizenship and social inclusion** of people with intellectual disabilities within their own communities, twenty seven respondents reported that:
- They enhance community involvement of people with intellectual disability
- They enable participation by people with intellectual disability in mainstream activities e.g. recreation, arts etc.
- They help to break down barriers and enable awareness
- They enable friendships and relationships

When asked how can organisations strengthen the contribution of volunteers to the active citizenship and social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities within their own communities, twenty six respondents reported that they could:

- Develop formal recruitment and training policies;
- Recognise and celebrate the contribution of each volunteer;
- Promote awareness in the community and in schools e.g. with transition year students; and,
- Ensure visible participation of volunteers and people with intellectual disability in the community e.g. through use of community facilities, involvement in open days etc.

Nineteen respondents indicated that in their organisations **volunteers** are not involved in **selecting volunteering opportunities**, eleven respondents indicated that in their organisations volunteers are involved and one respondent indicated that they didn't know if volunteers are involved in selecting volunteering opportunities within their organisation. In organisations where respondents indicated that volunteers are involved in selecting volunteering opportunities, they provided the following details:

- Volunteers suggest activities
- Volunteers are involved in matching the volunteers' skills and interests with the person with intellectual disability
- Volunteers are involved in training programmes, and
- Volunteers have informal discussions, viz a viz their role etc.

Twenty two respondents indicated that **people with intellectual disability** are not involved in selecting **volunteering opportunities** within their organisation while eight respondents indicated that people with intellectual disability are involved in selecting volunteering opportunities within their organisation. In organisations where people with intellectual disability are involved in selecting volunteering opportunities, this involvement is reflected in:

A number of respondents indicated that, in the future, their organisations would like to expand the role of people with intellectual disability in selecting volunteering opportunities within their organisation.

Fifteen respondents indicated that volunteering is integrated into its organisations overall **policy structure**, thirteen respondents indicated that it is not integrated into its organisations overall policy structure and one respondent indicated that it didn't know if volunteering was integrated into its organisations overall policy structure. While a number of respondents indicated that they achieved this policy integration through their general/standard company policies and in some instances through their volunteering policy, a number of other respondents indicated that work is ongoing in relation to this issue within their organisation.

When asked how do **other policies** affect volunteers within their organisation, the majority of respondents indicated that volunteers are made aware of all policies that affect their work and much of this is achieved through induction training and ongoing training e.g. adult/child protection, health & safety, manual handling, diversity in the workplace, risk management etc.

Fifteen respondents indicated that their organisations encourage volunteers to provide **feedback** on the effectiveness and efficiency of policies and systems in place to support volunteering and ten respondents indicated that feedback from volunteers is not encouraged. Where feedback is encouraged it is achieved, formally and informally, through:

- Holding regular meetings and/or yearly/quarterly reviews
- Encouraging feedback and opinions
- Volunteer Co-Ordinator or Line Manager
- Board of Management or
- Telephone or Email

In response to the question what support (if any) would your organisation welcome from the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies in respect of developing and implementing all or specific elements of a **Volunteering Policy**, twenty four respondents reported that the main supports their organisations require are:

1. **Advice on developing a volunteering policy, including:**
- Developing structures/systems
- Researching evidence based good practice
- Advising on Insurance / Risk Assessment
- Extending the garda vetting services to volunteers
- Highlighting training opportunities
- Sourcing Funding Opportunities
- Developing a Handbook for Volunteers

2. **On-line Assistance, including:**
- Sharing ideas on-line
- Developing a network of volunteering co-ordinators
- Developing a volunteering information resource

2.5   Volunteering Policy

In response to the question did their organisation have a formal **written volunteering policy,** twelve respondents indicated that their organisations had a formal written volunteering policy and twenty four respondents indicated that their organisations didn't have a written policy.

- Of the twelve organisations who **had** a written policy, the earliest policy was implemented in 1993, with the remainder being implemented in the years leading up to 2006.

- Of the twenty four organisations who **didn't have** a written policy, seventeen of these respondents indicated that their organisation intends developing a volunteering policy, four respondents indicated that their organisations do not intend developing a volunteering policy and the remainder indicated that they didn't know.

Respondents were asked to indicate yes or no if their organisations volunteering policy had addressed or considered 21 particular **topics**, ranging from general principles and values base to risk management and child protection. Twenty six respondents indicated yes or no to some of these topics (as relevant to their own organisation). The graph below provides details of the responses:

Responses to "has your volunteering policy addressed/considered the following topics?"
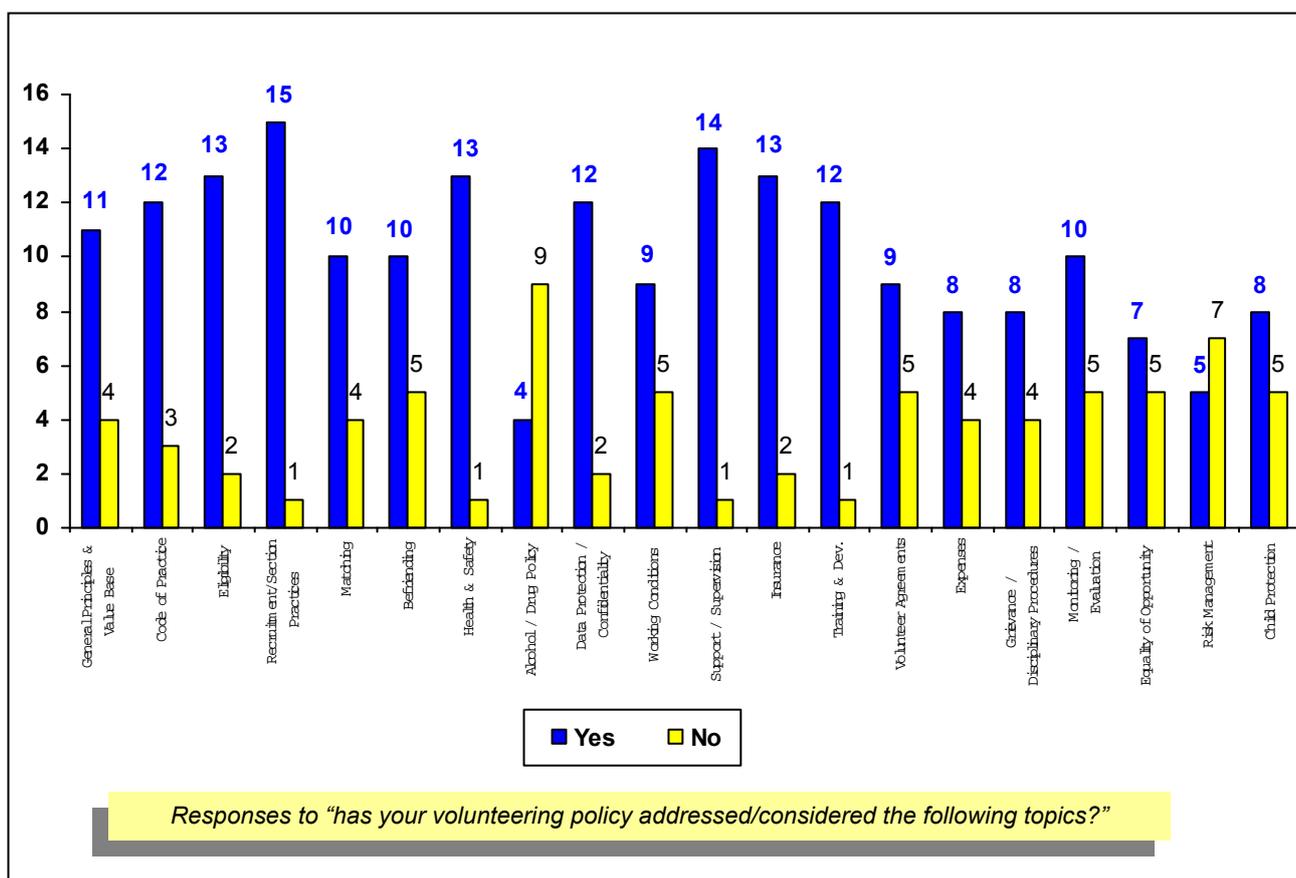
Respondents were asked to indicate from a suggested list if their volunteering policy was **active** in some or all parts of the service. Thirteen respondents indicated that it was active in some or all parts of the service. The two main areas where it was active were:

- Recreation services
- Day services

Respondents also indicated other areas of the service where the volunteering policy was active, including:

- Boards of Management
- Social Programmes/Night Classes
- Fundraising Activities
- Early Services
- Respite Services
- Supported living on campus
- Supported living in the community
- Training
- Special schools and
- Work / Supported employment

Seven respondents indicated that, within their organisations, there were **different agreed practices** on volunteering throughout different parts of the service. Seventeen respondents indicated that there were **no different agreed practices** on volunteering within their organisations. The seven respondents who indicated that there were different agreed practices on volunteering throughout different parts of the service highlighted the following issues:

- *"Committee of management members and fundraising committee are volunteers but do not come under our volunteer policy"*
- *"Outside the summer camps, the day centres may accept volunteers for a short period of time."*
- *"Older volunteers may have concerns re Garda vetting"*
- *"Within the community volunteers can accompany service users without supervision but within residential services they are supervised by nursing staff at all times."*

Fourteen respondents indicated that their organisations volunteering policy has **not been reviewed or audited**. This may be explained by the fact that many of the policies have only recently come into operation within their organisation. Five respondents indicated that their organisations volunteering policy **has been reviewed/audited**. The format of this review was either through internal review or discussions with management. Three respondents indicated that their organisations volunteering policy review was planned for 2006. Where reviews take place, Senior Management, HR Manager, Volunteer Co-Ordinator, Quality Co-Ordinator and other staff members are involved in the process.

Two respondents indicated that **training to implement the volunteering policy** has been provided by their organisations. Sixteen respondents indicated that their organisations had not provided training to implement the volunteering policy. In organisations where training was provided to implement the volunteering policy, respondents highlighted the following as being the main areas of training provided:

- Induction training
- Policy training around the prevention and management of abuse
- Staff-support and supervision of volunteer training and relationships between paid staff and volunteers
- Information presented at staff meetings throughout the organisation and copies of all documentation given to each area of the service and comments invited
- Policy document given to all volunteers

In organisations where training was provided to implement the volunteering policy, respondents reported that this training was provided externally by Volunteering Ireland and internally by a number of staff members including, Community Development Co-Ordinator, Volunteer Officer/Co-Ordinator etc.

