

Annual Report 2021

BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Our Vision

“ our vision is that people affected by eating disorders will have their needs met through the provision of appropriate integrated, quality service being delivered by a range of statutory, private and voluntary agencies ”

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Chairman & CEO's Report



Parvez Butt
Chairman



Jacinta Hastings
CEO

I am delighted to present to you, on behalf of the Board of Directors, the 2021 Annual Report which charts the past 12 months of the work of Bodywhys. I would first like to thank and pay tribute to my fellow colleagues who continued, in challenging times, with dedication and commitment.



2021 continued to be a very challenging year for society as COVID-19 continued to be of major concern resulting in ongoing restrictions and uncertainty. The year was no less of a challenge in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic with certain groups continuing to be impacted more severely, including people with eating disorders (PWED). The Bodywhys team continued to deliver and indeed expand services while working remotely. It is of great credit to the team of staff and volunteers who constantly considered innovation for development. As you will see from this Annual Report for 2021, much was achieved locally,

nationally and internationally. Meetings continued to be held via Zoom including team, finance, board meetings and the Annual General Meeting. While not an ideal situation, everyone worked closely to ensure that technology was utilised to lessen the impact on services and supports to meet the increased demand. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to change how the organisation operates for the foreseeable future, with a hybrid working model being considered.

The impact of COVID-19 saw a rise in presentations and severity of eating disorder cases, with a 55% increase in the use of

Bodywhys services. The email service for example, increased by 71% and YouthConnect saw an increase of 76% in attendance by repeat users. The Bodywhys team worked hard to continue to develop innovative and expansive initiatives to ensure that people affected by eating disorders, including families and friends, were supported.



A **call back service** was introduced to facilitate callers who were unable to get through to the helpline during specific times.



To meet the increased demand on our support services, **new volunteers** were recruited and trained for all services.

An increase in service activity included the PiLaR (Peer Led Resilience) programme for families which increased by 125% on 2020. The Family Support Package was expanded to include a monthly Maudsley Carer Skills Workshop which is scheduled to begin in early 2022.

Throughout the year, meetings with the HSE's Mental Health personnel continued in relation to ongoing discussions on Service Level Agreement and core funding commitments.

The CEO, together with Dr. Michelle Clifford and Rhona Jennings from the HSE's National Clinical Programme on Eating

Disorders, met regularly with Minister Mary Butler, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, to discuss services and developments.

Speaking in Dáil Éireann on February 4th, the Minister confirmed that she had secured €3.94 million for investment in specialist eating disorder services in 2021. On March 1st, Minister Butler and the Department of Health announced a further €1 million ring-fenced funding, including €150,000 to develop online resources that provide early intervention support for people with eating disorders. An additional €850,000 will be allocated to ensure people with more complex mental health care needs will have access to appropriate bed placements. This funding will help improve access to specialist treatment for mental health services, including those requiring inpatient eating disorder services.

In October, Minister Butler secured €1.15 million for Budget 2022. Bodywhys welcomed the Minister's ongoing commitment to eating disorder services and will continue to monitor progress.

At an operational level, the Board also took time to reflect on progress towards our mission and goals. To assist with this, we reviewed the structure and capacity of the team, and we welcomed Christopher Cash, Ellen Jennings and Ruby Whyte. The strategic review process with

stakeholders concluded and the new Strategic Plan for 2022–2025 was approved in December 2021. The strategic focus will support the transformation of our technologies, tools and processes to support the growth and reach of our services.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow board members for their continued commitment in very challenging times. A special thanks also to all the Bodywhys staff and volunteers whose efforts, commitment and hard work is evident in this report.

I would also like to thank our funders; your recognition of the organisation's valuable role in supporting people with eating disorders is greatly appreciated. During the year several fundraising events, undertaken on behalf of Bodywhys, raised an incredible €65,000 to support our services. We express our sincere thanks to you for your incredible efforts in raising funds for Bodywhys.

We look forward, as always, to your ongoing support of Bodywhys.

Parvez Butt
Chairman

Jacinta Hastings
Chief Executive Officer



Overview of Services

Overview of Services



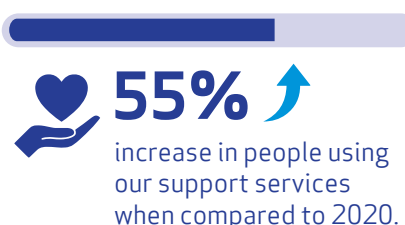
Kathy Downes
Support Services
Manager

The support services are an intrinsic part of our organisation. We offer a broad range of supports to people affected by eating disorders. In 2021, we continued to assist service users through the ongoing uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. Once again, Bodywhys saw an increase in people engaging in our support services.



Terri Coffey
Support Services
Officer

Looking at the overall figures for 2021, we can see there has been a



In varying ways, all our services offer a 'listening ear' to each person who needs it. Our ethos is to provide non-judgemental understanding to everyone who contacts us. Alongside this, we aim to provide comprehensive, up to date information, and psychoeducation.



Christopher Cash
Support Services
Officer

THANK YOU!

Each service depends on our committed and engaged volunteers, who once again this year kept things running smoothly. We want to wholeheartedly acknowledge our volunteers for their resolute dedication, especially considering the demands the pandemic has made on us all. In 2021 we trained new volunteers, who energetically took on the task of developing their skills, before joining our volunteer body. As always, it is with much gratitude that Bodywhys recognises the immense work and commitment, that all our volunteers give to support services. It is they who continue to ensure that the support and information we provide is done so in a respectful and nuanced way.

We would like to thank each one of them for the personal time and expertise they have given the organisation in 2021.



Our volunteers reflect upon what working alongside Bodywhys means to them.

"The indispensable helpline offers a safe holding space in which anxious callers can discuss their fears, both for themselves and their loved ones in the here and now"

"It is a true privilege to be of assistance to the many diverse and worried callers to the helpline, where they can receive genuine empathy, non-judgemental understanding, ongoing support"

"If I can only make one person feel as if they've been heard, helped or supported along the way, that means the world to me"

"It is such an honour to be part of a wonderful service, whereby the volunteers are truly valued and supported. Through the email support service, it is evident to me how much trust individuals put in the service, and how much beneficial work it does."

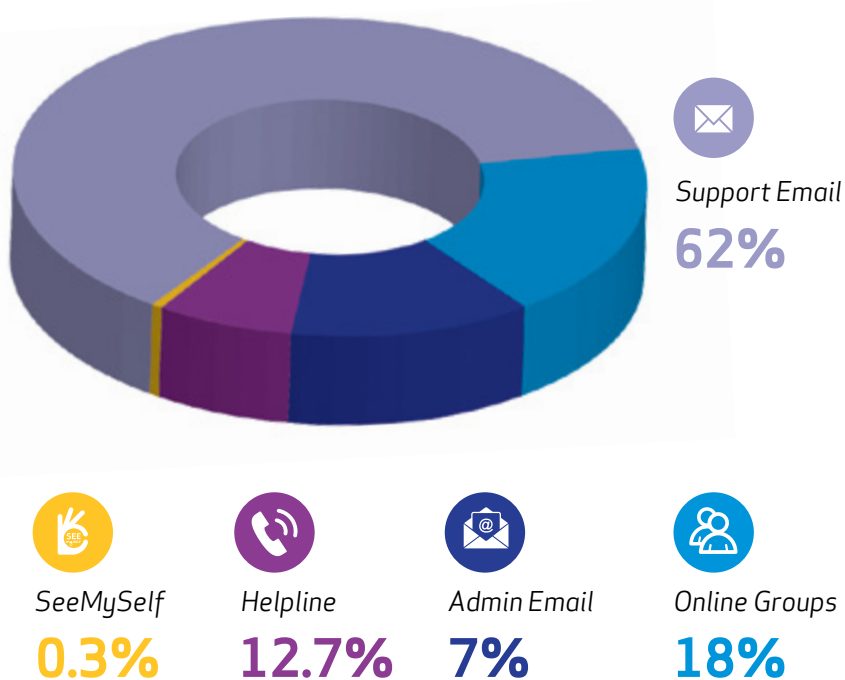
"My reflections on volunteering are that it is a source of fulfilment in my life as I am being a listening ear and hopefully, of help to someone in need."



We engage with all service users as unique in their own experience of an eating disorder. This might be a person who has self-experience of an eating disorder, or a family member looking for guidance to help them support their loved one. All our support services are based on the principle that we recognise an eating disorder is not just about food or weight, but concerns also, underlying issues and feelings specific to the person. A service user can use our services whenever, and as often as they wish, whether they are engaged in treatment or not.

Looking at the breakdown of services Figure 1 tells us that online support is a growing part of our service, with 80.3% of contact to us made through an online format.

Figure 1: How people contacted Bodywhys support services





Helpline

Helpline

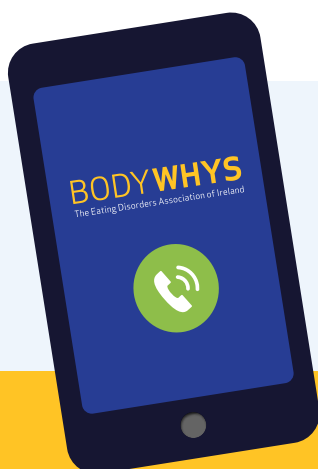
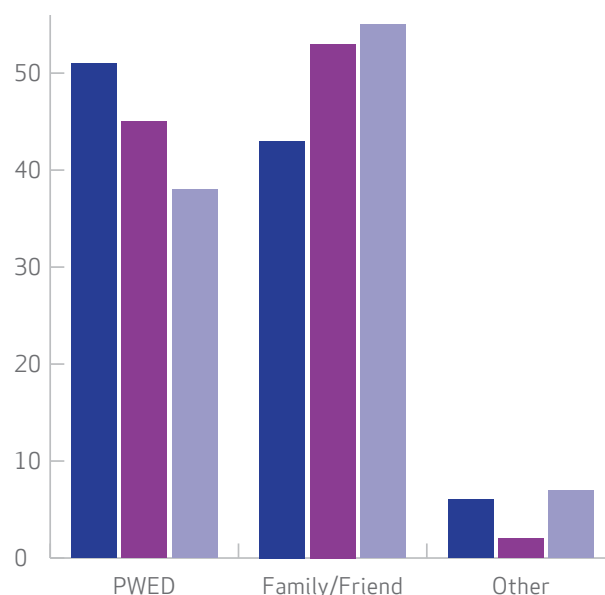
The helpline is primarily a 'listening ear' service, with the aim to deliver a safe, non-judgemental, non-directive, listening, support and information service, to people affected by eating disorders. Our helpline calls grew by 16% in 2021. This year, we introduced a call back service, to facilitate callers who were unable to get through to us in specific helpline times.

Looking at how people used the helpline in 2021, we can see that 77% of callers were calling us for the first time, and 23% were repeat callers.

In 2021, we can see (Figure 2) that, looking at who called the helpline, the percentage increase of family and friends calling the helpline is growing yearly. This may reflect our wide reach of support for families offered through PiLaR programmes, who may then avail of ongoing support across another service.

Figure 2: Who contacted the helpline?

	2019	2020	2021
PWED:	51%	45%	38%
Family / Friend:	43%	53%	55%
Other:	6%	2%	7%

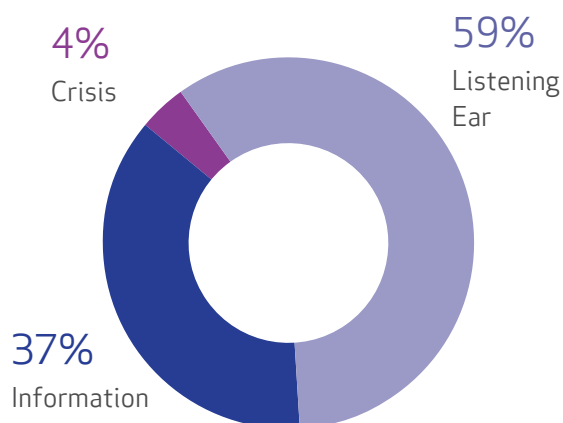


In 2021, one can see nearly 60% of the service users are calling the helpline to talk and be listened to, as a means of support.

As an illustration of this, we noted that 50% of all calls this year lasted between 20 and 45 minutes in duration.

2 Hours Per Day **4** Days per Week

Figure 3: Reasons people contacted the helpline



Eating disorders are not just a female issue, however, continuing the general trend from previous years, the breakdown in gender of people with an eating disorder calling the helpline reflects an average male to female ratio of 1:9.

Figure 4: Gender of person with an eating disorder

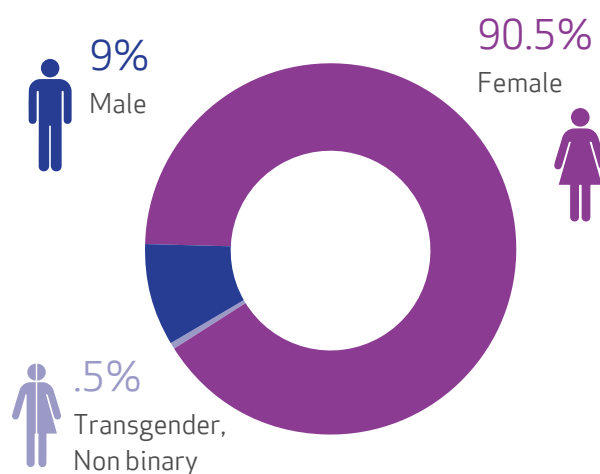
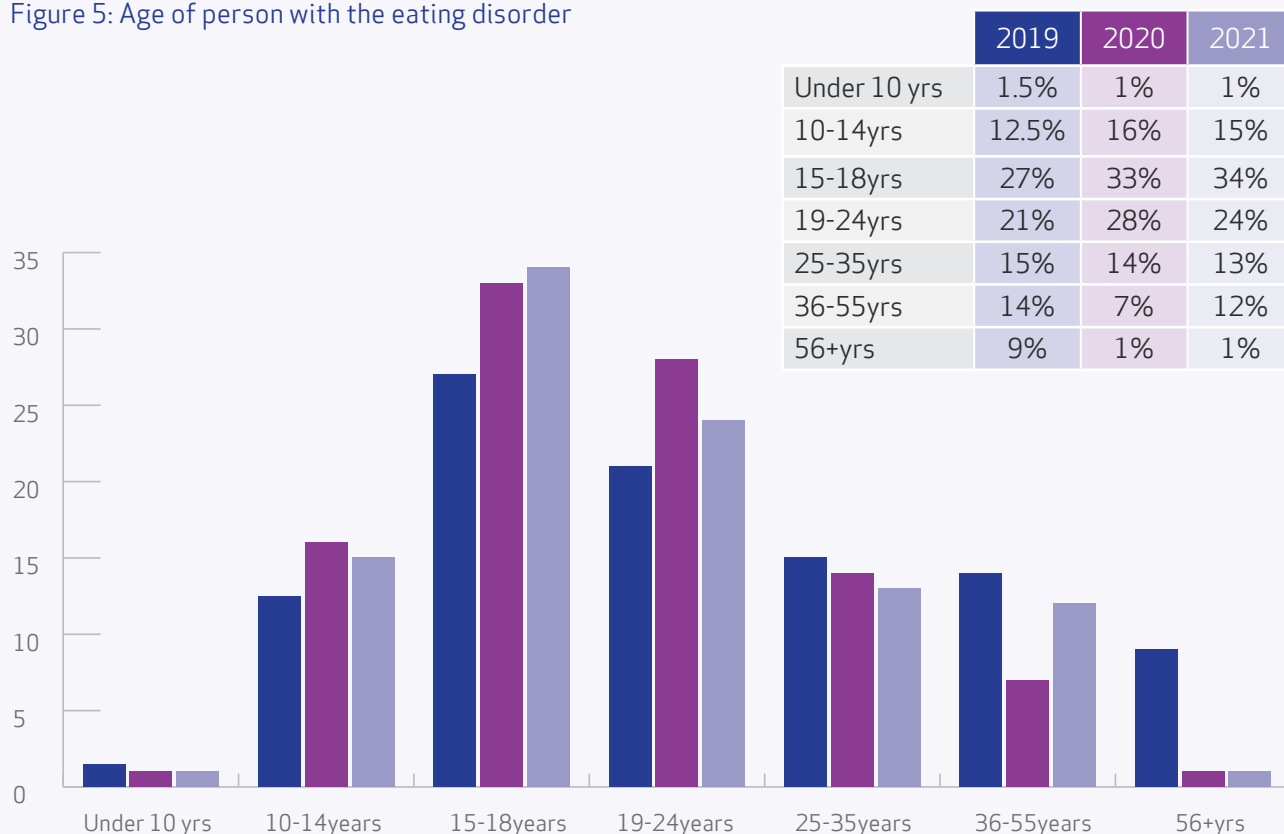


Figure 5 shows us the age of the person with an eating disorder, where we know it. Looking at year on year figures, we see a yearly growth of calls relating to eating disorders in the younger age ranges. Calls concerning 15-18-year-olds continues to be the largest percentage.

