



A BEACON OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY SUICIDE AND SELF HARM

Welcome to the 2014 Annual Report of Lighthouse, a suicide awareness and prevention organisation, established in 2003 as a community response to a community problem. Since this time we have strived to combat the levels of suicide within our communities and to help and support those families bereaved through suicide. Over the course of the year Lighthouse has continued to provide these much needed services and save lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

Lighthouse is a community based organisation that promotes and supports positive mental health for those affected by suicide and self-harm.

"A beacon of hope"

LIGHTHOUSE

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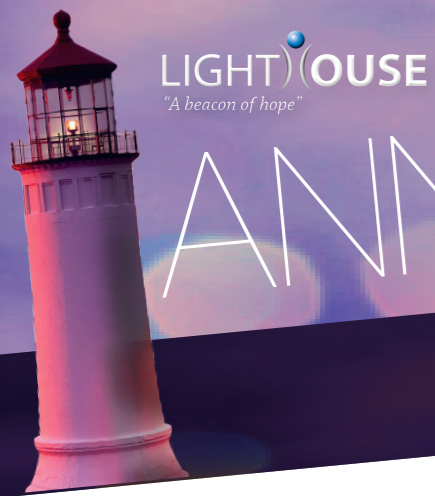
VISION STATEMENT

A beacon of hope, saving lives and creating a brighter future.

STRATEGIC AIMS

1. To provide accessible support services to people who are directly affected by suicide and self harm.
2. To deliver educational and awareness raising activities to promote positive mental health, preventing suicide and self harm.
3. To develop collaborative working relationships and partnerships with other organisations and agencies concerned with suicide and self harm.
4. To continue to improve and develop as a healthy and sustainable organisation.





LIGHTHOUSE
"A beacon of hope"

ANNUAL REPORT

CHAIR'S REPORT

This year has been challenging by virtue of increased austerity and the subsequent impact on statutory funding. This has put increased pressure on Lighthouse and other voluntary organisations that provide support and intervention for those bereaved by suicide, having suicidal thoughts, engaging in self harm and having a range of mental health difficulties. As you can see from the figures they have increased from 2013, without any commensurate increase in funding from the key organisations that support Lighthouse. It has equally been a challenging year in terms of getting donations and having conversations with our funders about increasing the stipend that we are given and the consequences of the increased turnover of our work.

Equally over the year the range of therapy, both therapeutic and complementary, has increased as well as the range of supervision and support provided for clinical staff. The investment and hard work by the staff has ensured that everyone who attended our service has had a very positive experience and outcome so that their needs have been heard and addressed in a way that is respectful of where they are, from a mental health and psychological perspective. Staff should be congratulated for their commitment to clients in 2014. This is one of the key strengths of Lighthouse – its ability to respond in the moment, flexibly and creatively, to any difficulties experienced by the clients attending our service. This is in marked contrast to statutory organisations that don't have the same flexibility and creativity, by virtue of their size.

Throughout 2014 Lighthouse has continued with a range of services including crisis interventions, therapies, family support, youth work, counselling, health fairs, awareness talks and training while one of the key successes of the year has been the launch of the Flourish Clergy Initiative and printing and promoting of the Flourish! resource.

As a result of the above Lighthouse, and the range of voluntary organisations similar to us, have a key role to play in the provision of comprehensive mental health services for children, young people, adults and their families. It is important that commissioners and the state see us as partners with the statutory services in the provision of interventions. We are concerned at the new tendering process and the difficulties it poses for us as an organisation; it clearly means that the certainty of funding is much more up in the air leaving the viability of organisations like Lighthouse in a much more tenuous position. We would be concerned that this will seriously impact Lighthouse capacity to meet the needs of the community it services. As such we would urge the commissioners and the state to take on board our critique of the tendering process in terms of the impact it would have on all voluntary organisations like Lighthouse.

Throughout 2014 Lighthouse has continued with a range of services including crisis interventions, therapies, family support, youth work, counselling, health fairs, awareness talks and training while one of the key successes of the year has been the launch of the Flourish Clergy Initiative and printing and promoting of the Flourish! resource. Lighthouse played a seminal part in the genesis of the Flourish! Initiative and it clearly highlights the importance of looking at unique solutions within this field of work and working in a way that other organisations find difficult to do.

On behalf of the board I would like to thank all the admin & clinical staff for their hard work through the year and especially thank the clients and friends of Lighthouse for their ongoing support.

Peter Gallagher
Chairperson



COORDINATOR'S REPORT

This year's theme for Lighthouse is a 'vision to become a reality'. Lighthouse continues to remain focused on supporting families and friends who have lost loved ones to suicide and offer support to those who are in crisis. Our vision is "A beacon of hope, saving lives and creating a brighter future" to those within the Belfast community. Our support and gratitude continues to shine on the Housing Executive for allowing our vision to become a reality. They had complete belief in the need for such a community resource thereby allowing us to have premises in an area which is accessible to all our communities. I also want to pay tribute to Des Rice who also had faith and belief in our vision and worked tirelessly supporting us in our fundraising for the refurbishment so that service users had a building that was welcoming, warm and inviting and didn't have a stigma around seeking support. It has been amazing to be part of the developmental journey, seeing the growth of the organisation and being part of making the "vision become a reality"



Our vision has been instilled for many years and it is only within the last year that we can see the shining affect that it has had in spreading across the various communities in Northern Ireland. I always feel very humbled and privileged to have met people whose stories will always hold a special place in my heart. Using these experiences and my community background I adopted the development of the "Flourish" model. Flourish is a churches initiative on suicide which brings together religious members from the main churches on the island of Ireland. The Flourish model has been growing from strength to strength and has been held up as a model of good practice and continues to further develop training and to de-stigmatise mental health. Mental health needs to be talked about both top-down and bottom-up to reduce the stigma within our communities. Again this has been a partnership with a range of organisations including the Public Health Agency, Churches Community Work Alliance NI, Clergy from across the Christian Churches and ZEST.

In order to make positive mental health a reality Lighthouse continues to develop bespoke services to meet the needs of clients. This year we have welcomed the placements of Seanna and Jillian, Psychology students from Ulster University who have worked in further developing a befriending service for Lighthouse which will support family members and individuals who feel isolated and who would benefit from further one to one support. During 2014 Lighthouse has also had to restructure and make changes to posts and staff to meet the needs and demands for the services we provide:

Sinead McIlvenna (Family Support Worker) changed post

to our part-time inhouse counsellor and crisis worker. Zanne Montgomery took up the family support worker post in August. Stuart Kirk took up a post as part time crisis intervention worker. Debbie Sloan returned to Lighthouse after a year away and took up post as part time admin / receptionist. Joe Donnelly also took up post with the TAMHI project (talking about mental health issues) and is being housed within Lighthouse 2 days a week and supported by the Lighthouse team. We have also had a number of placements from colleges and work experience students from schools and other organisations, all of which brought something special and unique to Lighthouse. As an organisation, and due to our reputation and professionalism in our specialist area of work, we continually get requests from counsellors seeking placements in lighthouse. This year we were delighted to welcome Catherine, Helen, Louise, Patricia, Shirley & Victoria.

As an organisation we need to be strategic but we also need to be able to grasp opportunities as they present themselves. It's all about pace, keeping going, sometimes slowing down to make sure people are with you, but never losing momentum and, more importantly, never losing sight of our strong vision. The needs of our clients and demand for our services is paramount and will always be central and at the core of all that we do in Lighthouse. Sadly on the 28th of April 2014 Jim Pierce passed away after a short illness. He had been a family member, volunteer and a very dear friend to all in Lighthouse. Jim was a person who instilled hope in people's lives, he always treated people with respect and dignity. Jim would have often accompanied me to do presentations on the work of Lighthouse and he would have spoken about his own personal loss and his involvement within Lighthouse as a bereaved father. He was an inspiration and often spoke about how in his working life as a seaman that a Lighthouse showed direction and then through his own loss and tragedy he found Lighthouse as an organisation as being "a beacon of hope and light in his hours of need". Jim always would have said "if I can give hope to only one person then sharing my story has been worthwhile". It is hard to put into words what Jim meant to us all in Lighthouse. He truly was a gentleman in every sense of the word, caring, compassionate, kind and an inspiration to all he came in contact with. In life we meet many people, Jim was one of them I had the privilege of meeting and knowing and will always hold a very special place in my heart for a person I am proud to say was a very dear friend.

Last but not least I would like to thank the board of directors, staff & volunteers for their commitment and continued support and dedication. With innovation comes change and hope we have added a few new services; these new services have brought about positive difference in people's lives. At Lighthouse we identified and saw the need and importance of clergy working together at a regional level around the issues of suicide and self harm. This issue of working grew the "Flourish!" initiative which has grown and continues to grow from strength to strength.

I would just like to thank the board of director's staff, volunteers and placement students for their commitment and dedication to Lighthouse.

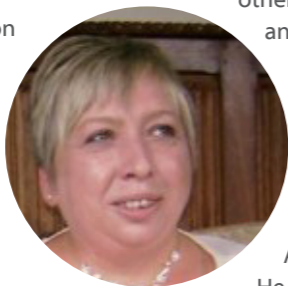
Jo Murphy
Coordinator

A Look behind Lighthouse: Board of Directors

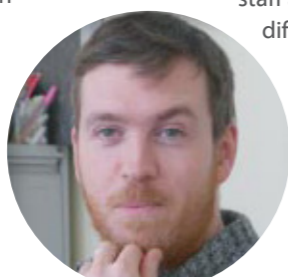
Dr. Seán Donnelly is a retired GP, married to Catherine with 4 children. His family have been in North Belfast for six generations and his grandfather practiced as a dentist from 203, Duncairn Gardens, just a few houses away from the current Lighthouse building. He has been on the board of Lighthouse since November 2011.



Malachai O'Hara is a lifelong activist and campaigner, who has worked in health promotion and youth provision for over 10 years. Malachai studied politics and history in England before returning to Northern Ireland in 2003. By day, Malachai manages health and wellbeing services at The Rainbow Project, Ireland's largest LGBT organisation. He is the organisational lead for health policy and the development and co-ordination for delivery of a range of professional health services across the region. He is the Vice-Chair of the Equal Marriage Campaign and Secretary of the Green Party in North and West Belfast. Malachai joined Lighthouse in November 2011 as he believed in the organisations commitment to the local community and providing support to those affected by suicide directly or through the loss of friends, family or peers. He believes that local organisations, rooted in their communities and meeting their community's needs are a key way to address poorer mental health in Northern Ireland.



Caroline Rutherford is a married mother of 3 sons aged 27, 26 and 6 years old. She qualified in Youth Work with a 1st Bsc (Hons) Community Youth Work from UUU in 1995 and has worked full-time in this field since then. After spending the last 15 years in Alternative Education with The Pathways Project, she has more recently become a Programme Manager with Extern NI's Supporting Families directorate and currently oversees eight projects working with young people aged 5 - 24 years. She has been a 'friend' of Lighthouse since it was founded in 2003 and has volunteered on the Board of Directors since 2008 and have used the services of the organisations many times through her own work. What makes Lighthouse special to her is that if she rings at 10am with a young person who is expressing suicidal ideation, she knows that they will get help that day and that both they and their family will be supported from that moment on, not only by a dedicated and skilled staff team, but by volunteers and family members who share their own knowledge and experiences to help others heal.



Frankie Corr is a 64 year old father and grandfather from North Belfast. Frankie first came into contact with Lighthouse, as a service user, after the death of his own son through suicide. After a period of time he began work as a volunteer before agreeing to a position on the board of directors which he joined in December 2010. Frankie is passionate about the work of Lighthouse and his own role as a director & volunteer. He gives his all and is determined, to the best of his abilities, to try and prevent other families having to suffer the loss of a loved one to suicide and in supporting those families previously bereaved through suicide.

Dr Peter Gallagher is a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Head of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. He has worked in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service for the past 25 years. He is currently Chair of the Child and Adolescent Faculty of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and Training Programme Director for Child Psychiatry at the NI Medical and Dental Training Agency. His area of expertise is treating severe mental health disorders and working with suicidal youth and he has been a Board member of Lighthouse since December 2010 and Chair since January 2012.

Sami Cullen has been involved with Lighthouse since 2008, but has only joined the board in November 2014. Her lighthouse journey started when lighthouse supported her after losing her brother to suicide. Sami's life has changed, and she no longer lives in the pit of grief, but instead is pro-active in suicide prevention, and the work of lighthouse. Sami lives in Carrickfergus with her daughter Phoebe (4).

Julie Knight qualified as a solicitor in 1990 and is a partner in Norman Shannon & Co, Belfast. She specialises in personal injury compensation claims and is regarded as an expert in the field of employment, equality and human rights law and has acted for individual employees and also for employers in the private and third (voluntary) sector. Julie qualified as an Advanced Solicitor Advocate in 2004 and is also a part time Employment Judge. She represents clients in courts and tribunals throughout Northern Ireland.

Julie greatly admires the amazing work of the dedicated staff and volunteers of Lighthouse who are making such a difference to people affected by suicide and bereaved families and is honoured to be a member of the Board.

LIGHTHOUSE SERVICES

"A beacon of hope"

YOUTH INTERVENTION SERVICE

This year saw us enter our final year of funding from Comic Relief. Just like the 2 previous years the work has been plentiful and we received many requests to deliver programmes in a variety of settings. In total I worked with 782 young people in 2014. The delivery was focused on one off awareness talks within the formal education sector, as well as providing 4-6 week personal development programmes focusing on promoting positive mental health and building resilience.

These programmes were delivered in a number of youth & community centres, youth organisations, LGBT Centre, young people in care and alternative education providers. The work within local schools and youth centres has helped dispel the myths around mental health, normalising their emotional feelings of distress and creating a self help culture. The discussions held within these groups, assemblies and presentations proved very beneficial for the pupils and young people involved, leading to many self referrals to Lighthouse.

As the work was monitored throughout the life of the project we are happy to conclude that; As part of the baseline questionnaires completed from participants:

77% reported an increase in being confident about asking for help if they needed it.

93% reported an increase in relation to their knowledge of mental health services available to them.

81% reported an increase in being optimistic about their future.

In terms of partnership working, Cycle Against Suicide, World Suicide Prevention Day and the Adventure Challenge, proved to be excellent initiatives and ones that have continued annually. This gave young people access to new ventures, increased confidence and exposed them to passionate and professional staff from various organisations. It has also raised awareness



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of the issues and provided audiences with information on local available services.

A significant piece of work was the creation of a specific group for young people who had been bereaved by suicide, had been experiencing thoughts of suicide, or dealing with emotional distress and anxiety. Initially programmed for 6 weeks, the programme ran for many months and had a big impact on those young people who took part.

It was clear that the support for each other, realising they were not the only teenager suffering emotional trauma, and being in a safe space to explore such issues were the biggest indicators of success. The participants have went on to pursue careers they thought were unrealistic at the beginning of the group process, gained recognised qualifications, volunteer with regional youth organisations or have entered training and employment.



As the final funding year comes to an end we look forward with anticipation, hoping the youth intervention service will gain extended funding from Comic Relief for a further 3 years. This will allow us to continue the work and develop new initiatives based on learning from the last 3 years. Many thanks to all those young people who have allowed us to work with them.

ANNUAL REPORT

FAMILY SUPPORT

Through Family Support, Lighthouse continues to provide vital support for families and individuals who have either been bereaved through suicide and/or are experiencing suicidal thoughts. This service is very much tailored to the needs of the individual and people access it at very different stages of their emotional journey. For those who have been recently bereaved, it provides the opportunity both to begin to process what has happened, and also enables them to understand the impact of trauma. Whilst the death of a loved one through suicide can never be 'normalised', the process of Family Support can help the person understand the myriad of emotions they may experience and to know that such emotions are a normal reaction.

For others who may be bereaved a longer length of time, Family Support can help them to begin to build their life again, whilst still acknowledging the death of their loved one. Our aims are to help inform families of the reactions to one self after suffering a traumatic event, to normalise their feelings and equip them with new tools and skills to help them on their journey of grief as well as to offer hope and understanding for their future. The specialist knowledge and skills in relation to bereavement through suicide are paramount...as one client bereaved over twenty years ago stated:

"It wasn't until I came to Lighthouse that I got the help I needed and that is because the staff at Lighthouse understand. I had been to other bereavement support groups over the years, but suicide is not like a normal death and they didn't really help me. I had Family Support at Lighthouse and I attended the Hope, Heal, Help group and for the first time in twenty years I began to feel like myself again."

For those who are experiencing suicidal thoughts, Family Support can provide a safe, non-judgemental space for them to talk and explore whatever is important to them. For some clients this may represent that first time they have felt accepted and valued for themselves for many years. Whilst this one to one work with clients is integral to Family Support, progression into the group setting can also be very healing for some.

Lighthouse saved my life, countless times. Sometimes they didn't need to say much, they just had to be there. They listened, when nobody else would, and sat with me when I couldn't find the words. Lighthouse shone their beacon of hope for me, they helped me find hope when I was lost. Lost in a state of despair, but they found me. They walked my darkest journey with me, and never let me fall. Lighthouse is an organisation that invests in time and compassion. Forever grateful.'

Sami



TOTAL SERVICE PROVISION FIGURES 2014

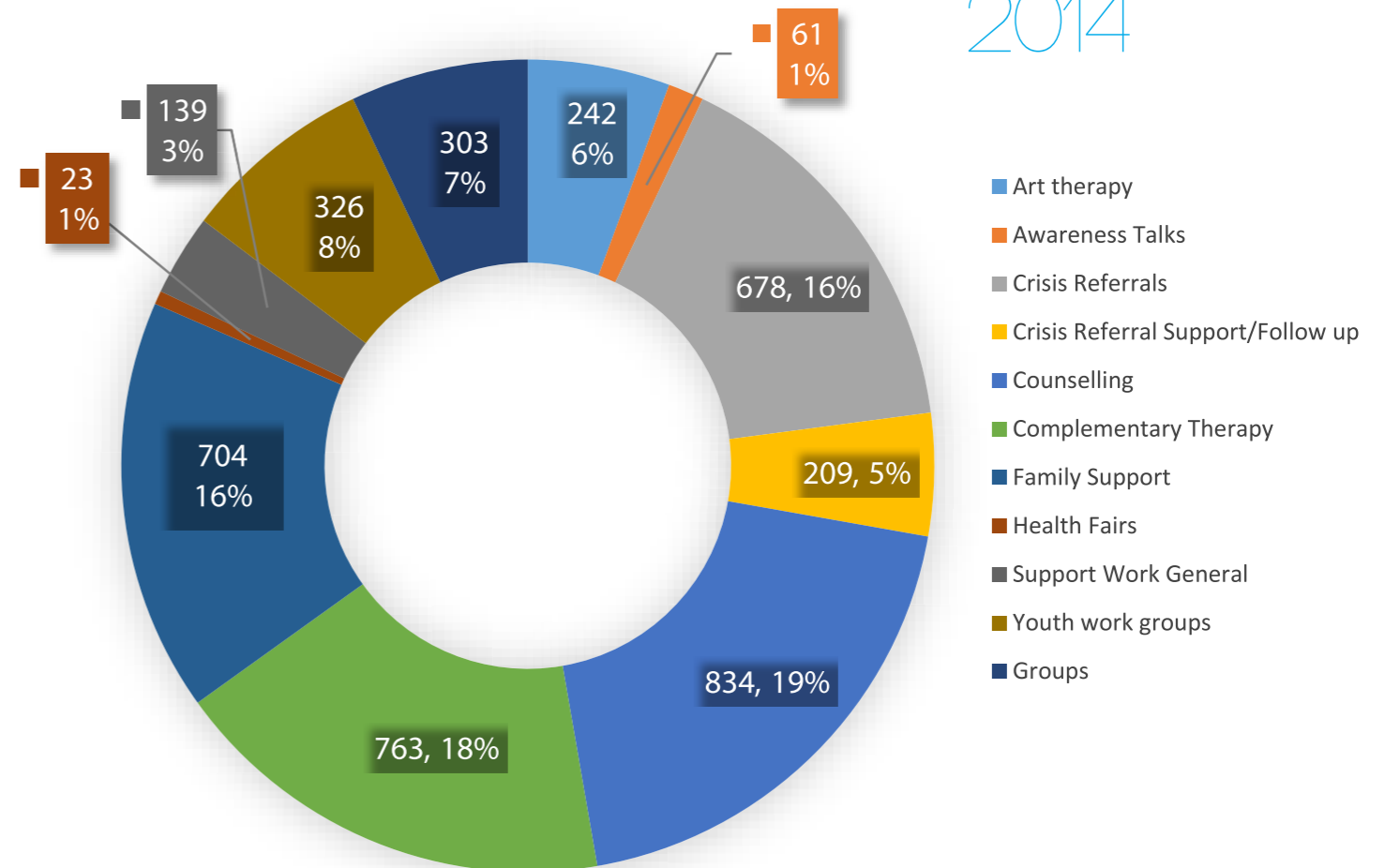
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Sami

SERVICE USER TESTIMONIALS

All aspects of this course have been very informative and useful. It is a great learning experience. This course has been very helpful and made me more aware of what I can achieve in life.

Service User



SERVICE TOTALS 2014

ANNUAL REPORT

ACHIEVEMENTS AND EVENTS 2014



- Flourish Launch
- World Suicide Prevention Day 2014
- Christmas Family Event
- Christmas Carol Service
- Fundraisers
- Cycle Against Suicide
- The Adventure Challenge



VOLUNTEER TRIBUTE JIM PIERCE



Lighthouse would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Jim Pierce, a family member and volunteer, who unfortunately passed away in April 2014. Jim first became involved with Lighthouse as a bereaved family member in 2009 and since this time, worked tirelessly in raising awareness of the organisation and services available for those in crisis and families bereaved through suicide. He also made immense contributions, in terms of time and effort, in fundraising for the organisation and the issue of suicide.

He inspired other newly bereaved families in trying to come to terms with their loss and was completely selfless in his support of others - a beacon of hope for families in times of great darkness. He was instrumental in organising many of the Lighthouse fundraising events and for those in which he couldn't participate, such as the skydiving, he instead arranged for his own family members to get involved and then stood on the sidelines cheering them on. Lighthouse benefitted immensely from Jim's contributions and he saved many hours of staff time in carrying out voluntary work in addition to representing the organisation in the way that only a true ambassador could. He went about his voluntary work with a quiet but determined dignity, always ensuring completion of whichever task he had undertaken, despite physical or emotional exhaustion. He inspired many and motivated many more to help in the fight against suicide and mixed just as easily with politicians and royalty as he did with staff and service users. He related to people from all walks of life and was an inspirational character who impacted on everyone he encountered.

He became a very dear, valued and irreplaceable friend to many of the Lighthouse staff and his passing left a void which had a huge impact on staff, directors, volunteers and service users alike.

We take this opportunity to celebrate Jim's life and remember the times he stood supportively by our sides, gave hugs when they were most needed, laughed with us, entertained and educated us with his unique and humorous stories and drank tea with us. He was a special man and we miss him dearly but remember him with love and are forever thankful that we had the opportunity to share part of his life with him.



ANNUAL REPORT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO FUNDERS:



Victoria Homes Trust



LLOYDS TSB
FOUNDATIONS

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
Registered Charity in England and Wales number 1063945



KELLY FAMILY CHARITABLE TRUST
strengthening family ties



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MANNYSTRIE O
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an Fowk Siccar

LIMESTONE TRUST