2.6   Recruitment and Training of Volunteers

Twenty nine respondents indicated answers to the question does your organisation use a variety of **methods to recruit volunteers** across all sections of the community.   The respondents indicated the most successful methods of recruiting volunteers were through:

(1)   Local Bulletins/Newsletters
(2)   Word of Mouth
(3)   Posters, and, Advertisements in Local Press

Further details of methods used to recruit volunteers are detailed in the graph below:

Methods used to Recruit Volunteers
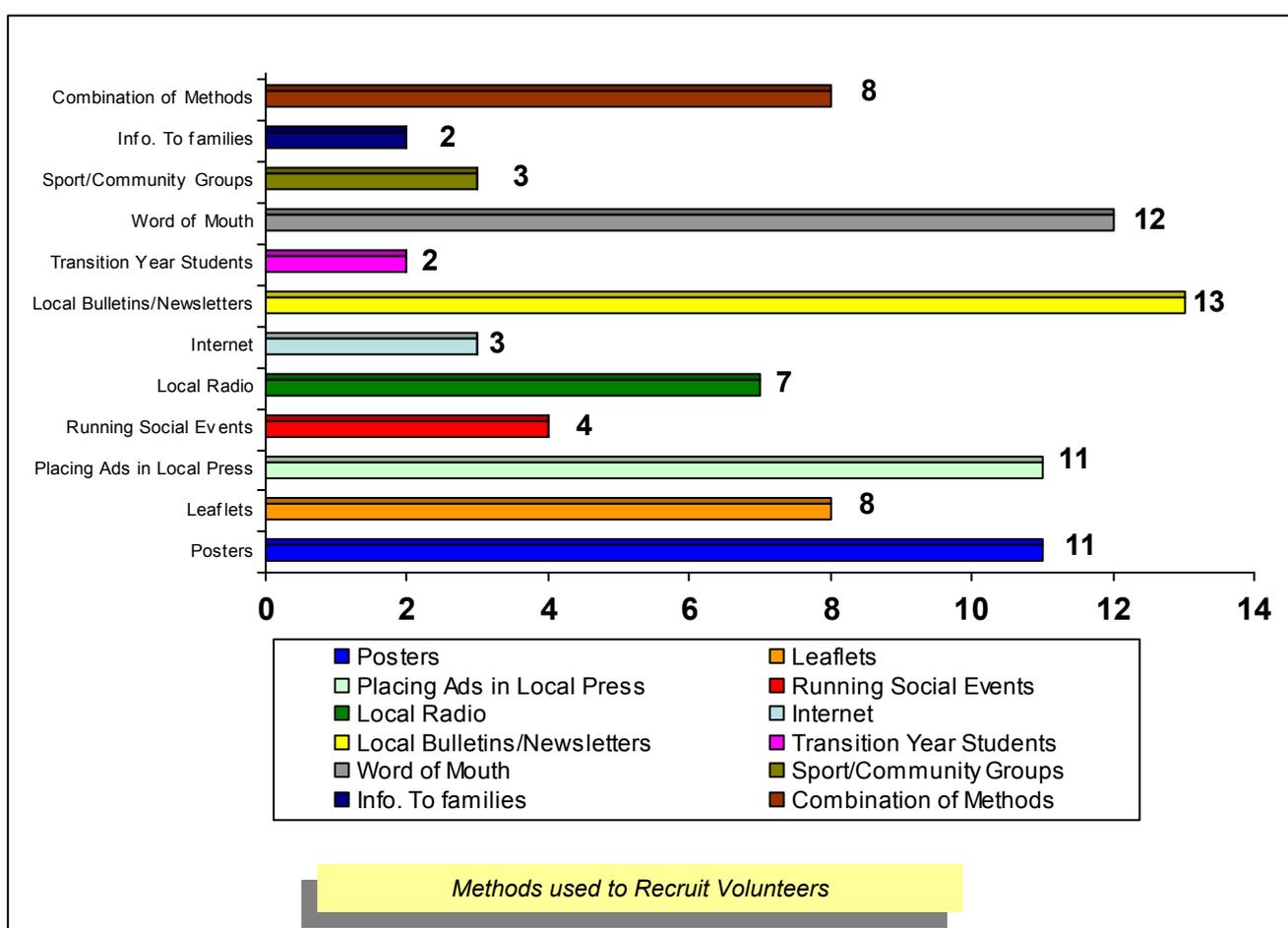
Nineteen respondents indicated that their organisations need **more volunteers** than they can recruit – they indicated figures ranging from 10 volunteers right up to 200 volunteers - while six respondents reported that their organisations don't need any more volunteers.

Twenty one respondents indicated that their organisations operate an **equal opportunity policy** in respect of recruitment of volunteers while two respondents indicated that their organisations don't operate an equal opportunity policy in relation to recruitment of volunteers.
Twenty one respondents reported that their organisations **match** the volunteer's skills, talents and interests to the individual needs of people with intellectual disabilities. This is achieved by identifying volunteer's skills and strengths through interview, registration or application form; linking activities through summer camps and clubs; matching up hobbies and interests. Two respondents reported that their organisations don't match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests to the individual needs of people with intellectual disabilities.

Twenty three respondents reported that their organisations **promote the relationship between volunteers and people with intellectual disabilities** through:

- Friendship Schemes e.g. Best Buddies
- Recognising, supporting and valuing the contribution of volunteers
- Training / Person Centred Plans
- Adequate Supervision
- Social and Community Outings

These strategies are also used to promote the relationship between volunteers and people with intellectual disabilities and are supported by:

- Providing regular feedback
- Sharing common interests
- Being Involved in Special Olympics Networks
- Nurturing Awareness of Disability Issues

Respondents indicated that their organisations **promote the relationship between volunteers and paid staff** through the following methods:

- Providing Induction training
- Giving staff responsibility for recruitment of volunteers
- Promoting relationships
- Ensuring ongoing encouragement and reassurance
- Ensuring good communication processes
- Outlining clear allocation of roles / duties for volunteers

These strategies are also used to promote the relationship between volunteers and paid staff and are supported by:

- Staff participation in training programmes for volunteers
- Staff involvement in ongoing support for volunteers
- Reassuring both staff and volunteers that they have a complementary role in the organisation
- Encouraging staff to invite volunteers to staff parties/meals and other social engagements

Respondents reported that **Training** is available in the following areas for volunteers:

- Adult/Child Protection
- Manual Handling
- Health & Safety
- First Aid
- Induction Training (including organisation's policies and procedures)
- Personal Outcomes Measures
- Inclusion Training
- Awareness / Attitudes training
- Advocacy Skills
- Coping Skills
- Specific training e.g. how to manage epilepsy, Hep B etc.
- Freedom of Information (for Board of Directors)
- Fundraising Guidelines
- Sports coaching
- Reflection Days

One respondent reported that its organisation provided opportunities for volunteers to participate in the 3rd level Certificate Course in Disabilities Studies.

Respondents reported that Training is delivered within the organisation by a variety of staff members, teams and groups e.g.

- Social Workers
- Social Care Leaders
- Director of Services / Unit Director
- Psychologists
- Area Manager
- Frontline Staff
- Advocacy Groups
- Multi-disciplinary Team
- Project Co-Ordinator e.g. Best Buddies
- Volunteer Co-Ordinator / Officer
- Training Staff

Seven respondents reported that volunteers within their organisations may, on occasion, request specific training on first aid, epilepsy/medical issues, manual handling, crisis prevention, company law for Board of Directors, LAMH speech & language training, etc.

2.7   Insurance & Volunteers

Twenty six respondents reported that their organisations have **insurance** policies in place to protect against **risk and liability** in relation to volunteers e.g.:

- Public / Employers Liability
- Directors and Officers Liability
- Professional Disability Insurance
- Company Driving Insurance

A number of respondents have added qualifiers to this section:

- *"Volunteers are insured to drive company vehicles if they have a clean driving license"*
- *"Volunteers must indemnify the organisation if they are carrying people in their own car"*
- *"Volunteers may need to be over 16 years of age (in some cases, 18) to be insured on the same basis as staff"*
- *"Some organisations include volunteers as a named "group" on their insurance policy"*
- *"Insurers may oblige organisations to provide manual handling & lifting training to volunteers"*

Eighteen respondents indicated that their organisations have **not** adopted any particular strategies for insuring against **risk** in relation to volunteers while ten respondents indicated that their organisations **have** adopted strategies. The main strategies adopted by these organisations are: the recruitment process, training, vetting, insurance, risk assessment and support from local management.

Thirteen respondents reported that their organisations had sought help and advice on risk and insurance issues in relation to volunteering from **external sources**. This advice was sourced from Insurance Companies, National Federation Secretariat, Volunteering Ireland, HSE, IBEC and from their own Board of Directors. Sixteen respondents indicated that their organisations haven't sought advice in relation to volunteering from external sources.

When asked the question did they agree that **training volunteers appropriately can reduce risk and insurance costs**, twenty eight respondents fully supported this statement. Three respondents indicated that they didn't know if training volunteers appropriately can reduce risk and insurance costs. Seven respondents indicated that there are insurance requirements that impact on volunteer training e.g. health & safety, manual handling, first aid, fire training, adult/child protection, garda clearance and/or training specific to the role of the particular volunteer.

2.8   Retention of Volunteers

Eight respondents reported that their organisations require volunteers to sign **volunteer agreements**. The volunteer agreements include some or all of the following elements:

- Time Commitment
- Ethos/Values/Mission of organisation
- Code of conduct, including dignity & respect towards the person who avails of intellectual disability services
- Proposed work activities / place of work
- Reporting of problems
- Confidentiality clause
- Commitment to participate in training / work assessment
- Acceptance of supervision
- Termination of contract

Twenty one respondents reported that their organisations do not require volunteers to sign volunteer agreements and one respondent indicated that they weren't aware if their organisation required volunteers to sign a volunteer agreement.