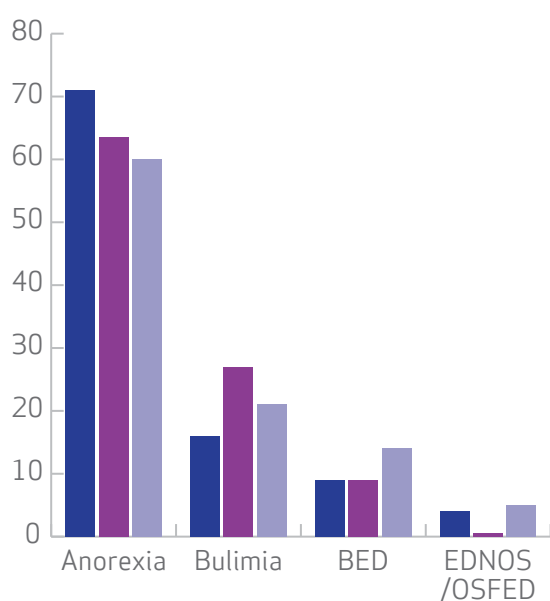
Figure 5: Age of person with the eating disorder



People do not need to have a diagnosis to use our support services. Nor do we diagnose anyone who uses our service. Where we know the type of eating disorder a person has, Figure 6 shows the breakdown in percentages. This year we saw a growth in the percentage of calls concerning binge eating disorder.

Figure 6: What type of eating disorder?

	2019	2020	2021
Anorexia Nervosa	71%	63.5%	60%
Bulimia Nervosa	16%	27%	21%
BED	9%	9%	14%
EDNOS/OSFED	4%	.5%	5%

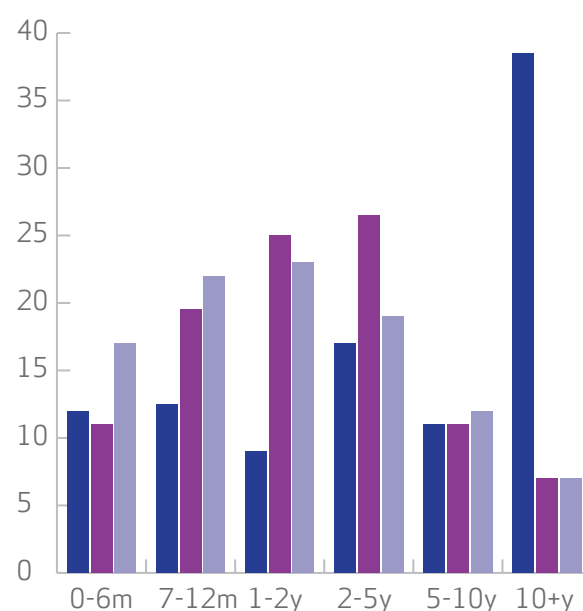


Looking at how long a person has had an eating disorder for, we can see in 2021, duration is evenly spread (see Figure 7).

What is interesting in our 2021 figures is the increase in callers who had a shorter duration eating disorder. This is growing yearly, with nearly 22% of duration of 7 to 12 months compared to 12.5% in 2019. There are different ways to interpret this figure, but this may reflect a more acute eating disorder onset in 2021, as being determined by the impact of COVID-19, or perhaps with a growing awareness of this illness, it is being picked up more quickly.

Figure 7: How long has the person had an eating disorder

	2019	2020	2021
0-6 months	12%	11%	17%
7-12 months	12.5%	19.5%	22%
1-2 years	9%	25%	23%
2-5 years	17%	26.5%	19%
5-10 years	11%	11%	12%
10+ years	38.5%	7%	7%



We do not always know from callers whether they are in treatment at the time of their call. We noted that in 2021 of the number of calls by, or concerning a person who is engaged in treatment, 78% of them used the Bodywhys helpline on a repeat basis.

In Figure 8 we can look at the overall breakdown of treatment engagement of people who used the helpline.

Figure 9 looks closer at service user's engagement in particular types of treatment. Where we know about treatment engagement, 43% of callers have been to their GP by the time they contact Bodywhys, and this has grown steadily every year; 6% in 2018, and 23% in 2019, and 37% in 2020.

Figure 8: In Treatment

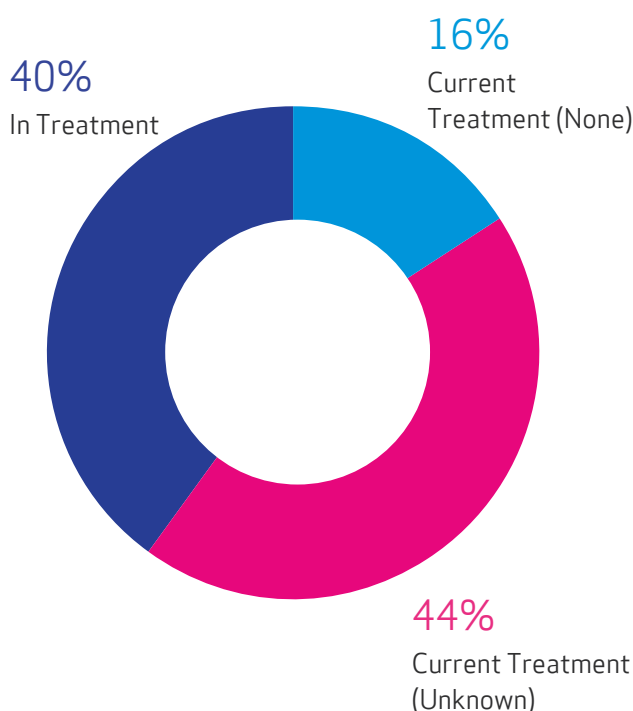


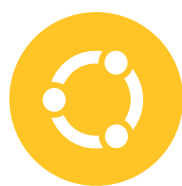
Figure 9: Type of Treatment



	2021
GP only	43%
Psychotherapy	14%
GP + Psychotherapy	6%
GP + Psychotherapy + Dietitian	2%
Hospital Treatment	3%
CAMHS	19%
AMHS	13%

*CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental health Services

*AMHS – Adult Mental Health Services



Online Support Groups

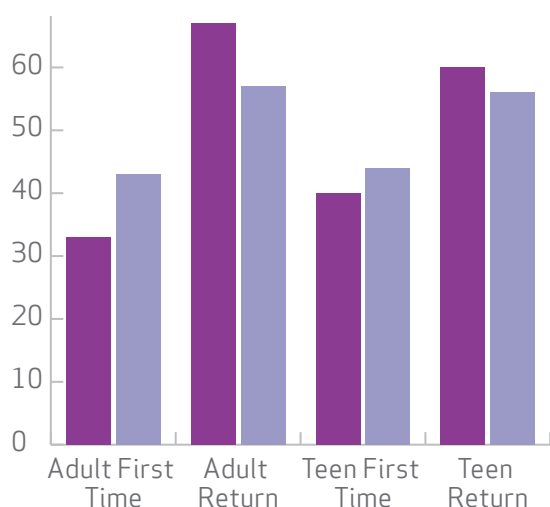
Bodywhys runs an online support group for adults and a separate group for adolescents. Both groups run once a week.

The pandemic initially had a very strong impact on online group figures with a rise in numbers attending by 90% in 2020. This continued to grow in 2021 by another 39%. Individually, attendance at YouthConnect grew by 83%, whilst BodywhysConnect increased by 26%.

Figure 10 shows the breakdown in those attending for the first time and those who are returning to the group. The adolescent group saw an increase of first-time users this year.

Figure 10: First time or Return?

	2020	2021
Adult First Time	33%	43%
Adult Return	67%	57%
Teen First Time	40%	44%
Teen Return	60%	56%



Looking at the adult group, again users are asked to choose an age category when they register for the group; again, most users are over 25 yrs old.

Figure 11: What age are the adult users?

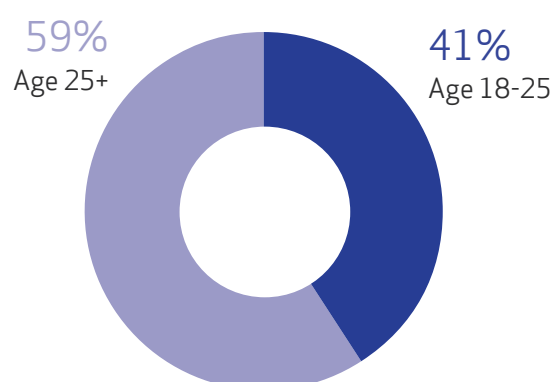
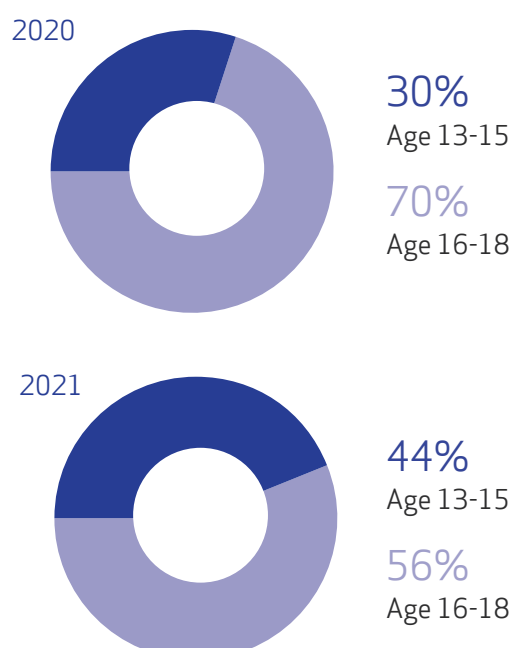


Figure 12 shows the breakdown in age on our teen group.

Figure 12: What age are the teen users?





BODYWHYS CONNECT

Online Support Groups held for adults (19+ years)

Gender



2021 saw an
83%
rise in male attendance



and a
171%
increase in transgender and non-binary users logging on

Users



61% increase in new users and an **11% increase** in repeat users

Type of eating disorder



People affected by **anorexia nervosa** logged in most often, followed by those affected by **binge eating disorder** and **bulimia nervosa**.



There was a **64% increase** in those affected by **binge eating disorder**, whilst users experiencing overeating increased by 204%.



Both anecdotally, and from a research perspective, the **pandemic** contributed to **increased experiences of restrictive eating and binge eating**.



YOUTH CONNECT

Online Support Groups held for teens (13-18 years)

Repeat users



YouthConnect saw a
76%
increase in attendance by **repeat users**

but there was a
102%
increase in **new users**

Type of eating disorder



There was an **80% increase** in those experiencing **anorexia nervosa**



Those experiencing a combination of **anorexia nervosa** and **bulimia nervosa** increased by **410%**



Those experiencing **OSFED** and other eating disorders, and **orthorexia nervosa** and **ARFID**, increased by **236%**



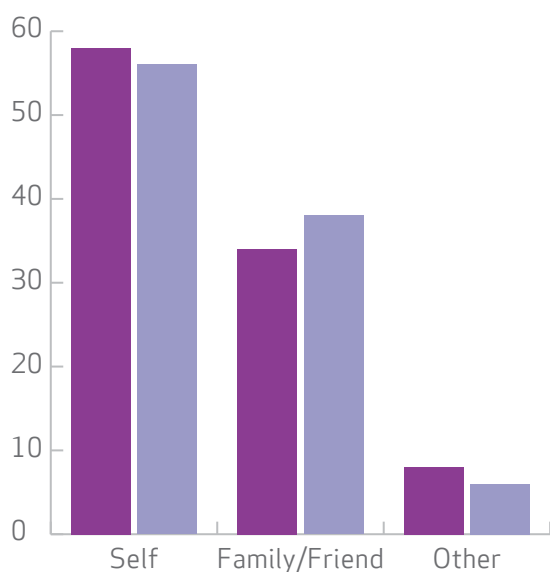
Email Support

'Alex' is a group of volunteers who write our email replies. We receive a large volume and a wide breadth of emails to this service. Sometimes a person who contacts Bodywhys needs specific information; other times the person uses the service to work things out, through exploration of thoughts and feelings. "Like a helpline call in an email", is one way of describing our email support service. All replies are reflective, non-directive, and written specifically for the person who has emailed. The email service grows annually and in 2021 we saw a growth of 71% in the number of emails received.



Figure 13: Who contacted the email service?

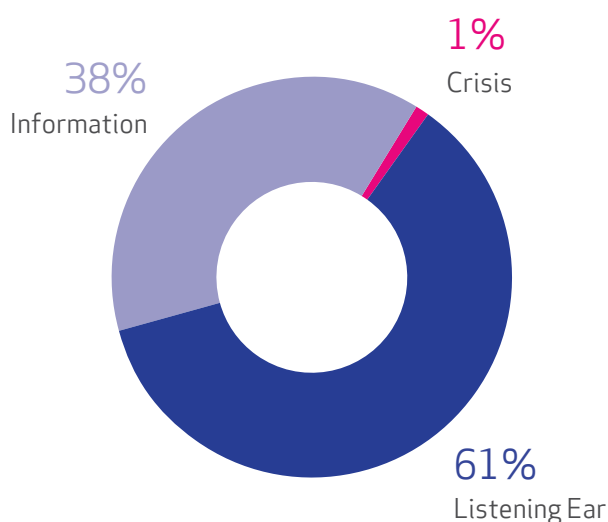
	2020	2021
Self	58%	56%
Family Friend	34%	38%
Other	8%	6%



...a helpline call in an email...

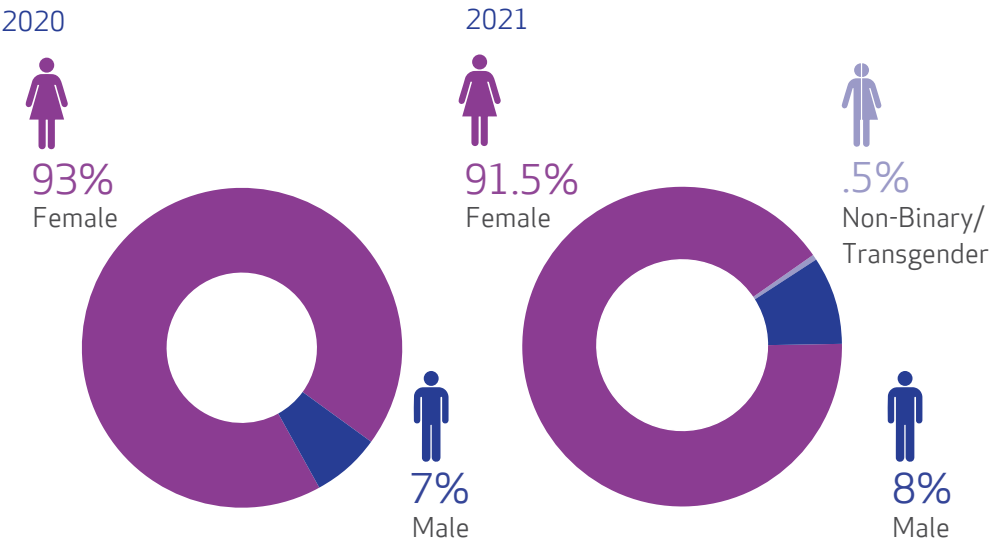
Figure 14: Why did people email Bodywhys?

Looking at these figures we can see that in 2021 the higher percentage of service users wrote in need of a listening ear. These emails, together with crisis emails, shows 62% of service users needed more than just information or signposting.



