

# BASW NI ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21



**BASW**  
**Northern Ireland**

The professional association for  
social work and social workers

# CHAIRS REPORT

I am delighted to present my second report to BASW NI as chair covering the period October 2020 to October 2021. It is my great pleasure to thank the committee who have supported me and advised Carolyn and their team to achieve many successes.



ORLAITH MCGIBBON, CHAIR, BASW NI

In this year our social work community in Northern Ireland has sadly lost two social workers, Nuala McLaughlin and Fionnuala McAndrew, who made a big impact on many of us. We extend our sympathies to their families. They will be sorely missed.

As Covid remains very much a struggle for our social workers we honour them for their innovation to adapt as they remain committed to the service user and delivering high quality practice. We in BASW NI have also continued to ensure that the service we provide is to the highest standard and we have demonstrated a strong commitment to our values and practice during these trying times.

In December we consulted widely and campaigned hard to ensure that social workers were among the first of essential workers to receive necessary vaccination to ensure they were safe whilst undertaking their work. Suffice to say we influenced at all levels in government and throughout the department of health. The strong relationships that we have built and the respect that BASW NI has achieved in acting as a strong voice for social work enables us to act in a timely and appropriate manner.

In March 2021 we were the first of the four nations to launch social work month, hosting two webinars where we examined the international social work and the impact of poverty on social work. We were blown away by the interest and

attendance at these events. As the year unfolded, we also hosted 10 communities of practice and continuing professional development seminars. We consulted with members understanding what they required from these events. Delighted to boast that BASW NI have been able to secure some well renowned practitioners who shared their knowledge and experience to make these worth while attending. In fact, with requests for follow ups, it is important to us that we continue to develop and expand these events in order to enhance and support practitioners to provide the best service that they can.

BASW podcasts have become an essential must listen for members who have been introduced to lots of academic thinking, styles of practice and contributors across the world keen to share their work and again enable us to develop and continually improve our practice.

Our mentoring scheme, launched in October 2020, has offered support and advice to social workers. We are pleased to be able to offer this bespoke service and are working currently on continuing the scheme into 2021/22.

After undertaking a huge research exercise in Collaboration with IASW, NISSC and CORU we were delighted to publish the findings of *Shaping Social Work Professional Identity: An All-Island Study*. The study represents the views of social workers across all of Ireland. The report was published in October 2020 and it provided insight

into how we as social workers identify as a profession given the many diverse roles we play and how our profession is viewed and respected for the work that we do. My thanks to NISCC, CORU and IASW for an enjoyable and collaborative working experience across the agencies and Ireland.

Such are these strong working relationships we continue to work together to understand and address the issues that Brexit has brought about for practitioners who practice very well in border counties and the implications this has for them. We are also working closely to address matters of registration for those who practice in the south of Ireland but live in the north.

As we seek to build on these strong relationships, we are currently working to introduce an Associate Membership Scheme, which would allow members of each association to claim a limited membership of the other association. We plan to launch this offer in early 2022.

We have also begun to develop close relationships with colleagues in Jordan, Palestine as they seek advice and consultation on the development of their member association. We are delighted to assist with this work.

During 20/21 BASW NI continued to campaign on the matter of Universal Credit Two Child Cap and Rape Clause and the application to Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act 1967.

Our continued work to raise concerns about bureaucracy in social work has now been presented to Minister Swann who we have asked to take the issue forward. At our earlier meeting we were delighted that the Minister and his officials reported that our continued championing of workforce recruitment had seen the development of a workforce strategy and many plans were in place to ensure that final year social work students would be supported to successfully take up posts in NI. This will address the number of vacancies that leave many teams across social work without the necessary personnel to respond to service user needs.

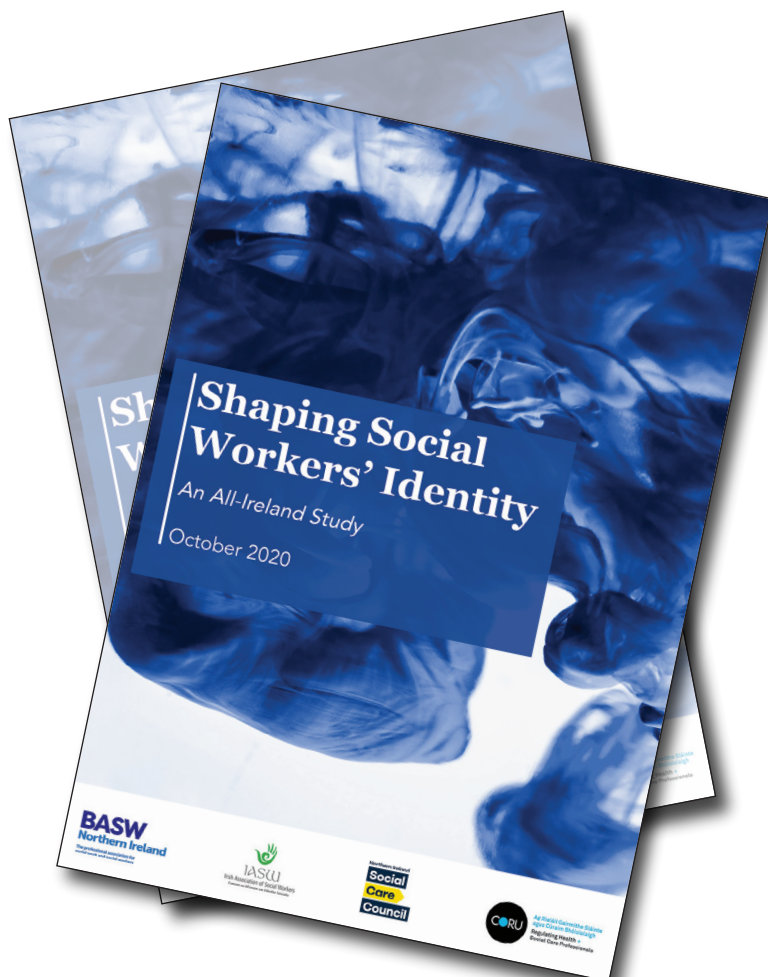
I am delighted also to report that BASW NI has played a central role in representing our profession and advising the outworking of the Hyponatremia Inquiry and Duty of Candour. We expect to see the outcomes of this work in the next few months.

Membership has continued to grow over the year, as the lifeblood of our association, members strengthen our professional standing. My thanks to Martina Jordan and Michelle McMaster who are constantly seeking new ways to engage members and seek their views.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to the small executive team in Belfast who work tirelessly for BASW NI – Carolyn, Martina, Andy, Michelle, and Linz. I am grateful to be supported very ably by Kerry Malone as Deputy Chair and the entire BASW NI Committee whose experience and knowledge across the entire profession enables us to be a committee who understands and represents every social worker's needs.

I am excited for the year ahead as we continue to influence and shape our profession and ensure that social work across the world is recognised for the important role that it plays in our society.

**Orlaith McGibbon,  
Chair, BASW NI**



# NATIONAL DIRECTORS REPORT

The past 12 months are without precedent, our way of working has totally changed, and we have been able to achieve things that would once have seemed impossible!



CAROLYN EWART, NATIONAL DIRECTOR, BASW NI

We have continued with the new ways of working and developed our offer to members, we have learned through consultation that you like the ways we do things, and we are able to engage with more members than ever. So much of our new approaches will stay as we begin to open up and find our new reality.

Our new way of working has enabled changes within our staff team, and it has allowed Amanda Beattie to take a two year move within BASW; we thank Amanda for her years of dedication and commitment to BASW NI, she truly was the backbone of our team, and we wish her every success.

We have been very lucky to bring on board two new staff, Lindsey Bates, joined us in January as our part-time administration support and has been a wonderful addition to the team. We were also lucky enough to appoint Michelle McMaster as a part-time temporary Professional Officer who joined us in February, Michelle brings a wealth of experience in adults services, the voluntary sector and project management. Alongside Martina they both work tirelessly to support and champion our members. Their professionalism and social work values are evident in all that they do.

Completing our team is Andy McClenaghan our Public Affairs, Policy and Communications lead. Andy leads our policy and political engagement, and he is a well-respected campaigner whose eye for detail and professional approach are a wonderful addition to BASW NI. I am very thankful to them all for all the work they do.

I also want to pay thanks to Orlaith as our Chair, she has led with compassion, enthusiasm, integrity, and immense bravery throughout these past 12 months. She leads alongside Kerry Malone as our Vice Chair and a strong committee of members. Your guidance and support is much appreciated. We lost three members from Committee: Cathie Connor, Yvonne Boyle and Vice Chair Adele Boyd's tenure came to an end. Adele was particularly influential and spearheaded our response on the restraint and seclusion in special schools. We thank each of them for their commitment and dedication and wish them well for the future. We also welcomed to committee Karen Quinn, Emma Wood, Ioan Radascan and Coumilah Manjoo, I look forward to working with you all.

**Carolyn Ewart,  
National Director, BASW NI**

BELOW FOLLOWS AN IMPACT REPORT OF KEY ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

## For Social Workers



- Continued meetings with IASW, hosted several joint activities: IASW Seminar Co-chair– Behind Closed Doors: Abuse in Care Settings, WSWD event.
- Hosted 10 Communities of Practice (CoP) and CPD Seminar events. Topics included Children's Services, Student SW, Domestic Abuse, Mental Health, Autism/ASD, Learning Disability and discussions about the proposed Duty of Candour legislation. Format and programme of events reviewed with member input – one CoP and one CPD are delivered on the first and third Wednesday of each month.
- Engaged with 8 voluntary sector organisations to build relationships, provide support, and encourage membership. Included attendance at 6 team meetings, regular online meetings, phone calls and email correspondence with team leaders and team members.
- Responded to 7 A&R queries from HSC Team Leaders and facilitated meetings (February-September) with team members and A&R colleagues to discuss safe practice concerns and help resolve issues. Fielded numerous member calls, responding with basic advice, which stemmed the flow to A&R.
- NI Member Support & Development Survey carried out April-May 2021 with 20 responses in total to help inform our CoP, CPD Seminar and mentoring support for 2021/22.
- Attended 8 meetings with HSC SW teams to provide support, share information and highlight benefits about BASW membership.
- Student Induction presentations to all Universities in NI – produced videos and materials for UU, OU and QUB.
- Produced recruitment video for existing UU and QUB students.

Let's Talk Social Work - How to Listen

How to listen to

**LET'S TALK  
SOCIAL  
WORK**



Watch later

Share

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social work



## For Social Work

### 2020:

- Oct-Sept: member of MHSW workforce review group led by DOH.
- Oct: regular meetings of the BASW NI Heritage Group.
- Oct: NICON Conference, Orlaith McGibbon presented at the conference.
- Oct: presented at IFSW conference on War and Conflict.
- Nov: Attended BMA roundtable on Duty of Candour.

### 2021:

- Dec-April: meetings with key officials in DOH regarding the roll out of the Vaccination Programme.
- Feb: presented at Berne University on SW and Conflict.
- Feb: member of One Mental Health Service for NI group.
- May: presented at DOH Duty of Candour events.
- May: Meetings with British dental Association re Duty of Candour
- July: Meetings with DOH and BMA and RCN re Duty of Candour.
- Feb-March: consulted with members about proposed 10-year Mental Health Strategy, participated in 10 DoH consultation events and submitted BASW NI response in March.
- Feb-April: consulted with members about proposed Adult Protection Bill and submitted BASW NI response in April.
- With committee members, produced a response to Regional Secure Facilities DoJ Consultation.
- Nov-July: participated in and hosted consultation events, including two CoP events, about proposed Duty of Candour legislation and submitted BASW NI response in August.
- Restraint & Seclusion in health consultation and seminar.

- April: NICCY reference group on Restraint and Seclusion in special schools.
- Sept-Oct: Member of NRPF group.
- Part of the UK World Social Work Day (WSWD) planning group from January-March.
- March: Hosted two WSWD events, Social Work across the globe with New Zealand, Jordan, UAE, and Philippines, and second event, Poverty is a Political Choice.
- Oct-Sept: Established NI Mentoring service, recruited 7 mentors (currently 5), supported 6 mentor-mentee matches, facilitated 5 Mentor team meetings.
- June 15: Co-chaired joint half day IASW & UCD Seminar – Behind Closed Doors: Abuse in Care Settings for World Elder Abuse Day, 15th June.
- Jan: Webinar Dr Amanda Holt, Northampton University – Violence towards grandparents in kinship care.
- Feb: Held a meeting with Siobhan O’Neill Mental Health Champion – Social work and mental health.
- BASW NI represented at the NISCC/PIP partnership meetings
- BASW NI represented in SW Research Strategy working group.
- March-September: Hosted 8 meetings to explore pilot of Social Work Wellbeing Project meetings.
- June-Aug: BASW membership of National Assembly of the IMPACT project led by UU; participation in first NI Assembly meeting 19th August.
- Facilitated CPD Seminar on Coercive Control in the context of Domestic Abuse.
- Regular meetings with members of the leadership community across NI, CEO NISCC, AEDSW, University Heads and Senior leadership Network for NI.
- Dec-July: regular meetings with NISCC, QUB and UCD re phase two research into The Troubles.