Respondents from fifteen organisations indicated that their volunteers have a **formal induction** period while a further fifteen respondents indicated that volunteers do not have a formal induction period within their organisations. Where a formal induction period is facilitated for volunteers, it includes the following elements:
- Ethos and philosophy of service
- Awareness of the rights and needs of people with intellectual disability
- Information on intellectual disability services in Ireland
- Good practice guidelines
- Adult/Child protection guidelines/ Safety guidelines
- Befriending ethos
- Relationships / role
- Social behaviour
- Management plans

Twenty respondents indicated that their organisations provide a variety of **supports** (both formal and informal) to volunteers, including: having an open door policy, invitations to attend functions and parties, providing flexible working arrangements, holding bi-monthly support meetings / feedback and providing some informal training. Various strategies are used by these organisations to **retain** volunteers e.g. thank you cards/letters, invitations to social events, bi-monthly support meetings and on-going feedback.

Seventeen respondents indicated that their organisations **plan, organise and monitor the duties** of volunteers through: volunteer agreements, role description, ongoing feedback, rostering, direct supervision, Special Olympics networks, volunteer request forms, including volunteers on attendance sheets, recording hours worked, including voluntary activity in

organisation's Annual Report. Eight respondents indicated that their organisations do not plan, organise and monitor the duties of their volunteers and two respondents indicated that they didn't know.

Fourteen respondents reported that their organisations **provide volunteers with opportunities to feedback and pass on their experiences of volunteering** to others through:

- Recruitment Process
- Providing informal support at local level
- Completing Questionnaires
- Attending bi-monthly meetings
- Attending the organisation's AGM
- Information in Newsletters
- Organising Special Events
- Inputting into Staff Training
- Ongoing Reviews
- Linking with colleges

Nine respondents indicated that their organisations didn't provide specific opportunities for volunteers to feedback and pass on their experiences of volunteering and two respondents indicated that they didn't know.

Nineteen organisations indicated that the contribution of volunteers is **celebrated** within their member organisations through social events, flowers, gifts, cards, newsletter articles, out of pocket expenses, coffee mornings, annual reports, posters, AGM, training, functions specifically for volunteers, etc. Six respondents indicated that their member organisations do not provide any specific celebration for volunteers and one respondent indicated that it didn't know if the contribution of volunteers is celebrated within their organisation.

Organisations would welcome a variety of supports from the National Federation in respect of promoting the **recruitment and retention** of volunteers, for example:	Organisations would welcome a variety of supports from the National Federation in respect of promoting the **recognition** of volunteers, for example:
- Policy / Guidelines - Volunteer Handbook - On-line Network/Sharing Group - Training Opportunities	- Invitation to Social Events - National Volunteering Day - Flowers / Gifts / Cards - Training Opportunities

2.9   Risk Assessment & Risk Management of Volunteers

Nineteen respondents indicated that their organisations didn't carry out **risk assessments** for volunteering and one respondent indicated that they didn't know. Seven respondents indicated that their organisations carried out risk assessments for volunteering as needed and these were carried out by a variety of staff members e.g.

- Key Worker
- Health & Safety Co-Ordinator
- Quality Manager
- Occupational Therapist (manual handling)
- Nurse (CNM2)

- Event Co-Ordinator
- Unit Manager

Only three respondents indicated that their organisations have a **risk management plan** in place specifically for volunteers. The risk assessment and analysis is carried out by staff members, including Director of Services, Quality Co-Ordinator, Safety Manager and Occupational Health Clinic staff. Twenty three organisations do not have a risk management plan in place specifically for volunteers and one organisation indicated that it didn't know if they had a plan in place. The three respondents who indicated that their organisations have a risk management plan in place specifically for volunteers highlighted the main elements of their plans, including:

- Safety Control Measures / Hazards
- Supervision
- Respect and Dignity for People with Intellectual Disability
- Confidentiality
- Organisation's guidelines and policies
- Definition of Role - matching people with activities
- Health & Safety (Induction)
- Training – including Manual Handling, Safe Work Practices
- Referees (2 referees)
- Garda Vetting
- Interview
- Medical Certificate
- Volunteer not involved in personal / intimate care
- Volunteers are not permitted to invite the person they support e.g. the person who avails of intellectual disability services, to their home without permission
- Overall risk assessment for all activities and facilities

In a number of organisations, respondents indicated that their risk management strategy for volunteers is part of the wider general risk management strategy for the organisation.

Seven respondents indicated that their organisations use **sources, guides and techniques** to devise the risk management plan for volunteers including; external trainers, adaptation of national governing bodies risk management guidelines, parent organisation policy documents, service risk management policy, models of best practice service delivery for people with intellectual disability, range of health & safety / code of conduct guidelines, Volunteering Ireland resources and material sourced from other similar organisations providing disability services.

Four respondents indicated that their organisations had some problems in implementing their organisations risk management plan for volunteers, i.e.

- Co-ordinating training – people not having time to attend training event
- Resource implications of assessing each individual volunteer placement in terms of health & safety and risk management
- Balancing definition and eligibility with practical requirements to ensure the safety of the person with intellectual disability

2.10 Vision and Commitment to Volunteering

Twenty four respondents outlined their organisations **vision and commitment** to volunteering. They outlined the valuable contribution of volunteers to their organisation and particularly to the social inclusion and community participation of people with intellectual disability. One

organisation outlined that they "*recognise the value of the volunteer's commitment to the overall strategy of inclusion. Volunteers may be the advocates of the future and participants in delivering a person centred service.*"

Volunteer/student programmes have been developed and the Best Buddies and Friends Indeed programmes have been integrated into a number of organisations. Training and support are also provided and respondents indicated that their organisations are exploring ways of recruiting more volunteers.

The value and ethos of volunteering is acknowledged in many organisation's annual reports, strategic plans etc. A number of respondents from smaller organisations indicated that while their organisations do not have a formal commitment to volunteering, they acknowledge that it has a vital contribution to make in terms of developing friendships, improving quality of life and enhancing the range of life experiences available to people with intellectual disability.

Twenty five respondents outlined that volunteers contribute to their **organisation's value and ethos** by:

- Enhancing service delivery
- Enhancing the quality of life of people with intellectual disability e.g. through developing friendships and maximising opportunities for personal growth
- Enabling people with intellectual disability to achieve their full potential and live ordinary lives
- Promoting social inclusion and community participation of people with intellectual disability
- Being central to the voluntary ethos/identity of organisations

Five respondents indicated that their organisations were involved in **employer voluntary schemes** to promote inclusive opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities e.g. fundraising events, social economy scheme, community employment scheme, VEC scheme (through FETAC). Nineteen respondents indicated that their organisations were not involved in employer voluntary schemes and one respondent indicated that they didn't know.

Ten respondents reported that their organisations support and encourage **people with intellectual disabilities to become volunteers**. Sixteen respondents reported that their organisations did not have any specific strategies to support and encourage people with intellectual disabilities to become volunteers and two respondents reported that they didn't know. Respondents indicated that there are currently 24 people with intellectual disability in a volunteering role and the strategies used to encourage and support them to volunteer include:

- Researching Social Role with Community
- Matching Interests
- Encouraging involvement in fund-raising / coaching / refereeing
- Encouraging volunteering in community through Person Centred Planning process (in charity shops, tidy towns, sponsored walks, churches)
- Becoming involved in Special Olympics Networks
- Developing Friendship Schemes
- Developing Life Skills Programme
- Facilitating Training & Supported Employment
- Becoming involved in Community & Arts Programmes
- Registering as a Casualty Actor with local Civil Defence Group
- Becoming involved in Local Interest Groups

Sixteen respondents indicated that their organisations had **selection** requirements for volunteers including:

- Application form
- Garda clearance
- Medical form
- References
- Assessment for suitability for role
- Interview
- Probationary period
- Training
- Time commitment

In some cases, volunteers may need to have their own transport or they may need to be over eighteen years of age. Eleven respondents indicated that their organisations did not have selection requirements for volunteers.

Twenty two respondents outlined the **resources** allocated by their organisation to volunteer development while a number of these organisations indicated that there is no budget within their organisation for volunteer involvement or development. Where resources are deployed – both staff and financial – respondents were concerned that these may not be adequate for the number of volunteers in the organisation. One respondent commented: "*There is very little funding set aside for the programme. I usually operate from my own pocket and then seek to be reimbursed at the end of each month*." A number of respondents indicated that their organisations are currently examining the allocation of a budget for volunteering activities within their organisations.

Eight respondents indicated that their organisations have a **volunteer handbook** (guidelines) while twenty respondents indicated that their organisations did not have a volunteer handbook or guidelines.

Seven respondents reported that their organisations were involved in **volunteer programmes/schemes** e.g. Best Buddies, Friendship Schemes, Advocacy schemes, Fast Friends, Breakaway, Special Olympics network, RDA, Friends Indeed. Five respondents reported that their organisations were currently developing volunteer programmes/schemes and fourteen respondents indicated that they were not involved with volunteer programmes or schemes within their organisation.

2.11 Volunteer Involvement in the Decision Making Process

Nineteen respondents indicated that volunteers are represented in their organisations **wider decision-making** process e.g. on Boards of Management, sub-committees, limited liability companies within the service and through their contribution to the organisation's review process. Eleven respondents indicated that volunteers are not represented in their organisations wider decision-making process.

Twenty one respondents shared their organisations view of the role of volunteer involvement in key decision making:

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Role of Volunteer Involvement in Decision Making

- Involvement in Advocacy Supports for People with Intellectual Disabilities
- Important part of Individual Planning Process (Person Centred Planning)
- Involvement in Board of Directors - key decision makers for organisation
- Involvement in Organisational Consultation Process
- Involvement in Services Provision
- Involvement in Social Programmes
- Role at Strategic Planning level
- Involvement in developing role descriptions
- National Health Strategy
- Finance
- Fund-raising
- Brings an external perspective
- Campaigning for change

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One respondent indicated that the involvement of volunteers in decision-making enabled their organisation to engage in a more holistic approach to service delivery.