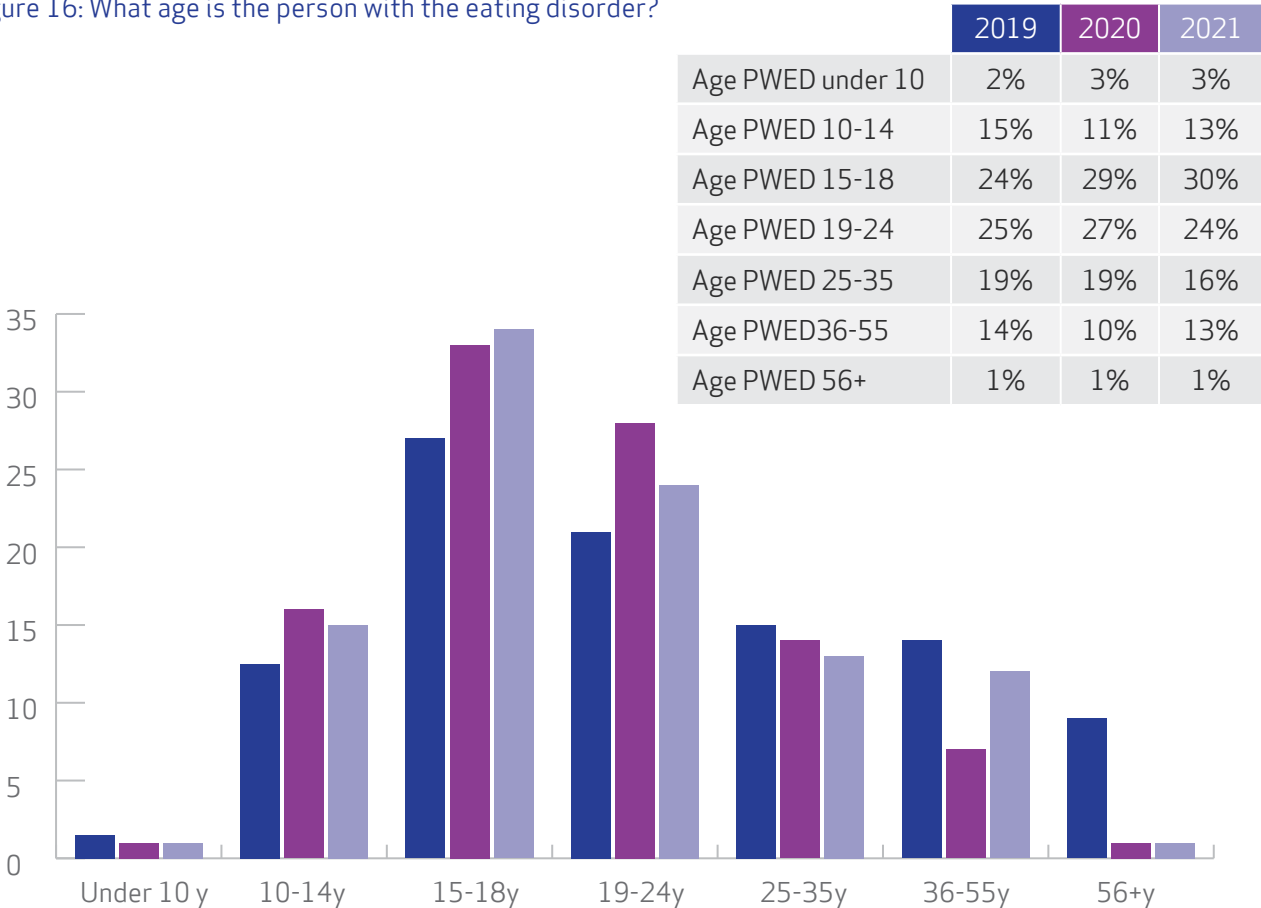
Looking at the gender breakdown of emails from a person with an eating disorder, in Figure 15 we see more females than males contacted this service.

Figure 15: Gender of person with an eating disorder



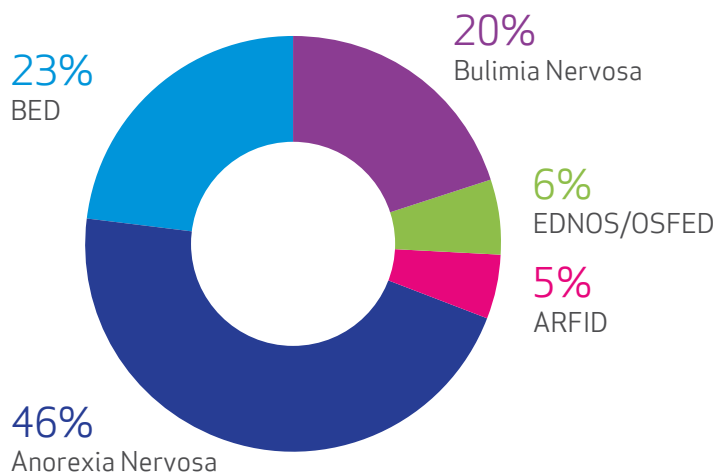
Looking at the age of those with an eating disorder on the email service, year on year the age group of 10-14 years increases, as does the age range 15-18 years. This year, child and adolescent eating disorders concerning under 18s, amounted to 46% of emails.

Figure 16: What age is the person with the eating disorder?



As with all our services we do not diagnose anyone who contacts us, and people do not need to have a diagnosis to use our support services. Of all emails received, in one third, we do not know what type of eating disorder the person is experiencing. But where we know the type of eating disorder a person has, Figure 17 shows the breakdown.

Figure 17: Types of Eating Disorder



Where we do know the duration of how long a person has had an eating disorder; Figure 18 shows the breakdown. Once again, we see an increase in the shorter duration of eating disorders, with the time frame of 7-12 months.

	2019	2020	2021
0-6 months	5%	8%	9%
7-12 months	9%	12%	21%
1-2 years	14%	20%	16%
2-5 years	30%	27%	20%
5-10 years	15%	15%	16%
10+ years	27%	18%	18%

Figure 18: How long has the person had an eating disorder?

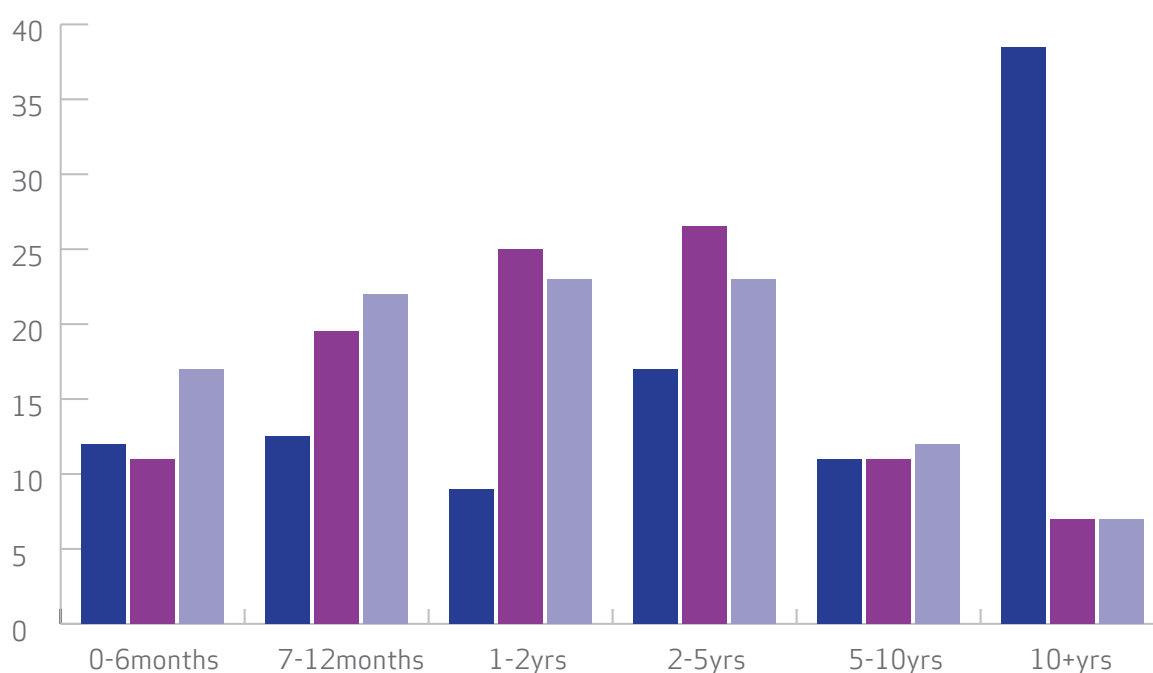
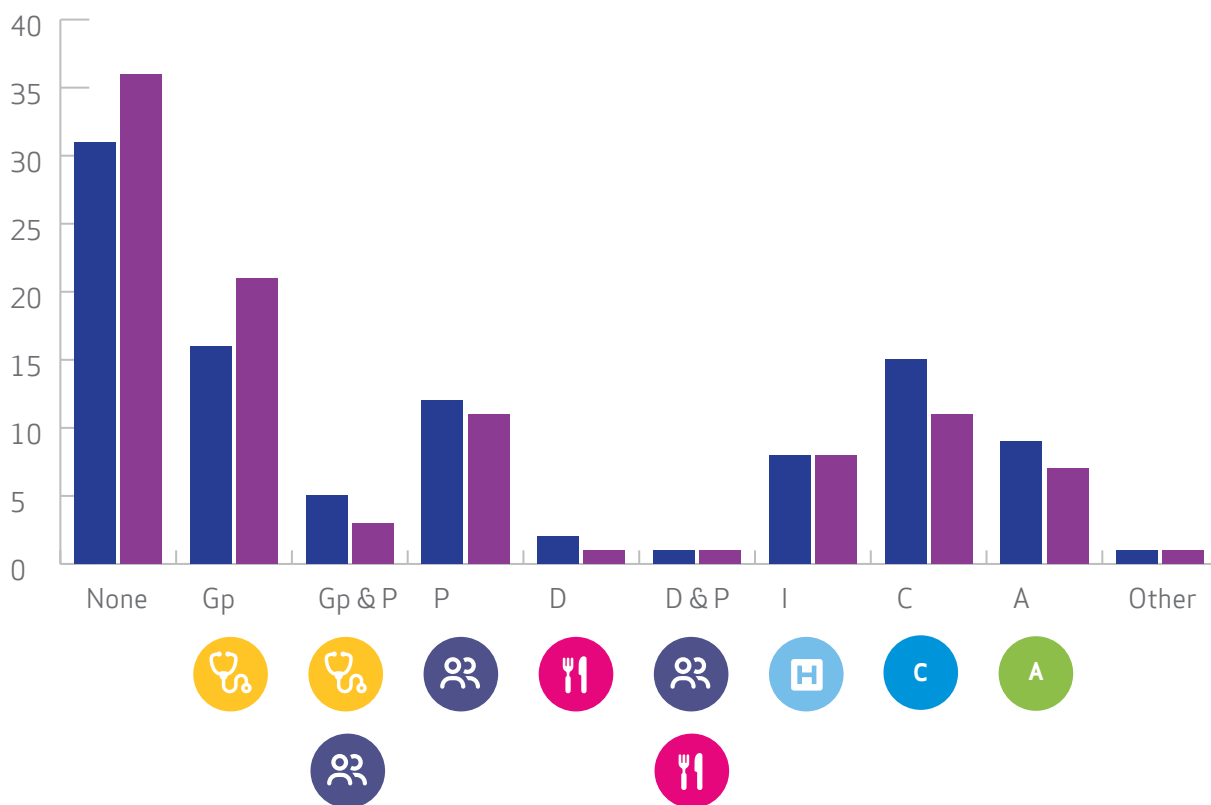


Figure 19: Type of Treatment

	2020	2021
None	31%	36%
GP only	16%	21%
GP + Psychotherapy	5%	3%
Psychotherapy	12%	11%
Dietitian	2%	1%
Dietitian + Psychotherapy	1%	1%
Inpatient	8%	8%
CAMHS	15%	11%
AMHS	9%	7%
Other	1%	1%

Some people use our email service to correspond with us on a regular basis. This year we saw that where the emailer was not in any treatment at all, 92% of this group used the email service on a returning basis. We also noted that where a person, or their loved one, was engaged in treatment, 71% used this service on an ongoing basis as a form of support.



Support Groups

Up to March 2020 Bodywhys ran two types of face-to-face support groups, one for people with eating disorders, and one for family and friends. In 2020 these groups stopped due to COVID-19. Unfortunately, they remained closed in 2021.

We hope to be able to resume the groups when we feel it is safe to do so.

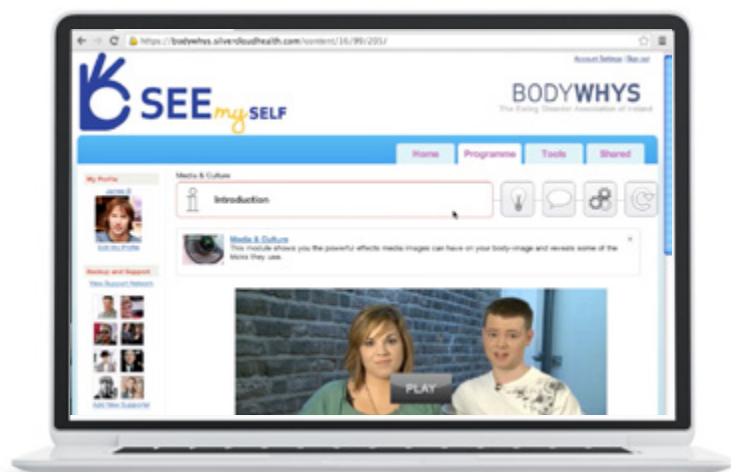


SeeMySelf

SeeMySelf is an online psycho-education programme designed for young people aged 15-24 focusing on self-esteem, body image and media, and cultural effects on self-image. The service offers weekly email support, and encouragement by Bodywhys volunteers.

2019	 6 Participants
2020	 14 Participants
2021	 14 Participants

SeeMySelf is an 8-week programme running alongside other online supports. As well as providing education and background to these topics, it asks the young person to think about how they themselves view these things. The programme is not specifically aimed at people who have an eating disorder but rather at young people who may face challenges to their self-image, body image and self-worth.



...it really makes you think about the way you describe yourself and the way you feel about yourself...





Training and Development

Training & Development



Harriet Parsons

Training and Development
Manager

The role of Bodywhys Training and Development Manager is to provide, supervise and implement the support component of the HSE's National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED). We have seen in other parts of this report how the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent changes to our lives, has impacted people with eating disorders, and in the following report we can see how the work of the Training and Development Manager has expanded to meet this need.

The collaboration and co-production between the HSE NCP-ED and Bodywhys Training and Development Manager is central to ensuring the values of both are at the heart of all components of work. The value of

this relationship is borne out in the benefit to service users who are supported, educated and trained in skills that are central to their own well-being and the well-being of their loved one with an eating disorder.



PiLaR Programme

Family support programme for those supporting a person with an eating disorder.



Not only did the PiLaR programme help my parents to understand and cope with my eating disorder, but it was a fundamental element to my recovery. It taught them to treat my eating disorder thoughts with compassion and empathy which I, in turn learned to show to myself. I wish I could say it's an easy journey, it's not, but it is one worth taking because everyone is capable of recovery."

Supporting family and friends continues to be a central feature of the work of Bodywhys. Our family support programme is a free four week (1 evening per week) structured programme offered to parents and families / friends of a person with an eating disorder, incorporating both psycho-education and support, as well as practical advice and skills to help them support their loved one towards recovery.





In 2021, the programme was delivered online, over four weeks, each week building on the knowledge from the last. The programme continues to be developed and improved. Topics covered are:

- ✓ Understanding an ED as a coping mechanism
- ✓ The main types of EDs and the mindset that accompanies each.
- ✓ Common features including distorted body image, black and white thinking, difficulty making decisions, and super-sensitivity.
- ✓ How to think through an ED cycle to provide a framework for understanding.
- ✓ Understanding how the person with an ED interprets their world – sensitivity, thinking style, the role of disordered eating behaviours
- ✓ Reframing behaviours to allow for better support
- ✓ Separating out the person from their eating disorder
- ✓ Avoiding power struggles
- ✓ Communication skills - How to have conversations
- ✓ Support for siblings
- ✓ Understanding triggers
- ✓ What is recovery?
- ✓ Treatment – working or not working – how to ask questions of healthcare providers
- ✓ Managing relapse



2021 has seen an enormous increase in numbers signing up for the PiLaR programme.

All PiLaR programmes were delivered online via the Zoom platform and this year, following feedback, we offered a combination of both

	morning and	✓
	evening programmes	✓

Looking at the demographics of those who attended the PiLaR programme we can see that the trends reported from the HSE NCP-ED specialist teams are in line with what we are seeing coming to the PiLaR programme.

Taking the September, 2021 demographics, 157 people completed the survey.

Figure 20. What is your gender?

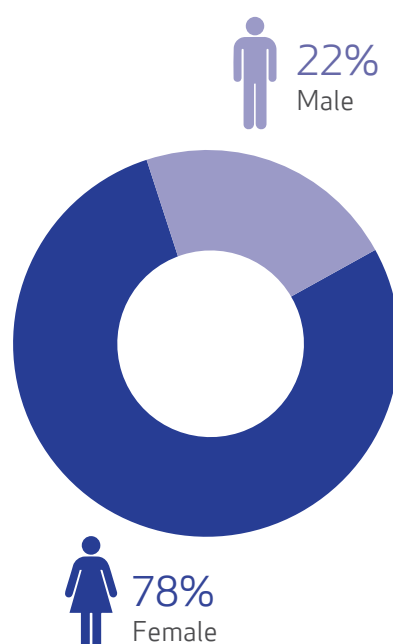
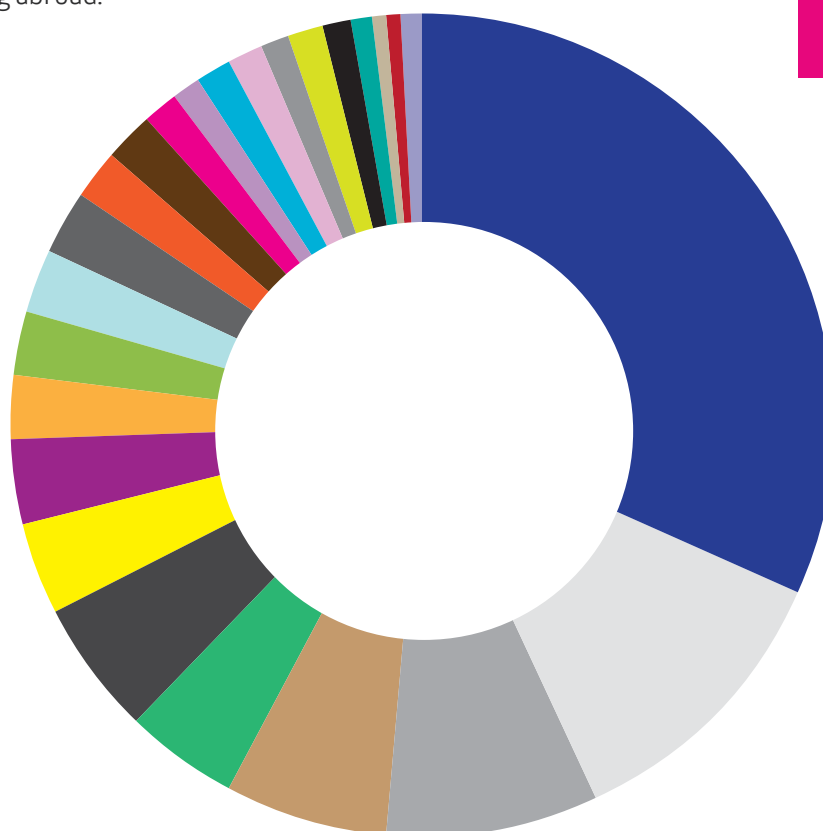


Figure 21. Where are you based?