COVID 19

What we do

Membership

Training/CPD

Resources

## BASW Northern Ireland Mentoring Service

The BASW NI Mentoring Service is a support NQSWs currently in AYE, so who have returned to practice after absence and social workers transiting

## For a Better Society

- Throughout the year we have worked to develop an EDI strategy with x6 members, x2 willing to help establish an NI EDI group (one now co-opted to committee) plus x2 current committee members, along with UK EDI and anti-racism leads and UK EDI Advisory Group.
- Oct: launched *Shaping Social Worker' Identity: An All-Ireland Study*. The report detailed the findings of BASW's research, conducted in partnership with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, IASW and Coru, exploring the professional identity of social workers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- Oct: submitted written evidence to the NI Assembly Committee for Health inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on Care Homes.
- Nov: National Director participated in an episode of BASW's *Let's Talk Social Work* podcast which profiled the findings of the 2019 *Voices of Social Work Through the Troubles* research report.
- Dec: National Director and Public Affairs and Communications Officer provide oral evidence to the NI Assembly Education Committee concerning restraint and seclusion of children and young people with additional needs in educational settings.

### 2021:

- Feb: National Director and Public Affairs, Policy and Communications Lead met with Paula Bradley MLA, NI Assembly Communities Committee Chair, about the Universal Credit two child limit in the context of the forthcoming review of NI Welfare Reform mitigations.
- Feb: Public Affairs, Policy and Communications Lead met with Louise Haigh MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland as part of a Cliff Edge Coalition delegation to discuss the extension and strengthening of the welfare reform mitigation package.
- March: Statements of support for World Social Work Day secured from the following MLAs: Minister for Health Robin Swann, Mark H Durkan, Gerry Carroll, Paula Bradley, and Rachel Woods.
- March: Public Affairs, Policy and Communications Lead met with Karen Mullan MLA, as part of a Cliff Edge Coalition delegation to discuss the extension and strengthening of the welfare reform mitigation package.
- March: contribution to Irish News article, *How Northern Ireland is protecting children at risk during Covid-19 pandemic*.
- March: submitted response to the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework consultation, calling for an additional outcome to reduce poverty in NI to negligible levels.
- March: Public Affairs, Policy and Communications

Lead met with the DUP Westminster team as part of a Cliff Edge Coalition delegation to discuss the extension and strengthening of the welfare reform mitigation package.

- April: Public Affairs, Policy and Communications Lead met with Kellie Armstrong MLA, NI Assembly Communities Committee Deputy Chair, as part of a Cliff Edge Coalition delegation to discuss the extension and strengthening of the welfare reform mitigation package.
- April: Written evidence submitted to the NI Assembly Committee for Health concerning the Health and Social Care Bill.
- May: Public Affairs, Policy and Communications Lead met with Finance Minister Connor Murphy MLA as part of a Cliff Edge Coalition delegation to discuss the extension and strengthening of the welfare reform mitigation package.
- May: worked with Chris Lyttle MLA, Chair of the NI Assembly Committee for Education, to draft the No Day Named motion, *Restrictive Intervention and Seclusion of Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs*. BASW NI supplied a written briefing to all MLAs urging them to support the motion. The motion was carried unanimously by the Assembly. BASW was mentioned nine times during the debate by five MLAs.
- May: Provided oral evidence to the NI Assembly Committee for Health concerning the provisions of the Health and Social Care Bill.
- June: the '*Ending restraint and seclusion*' episode of BASW's *Let's Talk Social Work* podcast featured Chris Lyttle MLA, Chair of the NI Assembly Committee for Education. It profiled the success of the No Day Named motion, *Restrictive Intervention and Seclusion of Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs* and work to update Department of Education guidance on the use of restrictive practices and seclusion.
- July: submitted a response to the consultation on the Duty of Candour and Being Open policy proposals developed by the Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths Programme Duty of Candour Workstream and Being Open Sub-Group.
- July: National Director participated in the '*Can I be honest with you?*' episode of BASW's *Let's Talk Social Work* podcast which profiled the proposal to introduce, in Northern Ireland, a Statutory Duty of Candour, at the organisational and individual levels – including criminal sanctions for breach of the Duty.
- July-6 Aug: membership recruitment campaign run across BASW's Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn platforms. Campaign resources comprised a mix of videos and still images highlighting the benefits of BASW membership.

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