When asked what their experiences were in relation to the **challenges of volunteer involvement in key decision making**, fifteen respondents reported that their organisations involvement was very positive and worked well and enhanced the volunteer perception and focus within the organisation. One respondent indicated that, for their organisation, "the challenge is to attract appropriate key business players who can bring influence and knowledge" to the organisation. A number of respondents detailed their organisations particular strategies to increase/maintain the involvement of volunteers in decision making:

- *"The strategy employed aims to identify deficits within the Board of Management expertise and to recruit appropriate qualified volunteers."*
- *"Effective communication and always be prepared to say 'thank you' and have an effective reward system"*
- *"We advertise the branch structure and encourage people to join. Our current strategic plan has building partnerships as one of its four priorities. We have parents on a number of "Improvement Projects" within the agency. We have invited people with particular expertise i.e. the local bank manager is a member of the finance committee."*

2.12 Key Volunteering Issues & Challenges

2.12.1 Key Issues and Challenges

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key issues and challenges**, in respect of volunteering, **for people with intellectual disabilities**:

- Time commitment from volunteers e.g. long-term rather than a short-term commitment, and especially at evening/night time/weekend
- Continuity of relationships / development of meaningful friendships and relationships
- Developing trust and confidence
- Volunteers keeping appropriate professional distance – developing boundaries
- Expansion of Garda vetting to cover volunteers

- Communication difficulties e.g. dealing with people who come from a different culture and who may speak a different language
- Empowering people with intellectual disability and supporting them in making choices
- Safeguarding people with intellectual disability from exploitation
- Selection & matching of suitable persons

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key issues and challenges**, in respect of volunteering, **for families or guardians**:

- It can sometimes be difficult to balance safety/protection of person with intellectual disability with "letting go" issues by families
- It would be helpful for families if Garda vetting was extended to cover volunteers
- It can sometimes be a challenge to find the right match for the person with intellectual disability
- Developing trust and confidence between family and volunteer can be challenging
- It can be difficult to sustain continuity of relationships, especially if the role of the volunteer is short-term
- It is essential for families that confidentiality is maintained at all times
- Its important for families to have clarity around the exact role of volunteer

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key issues and challenges**, in respect of volunteering, **for organisations**:

- It would be helpful to have guidance around the development of a volunteering policy
- Its important the role of the Volunteer Co-Ordinator/Manager is recognised and supported
- It would be helpful for organisations if Garda vetting was extended to cover volunteers
- Organisations would like strategies / guidance around:

  ▪ Support, Supervision and Monitoring of volunteers
  ▪ Induction and ongoing training of volunteers
  ▪ Insurance issues
  ▪ Confidentiality issues
  ▪ Assessing Risk
  ▪ Recruiting more male volunteers
  ▪ Recruiting younger volunteers to address an aging volunteer force
  ▪ Retaining, Motivating and Celebrating volunteers

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key issues and challenges**, in respect of volunteering, **for volunteers**:

- A clear definition of the role of the volunteer within the organisation is essential
- Volunteers need a good understanding and awareness of intellectual disability
- It can be a challenge for volunteers to give a certain time commitment and then maintain that commitment
- Communication difficulties between person with intellectual disability and volunteer can pose challenges
- Its important for volunteers that the matching process with the person with intellectual disability is successful

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key issues and challenges**, in respect of volunteering, **for paid staff**:

- It would be helpful to have a formal policy for volunteers
- It is important that there is mutual respect between staff and volunteers and that staff understand and acknowledge the complementary role of volunteers
- A clear definition of each person's role in the organisation is essential
- On occasions it can be a challenge coping with difficulties that may arise when volunteers leave the organisation
- Challenges can also arise around:
  - o Communication difficulties between volunteer and person with intellectual disability
  - o Supervision of volunteers
  - o Developing programmes to incorporate volunteers
  - o Provision for positive feedback to the volunteer

2.12.2   Elements of Volunteering Policy that are working well

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key elements of their Volunteering Policy** that are working well for **people with intellectual disabilities:**

- The one-to-one friendship that results from the contribution of volunteers is invaluable to the person with intellectual disability and enables them to live more independent lives
- People with intellectual disability can live life to their full potential and can access a wider range of opportunities and experiences

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key elements of their Volunteering Policy** that are working well for **families or guardians:**

- Families can be confident that best practice recruitment, vetting and selection procedures are in place

- Families can be assured that trust and confidentiality will be maintained

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key elements of their Volunteering Policy** that are working well for **their own organisation:**

- It provides the organisation with a fresh approach to service delivery
- Organisations can be confident that good practice is being implemented
- Organisations can provide a suitable match between the person with intellectual and the volunteer
- It can lead to enhanced quality of service e.g. more choice in activities available to people who avail of services
- It allows organisations to achieve their aims within a shorter timeframe
- It increases the diversity of people working within the organisation
- It enhances the voluntary ethos of organisations

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key elements of their Volunteering Policy** that are working well for **volunteers:**

- It provides volunteers with access to training opportunities
- It provides volunteers with experiences which may help them secure future employment
- It provides an opportunity to work as part of a team and contribute to the overall aims of the organisation
- Having a volunteering policy in place can highlight the value and contribution of volunteers to the success of the organisation

Respondents outlined, in their view, the **key elements of their Volunteering Policy** that are working well for **paid staff:**

- It can enhance the quality of service provided by the organisation
- It can lead to greater mutual respect between staff and volunteers and an understanding and acknowledgement of the complementary role of volunteers and paid staff
- It allows more variety in programmes
- It provides staff with a corps of volunteers who will enable them to achieve their aims and objectives

2.12.3   Volunteering Ethos / Monitoring & Evaluation

Respondents outlined how their organisations have maintained a **volunteering ethos** by utilising some of the following methods:

- Appointing a staff person in the organisation who has responsibility for volunteers e.g. Volunteer Co-Ordinator
- Developing personal outcome training for staff which will increasingly give support for volunteer involvement
- Maintaining an open culture
- Developing a Volunteering Policy
- Ensuring ongoing recruitment and supervision of volunteers
- Celebrating and recognising the role of the volunteer (including information on volunteering programmes in the organisation's annual report, strategic plan etc.)
- Ongoing development of the school and citizen Buddy programme

Fifteen respondents reported that their organisations had **developed particular strategies/initiatives** to overcome the obstacles of volunteering that they would recommend to other Member Organisations, while four respondents reported that they didn't have any particular strategies/initiatives. The particular strategies/initiatives highlighted by the fifteen respondents included:

- Continued support and recognition of the valuable contribution of volunteers
- Involvement in transition year projects e.g. community placements and work placements.
- Involvement in Gaisce awards for students.
- Acknowledgement of the value and contribution of volunteers
- Assuring volunteers of flexibility within organisations' structures
- Provision of information and training to staff, families and people who avail of intellectual disability services about the benefits of volunteer involvement and the inclusion of the Best Buddies Programme.
- Contacting the Career Guidance Counsellors in your area and organise careers seminars. Invite 5th/6th years along and have a volunteer/student work experience stand along with the other 'professional' stands.

Four respondents indicated that their organisation has a system and/or procedures in place for **monitoring and evaluating volunteers' tasks**, while one respondent indicated that it didn't. Comments included:

- *"A project co-ordinator assesses and ensures tasks assigned are carried out"*
- *"Manager of volunteer services meets with each volunteer on a regular basis to review their volunteer agreement"*
- *"Information is gathered informally"*
- *"3 month probation period after which they are assessed for suitability"*
- *"They have an evaluation at the end of 3 months where they get feedback from their peers and those in supervisory positions"*
- *"Individual service user / volunteer agenda"*
- *"Volunteers are encouraged to contact the volunteer co-ordinator on a regular basis"*
- *"Co-ordinator maintains regular telephone, text and email contact and arranges regional meetings/forums"*

2.13 Future of Volunteering

Respondents listed a variety of actions required to ensure **that the value and benefits of volunteers** is on the strategy agenda **within their own organisation**:

The suggestions included:
- Employment of a Volunteer Co-Ordinator
- Inclusion of volunteering in the organisation's strategy and policy documents
- Ensuring management commitment to volunteering
- Establishment of a volunteer development committee
- Commitment to core funding for volunteer programmes
- Development of a Volunteering Policy
- Ongoing review of volunteering strategy and policy – including external review
- Induction and ongoing training
- Involvement of volunteers in organisation working groups, meetings, decision making process, etc.

Respondents outlined some of the actions required to ensure that the **value and benefits of volunteers** is on the strategy agenda **within the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies.** This may be achieved by:

- Ensuring Garda Clearance is available for volunteers
- Acting as a central resource for development of National Federation Volunteering Strategy and Volunteering Policy
- Seeking funding at a national level e.g. from Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs
- Linking with volunteering groups e.g. Volunteering Ireland
- Sharing of training opportunities – induction and ongoing training
- Documenting what is happening nationally and ongoing communication and sharing of information with organisations
- Highlighting good practice – both national and international
- Promoting volunteering in intellectual disability services
- Sharing of training opportunities
- Providing direction on insurance/ risks
- Continuing the work and development of the National Federation Volunteer Sub Committee.

- Encouraging all members/or the Volunteering Sub-committee to enter discussions regarding the possibility of developing a unified 'Federation Volunteer Policy' that covers all aspects of volunteering and which could be welcomed and adapted by all member organisations
- Recognising the valued work of volunteers by providing newsletter articles relative to volunteers
- Organising an National Federation of Voluntary Bodies day/conference/seminar, along the lines of, or in conjunction with, Volunteering Ireland's PAVMI Group

To the question "**in the past five years has the number of volunteers within your organisation increased, decreased or remained the same**?" seventeen respondents reported that the numbers of volunteers within their organisations had increased, three respondents reported that they had decreased, and eight respondents reported that the numbers had remained the same. The respondents who reported that the numbers of volunteers within their organisation had increased or remained the same outlined the use of the following strategies:

- Word of mouth has proved very valuable in recruiting volunteers
- Appointment of Volunteer Service Manager / Volunteer Co-Ordinator with organisation
- Development of Volunteer Policy
- Development of partnerships with the local community for local activities e.g. golf, swimming, table tennis, club activities etc.
- Organising talks in local schools, promoting inclusion of people with disabilities, developing awareness of disability issues and encouraging pupils to get involved.
- Following the success of the 2003 Special Olympics Host Town Programmes, new Special Olympics networks have been established.
- Introduction of the Best Buddy Programme
- Friends Indeed new pilot initiative
- Partnerships with external groups who would make use of organisation's facilities, leading to an awareness of disability issues
- Development of Volunteer packs
- Campaign via church newsletters
- Information sharing evenings

It is also noted that a number of organisations who indicated that their numbers have increased or remained the same have only recently developed their volunteer programme (i.e. in the past 1-2 years).