We can see that people are attending from a range of counties in Ireland, as well as Irish people living abroad.



The majority attending were female (mothers).



Dublin (50)	Kilkenny (5)	Louth (2)	Leitrim (1)
Cork (18)	Limerick (4)	Laois (2)	Lebanon (1)
Wicklow (13)	Wexford (4)	Carlow (2)	Northern Ireland (1)
Meath (10)	Clare (4)	Waterford (2)	Donegal (1)
Galway (7)	Tipperary (4)	Monaghan (2)	
Kildare (8)	Roscommon (3)	Cavan (2)	
Kerry (6)	Mayo (3)	United Kingdom (2)	

Figure 22. I'm here to support my...

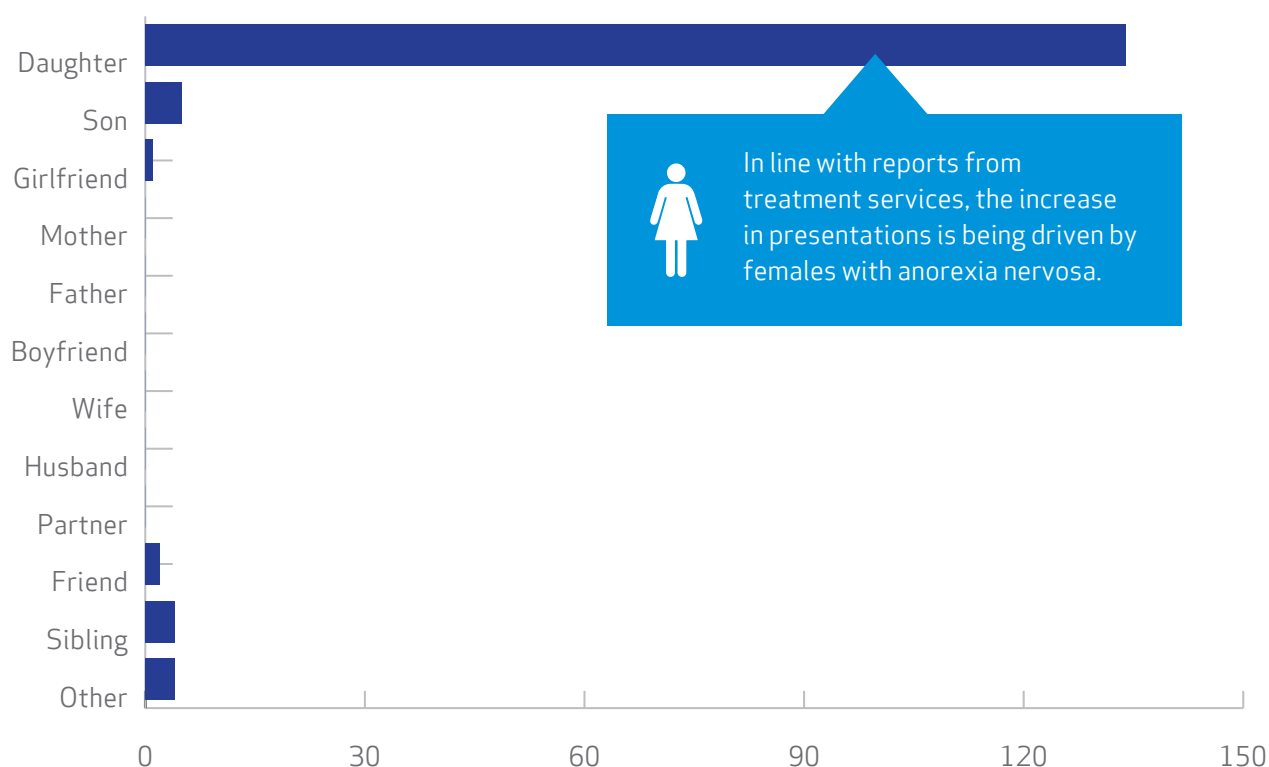


Figure 23. What type of eating disorder (ED) do they have?

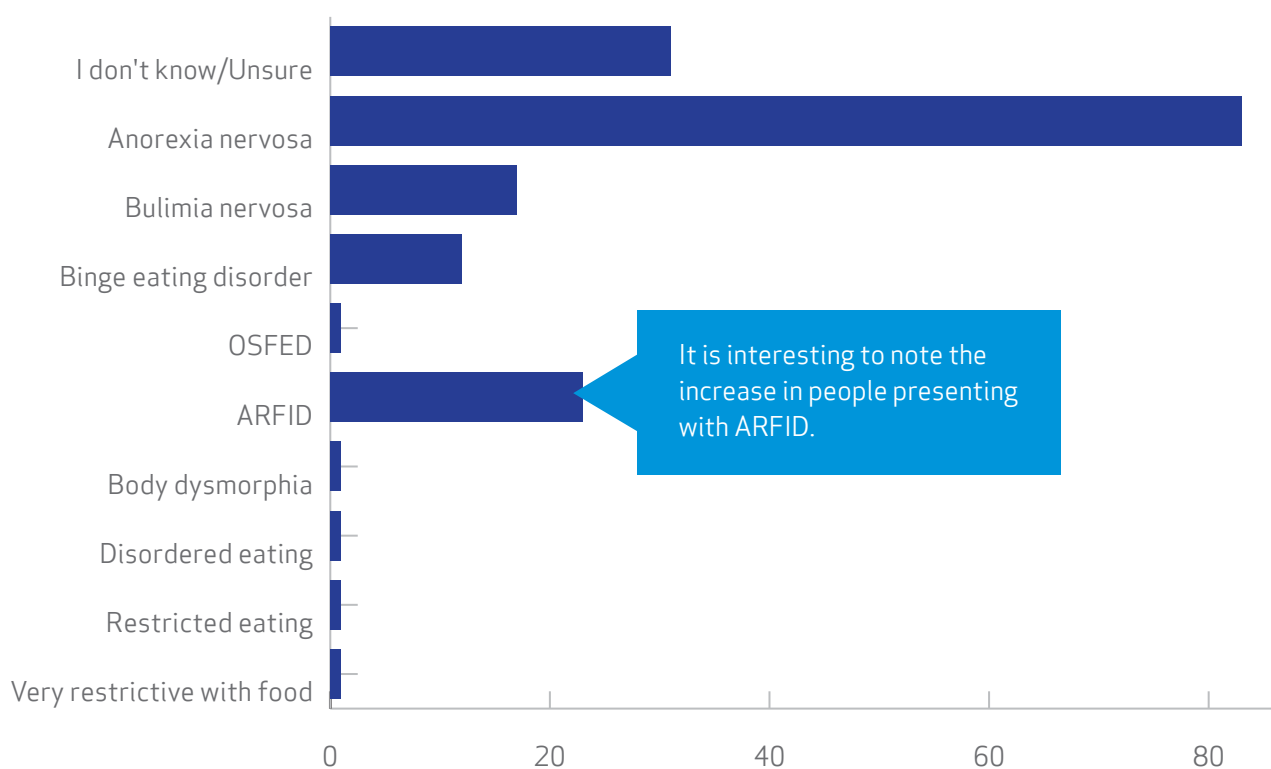
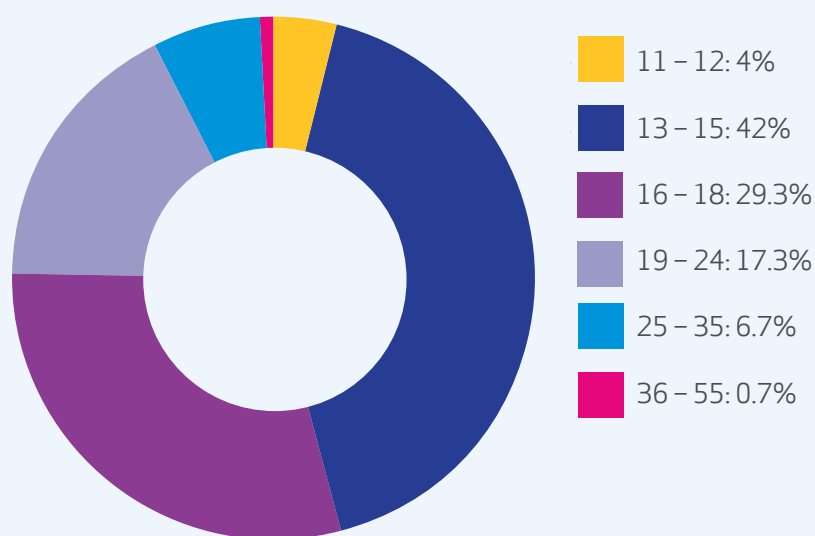
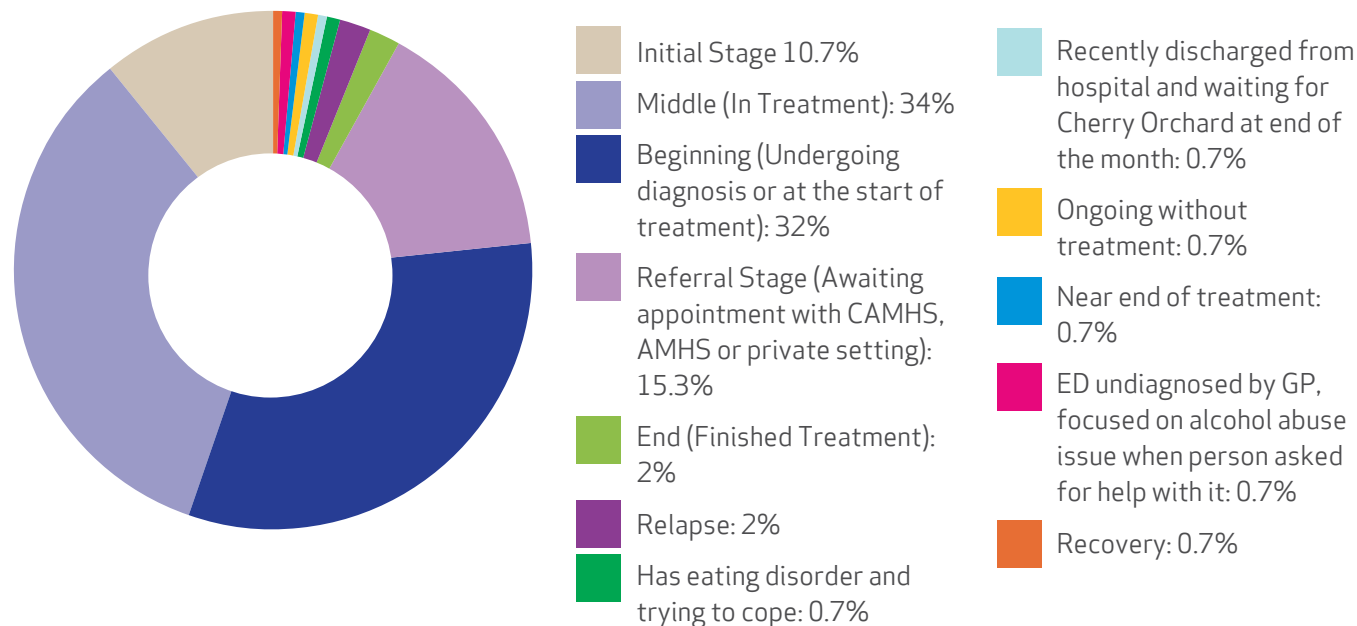


Figure 24. What is the age of the person you are supporting?



The ages in Figure 24 show us that people of all ages are coping with an eating disorder which is not just a teenage illness. However, the increase in ED presentations are being driven by people aged 13-18 yrs, which is the average age of onset of an ED. This means that 28.7% of people attending the PiLaR programme are supporting an adult with an ED, and it is reasonable to assume that they have been supporting this person for many years, (the likelihood being that a number of these adults have a severe and enduring ED (SEED) which is an area of support that we are planning to develop in 2022).

Figure 25. Where in the process would you consider your person to be?



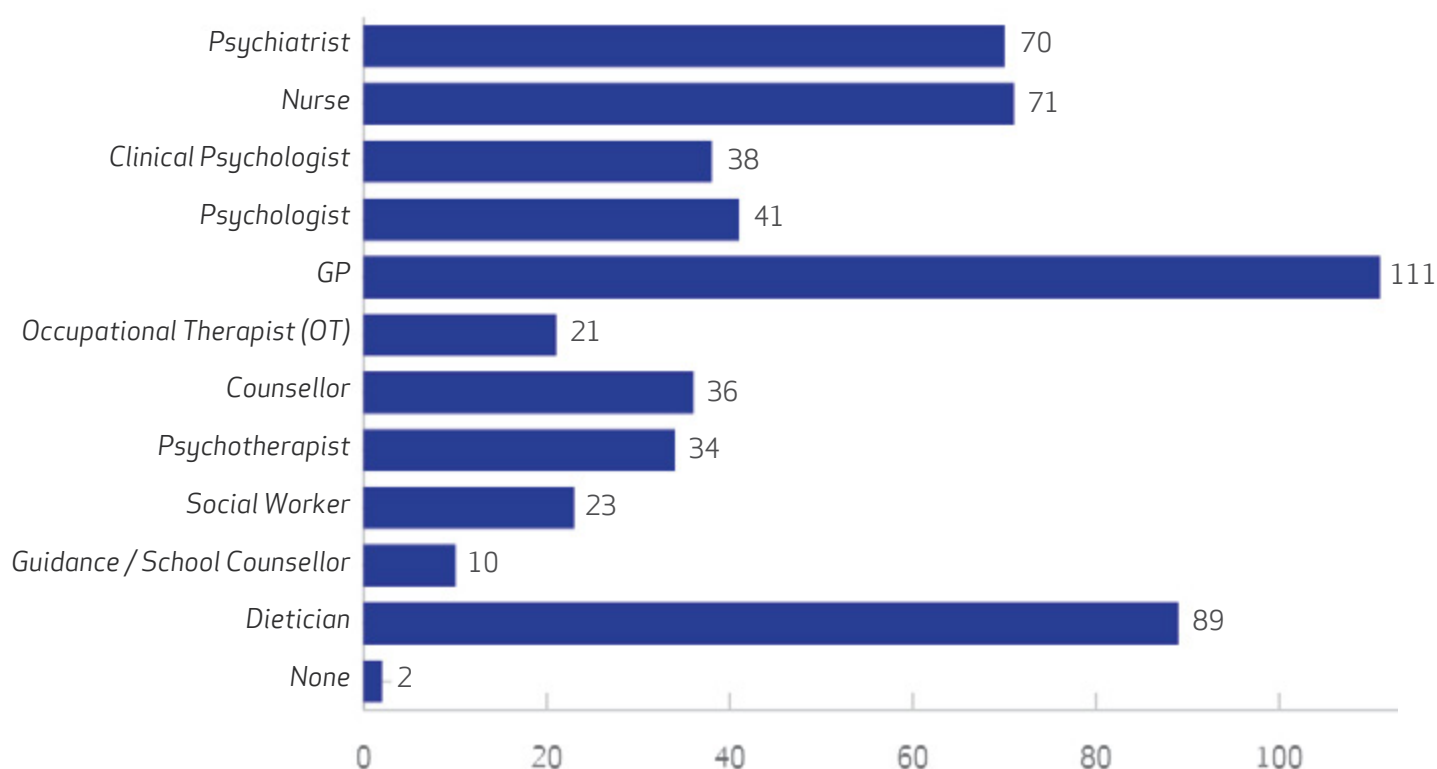
We can see from Figure 25 that many people attend the PiLaR programme as their person is beginning treatment (58%), 34% are in the middle of treatment, and the remainder are in the final

stages, relapse, or maintenance of recovery. The content of the PiLaR programme is suitable for all and we know from the 2019 evaluation and from feedback from clinicians, that when families

attend the PiLaR programme in the early stages of assessment and treatment they benefit hugely from better knowledge, education, and support, giving their person the best chance of recovering.