Fourteen respondents indicated that their organisations had no **concerns about maintaining the involvement of volunteers in the future**, twelve respondents indicated that they had concerns and one respondent indicated that they didn't know. Comments from the twelve member organisations who indicated that they had concerns about maintaining the involvement of volunteers in the future include the following:

- *"I feel that there needs to be more time put into the co-ordinating of the volunteer programme. If we are to maintain and recruit other volunteers, we will need a dedicated staff person for this."*
- *"It is difficult to obtain long term commitments. It appears that there is a better response to projects which are short term."*
- *"If not funded adequately then the support won't be there to maintain volunteers."*
- *"Unless we have a more co-ordinated approach and seek out avenues for utilising volunteers, the momentum may decline."*
- *"Provide ongoing support and continue to recognise their contribution, not to leave them to their own devices."*

- *"The remit for a service-wide programme without additional staff to support the volunteer co-ordinator will be difficult to maintain"*
- *"With full employment in the country the amount of volunteers are limited and seem to remain in the bracket of retired people"*
- *"Garda Clearance has to be available for all volunteers"*

Where respondents had reported concerns about maintaining the involvement of volunteers in their organisations in the future, the following were some of the comments expressed:

- *"Funding has been applied for under the department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to employ a volunteer co-ordinator"*
- *"Planning to review current policy"*
- *"Network with other Agencies to tap into what works well for them"*
- *"Develop a recruitment plan for the future with the extension of our Day service facility"*
- *"The area of volunteer recruitment etc. is being included in strategic discussions and will be a major area for the development of our Recreational Services"*
-

Only six respondents indicated that their organisations had a **volunteer recruitment plan for the future,** twenty one respondents indicated that their organisations didn't have a volunteer recruitment plan for the future and two respondents indicated that they didn't know. Comments from the six respondents whose organisations had a volunteer recruitment plan for the future include:

- *"We intend to use the same recruitment plan that we have been using to date as well as to go to community groups and target particular groups for example, youth groups, women's groups, men's groups etc."*
- *"Continue to recruit through all local newspapers etc."*
- *"Target the recruitment of volunteers with specific skills e.g. advertising in language schools for interpreters."*
- *"There has been no major recruitment campaign in the past year in terms of advertising etc., designing new literature, etc. so this is on the agenda."*
- *"We advertise twice a year in January and September of each year"*
- *"In 2006 we requested each staff member and volunteer to recruit one volunteer"*
- *"To recruit more companion Buddy volunteers to support service-users to participate more fully in activities/programmes in their local communities at night time."*
- *"The Volunteer Coordinator has interviewed each supervisor and their requirements and there is a need for 60 new volunteers for the service bringing the numbers to 160 approx."*
- *"Continued promotion of roles through internet and poster ads"*

2.14 National and International Volunteering Events

The survey also contained questions on the impact of national and international events on volunteering activity within member organisations.

In answer to the question "what impact had the **European Year of People with Disabilities** on volunteering activity within your organisation?" three respondents indicated that it had a high impact on volunteering activity within their organisations and four respondents indicated that it had a medium impact on volunteering activity within their organisations. The remaining twenty two respondents indicated that it had low/no impact or else they weren't aware of the impact of

this event on volunteering activity within their organisations. The respondents who indicated that it had a high or medium impact within their organisations highlighted that:

- *"it created awareness, and"*
- *"It highlighted the cause of people with intellectual disability"*

A number of the respondents who indicated it had a low or no impact within their organisations commented that:

- *"Many of those involved were already volunteers"*
- *"Nothing substantial came from it – it was a once-off initiative"*
- *"We were not in a position to capitalise on benefits"*

In answer to the question "what impact had the **UN International Year of Volunteers** on volunteering activity within your organisation?" one respondent indicated that it had a high impact on volunteering activity within their organisation and three respondents indicated that it had a medium impact. Twenty five respondents indicated it had low/no impact or else they weren't aware of the impact of this event on volunteering activity within their organisation.

The respondents who indicated that it had a high or medium impact highlighted that it increased awareness and "made me organise an event for volunteering". A number of the respondents who indicated that it had low/no impact within their organisations commented that:

- *"Didn't know when it was (when was it?)"*
- *"Not enough media coverage – not as well highlighted as European Year of People with Disabilities"*
- *"No volunteers joined as a result"*

In relation to the impact of the **Special Olympics 2003**, which were held in Ireland, over eighteen respondents indicated that it had a high impact on volunteering activity within their organisation, with six respondents indicating that it had a medium impact. Four respondents indicated that it had a low impact and two organisations indicated that it had no impact on volunteering activity within their organisation. Comments from organisations who indicated that the Special Olympics 2003 had a high impact include:

- *"Increased Awareness and dispelled prejudices"*
- *"Promoted inclusion of people with intellectual disability"*
- *"Highlighted abilities of people with intellectual disability"*
- *"Introduced volunteering ethos to public"*
- *"Brought volunteering to local level"*
- *"Created links to services and service users/families"*
- *"Breaking down barriers"*
- *"Time of great pride - feel good factor"*
- *"Short term volunteering commitment"*

One of the comments from a respondent who indicated that it had low/no impact on volunteering activity within their organisation highlighted that it was *"difficult to capitalise on its success as involvement was short term".*

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 Conclusions

The high response rate to the National Federation volunteering survey, with 62% of total respondents completing the survey questionnaire, indicates a very high level of interest among member organisations in developing volunteering supports for people with intellectual disability that will enable them to live the life of their own choice in their own community.

The Government's White Paper (2000) Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity outlines that "voluntary activity forms the very core of all vibrant and inclusive societies." This is reiterated by the Government Taskforce on Active Citizenship Report which documents that "in …… communities we have rights and responsibilities to be active – to care for ourselves and others" (2007). These statements are borne out in the findings of our volunteering survey which highlight that just over 50% of our member organisations have 3,000+ volunteers making a valuable contribution to the lives of people with intellectual disability, making volunteering an integral part of community activity within these organisations. Volunteering is thus "one of the cornerstones of social capital and a civil society" (Volunteer Centres Ireland – www.volunteer.ie).

Respondents definitions of volunteering are very much in line with the definition outlined in the Government White Paper "Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity" which was published in 2000. The White Paper defines volunteering as "the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society, local communities, individuals outside the immediate family, the environment or other causes. Voluntary activities are undertaken of a person's own free will, without payment". Respondents to this survey outlined the benefits of volunteering in their definitions and highlighted the "non-payment" element associated with volunteering e.g. *"The volunteer is someone who gives of his/her free time and energy for the benefit of the service-user. It is undertaken freely by choice without any concern for financial gain."*

The 3,029 people who are currently volunteering in thirty three of our member organisations contribute approximately 7 hours per person per month to services for people with intellectual disability. 89% of these respondents indicated that the number of volunteers within their organisation had increased or remained the same in the past five years. The volunteers were all recruited locally with local bulletins/newsletters and word of mouth being the most successful methods of recruitment to date. While respondents indicated that their organisations needed support and advice in relation to risk management of volunteers, a number of respondents indicated training as one of the key elements in insuring against risk in relation to volunteers. The majority of organisations provide induction and ongoing training for volunteers.

The survey findings indicated that the main roles played by volunteers within member organisations are at an organisational level e.g. members of boards of management and fundraisers. These are closely followed by the role of Befrienders/Buddies. This is interesting when compared with the answers by respondents to the question "outline the contribution of volunteers to your organisation's value and ethos". While respondents indicated that the contribution of volunteers was central to the voluntary ethos of the organisations, they indicated that the main contribution of volunteers was focused around enhancing the quality of life and in promoting the social inclusion and community participation of people with intellectual disability. A number of organisations reported that their boards of management did not come under their volunteering policy and this may have been a factor when responding to the question.

Respondents indicated that over 70% of volunteers are female and that 45% of all volunteers are in the 50+ age group. This ageing profile poses a challenge to organisations to recruit younger volunteers and develop strategies that will sustain their long term interest in volunteering in services. A number of respondents indicated that they are now involved in school programmes, e.g. transition year student programmes, Gaisce awards, Special Olympics networks etc. which

will help to develop awareness and highlight the benefits of volunteering among younger people. Recent research carried out in the UK highlighted that "women were more likely than men to volunteer in organisations whose main field of interest was education and health/disability …………" (Helping Out – A National Survey of Volunteering and Charitable Giving, 2007). And an Institute of Volunteering research bulletin also indicated that a higher proportion of women volunteered than men and that people in the 35-44 and 55-64 age groups volunteered more than other age groups (Who Gives Time Now? Patterns of Participation in Volunteering, 2007).

While 84% of organisations reported that they match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests to the individual needs of people with intellectual disabilities, 71% of respondents indicated that people with intellectual disability are not involved in selecting volunteering opportunities within their organisation and 62% of respondents indicated that volunteers are not involved in selecting volunteering opportunities. It is also important that staff are involved in the process so that mutual trust and respect and a recognition of the complementary roles of both staff and volunteers can be developed. Volunteer Centres Ireland recommends that you gain the support of your management team as early as possible in the development of the volunteering programme and that staff should also be involved in the recruitment process in order to gain their trust and confidence in the volunteering programme (Volunteer Centres Ireland - www.volunteer.ie).

The contribution of volunteers is celebrated locally through social events, sending flowers, cards, writing newsletter articles, payment of out of pocket expenses, coffee mornings, involvement in their AGM etc. The recognition of the valuable contribution of volunteers is seen as an essential element of retaining volunteers

According to respondents, the European International Year of People with Disabilities and the UN International Year of Volunteers 2001 had little or no impact on volunteering activities within their organisations. This contrasts significantly with the impact of the Special Olympics which were held in Ireland in 2003 with 78% of respondents indicating that it had a high/medium impact on volunteering activity with their organisation. Respondents indicated that the Special Olympics promoted awareness and dispelled prejudices; highlighted the abilities of people with intellectual disability; introduced the volunteering ethos to the wider public and enhanced volunteering at a local level.

Active Citizenship of People with Intellectual Disability

As we outlined earlier, services provided by National Federation member organisations are rooted in the rights based perspective that people with intellectual disability have the right to live full and active lives and be active participating members of their own community. People need to be not just present in the community but be engaged in the community and be empowered to play a valued role within the community. Participatory research, facilitated by the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, highlighted issues that are important to people with intellectual disability in order for them to live the life of their choice and be meaningfully included in their own communities. People Connecting identified some very important issues for the National Federation which would help people with intellectual disability to live ordinary lives:

- "We need you to promote our right to independence and the right to make our own decisions.
- We need you to understand the importance of us having friends, and to support us to meet up with our friends to do things we like to do.
- We need you to support us to live and work in places of our own choice and with people who have similar interests.
- We need you to support us to take risks like everyone else." (People Connecting, National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, 2007)

One of the ways of achieving this is by supporting and enabling people with intellectual disability to undertake volunteering roles within their own community. Respondents to the survey indicated

that there was a very low number of people with intellectual disability in a volunteering role in their community. The Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship highlights many of the benefits of being an active citizen including the fact that active citizenship can be very rewarding "in terms of personal development and making friends, as well as the satisfaction of giving back to the community and contributing to the common good". It emphasises that "active citizens shape strong, healthy, inclusive societies" (Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship, 2007). The reciprocal nature of the volunteering relationship will support people with intellectual disability to live a fair and just life and be active, participating members of their own community.

Benefits of Volunteering

Respondents outlined the benefits of volunteering programmes and initiatives for people with intellectual disability, for volunteers and for organisations:

- *Benefits for People with Intellectual Disability:* The main benefits outlined for people who avail of intellectual disability services were: enhancing community involvement; enhancing quality of life and personal growth; enabling participation in mainstream activities e.g. recreation, arts etc.; helping to break down barriers and enable awareness; enabling friendships and relationships; developing new skills and; reducing the levels of social inclusion and contributing to the active citizenship of people who avail of intellectual disability services.
- *Benefits for Volunteers:* The main benefits outlined for volunteers were: wanting to give something back; stepping stone to employment; experiencing personal satisfaction and a feel-good factor
- *Benefits for Organisation:* The main benefits outlined for organisations were: providing friendship/companionship/circle of friends to people with intellectual disability; sharing volunteers valuable talents and ideas with the organisation; enhancing community integration and social inclusion of people with intellectual disability; enhancing service delivery; complementing staff roles; offering new experiences and variety of choice to people with intellectual disability; and contributing to a better quality of life to people with intellectual disability

Support for Member Organisations

Member organisations indicated that support at national level would be welcomed from two main sources:

- *National Federation:* Respondents indicated that member organisations would welcome advice and support from the National Federation on developing a volunteering policy for their organisation. Support would also be welcomed around developing volunteering structures/systems; researching evidence based best practice; advising on insurance / risk assessment; extending the garda vetting service to volunteers; developing a handbook for volunteers; inviting volunteers to social events e.g. conferences, seminars; developing a network of volunteer co-ordinators; and online assistance including: discussion forum for sharing ideas; and developing a volunteering information resource. In his research study published in 2004, Dr. Padraig MacNeela highlights that "Devising a strategy and policies on volunteering helps voluntary groups remain clear in planning what role volunteering should have as circumstances change" (Individual and Organisations: An Exploration of the Volunteering Process in Health & Social Care Groups, 2004)

- *Government:* As recommended in Tipping the Balance (2002) volunteering centres - Volunteer Centres Ireland, a national infrastructure of volunteer centres - have now been set up in sixteen centres throughout Ireland, with the support of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. These centres will provide support to volunteer-involving organisations and individual volunteers throughout the country.

Respondents outlined that one of the main challenges they faced in maintaining their volunteering programme into the future was a lack of funding resources. A dedicated budget resource for volunteering activities within the organisation would support the ongoing management of volunteering activities and enable more of our member organisations to avail of the valuable contribution of volunteers. The Active Citizenship Report highlights that "voluntary effort must go hand in hand with Government support and provision" (Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship 2007).

Strategy Agenda of National Federation

Respondents outlined some of the actions required to ensure that the value and benefits of volunteers is on the strategy agenda within the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies. This can be achieved by:

- Ensuring Garda Clearance is available for volunteers
- Acting as a central resource for development of National Federation Volunteering Strategy and Volunteering Policy
- Seeking funding at a national level e.g. from Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs
- Linking with volunteering groups e.g. Volunteering Ireland
- Sharing of training opportunities – induction and ongoing training
- Documenting what is happening nationally and ongoing communication and sharing of information with organisations
- Highlighting good practice – both national and international
- Promoting volunteering in intellectual disability services
- Providing direction on insurance/ risks
- Continuing the work and development of the National Federation Volunteering Sub Committee.
- Recognising the valued work of volunteers by providing newsletter articles outlining the role played by volunteers in the lives of people with intellectual disability
- Organising a National Federation of Voluntary Bodies day/conference/seminar, along the lines of, or in conjunction with, Volunteering Ireland's Professional Association of Volunteer Managers Ireland (PAVMI) Group

Challenges

A number of respondents indicated that their organisation had concerns about maintaining the involvement of volunteers into the future mainly due to the lack of a dedicated staff person to manage their volunteer programme, lack of funding to support the programme, lack of garda vetting for volunteers, the ageing profile of volunteers; difficulty in obtaining long-term commitment from volunteers; difficulty in recruiting male volunteers, etc. The following recommendations have been identified as a means of overcoming these challenges. The National Federation Research Strategy 2008-2013, which is currently being prepared for publication, will also enable a number of these recommendations to be progressed during the lifetime of the strategy.

3.2 Recommendations

National Federation

1. **Volunteering Policy & Supports:** Develop National Federation best practice guidelines to support volunteering activity and the development of natural support networks within member organisations.

2. **Strategies for recruiting new volunteers:** While recruitment strategies are in place for volunteers, strategies need to be developed for the recruitment of second and third level students as volunteers including, involvement in transition year projects, Gaisce awards, Best Buddies Programme, intellectual disability awareness training etc.

3. **Enhance Links with external bodies:** Develop ongoing dialogue/ co-operation with external stakeholders, e.g. Volunteer Centres Ireland (a network of local volunteers centres), Volunteering Ireland, Office of Active Citizenship, Department of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs, Business in the Community Ireland, Special Olympics Ireland, Professional Association of Volunteer Managers Ireland (PAVMI) etc.

4. **Volunteer Co-Ordinator/Manager Network:** Provide support for a National Federation Volunteer Co-Ordinator/Manager Network e.g. dissemination of evidence based research etc.

5. **Mentoring:** Develop a panel of mentors, drawn from existing Volunteer Co-Ordinators, who, through the support of their organisations, would provide support and guidance to organisations who are interested in recruiting volunteers. This is currently happening on an informal basis, where Volunteer Co-Ordinators/Managers, based on their areas of expertise, provide invaluable support and guidance for member organisations who are in the process of developing volunteer programmes.

6. **Garda Vetting:** In order to ensure the safety and protection of people who avail of intellectual disability services, campaign for vetting procedures to be implemented for volunteers, similar to the procedures that are already in place for staff.

7. **Volunteer Resource Pack:** Develop National Federation best practice pack for volunteers, including volunteer agreement, role description etc.

8. **Funding:** Source options for funding opportunities for volunteering in intellectual disability services.

These recommendations will be implemented by the National Federation, with the support, guidance and expertise of the National Federation Volunteering Sub-Committee.

Member Organisations

1. **Co-Ordinator/Manager:** In order to enable and fully support volunteering activities, member organisations should give consideration to the employment of a full-time Co-Ordinator / Manager to oversee all aspects of their volunteering and other natural support networks. The Volunteer Co-Ordinator/Manager would support frontline managers to recruit and maintain their own team of volunteers locally. Frontline managers would then take on day to day responsibility for all volunteers and volunteering activities within their own local teams. This would ensure a harmonious blend of paid and unpaid teams working together locally to improve the quality of life of the person who is availing of intellectual disability services.

2. **Dedicated Budget Resource:** Resources should be ringfenced for the development and support of volunteer programmes within each member organisation which will recognise the duty and responsibility of the organisation towards its volunteers.

3. **Inclusion Policy:** In keeping with the principles of person centredness, people who avail of intellectual disability services, families, and local frontline staff should be involved in the recruitment and selection process for volunteers.

4. **Celebration of Volunteers:** Celebrate the valuable contribution of volunteers at local level to ensure their continued involvement in the lives of people with intellectual disability.

People with Intellectual Disability

1. **Civic engagement of people with intellectual disability:** Examine the benefits/barriers of people with a disability volunteering in their own community, including the reciprocal nature of civic engagement, so that people with intellectual disability can connect with their own communities and have positive valued social roles within their communities.

2. **Natural Supports:** Volunteering is one of the many forms of natural supports that will enable people who avail of intellectual disability services to live the life of their own choice in their own community. Examine the development of other natural supports around each individual person e.g. relationships with families, friends, neighbours, people living in the community etc. to achieve social inclusion of each individual person who avails of intellectual disability services.

3.3 In Summary

These recommendations will support volunteering activities within member organisations to continue to contribute to the active citizenship and social inclusion of people who avail of intellectual disability services, and to the organisation's values and voluntary ethos, by:

- Enhancing service delivery
- Enhancing the quality of life of people who avail of intellectual disability services e.g. through developing friendships and maximising opportunities for personal growth
- Enabling people who avail of intellectual disability services to be active citizens in their own communities, thereby achieving their full potential and living the life of their choice
- Promoting social inclusion and community participation of people who avail of intellectual disability services.

These recommendations will also support:
- National Federation of Voluntary Bodies Strategic Objectives
- National Federation Research Strategy 2008-2013
- Ireland's National Disability Strategy
- Government's commitment to further developing national policy in support of volunteering and their commitment to people who avail of intellectual disability services to enable them to live the life of their own choice in their own community
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular Article 19 which outlines "*States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community*….." (Article 19, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006).