Figure 26. Which professionals has your person met?

150 Responses



Other responses given by participants were (with one each):

Medical Consultant in Hospital	1	Spoke with Jigsaw counsellor re: anxiety, body dysmorphia, food. Has psychologist appointment scheduled	1	Doctor in emergency department	1
Not for ED specifically, but food concern is one aspect	1	GP sent her for bloods due to her lack of food intake	1	Psychiatric doctor	1
Consultant Paediatrician	1	Paediatrician	1	Eating disorder untreated as not recognised by person or GP	1
Hospital Paediatrician	1	Neurologist	1	She met all the above in a 2 week hospital stay	1
CAMHS Doctor and consultant	1	Don't know, she is to update to discuss with us	1		
Therapist	1				

Figure 26 shows us just how complex an ED is and how many professionals working in many different settings might be approached for the first time. This is why the 'training' aspect of the Training and Development Manager's role is so important. For further details see page 31 and 32 for the range of training workshops delivered to various professionals.

We asked PiLaR attendees if they would like to say something about their experience of services. The following are a snapshot of some people's experiences, and they highlight the importance of the continued funding of the NCP-ED and the strength and benefit of the collaborative working relationship between Bodywhys and the NCP-ED.

"Very fast and professional"

"Nobody on the same page. Very poor service. Nobody minding her physical health. GP won't see her now, has referred on. No dietician available. Nurse away for 6 weeks"

"The referral process is ok but the waiting times for treatment are long for people in need. I understand this is a resourcing and government funding issue but it is a big challenge for people needing the service"

"My GP was very helpful and referred immediately"

"Was initially referred to CAMHS for self-harm. Mum was concerned about weight loss and expressed same to CAMHS but never put 2 and 2 together initially. CAMHS referred us to GP for bloods and ECG. GP sent us to A&E. Heart rate extremely low. Very grateful to CAMHS. We were 6 weeks in hospital before being medically fit for discharge. Unfortunately, the consultant is not available for 4 weeks after discharge. Our appointment is end of September. In the meantime, being monitored weekly by the original local CAMHS."

"Unacceptable waiting period for assessment"

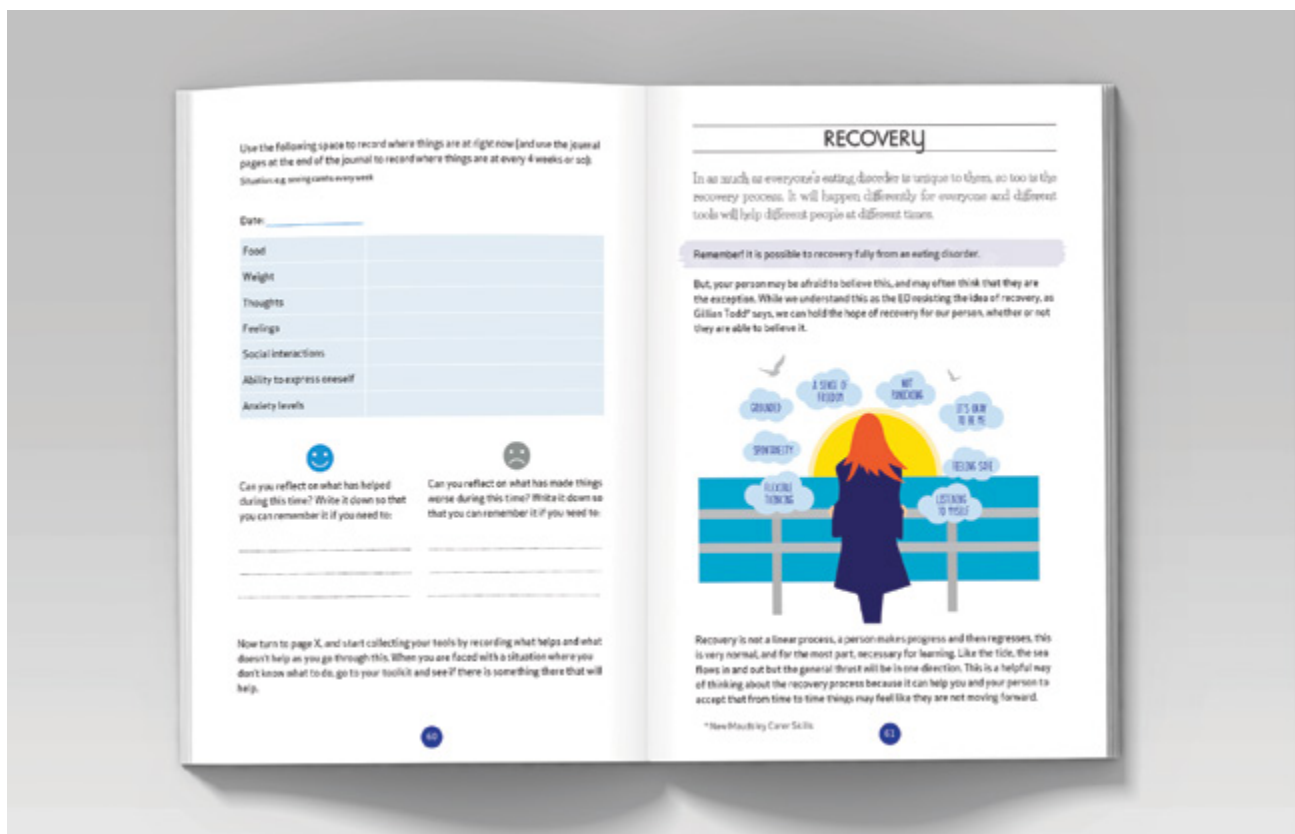
"My GP hadn't heard of CAREDS/Cork-Kerry before I told her"

"Stressful to have to go through A&E always for admission"

"Daughter was referred for triage assessment. Received diagnosis of anorexia. On waiting list for FBT. However, we are seeing a dietician privately and refeeding using FBT/ Maudsley approach at home"



In 2021 we piloted the PiLaR Journal with a view to having a completed version in 2022.



Bodywhys Family Support Package

The pandemic has had a positive impact on the provision of family support by Bodywhys. Providing the PiLaR programme online has enabled the provision of other online family supports, which have culminated in the new Bodywhys Family Support Package. The Family Support Package has several components which are all free to attend. The cornerstone of the package is the PiLaR programme. Once a person has attended the PiLaR programme they can sign up for the bi-monthly carer support group and the New Maudsley Carer Skills training programme. Once this training programme is completed a person may also attend a monthly new Maudsley Carer Skills workshop which is scheduled to begin in 2022.

Post-PiLaR Support Group

This group is open to anyone who has attended the PiLaR programme. It is limited to a smaller number of people so that everyone gets a chance to speak should they wish to. This group is facilitated by the Training and Development Manager and runs twice a month, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month.

This is a support group and it is run along the same ethos of all Bodywhys support services, i.e. that we understand an ED as a coping mechanism and the group is a safe and supportive space in which carers can bring a question or talk through a current issue with other carers. Members of the group get and give support to one another, and the boundaries of the group are maintained by the facilitator.



'I attended many of the PiLaR Support Group meetings and found them so helpful. They gave me a feeling of belonging, like I wasn't the only Mum fighting the horrendous illness. They gave me support and advice when I needed it. The group was always amazing and provided the much needed support, compassion, kindness, advice and information during this ongoing battle against ED that we were all facing and many of us still are. There is nothing like the support of someone who knows what you're going through. This type of support group is instrumental for parents/carers to help them find the support they need while they provide the support their loved one needs.'



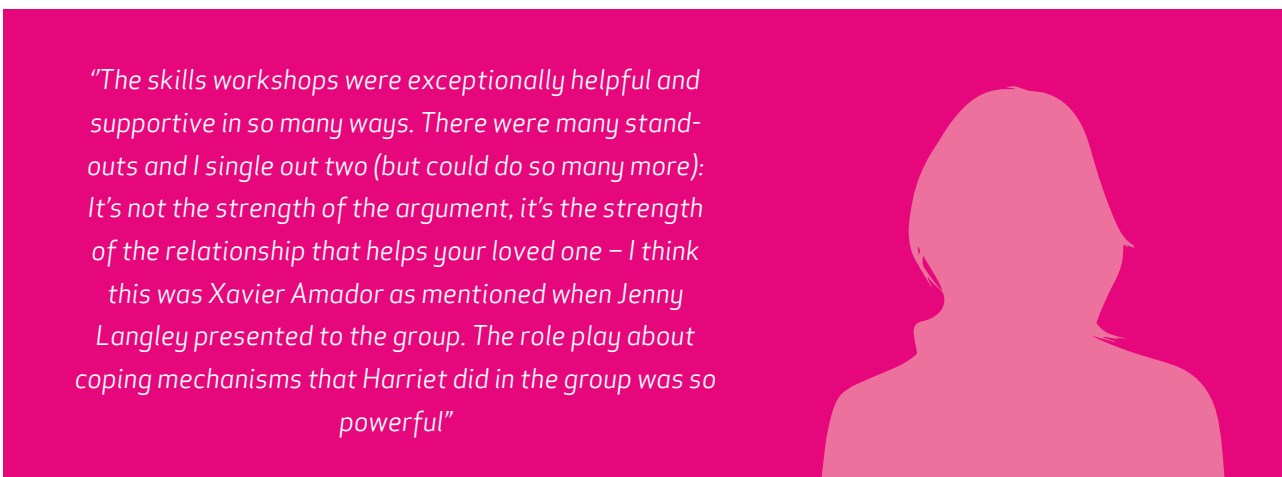
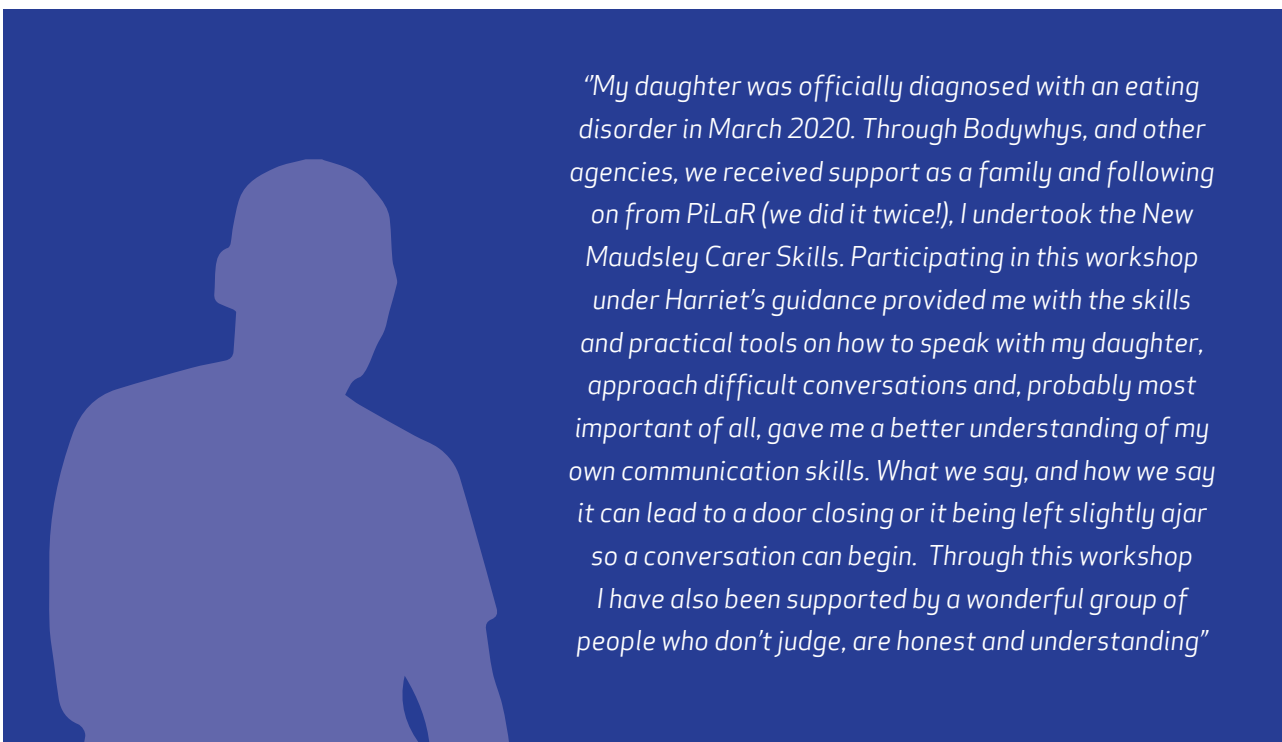
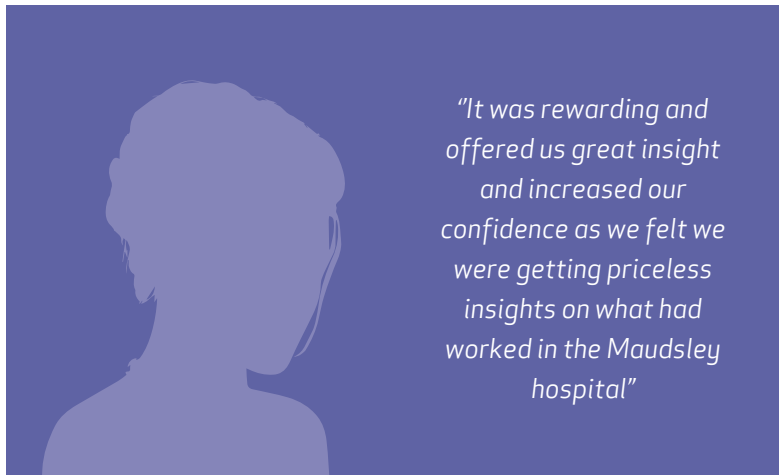
The Post-PiLaR Support Group is my lifeline. It's a safe space where any question or situation can be discussed with a group of people who understand the terrifying and unrelenting world of EDs. I come away from meetings feeling supported and with a better understanding of what my person is going through and being able to see her again, separate from the ED"

Post-PiLaR Support Group

Month	Number attending
January	24
February	24
March	24
April	24
May	24
June	24
July	12
August	12
September	24
October	24
November	42
December	11
Total	269

New Maudsley Carer Skills Workshop

The Training and Development Manager is trained to deliver the New Maudsley Carer Skills. Moving the workshops online enabled the delivery of these workshops to carers in 2021. The first group began in June (17 carers) and the second group in November (22 carers).



4 Eating Disorders Training delivered:

Providing CPD training for professionals (Clinicians, and Allied Health Professionals, Talking therapists, Addiction services) continues to be a central part of the Training and Development Manager's role. 2021 saw continued demand for professional training in supporting people with eating disorders.

Date	Title	For
January	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	HSE Speech & Language Therapists
January	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	TCD Higher Diploma in Mental Health Nursing
February	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	Wexford Rape Crisis Centre Staff
February	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	St. Angela's College Sligo, Mental Health Nurses
February	Supporting students with eating disorders	Scoil Mhuire Community School, Clane
March	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	Counsellors and Psychotherapists, MyMind.
March	Understanding eating disorders	University of Limerick
March	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	3 rd year BSc Nursing Students
March	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	UCC Mental Health in the Community
March	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	HSE Clinicians
April	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	ISPCC Volunteers
April	Supporting students with eating disorders	Sacred Heart School, Tullamore
April	Working with people with eating disorders, and supervisory workshop	Wexford Rape Crisis Staff
May	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	Jigsaw, Donegal
May	Supporting students with eating disorders	Kilrush Community College
May	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	Wexford General Hospital Staff

Date	Title	For
June	Supporting people with eating disorders	Tusla Training
June	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	Niteline
October	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	Spectrum Healthcare Dietitians
October	Supporting families	HSE ED Masterclass Series
October	Supporting people with eating disorders	Galway University Hospital Dietitians
October	Understanding eating disorders	Sport Ireland Institute
November	Supporting students with eating disorders	Guidance Counsellors Sligo
November	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	CAMHS Balbriggan
November	Working therapeutically with people with eating disorders	St. Vincent's Fairview Clinicians
November	Supporting students with eating disorders	Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education
November	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	Tusla Foster Carers
November	Supporting students with eating disorders	Bodywhys Webinar
December	Supporting people with eating disorders	Youth Workers

5. Attendance and presentation at events / conferences



When	What	To Whom
March	Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with eating disorders	PSI SIGED, EDAW Event
March	An overview of our work in 2020	NCP-ED Network day
March	Understanding eating disorders	Spectrum Health EDAW Event
March	Bodywhys: Who we are and what we do	Longford/ Westmeath EDAW Information Event
March	Understanding eating disorders	Citi Health EDAW Event
March	Understanding eating disorders	Kerry Mental Health Week
October	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	Library Talk
November	Supporting people with eating disorders	College of Psychiatrists of Ireland
November	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	UCD Health Across the Lifespan
November	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys. Who we are and what we do.	Tusla Foster Carers
November	Supporting families of those with eating disorders	Turkish Conference (online)
November	Coping with Christmas	Bodywhys Webinar
December	Understanding eating disorders	AsIAm



Communications,
Research and Policy

Communications, Research and Policy



Barry Murphy
Communications Officer



Ellen Jennings
Communications Officer
(From September)

Media Queries



Unsurprisingly, as the intensity of the pandemic continued, there was a



107% increase
in media requests,
compared to 2020.



Topics included:

Body image and social media, rising cases of eating disorders, the impact of COVID-19, social media and eating disorders, the death of Nikki Grahame, life assurance and mortgage protection, HSE NCP-ED funding, service provision, hospital admissions figures, podcast requests, wards of the court and the Mental Health Act 2001,

obesity and weight loss, personal stories, Christmas support, Eating Disorders Awareness Week, eating disorders and men, the lack of plus-size male models in Ireland, orthorexia nervosa, TikTok, body editing apps, the rise in eating disorder hospitalisations in children and body dysmorphia.

Media Spotlight on Eating Disorders

In January and February, the print media focused on diet culture in lockdown, how COVID-19 has led to an increase in eating disorders and Mary-Kate Slattery's personal experience of anorexia nervosa and boxing. In March and April, coverage was given to men and eating disorders, the societal outlook on weight loss, the surge in eating disorder referrals since lockdown and supporting someone with an eating disorder. April saw the sad news of the death of Nikki Grahame. Barry Murphy and psychologist Alison Keating spoke to Virgin Media's *Ireland AM*. In May, tube feeding under restraint, young people and eating disorders during lockdown, personal experiences of eating disorders

and male body confidence were highlighted. In June, disordered behaviours and modelling, body dysmorphia, travelling to the UK for eating disorder treatment and men living with anorexia nervosa were discussed. In July and August, the print media reported on the expansion of eating disorder teams nationally, body positivity, online safety and editing images online as well as the announcement that Pinterest banned all weight loss ads from their platform. In September and October, there was coverage of recruitment for eating disorder hubs, the increase in children requiring inpatient support, the 'Achill to Athens' fundraiser and articles outlining what it can be

like to live with an eating disorder. November saw the release of the 'Unspoken' documentary on RTÉ in which three Irish men, Cormac, Eoin and Daniel shared their experiences of living with eating disorders. The film 'Spencer' was also released in November, which portrayed the life of Princess Diana and a storyline around bulimia nervosa. Barry Murphy and Cormac Ryan discussed eating disorders in men on *Ireland AM* ahead of International Men's Day. In December, the media focused on supporting a loved one with an eating disorder, supporting teenagers with eating disorders as well as men and eating disorders.



Articles by Keyword (print and online) – source from Kantar analytics

Anorexia: 521

ARFID: 6

Bulimia: 127

Binge Eating: 43

Eating Disorders: 808

Body Image: 321

Bodywhys: 506

Other: 74

*orthorexia nervosa (7), muscle dysmorphia, body dysmorphia (67)

Total number of articles across all keywords: 2,200 (Print and web-based)

February, April and September to December were the busiest periods for print and web articles. 27% of all articles were web-based, 25% were from the print media. 9.4% of articles referencing Bodywhys were web-based.

Top news sources by reach:

- *Irish Independent, Irish Times, Irish Examiner* (web editions)
- *Sunday Independent, Irish Independent* (print)

Top news sources by volume of articles:

- *Irish Examiner, Irish Independent, Irish Times* (web)
- *The Irish Sun, Irish Examiner, Irish Daily Mail* (print)

Top sources with keyword – Bodywhys

- *Extra.ie, Goss.ie, Irish Examiner, Her.ie* (web)
- *The Irish Examiner, The Irish Times, The Echo (Cork), The Irish Daily Mail* (print)

Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW)

EDAW was a busy period for media activities, with requests prior to and throughout the week. This included: *C103 Cork, Classic Hits, East Coast FM, Flirt FM, Irish Daily Mirror, Irish Independent, The Irish Times, Liffey Sound, Northern Sound, Newstalk FM, the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland's (RCPI) Mind Reading podcast, Reuters, RTÉ Brendan O'Connor show, RTÉ Claire Byrne show, RTÉ Drivetime, RTÉ News, Southern Star, Spirit Radio, Waterford News and Star, the 'When...' podcast, TheJournal.ie, Tuam Herald and Virgin Media.*



Barry (right) speaking to Eleanor Mannion (left), RTÉ News, about the impact of COVID-19



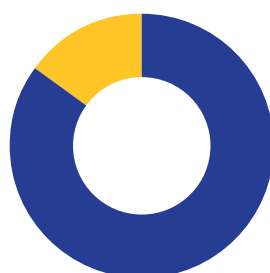
190,780
users reached

Our combined EDAW social media campaigns across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram reached 190,780 accounts during the week.

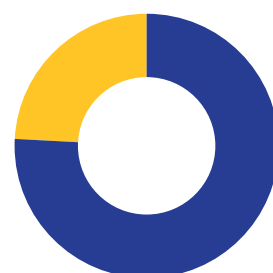
Website



72% of all visitors who accessed www.bodywhys.ie were based in Ireland, followed by 9% from the United States and 7% from the United Kingdom. February, March, April, May, October and November were the busiest months of activity on the website. 84% of visitors were new users, whilst 74% of users came via organic search. There were approximately 1,074,512 page views, reflecting a 131% increase compared to 2020. 64% web traffic came through mobile phones, 34% from desktop computers and 2% via tablet devices. The most accessed sections of the site, in order, were: the homepage, the services directory, the helpline, support services, treatment guide, binge eating disorder, PiLaR programme, anorexia nervosa, supporting someone and personal stories.



New Users
84%



Organic search
76%



1,074,512

PAGE VIEWS

131% increase compared to 2020



Mobile
64%

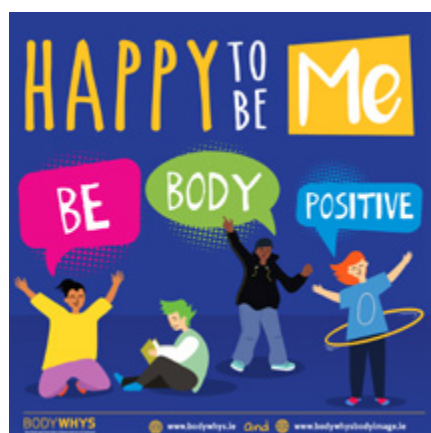


Desktop
34%



Tablet
2%

Social Media



We are grateful to all those who set up birthday fundraisers through Facebook, with the proceeds going to Bodywhys.

Popular posts on Facebook included:

- Eating disorders are not a lifestyle choice.
- **PiLaR programme** posters
- 'Unspoken' documentary, *RTÉ*
- **EDAW** and **Christmas** messages
- World Eating Disorder **Action Day**
- **Supporting students** webinar poster
- **Happy To Be Me** Resources launch post
- **Emer McLysaght** on Ryan Tubridy's radio show

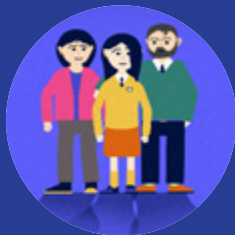
On Twitter, Bodywhys generated approximately 1,378,800 impressions through the year, a 115% increase compared to 2020. Popular tweets throughout the year included those from EDAW in March, infographics from the coach education series, reference to media interviews, facts about eating disorders, support for parents, research opportunities, the launch of the primary school resources, webinars for teachers and posts around Christmas. Our EDAW messages were supported by See Change. Bodywhys supported activities such as:

- **Carers Week** (Care Alliance Ireland) in June.
- **World Eating Disorders Day** on June 2nd – the focus was #Equity4EatingDisorders

- **Men's Health Week** in June, with the theme 'Making the Connections'.
- Information about ED and body image issues amongst the **LGBTQIA+ community**, in support of Pride.
- We created '**Coping with Christmas**' tips in the 12 days leading up to Christmas based on feedback from the Christmas webinar.

We gained 1,777 new Instagram followers in 2021 and reached 26,217 accounts, reflecting an over 3 fold increase on 2020. Popular content included EDAW content, COVID-19 and body image, Bodywhys statements and webinars.





Kate's Dad Animation

We developed a script for a new animation which focused on a father's perspective. Our thanks to the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) for supporting this project.

Online Safety

- ✓ In the Spring and Autumn, Bodywhys met with staff from TikTok's Outreach and Partnerships, Trust, and Safety team.
- ✓ May - Bodywhys responded to a query from the Labour Party's press office about how social media companies manage harmful content.
- ✓ July - Pinterest banned all weight loss advertising from its platform, this follows on from similar action taken by Facebook in 2019.
- ✓ July - We attended the Children's Rights Alliance webinar about online safety, with speakers including Peter Tyndall, Ombudsman and Information Commissioner for Ireland, Dr Karen McAuley, Head of Policy, Ombudsman for Children and Noeline Blackwell, CEO, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre.
- ✓ A member of the public contacted Bodywhys with a concern about a pro-anorexia website. We subsequently reported it to the website's hosts, and it was removed.
- ✓ In November, we attended a Children's Rights Alliance webinar about online safety. The main speakers were Leanda Barrington-Leach, Head of EU Affairs at the 5Rights Foundation (sic) in the UK and a youth panel. Young Social Innovators (YSI) students Amy and Sophie shared their project about TikTok and body image.
- ✓ In the United States, whistleblower Frances Haugen highlighted concerns about the impact of Facebook and Instagram, including on body image.



BODYWHYS
PODCAST

Podcast

We published two podcast episodes in late 2021.

- 1 Body image, social media and self-compassion, with Dr Ciara Mahon, a post-doctoral research fellow at UCD's Youth Mental Health Lab.
- 2 Coronavirus and eating disorders: Voices from around the world. Interviews with staff from Beat, the Butterfly Foundation, EDANI, NEDA and Sheena's Place about their experiences of supporting people during the pandemic.

We look forward to creating more episodes in 2022.

Headline Awards



Mental Health Broadcasting, Short Form: 'Lack of funding for Ireland's eating disorder treatment plan revealed' - Paul O'Donoghue for Newstalk FM



Mental Health Journalism, National Print/Online: 'During lockdown, my 11-year-old was hospitalised with an eating disorder' - Meg Walker for The Irish Times

Congratulations to Paul and Meg.

Supporting Researchers

It was a particularly busy year supporting the work of professional and postgraduate researchers and trainee psychologists and clinicians. Calls for participants included:

- The body image and self-surveillance study
- Attitudes, awareness and perceptions of the public around orthorexia nervosa.
- The involvement of carers in eating disorders
- Family recovery from eating disorders
- Exploring professional perspectives on the impact of COVID-19 on individuals with eating disorders
- Factors that facilitate or prevent fathers from engaging in the treatment process of a child or adolescent with a clinically diagnosed eating disorder
- Lived experience of diagnostic shifts in adult mental health
- An exploration of psychotherapists' experience in the treatment of men with eating disorders
- Adjusting to COVID-19: Predictive and protective factors (Phase 2)
- ENTWINE survey on family caregiving

In May, Barry met with Dr Sarah Cooney, School of Psychology, UCD, to discuss support for her application to the Irish Research Council (IRC) for a body image

project. The funding call was for the IRC's New Foundations grant. If successful, this will lead to a workshop in 2022.

Research and Policy

This is a new role undertaken by Barry Murphy, commencing in September 2021.

In June, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) autism guidelines were updated to highlight awareness of potential coexisting issues, including feeding and eating problems.

With little sign of the pandemic slowing down, 2021 saw continued growth in research assessing the impact of COVID-19 on eating disorders.

Harriet and Barry, and Deirbhile Malone, a Bodywhys volunteer, and medical sociologist Dr Ingrid Holme, UCD, had a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Medicine*.

Parsons, H., Murphy, B., Malone, D., & Holme, I. (2021) Review of Ireland's first year of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on people affected by eating disorders: 'Behind Every Screen There Was A Family Supporting A Person With An Eating Disorder'. *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, 10(15), 3385. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jcm10153385>

This study was subsequently cited in another *Journal of Clinical Medicine* paper in October and in *JAMA Paediatrics* in November.

The Health Research Board (HRB) published hospital and psychiatric unit admission figures for 2020, reflecting a 32% rise in adults and 61% increase in children and adolescents, compared to 2019. The report: Activities of Irish Psychiatric Units and Hospitals 2020 can be accessed on www.hrb.ie

In July, the website Creating Our Future was launched in full, having previously been announced by Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD and Minister Simon Harris TD.

- Data from the US indicated that hospitalisations and inpatient care for eating disorders more than doubled in 2020, compared to previous years. The increase was observed across anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and other and unspecified eating disorders. The number of patients accessing outpatient care for eating disorders also rose. (Source: *JAMA Network Open*)
- 'Exploring carer burden amongst those caring for a child or adolescent with an eating disorder during COVID-19' written by Dr Kristen Maunder and Prof. Fiona McNicholas was published in the *Journal of Eating Disorders* and referenced Bodywhys and the PiLaR programme.
- In October, Australia launched the world's first children's mental health and wellbeing strategy 0-12 years. Australia also published its first national strategy for eating disorders.

- The Academy for Eating Disorders published its Medical Care Standards Guide 4th Edition.
- New figures published in the *Lancet Psychiatry* estimated that there are 17.3 million worldwide with binge eating disorder, whilst 24.6 million are affected by Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorder (OSFED). Source: Santomauro, D.F. et al (2021) The hidden burden of eating disorders: an extension of estimates from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019. *Lancet Psychiatry*, 8(4), 320-328.

Discussion with BeLongTo

In January and April, we met with BeLongTo, to discuss how to collaborate on body image issues and eating disorders amongst the LGBTQIA+ community.

Family Carer Research Group (FCRG)

Organised by Care Alliance Ireland, Barry attended FCRG meetings throughout the year.



International Meeting

In December, we attended an international virtual meeting with representatives from ANAD, Beat, the Butterfly Foundation, NEDA and NEDIC. We look forward to future meetings in 2022.

Autism and eating disorders: Collaboration with AsIAm



In November, we met with staff from AsIAm, to explore how to develop support, resources or information for autistic adults experiencing eating disorders and their carers/parents. We look forward to continuing this work in 2022. We also thank AsIAm for providing autism awareness training to our staff in December 2021.

Men's Health Forum Ireland (MHFI)

We attended several MHFI's planning meetings during the year. The campaign for 2021 focused on the theme: 'Making the Connections' and to 'Check In. Check Up. Check it Out. The overall aims of Men's Health Week are to:

- ✓ Heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages.
- ✓ Support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices and activities.
- ✓ Encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.

Medical Guidelines: Stakeholder Consultation

In September, Bodywhys and many other organisations were invited to respond to a

draft document 'Guidance on Recognising and Managing Medical Emergencies in Eating Disorders', upcoming successor to the Management of Really Sick Patients with Anorexia Nervosa (MARSIPAN) guidelines.

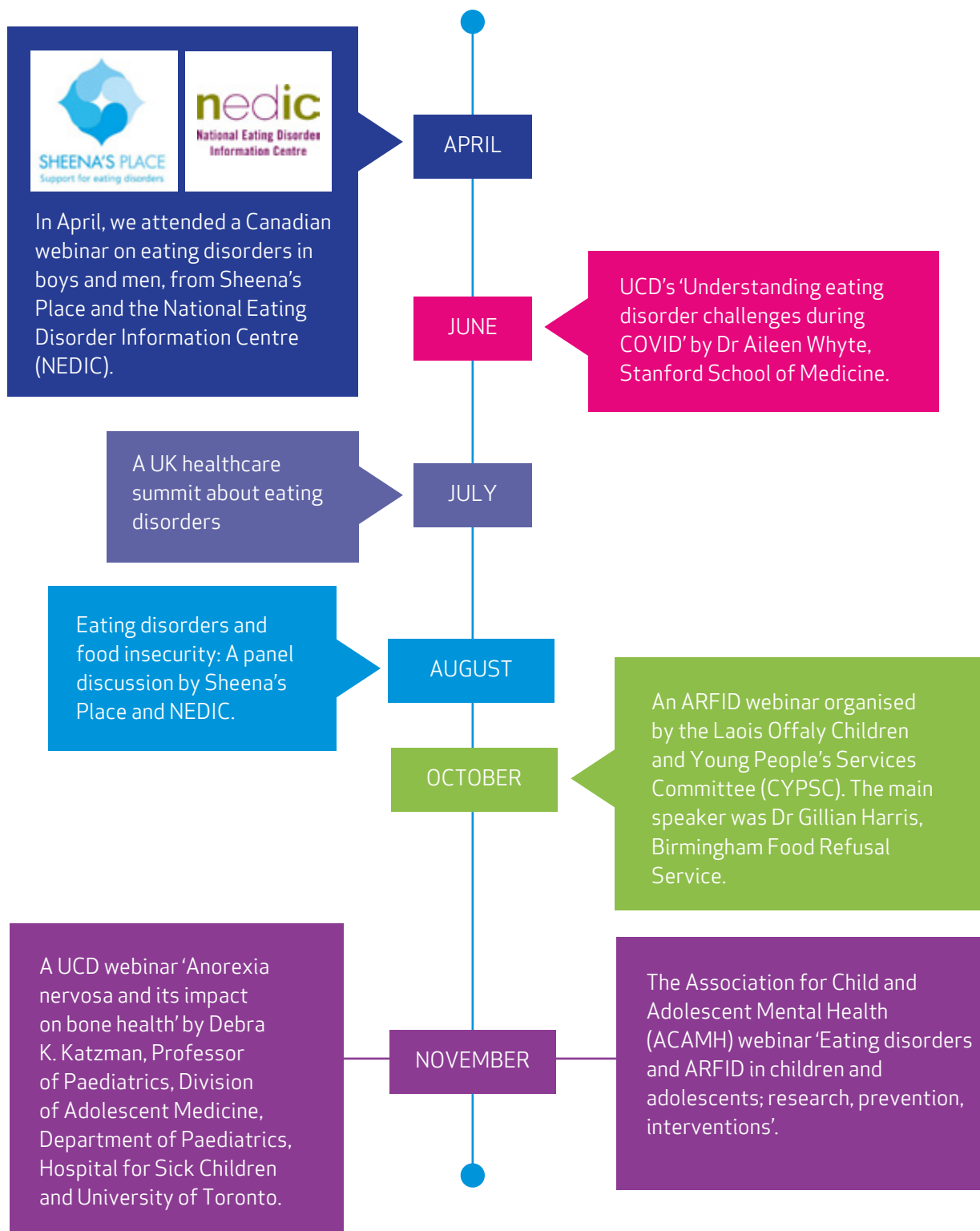
This work was overseen by Dr. Dasha Nicholls and the Royal College of Psychiatrists. The draft was impressive, thorough, exhaustive, and clear. The final document will be launched in 2022.

Network of Childhood Illness Organisations (NCIO)

Organised by Children in Hospital Ireland (CIHI), Barry attended NCIO meetings throughout 2021 and an 'advocating to policymakers' webinar.

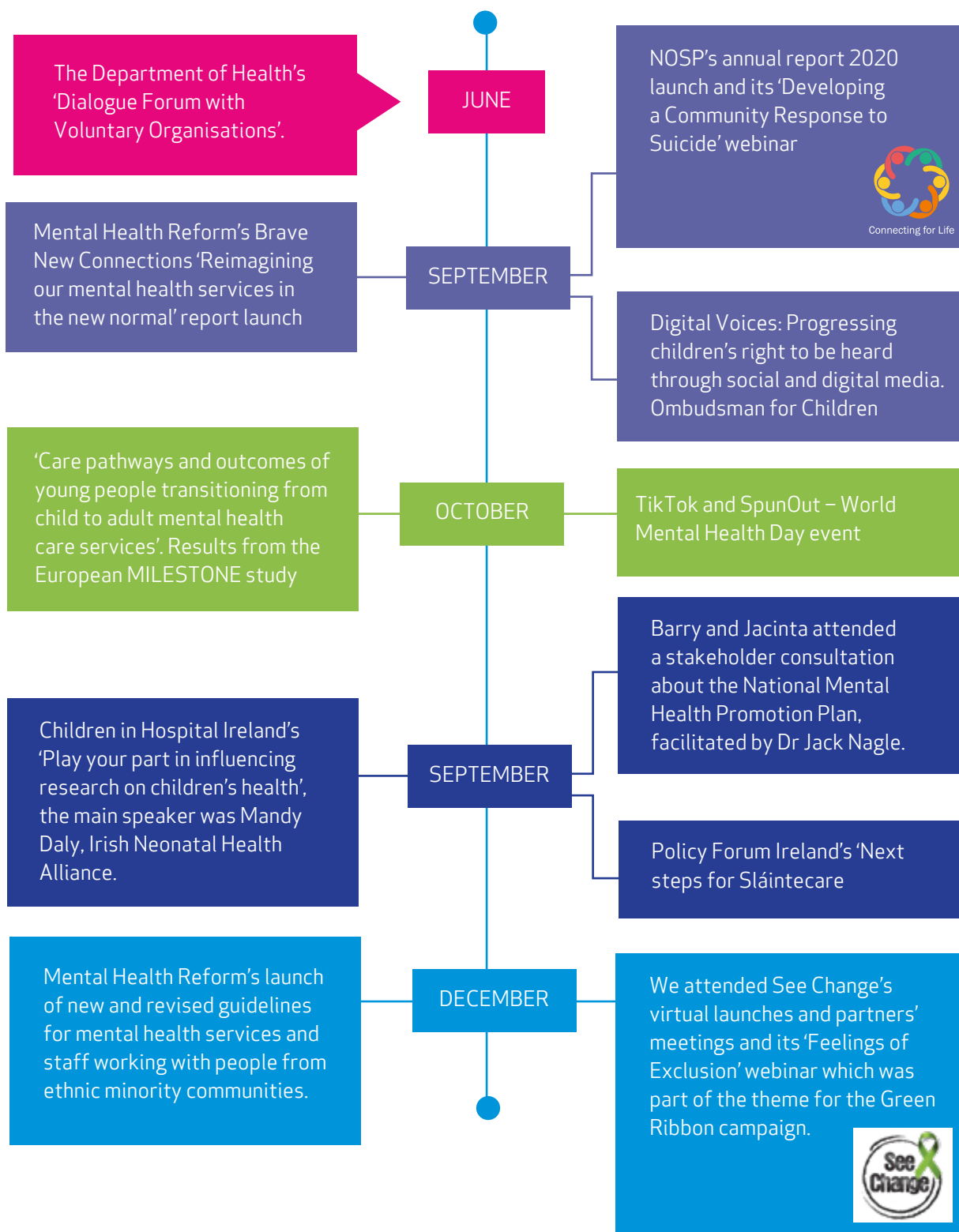


Eating Disorder Webinars





Other Webinars and Forums



Legislation updates

Throughout the year, colleagues in Mental Health Reform (MHR) kept us updated and organised discussions about reform of the Mental Health Act 2001 and the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Bill 2021. MHR published an independent human rights analysis of the draft Heads of Bill of the Mental Health Act 2001, by experts from NUIG. The Heads of Bill mentioned several submissions concerning the use of nasogastric feeding under wards of court. Further work on both pieces of legislation will continue in 2022.



Pre-budget submission 2022

In September 2021, Bodywhys sent pre-budget submissions to Ministers Butler, Donnelly and Donohoe calling for continued investment in public specialist eating disorders services.

Working Group: Eating Disorders and Sport

The working group (WG) on eating disorders and sport continued to meet during early 2021. Planning for three educational workshops began, with an agreed focus on 'Supporting athletes with fuelling for performance and health', for delivery to athletics coaches in March and April 2021.

- 1 Recognising and responding to the challenges of relative energy deficiency in sport (RED-S), with Jessie Barr, Julianne Ryan and Dr. Danielle Logue
- 2 Let's talk about problematic eating behaviour in sport, with Dr. Siobhain McArdle
- 3 The coach/athlete perspective, with Dr. Jessica Piasecki and Steve Vernon and a discussion on the role of the coach.

Thank you to Sene Naoupu for continuing to chair the WG and to all those involved for sharing their time, knowledge, experience and skills, including Dr. Kate Kirby, Dr. Matt Lockett, Dr. Sharon Madigan, Dr. Siobhain McArdle, and Hannah Tyrrell. Our thanks also to the Sport Ireland Institute and Athletics Ireland for supporting the webinar series. The webinars were well-attended and had lively Q&A sessions. Recordings of these webinars are available on YouTube.





Youth Development

Youth Development



Fiona Flynn
Youth Development Officer

The youth development activities for Bodywhys remained mostly online in 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Fiona continued to provide workshops and webinars online to schools and youth groups and to provide training to teachers and school primary care teams. Bodywhys compiled resources including useful links and information for teachers to share with students to promote awareness of eating disorders, promote positive body image and to highlight the supports available. Fiona continued to work closely with other youth organisations including SpunOut,

BeLongTo, Union of Students in Ireland (U.S.I.) to consider new ways to support young people at this time. In addition to this work some of the highlights from 2022 are outlined below.

In January and February, Fiona contributed to media articles in *Kiss* magazine (a teenage edition of *Stellar*), UCD Student magazine and the *Guideline Magazine: A Publication of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors* on the topic of body image. Bodywhys hosted a virtual stand at Healthfest, a new online event for students. This included a range of information with videos, links and materials for the Healthfest event and one-to-one virtual interactions throughout the day. The Bodywhys stand was well attended on the day with statistics generated indicating 2,895 total visits to the Bodywhys stand including 788 views of the video materials and 214 direct messages.

March was busy with public webinars during eating disorders awareness week including 'Body Image and COVID-19 – A Youth Perspective' which was hosted by Bodywhys and included input from young people on the Bodywhys Youth Panel, SpunOut Action Panel and from Union of Students in Ireland (U.S.I.). This virtual event was attended by over 200 secondary schools nationwide and the recording made available following the event on request from schools.



WEBINAR



BODY IMAGE & COVID-19

A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

Tuesday 2nd March 2021

12:00 – 1.30 pm

#EDAW2021

The COVID-19 restrictions have impacted on all aspects of our lives. Many of the daily routines which brought us comfort have changed. It's really important to acknowledge that being out of our routine like that is very difficult. Our exercise and food choices may be different, we may have less time to ourselves and all of these changes can have an impact on body image.

12:00 FIONA FLYNN

Youth Development Officer at Bodywhys
Research on Body Image and COVID-19

12:15 ROSSA GILSENAN

Member of the SpunOut Action Panel
Acceptance & Positivity Around My Body Image

12:25 SEAN SEXTON

Member of the SpunOut Action Panel
Body Confidence in Men

12:35 MARIE MALLON

Bodywhys Youth Panel Member
Social Media, Media Literacy & Body Image

12:45 CAITLIN GRANT

Member of the SpunOut Action Panel
How Running Changed My Perspective on My Body

12:50 AZRA SABIC

Bodywhys Youth Panel Member
Exercise Pressure during COVID-19

12:55 BLESSING DADA

Member of the SpunOut Action Panel
Culture Attitudes to Body Image

13:00 CLARE AUSTICK

Vice President for Welfare at U.S.I. (Union for Students in Ireland)
Body Image Issues at Third Level

13:10 LAURA WALSH

Bodywhys Youth Panel Member
Practical Tips to Promote Positive Body Image

13:20 FIONA FLYNN

Youth Development Officer at Bodywhys
Closing Remarks

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

In March the Youth Development Officer also contributed to various panel discussions at third level to promote awareness of eating disorders including virtual events hosted by UCD and Maynooth University during their 'Mental Health Awareness' weeks.

Ongoing development of new content and resources for schools continued in 2021. New resources were promoted via social media throughout eating disorders awareness week including the

'Body Image Practical Tips' poster which was developed in collaboration with young people from the Bodywhys Youth Panel and SpunOut Action Panel. These were designed to support young

people in navigating the unique pressures to body image and wellbeing presented during the COVID-19 restrictions and to promote awareness of supports and resources available.



The poster features a blue background with a yellow and white logo on the left depicting stylized figures. The title 'BODY IMAGE PRACTICAL TIPS' is in large yellow and white text. The Bodywhys logo and 'IN ASSOCIATION WITH' logos for 'See Change' and 'HEADLINE' are in the top right. The main text is white on a blue background, and the list of tips is in white circles on a blue background. The footer is a yellow bar with contact information.

BODY IMAGE PRACTICAL TIPS

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
 

The COVID-19 restrictions have impacted on all aspects of our lives. Many of the daily routines which brought us comfort have changed. It's really important to acknowledge that being out of our routine like that is very difficult. Our exercise and food choices may be different, we may have less time to ourselves and all of these changes can have an impact on body image.

1. Try not to be hard on yourself if you can't stick to your usual routine or don't feel like exercising. These are stressful times and focusing on what makes you feel good and brings comfort is more important.
2. Make it a habit to 'check in' with yourself and ask 'what do I need right now?' Maybe you need a rest, a cup of tea, a hot shower or a walk and some fresh air. Start to respond to what your body needs.
3. Become a critical viewer of the internet and social media. Notice content that makes you feel bad and 'unfollow'. You can control your social media feed. Make time online purposeful and avoid mindless scrolling. Keep the start and end of your day screen free to check in with yourself.
4. Think about what really interests you. Take time to find interests and activities you really enjoy and spend time doing them.
5. Value yourself as a whole person. Make a list of 5 things you like about yourself that are not related to your appearance. Read this often and keep adding to your list.
6. Consider people you enjoy spending time with and why. This exercise can remind us that we appreciate people for who they are and not how they look. Make time daily to connect with people who make you feel good.
7. Edit harsh self-talk. Everyone has negative self talk but unchecked it can really get you down. Make an effort to replace the negative voice in your head with the same kind, supportive voice you would offer a friend.
8. When you look in the mirror focus on the whole person rather than on specific body parts. Wear clothes and styles that make you feel comfortable and good about your body.
9. Many people find video calls increase body concerns. If so, turn your camera off or connect in other ways: A socially distanced walk, texts, voice notes, phone calls. Do what feels right for you.
10. Take time every day to appreciate your body for what it can do. Tune in to how you are feeling and move your body in ways that feel good. Make exercise choices that promote wellbeing.

Helpline  (01) 2107906  alex@bodywhys.ie  www.bodywhys.ie #EDAW2021

April was another busy month with third level campaigns to promote awareness of body image and related issues. Bodywhys presented at virtual events hosted by Trinity College Dublin and National College of Ireland, Dublin in panel discussions as part of their respective 'Body Awareness' Weeks. Fiona also presented at Maynooth University Research Week on schools-based research to promote positive body image.

Conferences

The Irish Guidance Counsellor Conference was a virtual event in April 2022. Bodywhys hosted a virtual information booth at the event which included links to relevant videos, webinars, information, lessons for schools and relevant information. There were also Zoom meeting appointments throughout the day and direct emails. In total Bodywhys had 365 booth visitors on the day, responded to 117 direct emails and had 12 virtual meetings with individual counsellors. On May 14th, Fiona Flynn presented a research paper '#MoreThanASelfie: Results of a schools based intervention to promote positive body image and media literacy' at the Psychology, Health and Medicine Conference. This research was conducted in collaboration with Maynooth University, supervised by Prof. Sinéad McGilloway and Dr Catriona O'Toole and funded by the Irish Research Council.

Also in May

The Youth Development Officer worked closely with a Transition Year (TY) group in the development of resources to support TY students in promoting positive body image in the school environment.

The summer months were focused on developing resources to support schools in promoting positive body image. These included the 'Be Body Positive Initiative' for secondary schools

and youth groups, the 'Happy To Be Me' programme to promote positive body image and self-esteem in primary school children and the design of a public webinar series for the autumn.

Bodywhys collaborated with U.S.I. to develop new content for sixth year students in secondary schools, including videos and information on preparing for college. For example, information on body image and eating

disorder supports, the transition to third level and practical information.

Public Webinar Series

In September Bodywhys launched a public webinar series for secondary schools including webinar dates on the following topics 'Let's Talk Body Image', 'Understanding Eating Disorders' and Teacher Training.

Launch of the 'Be Body Positive' Initiative

In October, the Bodywhys Be Body Positive initiative for secondary schools was launched and made available to schools. This initiative is intended to encourage schools, and youth groups to actively promote positive body image in young people. It is intended to enhance and reward positive action taken in relation to promoting positive body image. The Be Body Positive initiative includes an information pack including a clear framework for schools and

youth groups to support them in promoting positive body image and supplementary resources and materials to display in their school. Participating schools are presented with a Be Body Positive flag to display outside their school upon completion.



Launch of the Happy To Be Me Programme for Primary Schools



In October 2021, the Bodywhys 'Happy To Be Me' Programme for primary schools was launched via social media. All lessons have been designed in conjunction with the SPHE curriculum. All lessons include group and individual exercises and include videos, images, arts and crafts and some dance or movement so that the lessons are fun and memorable for students to ensure maximum benefit from the programme. The Happy To Be Me Programme was tested in 4 schools and has been reviewed and endorsed by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) Team for Wellbeing in Primary Schools.

Research in Ireland indicates that body image is a widespread issue for young people, that body image and related concerns are on the

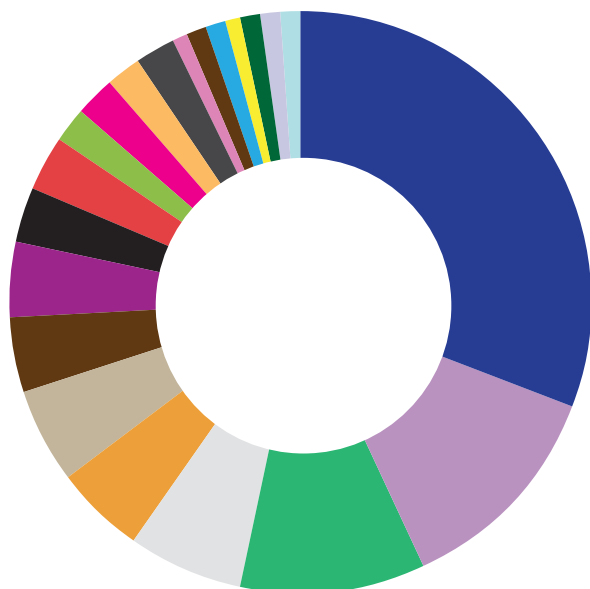
rise in both males and females and worryingly, rates of eating disorders are rising in preteens. It is important that teachers are aware that such issues can occur in primary school children and that they are equipped to deal with any such issues which may arise.

The Happy To Be Me Programme includes four lessons for each class in the primary school from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. The Happy To Be Me Resource has been developed to provide teachers with fun, easy to use materials to promote positive body image and self-esteem in primary school children. Lessons include group and individual exercises and include videos, images, arts and crafts and some

dance or movement so that the Lessons are fun and memorable for students to ensure maximum benefit from the programme. All materials are age appropriate and media literacy lessons are introduced gradually from 2nd class onwards.

Statistics generated on the use of the Happy To Be Me Programme indicate that by the end of 2021 over 4,200 primary school children had received the programme through schools nationwide. The breakdown of use by county is illustrated in Figure 27.

Figure 27. Happy To Be Me participants by location

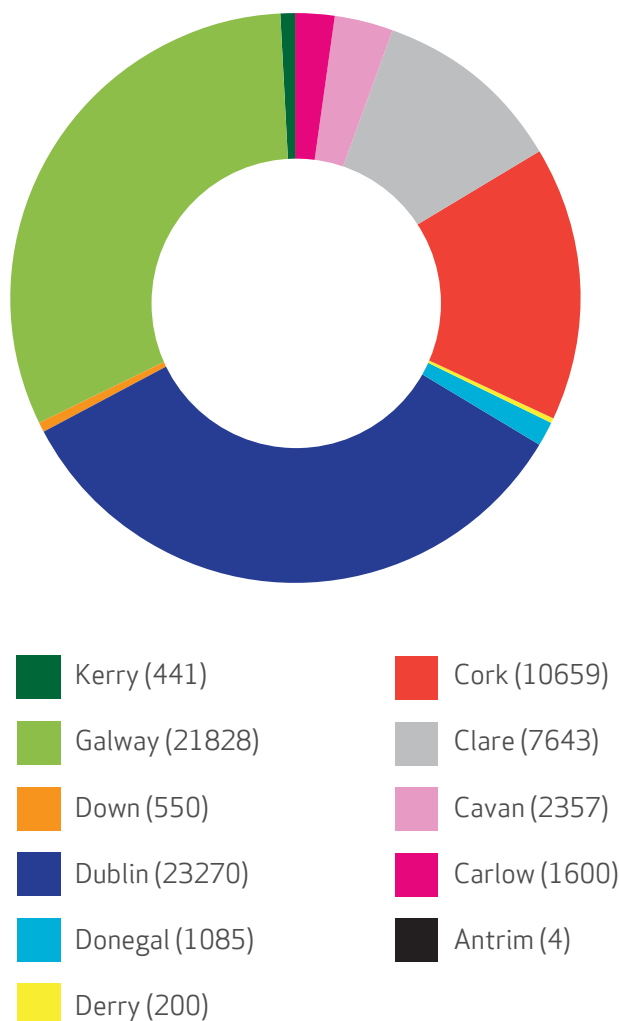


#MoreThanASelfie Statistics

The statistics generated on the use of the #MoreThanASelfie programme for secondary schools which was launched in October 2020 exceeded all expectations. The #MoreThanASelfie Resources were developed in collaboration with Maynooth University with research funding provided by the Irish Research Council.

In 2021, these resources were accessed 409 times by teachers and delivered to 125,625 students. In Ireland the #MoreThanASelfie programme was delivered nationwide and in mixed, all girl and all boys schools.

Figure 28. #MoreThanASelfie programme delivered by county





Awareness Activities and Fundraising

Awareness Activities and Fundraising

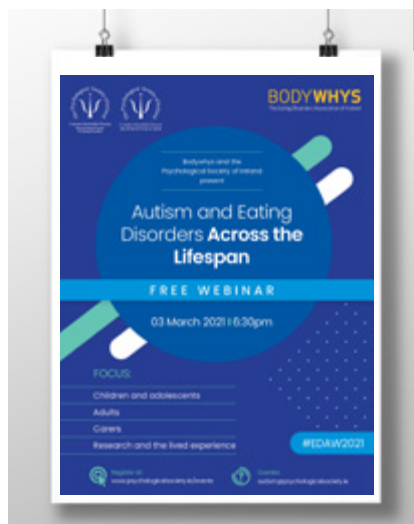


Ruby Whyte
Administrator

Eating Disorders Awareness Week March 1st-7th 2021: Activities and webinars

Binge Eating Disorder was the theme for the week and this was the first time that EDAW went fully online, which allowed for increased accessibility at events. Not all these events were recorded, however some can be found on our YouTube channel.

- ✓ CPD webinar on binge eating disorder - Academy For Eating Disorders Ireland (AEDI) and Gerry Butcher, psychotherapist
- ✓ Body image and COVID-19: A youth perspective – Bodywhys and SpunOut
- ✓ The impact of COVID-19 on the eating disorders community – Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)
- ✓ Understanding eating disorders - Maynooth Mental Health Society
- ✓ Autism and eating disorders across the lifespan – Bodywhys and PSI
- ✓ Eating disorders, let's talk about it – Athlone Community Mental Health Team
- ✓ PiLaR programme for family members and friends - Bodywhys
- ✓ Understanding eating disorders – UCD Food Society
- ✓ Report launch – Reflections on Eating Disorders Experiences in Ireland – Bodywhys, HSE NOSP and Dr. Niamh McNamara, Nottingham Trent University



#EDAW2021



Connecting for Life

Fundraisers

From Achill to Athens, 30 punctures, 3 chains and 6 tyres...

Barry met Cormac Ryan, his family and supporters on September 2nd to wish him well for the fundraising cycling trip from Achill to Athens. The Achill To Athens Project, a 5,350km transcontinental cycle across Europe raised €48,145 for Pieta House and Bodywhys. The cycle, spanning 58 days, saw Cormac Ryan

(Dublin), his cousin Stephen Ryan (Mayo) and friend Niall O'Donnell (Dublin) travel through 13 countries, Ireland, France, Italy, Switzerland, Slovenia, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Albania and finally Greece. There were ups and downs along the way, with the cyclists' combined casualties being 30 punctures, 3

chains, 6 tyres, 1 rear wheel, and 1 one very expensive drone lost in a French canal. Each country offered a unique challenge, with soaring temperatures in France, thunderstorms and flooding in Croatia, wild dogs in Albania, but the kindness and generosity of the people along the way kept morale high.



Stephen Ryan, Cormac Ryan and Niall O'Donnell (left to right)



Ellen Jennings, Bodywhys and Darragh McGovern, NUIG Med Soc (left to right)

Darragh McGovern from NUIG for their 100 miles fundraiser

Over the month of October, more than 200 students from the School of Medicine, and others from the School of Science and the School of Psychology raised over €28,000 for Bodywhys. Our sincere thanks to NUIG's Medical Society for leading and organising this fundraiser.



Rachel Kearney

Rachel participated in a sponsored run across the Okanagan in aid of Bodywhys.



Starting at 5am, Friday 4th of June 2021, I set out to run 250km across the Okanagan, British Columbia, Canada. Despite getting knocked down by a car Saturday morning and climbing 3 thousand feet of elevation that night, I finished Sunday evening, 65.5 hours later. I couldn't have done it without the support I received, physically and virtually. The awareness and money raised for a cause close to my heart was what especially drove me to finish the gruelling task and I'm extremely grateful.



Financial Statements and Balance Sheet

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the financial year ended 31 December 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
		2021	2021	2021	2020	2020	2020
		€	€	€	€	€	€
Incoming Resources							
Voluntary Income	6.1	65,059	-	65,059	15,267	-	15,267
Activities for generating funds	6.2	474,594	-	474,594	486,637	-	486,637
Total incoming resources		539,653	-	539,653	501,904	-	501,904
Resources Expended							
Charitable activities	7.1	490,766	-	490,766	408,583	-	408,583
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		48,887	-	48,887	93,321	-	93,321
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year		48,887	-	48,887	93,321	-	93,321
Reconciliation of funds							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2021	13	512,537	17,104	529,641	419,216	17,104	436,320
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2021		561,424	17,104	578,528	512,537	17,104	529,641

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the financial year. All income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 14 June 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

PARVEZ BUTT
Director

HENRY BLAKE
Director

Balance Sheet

as at December 2021

	Notes	2021 €	2020 €
Current Assets			
Cash at bank and at hand		627,599	555,701
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	(49,071)	(26,060)
Net Current Assets		578,528	529,641
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		578,528	529,641
Funds			
Restricted trust funds		17,104	17,104
Unrestricted designated funds		226,730	226,730
General fund (unrestricted)		334,694	285,807
Total Funds	13	578,528	529,641

Approved by the Board of Directors on 14 June 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

PARVEZ BUTT

Director

HENRY BLAKE

Director

Acknowledgements

The Chairman, Board of Directors and Staff wish to record their sincere thanks to all those who volunteered, supported or donated to Bodywhys in 2021. Your interest in, and support of our work is much appreciated.

Department of Health

Dr. Ingrid Holme, UCD

Health Service Executive and Staff

National Office for Suicide Prevention and Staff

Dr. Niamh McNamara, Nottingham Trent University

St. John of God Brothers - Management Team and Order

Guy with Red Beard - Daire O'Suilleabhain

Sully Productions – Eavan O'Sullivan

All of those who undertook fundraisers for or who donated to Bodywhys during the year



Our People

Mission Statement

“ our mission is to ensure support, awareness and understanding of eating disorders amongst the wider community as well as advocating for the rights and healthcare needs of people affected by eating disorders ”

Company Information

Company information as of 31st December 2021

DIRECTORS

Parvez Butt
Henry Blake
Marie Devine
Malachy Heffernan (retired, July 2021)
Tiggy Hudson
Ann McCann
Sene Naoupu
Dermot Smith

REGISTERED OFFICE

18 Upper Mount Street
Dublin 2

AUDITORS

Dillon Kelly Cregan & Co.
18 Upper Mount Street
Dublin 2

COMPANY SECRETARY

Henry Blake

Think Bodywhys CLG, trading as Bodywhys - The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland, is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Ireland with a registered office at 18 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2 and registered company number 236310.

Bodywhys is also a charity (Charity Reg. No. 20034054) and holds CHY number 11961.



Bodywhys Team (2021)

Jacinta Hastings, Chief Executive Officer

Harriet Parsons, Training and Development Manager

Kathy Downes, Support Services Manager

Terri Coffey, Support Services Officer

Christopher Cash, Support Services Officer

Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Officer

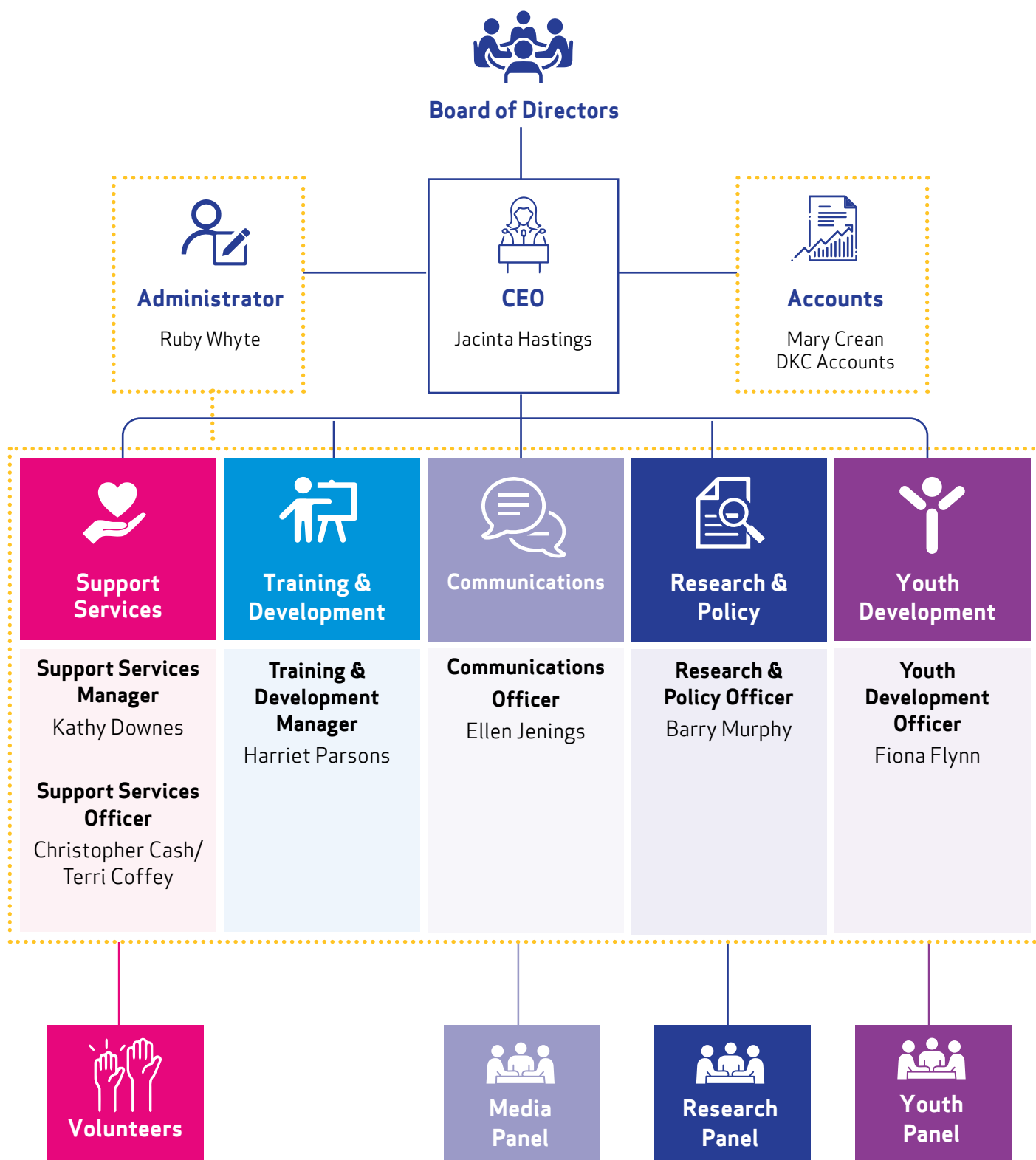
Barry Murphy, Research and Policy Officer

Ellen Jennings, Communications Officer

Ruby Whyte, Administrator

Mary Crean, Accounts Officer

Organisational Structure



Collaborative Engagements

The CEO, together with members of the Board, represented the organisation throughout the year at various engagements including:

- The HSE in relation to ongoing discussion on SLA and Core Funding Commitments.
- The Department of Health's Women's Health Network.
- Training events organised by The Wheel including Risk Management and Implementing the Charities Regulatory Authority Governance Code; and Planning and Completing your Annual Audit.
- The Wheel's Health Dialogue Forum Advisory Group.
- The HSE's National Patient and Service User Forum who continued to meet virtually throughout the year. Through the Forum, members are invited to respond to Expressions of Interest for various developments which may be an area of interest or expertise including:
 - COVID-19 Tracker App Oversight Group;
 - Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) Advisory Group on the Collection, Use and Sharing of Health Information;
 - HSE's Community Network to share factual information on COVID-19;

The CEO, together with Sheila Naughton, made a presentation on eating disorders to the members of the Mental Health Commission.

Mental Health Reform's Members Working Group on the reform of the Mental Health Act 2001.

In April, the CEO attended a virtual MEP Interest Group on Equitable Access to Healthcare 'Turning Principles into Reality'.

In May, the CEO met with Minister Simon Harris, T.D., to discuss the policy of Innovation in Health and Social Care at third level education. Following the discussion, it was agreed to explore a dedicated support group for students either in or transitioning to third level education.

In September, Harriet and Jacinta met with Minister Mary Butler, T.D., Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, on a visit to Linn Dara CAMHS, specialist eating disorders services.



Harriet, Minister Mary Butler and Jacinta in Linn Dara

CARED Ireland (Caring About Recovery in Eating Disorders) which is a newly formed parent group of people with eating disorders.

In November, the CEO joined Cormac Ryan and other panel members to contribute to the Na Fianna GAA Club webinar on eating disorders.



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service

Memberships



BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland



BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

P.O. Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

T +353 1 283 4963

E info@bodywhys.ie

www.bodywhys.ie

Support Email: alex@bodywhys.ie



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service