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- **Volunteer Centres Ireland** – www.volunteer.ie

Appendix 1 – National Federation Member Organisations

- Ability West, Blackrock House, Salthill, Galway
- Ard Aoibhinn Centre, Belvedere Road, Wexford
- Association of Parents & Friends Carrickmacross, Corcrin, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan
- Beam Services, Chestnut Court, Royal Oak Road, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow
- Brothers of Charity Services Clare, Banner House, Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
- Brothers of Charity Services Galway, Woodlands, Renmore, Galway
- Brothers of Charity Services Limerick, Bawnmore, Limerick
- Brothers of Charity Services Roscommon, Lanesbro Street, Roscommon
- Brothers of Charity Services South East, Belmont Park, Waterford
- Brothers of Charity Southern Services, Lota, Glanmire, Co. Cork
- Cairdeas Centre, Tullow, Co. Carlow
- Camphill Communities of Ireland, Ballytobin, Callan, Co. Kilkenny
- Carriglea Cairde Services, Carriglea, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford
- CASA - Caring & Sharing Association, Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7
- Cheeverstown House, Templeogue, Dublin 6W
- Children's Sunshine Home, Leopardstown Road, Foxrock, Dublin 18
- Clann Mór Ltd., Clann Mór House, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
- Clones Branch, Cairde Activation Centre, Canal Stores, Clones, Co. Monaghan
- CoAction West Cork, Slip, Bantry, County Cork
- COPE Foundation, Bonnington, Montenotte, Cork
- Cork Association for Autism, 61 Oliver Plunkett Street, Cork
- County Wexford Community Workshop, Beelefield, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
- County Wexford Community Workshop, Marshmeadows, New Ross, Co. Wexford
- DARA Residential Services, Unit F12, Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
- Daughters of Charity Service, St. Vincent's Centre, Navan Road, Dublin 7
- Delta Centre, Strawhall, Carlow
- Drumlin House, Cootehill, County Cavan
- Gheel Autism Service, Milltown Road, Milltown, Dublin 6
- Holy Angels Day Care Centre, Strawhall Industrial Estate, Carlow
- KARE, Lower Eyre Street, Newbridge, County Kildare
- KASMHA, College Gardens, Callan Road, Kilkenny
- Kerry Parents & Friends Association, Old Monastery, Port Road, Killarney, Co. Kerry
- L'Arche Ireland Secretariat, Cluain Aoibhinn, Fairgreen Lane, Callan, Co. Kilkenny
- Malta Services Drogheda, Industrial Estate, Donore Road, Drogheda
- MIDWAY Services, Beechmount Industrial Estate, Navan, Co. Meath
- Moorehaven Centre, O'Brien Street, Tipperary
- North West Parents & Friends Association, Holy Family Day Centre, Ballytivnan, Sligo
- Peacehaven, 138 Hillside, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
- Peamount, Newcastle, County Dublin
- Prosper Fingal, Vocational Training Centre, Piercetown, Skerries, Co. Dublin
- Rehabcare, Roslyn Park, Beach Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4
- Sisters of Charity of Jesus & Mary, Moore Abbey, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare
- Sisters of La Sagesse, Cregg House, Sligo
- SOS Kilkenny Ltd., Seville Lodge, Callan Road, Kilkenny
- St. Aidan's Service, Millands, Gorey, Co. Wexford
- St. Anne's Service, Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary
- St. Catherine's Association, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow
- St. Christopher's Service, Leamore Park, Battery Road, Longford
- St. Cronan's Association, Grange, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary
- St. Hilda's Services, Grace Park Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
- St. John of God Hospitaller Services, Provincial Administration, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
- St. Joseph's Foundation, Charleville, Co. Cork
- St. Margaret's Centre, Moorehampton Road, Donnybrook, Dublin 4
- St. Michael's House, Ballymun Road, Ballymun, Dublin 9
- St. Patrick's Centre (Kilkenny), Kells Road, Kilkenny
- St. Vincent's Centre, St. Mary's Road, Cork
- Stewarts Hospital Services Ltd., Palmerstown, Dublin 20
- Sunbeam House Services, Cedar Estate, Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
- Tipperary Association, Drangan, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
- Walkinstown Association, 1 Longmile Road, Dublin 12
- Waterford Intellectual Disability Association, Ashley Drive, Spring Garden, Cherrymount, Waterford
- Western Care Association, Pool Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
- Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit, Larkins Lane, South Main Street, Wexford

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES
Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

Appendix 2 – National Federation Volunteering Survey

Section 1: General Information

1. Name of Organisation:	
2. Address:	
3. Name of Respondent:	
4. Job Title:	
5. Email:	
6. Telephone Number:	

Section 2: Demographics of Volunteers

1. **Does your organisation currently have volunteers?**   **Yes[1]** ☐ **No[2]** ☐

2. **How many volunteers do you estimate are currently volunteering in your organisation?**

    Please specify the total number, age groups, gender of volunteers and length of time:

    (a) Total Number of Volunteers:

    (b) Age Groups (approx.)

under 18		30-39 years		50-59 years	
18-30 years		40-49 years		60 years +	

    (c) Gender

Total No. of Male Volunteers		Total No. of Female Volunteers	

    (d) Length of Time

What is the average number of hours per volunteer per month? (e.g., 4 hours)	
How long (approx.) do volunteers stay with your organisation? (e.g., 3 yrs)	
When did your organisation first begin to rely on volunteers? (e.g., 1973)	
Please specify any other relevant information:	

3. **How many volunteers (approx.) have become paid employees in the last 5 years within your organisation?**   *Please specify numbers in each category below.*

    Full Time ☐   **Part-Time** ☐   **Temporary** ☐   **Other** ☐

    (a) Do your volunteers have access to, or receive information on, internal job adverts?

4. **What roles do volunteers have within your organisation?**

---

[1] *If your answer is yes, please proceed to Question 2.*
[2] *If your answer is no, please proceed to Section 3, Questions 2-4 and then proceed to Section 4.*

Please tick as appropriate:

(a) Board of Management		**(g)** Service Provision	
(b) Befrienders / Buddies		**(h)** Campaigners	
(c) Support Workers		**(i)** Community Action	
(d) Drivers		**(j)** Fundraisers	
(e) Escorts		**(k)** Advice/Information	
(f) Advocacy		**(l)** Other(s), please specify	

(b)   How were these volunteers recruited, screened and selected?

Recruited	
Screened	
Selected	

5.   Does your organisation have a full time Volunteer Coordinator?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

(a) If yes, please complete the following:

Name: ☐   Email**:** ☐

(b) If no, does someone in your organisation take on this responsibility part-time?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

♦   If yes, please complete the following:

Name: ☐   Email**:** ☐

Position: ☐

♦   If no, who is responsible for the recruitment of volunteers?

Name: ☐   Email: ☐

Position: ☐

Section 3: Scope of Volunteering

1.   Outline the main motivations/reasons why people volunteer for your organisation?

☐

2.   What benefits do you think volunteers bring to people with intellectual disabilities?

☐

3.   What are the obstacles encountered in the realisation of this benefit?

☐

4. In your opinion:

    (a) How do volunteers contribute to the active citizenship and social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities within their own communities?

> [ ]

    (b) How can organisations strengthen this aspect?

> [ ]

5. (a) Are volunteers themselves involved in selecting volunteering opportunities within your organisation?   **Yes** [ ] **No** [ ] **Don't Know** [ ]

If yes, please provide details:

> [ ]

    (b) Are people with intellectual disabilities involved in selecting volunteering opportunities within your organisation?   **Yes** [ ] **No** [ ] **Don't Know** [ ]

If yes, please provide details:

> [ ]

6. Is volunteering integrated into your organisations overall policy structure?   **Yes** [ ] **No** [ ] **Don't Know** [ ]

If yes, please provide details:

> [ ]

7. How do other policies affect volunteers within your organisation? *(e.g., Health & Safety)*

> [ ]

8. Does your organisation encourage volunteers to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of polices and systems in place to support volunteering?   **Yes** [ ] **No** [ ] **Don't Know** [ ]

If yes, please provide details:

> [ ]

9. What support (if any) would your organisation welcome from the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies in respect of developing and implementing all or specific elements of a Volunteering Policy?

> [ ]

Section 4: Volunteering Policy

1. **Does your organisation have a written Volunteering Policy?**

   Yes[3] ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐

2. **Does your organisation intend to develop a Volunteering Policy?**

   Yes[4] ☐   No[5] ☐   Don't Know ☐

3. **What year was your Volunteering Policy implemented?** ☐   Don't Know ☐

4. **Who was involved in developing the Volunteering Policy?**

   If known, please specify the personnel involved:

   _____

5. **Has your Volunteering Policy addressed/considered:** *Please tick as appropriate*

Issues	Yes	No
General Principles & Value Base		
Code of Practice		
Eligibility		
Recruitment & Selection Practices		
Matching		
Befriending		
Health and Safety		
Alcohol & Drug Policy		
Induction / Orientation		
Data Protection & Confidentiality		
Working Conditions		
Support & Supervision		
Insurance		
Training and Development		
Volunteer Agreements		
Expenses		
Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures		
Monitoring & Evaluation of Volunteer Involvement		
Equality of Opportunity / Anti-Discriminatory Practices		
Risk Management		
Child Protection		
Other(s), please specify:		

---

[3] *If your answer is **yes**, please append and proceed to Question 3*

[4] *If your answer is **yes**, and **you have volunteers** in your organisation, please go to Section. 5*

[5] *If your answer is **no**, and **you have volunteers** in your organisation, please go to Section 5*
 *If your answer is **no** and **you have <u>no</u> volunteers** in your organisation please go to Section 11 Question 1, then Section 12,*
 Question 1 & Question 5 and then go to Section 14

6. Is your organisation's Volunteering Policy active in some or all parts of the service?

Some ☐ All ☐ Don't Know ☐

If it is only in __some parts__ of the service, please tick the appropriate boxes:

Day Services	
Early Services	
Mainstream School Support	
Special Schools	
Work / Supported Employment	
Training	
Recreation	
Respite	
Supported living in Community	
Supported living on Campus	
Fundraising	
Social Programmes / Night Classes	
Board of Management	
Other(s), please specify	

7. Within your organisation are there different agreed practices on volunteering?

(e.g., throughout the various parts of your service) Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details:

8. What elements of the policy are operational at present? Don't Know ☐

9. Has your Volunteering Policy been reviewed and/or audited?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, what was the format of this review/audit?

(a) Who is involved in this process?

(b) When did this last review/audit occur?

10. Has your organisation provided training to implement your Volunteering Policy?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, what training has been provided to volunteers and paid staff?

(a) Who provided this training?

Section 5: Recruitment & Training of Volunteers

1. **Does your organisation use a variety of methods to recruit volunteers across all sections of the community?**   **Yes** ☐   **No** ☐   **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please tick as appropriate.

Posters		Local radio	
Leaflets		Internet	
Placing adverts in the local press		Local Bulletins/Newsletters	
Running social events		Combination of methods	

    Other, please specify:

2. **What recruitment methods have been most successful for your organisation?**

1.
2.
3.

3. **Does your organisation need more volunteers than you can recruit?**

    Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, how many volunteers do you need to recruit? | |

4. **Does your organisation operate an equal opportunity policy in respect of recruitment of volunteers?**   **Yes** ☐   **No** ☐   **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please provide details:

5. **Does your organisation match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests to the individual needs of people with intellectual disabilities?**

    Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please provide details:

6. **How does your organisation promote the relationship between:**

    (**a**) Volunteers and People with intellectual disabilities

    ♦   What strategies/initiatives would you recommend to promote this relationship?

(b) Volunteers and Paid Staff

>
>
> ♦   What strategies/initiatives would you recommend to promote this relationship?
>
>

7. What training is currently available to volunteers?

>
>

8. Who delivers this training to volunteers within your organisation?

>
>

9. Do your volunteers request specific training?   **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

If yes, please list the training requested in order of priority 1, 2, 3:

1.
2.
3

Section 6: Insurance & Volunteers

1.   What insurance policies does your organisation have in place to protect against risk & liability in relation to volunteers?

>
>

2.   Has your organisation adopted any strategies for insuring against risk in relation to volunteers?   **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

If yes, please provide details:

>
>

3.   Has your organisation sought advice and help on risk and insurance issues in relation to volunteering from any external sources or organisations?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

If yes, please provide details:

>
>

4.   Do you agree that training volunteers appropriately can reduce risk and insurance costs?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

5. Are there any insurance requirements that impact on volunteer training?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details:

☐

Section 7: Retention of Volunteers

1. Are volunteers within your organisation required to sign volunteer agreements?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details (e.g., terms and level of volunteer involvement)

☐

2. Do volunteers within your organisation have a formal induction period?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details on the induction process:

☐

3. What support does your organisation currently offer to volunteers?

☐

4. What strategies does your organisation use to retain volunteers?

☐

5. Does your organisation plan, organise and monitor the duties of volunteers?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details of processes used:

☐

6. Does your organisation provide volunteers with opportunities to feedback and pass on their experiences of volunteering to others? Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details:

☐

7. Does your organisation celebrate the contribution of its volunteers?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If yes, please provide details:

☐

8. **What support (if any) would your organisation welcome from the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies in respect of:**

(a) Promoting the recruitment and retention of volunteers?

(b) Promoting the recognition of volunteers?

Section 8: Risk Assessment & Risk Management of Volunteers

1. **Does your organisation carry out risk assessments for volunteering as needed?**

   Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

   If yes, who carriers out the risk assessment & analysis? (Name & Position)

2. **Does your organisation have a risk management plan in place for volunteers?**

   Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

   If yes, who develops the risk management plan for volunteers? (Name & Position)

3. **What are the main elements of your organisations risk management plan for volunteers?**

4. **Did your organisation use any sources, guides and techniques to devise the risk management plan for volunteers?**   **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

   If yes, please provide details:

5. **What problems (if any) have you had in implementing your organisations risk management plan for volunteers?**

Section 9: Vision and Commitment to Volunteering

1. **What is your organisations vision and commitment to volunteering?**

    _____

2. **How is a volunteer defined by your organisation?**

    _____

3. **In your opinion, how do volunteers contribute to your organisations value and ethos?**

    _____

4. **Is your organisation involved in any employer voluntary schemes[6] to promote inclusive opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities?**

    Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please provide details:

    _____

5. **Does your organisation support and encourage people with intellectual disabilities to become volunteers?** **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please specify:
    (a) The number of people with intellectual disabilities currently volunteering: ☐
    (b) The strategies used to encourage and support people with intellectual disabilities to volunteer:

    _____

6. **Does your organisation have any selection requirements for volunteers?**

    Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please outline the requirements briefly:

    _____

7. **What resources does your organisation allocate to volunteer development?**

    _____

8. **Does your organisation have a volunteer handbook (guidelines)?**

    Yes[7] ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

---

[6] Employer Voluntary Schemes refer to projects where companies actively support and encourage their employees to volunteer and/or fundraise to support people with intellectual disabilities to live full and active lives within their local communities.
[7] If your answer is **yes**, please append your volunteer handbook, if available.

9. **Does your organisation have any volunteer programmes/schemes?** *(e.g. Best Buddies etc).*

Yes[8] ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Currently being developed ☐

If yes, please specify the name(s) of the volunteer programme/scheme and append details.

☐

Section 10: Volunteer Involvement in the Decision Making Process

1. **Are volunteers represented in your organisations wider decision-making process?** (e.g., Board of Management)   **Yes** ☐   **No** ☐   **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please provide details:

    ☐

2. **What do you see as the role of volunteer involvement in key decision making?**

    ☐

3. **What has your organisation experienced in relation to the challenges of volunteer involvement in key decision making?**

    ☐

4. **Has your organisation utilised any particular strategies to increase/maintain the involvement of volunteers in agency decision making?**

    Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please provide details:

    ☐

Section 11: Key Volunteering Issues & Challenges

1. **What are the key issues/challenges in respect of volunteering?**

    - **For People with Intellectual Disabilities/Families or Guardians**

    ☐

    - **For Your Organisation**

    ☐

    - **For Volunteers**

    ☐

---

[8] If your answer is yes, please append details of these programmes/schemes, if available

- **For Paid Staff**

2. **What elements of your organisations Volunteering Policy are working well?**
    - **For People with Intellectual Disabilities/Families or Guardians**

    - **For Your Organisation**

    - **For Volunteers**

    - **For Paid Staff**

3. **What are the remaining volunteering challenges within your organisation?** (e.g., insurance)
    - **For People with Intellectual Disabilities/Families or Guardians**

    - **For Your Organisation**

    - **For Volunteers**

    - **For Paid Staff**

4. **How has your organisation maintained a volunteering ethos for volunteers?** (e.g., strategies)

5. **Has you organisation developed any particular strategies/initiatives that you would recommend to other Member Organisations?** (e.g., to overcome the obstacles of volunteering)

    Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

    If yes, please provide details:

6. **Does your organisation have a system and/or procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating volunteers' tasks?** **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Don't Know** ☐

If yes, please provide details:

Section 12: Future of Volunteering

1. **In your opinion what future actions are required to ensure that the value and benefits of volunteers is on the strategy agenda within:**
    (a) Your Organisation

    (b) National Federation of Voluntary Bodies

2. **In the past five years has the number of volunteers within your organisation increased, decreased or remained the same?**

Increased	
Decreased	
Remained the same	

    If the number has **increased or remained the same**, please detail the strategies utilised:

3. **Has your organisation any concerns about maintaining the involvement of volunteers in the future?**   Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐
    If yes, please detail the concerns:

    (a) What is the organisation doing to address/overcome these concerns?

4. **Does your organisation have a volunteer recruitment plan for the future?**
    Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

    If yes, please provide details of the organisations recruitment plan:

5. **In your opinion, what strategies could be used to promote the value and benefits of volunteering to the wider community and to people with intellectual disabilities within the Member Organisations?**

6. **What impact has '*Volunteering Ireland'* had on supporting volunteering within your organisation?**

Section 13: National & International Volunteering Events

1. **In your experience, what impact have the following events had on volunteering activity within your organisation?**

    (a) European Year of People with Disabilities

    High Impact ☐   Medium Impact ☐   Low Impact ☐   No Impact ☐   Don't Know ☐

    Please specify the reasons for the selected impact:

    (b) UN International Year of Volunteers

    High Impact ☐   Medium Impact ☐   Low Impact ☐   No Impact ☐   Don't Know ☐

    Please specify the reasons for the selected impact:

    (c) Special Olympics 2003

    High Impact ☐   Medium Impact ☐   Low Impact ☐   No Impact ☐   Don't Know ☐

    Please specify the reasons for the selected impact:

2. **In your experience, what impact have the following publications had on supporting volunteering activity within your organisation?**

    (a) Volunteers and Volunteering in Ireland (2005) Sixth Report – Joint Committee on Arts, Sport, Tourism, Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
    (Website: www.davy.ie/other/pubarticles/VolunteersandVolunteeringinIreland.pdf)

    High Impact ☐   Medium Impact ☐   Low Impact ☐   No Impact ☐   Don't Know ☐
    Please specify the reasons for the selected impact:

    (b) White Paper 'Supporting Voluntary Activity' launched by the Government in 2000
    (Website: www.tcd.ie/Business_Studies/CNM/PDF%20Files/Voluntary.pdf)

High Impact ☐ Medium Impact ☐ Low Impact ☐ No Impact ☐ Don't Know ☐

Please specify the reasons for the selected impact:

┌───┐
│   │
└───┘

(c) 'Tipping the Balance' Report launched by the National Committee on Volunteering in 2002

High Impact ☐ Medium Impact ☐ Low Impact ☐ No Impact ☐ Don't Know ☐

Please specify the reasons for the selected impact:

┌───┐
│   │
└───┘

Section 14: Conclusion

1. **In your opinion, are there any other challenges related to volunteering that your organisation has experienced that have not already been covered in this questionnaire?**

2. **The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies intends to develop a comprehensive website and newsletter for its member organisations. Do you have any suggestions about what you would like to see included in the website and newsletter regarding volunteers?**

3. **Do you have any final comments to make in relation to the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies support for Volunteering Policy and Initiatives within Member Organisations?**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses will assist the National Federation Volunteering Sub-Committee greatly with its work. A summary report on the findings of this survey will be provided to all National Federation Member Organisations.

Please Remember to Append

1. Your Volunteering Policy (if available)
2. Your Volunteer Handbook – Guidelines (if available)
3. Your Volunteer Programme/Scheme Details (if applicable)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability