



Annual Report

2023

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 services being delivered by a range of statutory, private and voluntary agencies ”

Contents

Page No.

Chairperson & CEO's Report	4
Overview of Services	7
<i>Helpline</i>	9
<i>Online Support Groups</i>	13
<i>Virtual Support Group</i>	16
<i>Email Support</i>	17
<i>SeeMySelf</i>	21
Training & Development	23
Communications	42
Research & Policy	61
Youth Development	68
Awareness Activities & Fundraising	81
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet	84
<i>Statement of Financial Activities</i>	85
<i>Balance Sheet</i>	86
Acknowledgements	87
Organisational Structure and Governance	88
<i>Overview of Company Structure</i>	89
<i>Organisational Structure 2023</i>	90
<i>Governance</i>	92
<i>Collaborative Engagements</i>	95
<i>Memberships</i>	97

Chairperson & CEO's Report



Sene Naoupu
Chair



Jacinta Hastings
Chief Executive
Officer (CEO)

As Chairperson and CEO of Bodywhys, we are delighted to present to you, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, the Bodywhys Annual Report for 2023, which provides a comprehensive overview of our activities to support people affected by eating disorders.

In 2023, our support services continued to experience a growing demand, particularly for and from young people. While this demand posed significant challenges for our services team, they nevertheless ensured that support was available to all by expanding services and increasing the volunteer base.

During the year

4,809

people accessed our support services



This reflects an increase of 19.5% over the previous year. Our helpline received 1,292 calls, which indicates a growth of 35%, with 40% of those calls concerning children and adolescents under 18.

460 participants attended the **Bodywhys Connect** online supports groups, whilst 160 participants attended our **Youth Connect** groups. We continued to provide a once monthly space for men within our men's online chat support group. We also provided a student support group, again running once a month. Our email support service received and answered 2,346 support emails with nearly 50% of emails concerning children and adolescents experiencing eating disorders.

Bodywhys continued to provide and expand the **Family Support Package (FSP)** for families and carers. The FSP includes the **PiLaR (Peer Led Resilience) programme** which is a four-week structured programme, run one evening a week over four weeks, providing psychoeducation, practical advice, and support through all the main issues that carers face when supporting a loved one with an eating disorder. During the year, we ran the PiLaR programme five times, with 637 family members signing up to attend.

The **Post-PiLaR support group** is a follow-on support group for those who have attended the PiLaR programme and is held twice a month. **The New Maudsley Carer Skills Workshop** series is an 8-workshop series run over four months in which carers are trained in core supportive skills. The regular monthly New Maudsley support group is for those who have completed the New Maudsley workshop series, where carers can get and give support to one another, as well as practice and refresh the skills learned.

Another exciting development in 2023 was the establishment of the **expert By experience (eBe)** group. Bodywhys worked with the National Clinical Programme on

Eating Disorders (NCP-EDs) team to provide a channel for the voice of the person and their carer to be heard and listened to, through this eBe group. The first piece of work by the eBe group will be undertaken for Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2024.

As in previous years, the media focus on eating disorders, and related issues, continued throughout 2023, including participation in a TG4 documentary 'Síomha: Idir Anam is Corp' with Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Manager. A documentary from Irish filmmaker Ken Wardrop, titled 'So This Is Christmas', featuring Media Panel member, Mary Byrne, was released in cinemas across Ireland in November.

In keeping with our approach to ensuring that information is evidence-based and up-to-date, a number of new free resources were developed throughout the year.

In February, we launched a new animation titled **Niamh's Story** focusing on a sibling's perspective - to give a sense of what a sibling can experience when a family member has an eating disorder. In March, we launched our new resource - *Eating Disorders: Speaking to Your Doctor*. This resource was developed as a guide to navigating a visit to the GP or supporting someone during that visit.

In May, we launched ***Eating Disorders: A Guide for Families***. This resource is based on our experience of supporting and listening to families caring for

someone with an eating disorder and is intended to help families think about their family member and how the eating disorder is influencing how they think, behave, and feel.

In November, we launched our new **'Coping at Christmas'** resources. The Christmas period can be particularly challenging for those affected by eating disorders. The buildup to the season, changes in routine, expectations around socialising and food can contribute to stress, pressure and conflicted thoughts and feelings.

Online resources for schools

The Bodywhys online **#MoreThanASelfie** programme for post-primary schools was again widely used in 2023. The resources were accessed by teachers 360 times and delivered to 90,148 students.

The **'Happy To Be Me'** online programme for primary schools was accessed by 137 schools and was delivered to a total of 6,646 primary school students in 2023.

We wish to sincerely thank our volunteers for the dedication they bring to our support services. Bodywhys volunteers give generously of their personal time, skills and expertise to ensure the smooth running of our support services.

Change

Change, of course, is inevitable and during the year, we said goodbye to Mary Crean, Maja Dumana, Claire Thornton and

welcomed Niamh Nutty as Office Manager; Mary O'Riordan as Finance Manager; and Molly Nee as Regional Youth Development Officer (West) to the team. We also welcomed Jason Costello to the Board as Honorary Treasurer. We look forward to working with our colleagues in the coming year as we progress our shared goals.

At a national level, key issues included the abolition of the wardship process and the operationalisation of the Assisted Decision-Making Acts and Decision Support Service (DSS) in April. In July, the HSE held a stakeholder consultation in Dublin on the future of youth mental health services, including consideration of expanding the transition between child and adolescent services and adult services from age 18 to 25.

In conclusion, as Chair, I wish to pay tribute to my fellow Trustees for their ongoing support and commitment to Bodywhys as well as the team of staff and volunteers who ensure that Bodywhys continues to support people affected by eating disorders.



Overview of Services

Overview of Services



Kathy Downes
*Support Services
Manager*



Terri Coffey
*Support Services
Officer*



Perna Shah
Email Support Officer

In 2023, we continued to support people with eating disorders and their family members and friends through the provision of our support services. Our support services primarily consist of a national helpline, online support groups, virtual support groups and an email support service. Each service puts an emphasis on offering a listening ear, alongside provision of up-to-date information, signposting of care pathways, and psychoeducation.

Our ability to offer these services depends on our team of volunteers. In 2023, we trained 25 new volunteers; each underwent a comprehensive and interactive training process before joining on the services. At present, there are 60 volunteers working across our core support services. All volunteers are Garda vetted and receive training in relation to child protection and vulnerable adults.

We wish to sincerely thank our volunteers for the dedication they bring to our support services. As always, it is with much gratitude that Bodywhys recognises the immense work and commitment, that all of our volunteers offer the organisation. With consistency and dedication which is at once empathetic and respectful, they ensure that our services run smoothly, week in and week out throughout the year. We wish to thank each one of them for the personal time, skills and expertise they have given the organisation in 2023.

All of our support services are based on the principle that we recognise an eating disorder is not just about food or weight but concerns complex issues and feelings specific to the individual. We respect that each person is individual in how they engage with their own journey and their experience of an eating disorder. This means that, foremost for us in the support services team, is the aim to provide inclusive support and acceptance of everyone, at whatever point they may be at. Service users are wide ranging; some at the beginning of an eating disorder, others perhaps at a later stage, some in treatment, some not. We also engage with family members, friends and partners who need a listening ear or a road map to support their loved ones with an eating disorder. We aim to provide support at all levels. Service users can and do use our services whenever, and as often as they wish, whether they have an eating disorder diagnosis or not.



Looking at the overall figures for 2023

4,809 people accessed our support services.

This reflects an increase of

19.5% ↑

Figure 1. How people contacted us for support in 2023



Online Connect Group

620 (13%)



SeeMySelf

12 (0.5%)



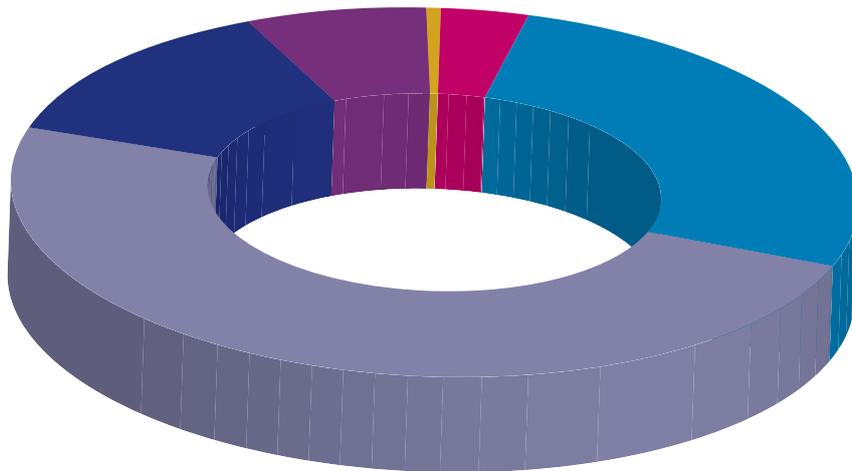
Virtual Support Groups

335 (7%)



Admin Email and Phone

204 (3.5%)



Email Support Service

2,346 (49%)



Helpline

1,292 (27%)

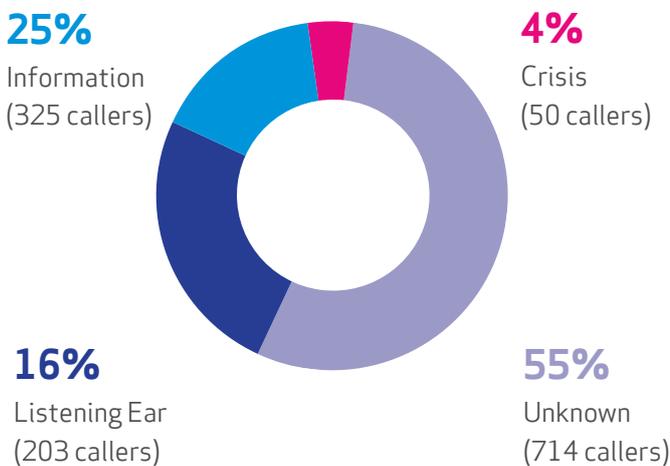


Helpline

In 2023, our national helpline operated for 2 hours per day, 6 days per week, offering a call back service outside of these times. Our helpline received 1,292 calls in 2023, which indicates growth of 35%. This telephone helpline service has an aim to deliver a safe, non-judgemental listening and support along with provision of up-to-date clear guidance and information, to people affected by eating disorders and friends and family. Calls vary on the helpline, depending on the service user's needs.

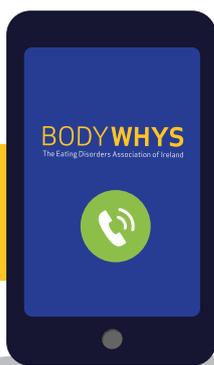
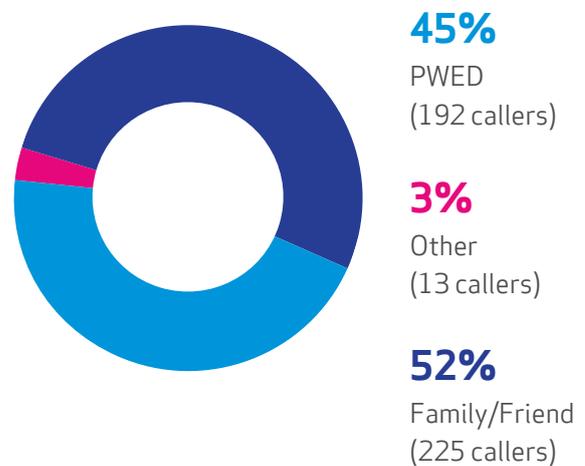
Figure 2 illustrates, where we know, why people called.

Figure 2: Why did people call the helpline?



Looking at how people used the helpline in 2023, often we do not know how many times people might use the service. However, where we know if people were first time or repeat callers, we found that 200 people, or 65% of callers, contacted the service for the first time and 109 people (35%) were repeat callers. In general, most calls to our helpline can be broken down into calls from a person needing support for themselves, or from family and friends who are supporting a loved one. In Figure 3, where we know the type of contact, we look at who called the helpline. We can see that most calls here are from family and friends.

Figure 3: Who contacted the helpline?



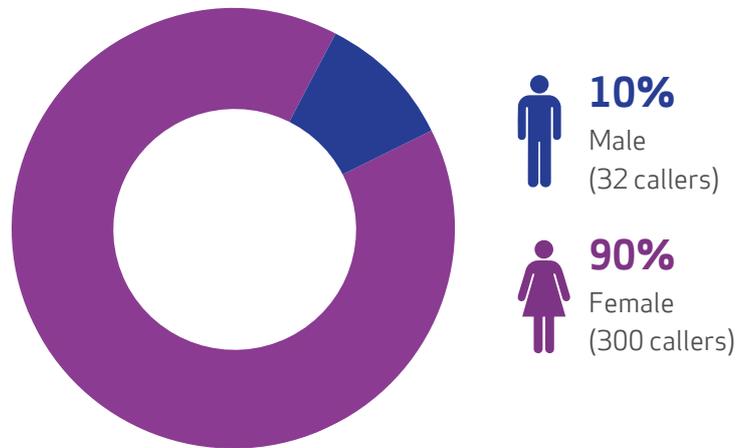
01 210 7906

2 Hours Per Day

6 Days per Week

Figure 4 shows the breakdown of calls where a person has stated the gender identity of the person with an eating disorder. This service sees an average male to female ratio of 1:10.

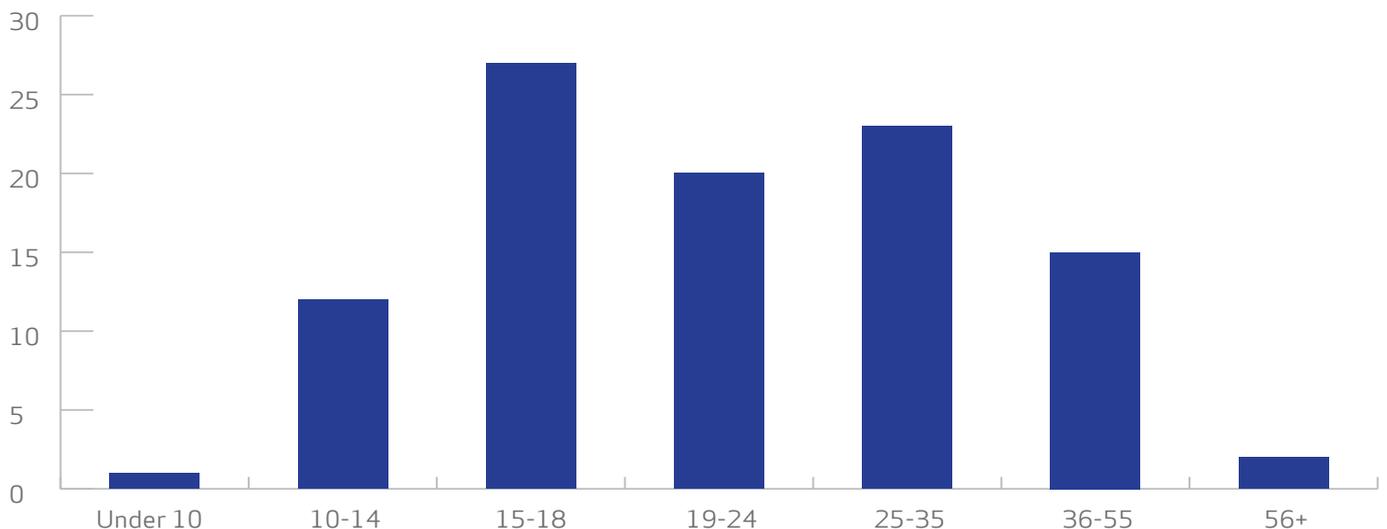
Figure 4: Gender of the person with an eating disorder



We know the age of the person with an eating disorder in some calls (292 calls). We can see that of these calls, 40%, concern children and adolescents under 18.

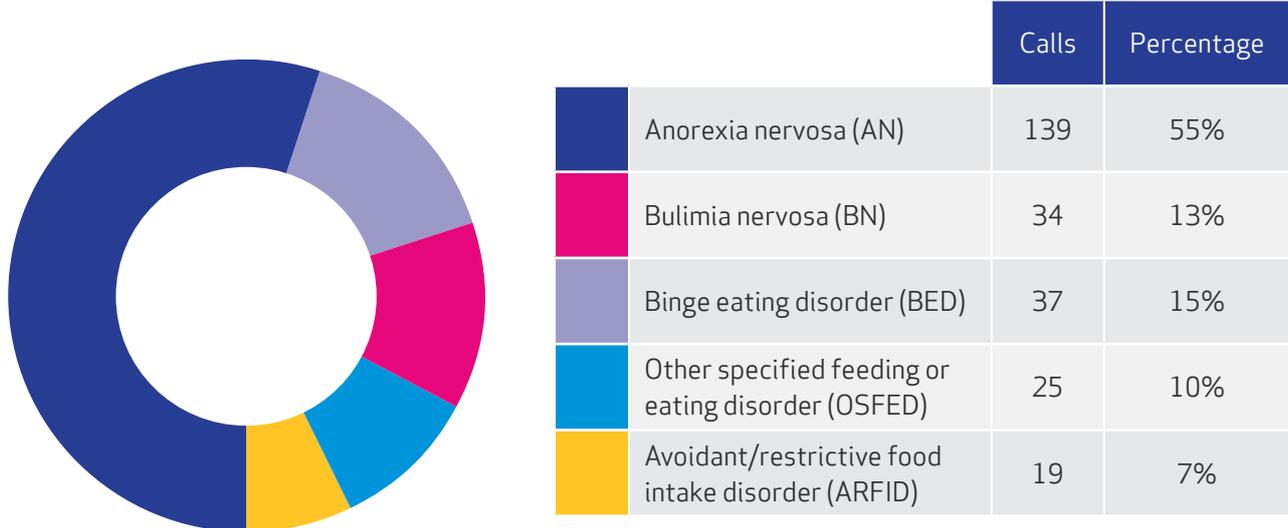
Figure 5: What age is the person with the eating disorder?

Age in years	Number of calls by age	Percentage
Under 10	3	1%
10-14	36	12%
15-18	77	27%
19-24	59	20%
25-35	68	23%
36-55	42	15%
56+	7	2%



In 254 of calls, the caller has named a specific eating disorder. As we see in Figure 6, anorexia nervosa reflects over half of the calls.

Figure 6: What type of eating disorder?



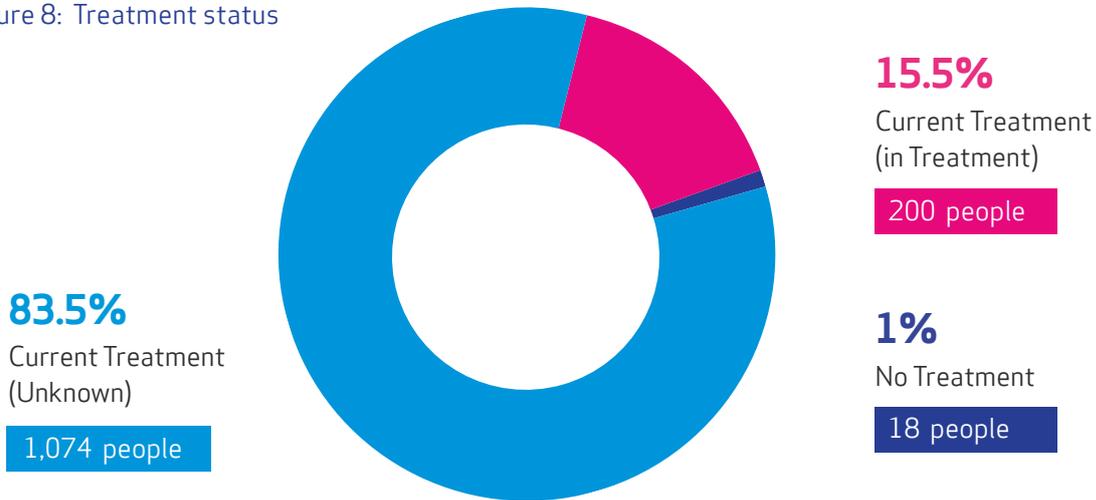
In Figure 7, we look at how long a person has had an eating disorder for, again the figures are taken from the number of calls where we know duration, in this case, 242 calls.

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



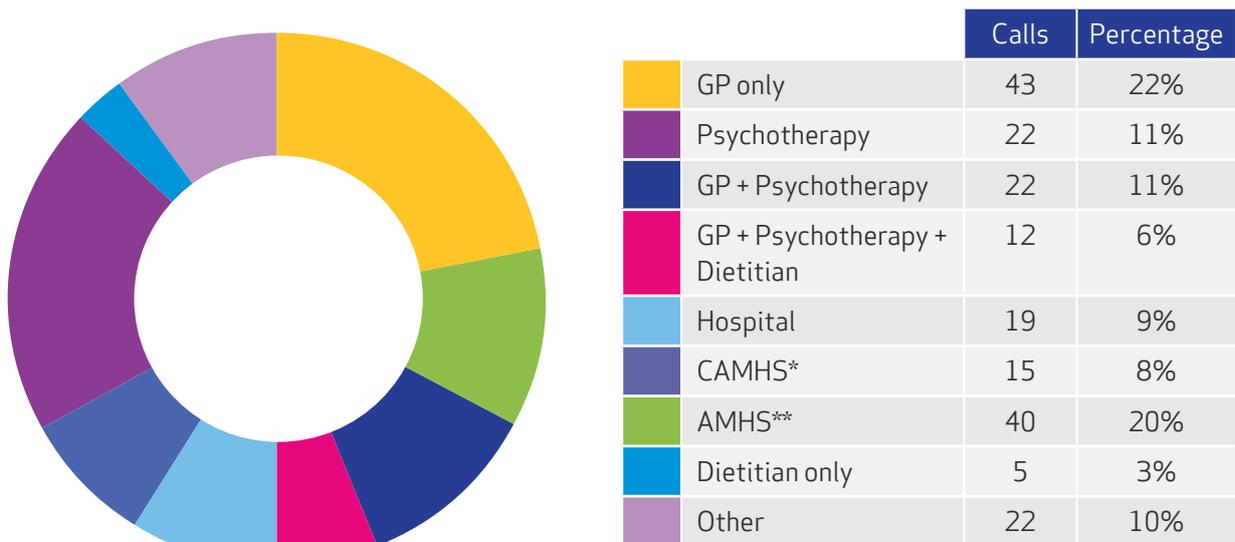
We do not always know from callers whether they are in treatment or not at the time of their call. In Figure 8 we look at the overall breakdown of treatment engagement of people who used the helpline.

Figure 8: Treatment status



Breaking down further the 200 calls where we know a person is in treatment, Figure 9 show types of treatment. Often, Bodywhys supports a person in parallel to their treatment. Of note 61, or 31%, of these callers were also using Bodywhys support services on an ongoing basis.

Figure 9: Treatment type



*CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

** AMHS – Adult Mental Health Services



Online Support Groups

At Bodywhys, we run several ongoing online support groups. Like all of our services, these groups are facilitated by trained Bodywhys volunteers, and supervised by our Support Services Manager.

BodywhysConnect is an adult group for those aged 18+ years, and **YouthConnect** is a separate group for adolescents (13-18 years). Both services are chat-based online support groups, giving attendees the comfort and privacy of anonymity, using typing to be able to receive and give support to each other within the

groups. In 2023, 460 participants attended the BodywhysConnect groups, and 160 participants attended the YouthConnect groups. We continued to provide a once monthly space for men within our men’s online chat support group. During 2023, the men’s group ran 12 times, and

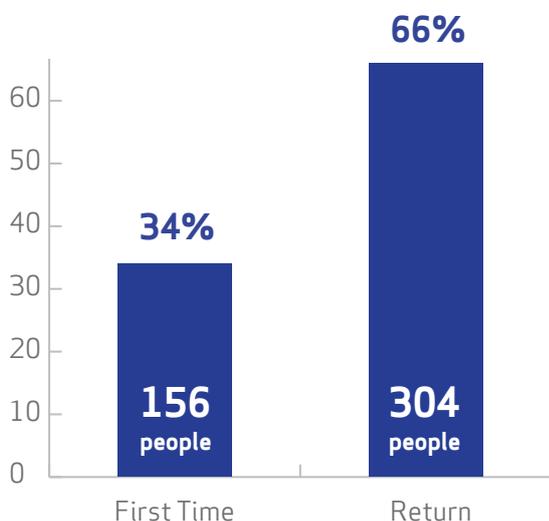
had 18 attendees. We also provided a student support group, again running once monthly. This group focuses on the specific challenges that third level might present to those affected by an eating disorder. 30 participants attended the student group in 2023.

Figure 10 shows the breakdown in those attending for the first time and those who returned across all online chat-based support groups.

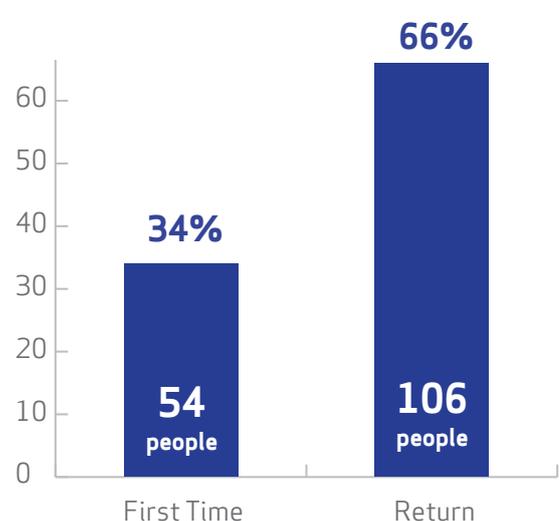
Figure 10: First time or return user?



Bodywhys Connect
Online Support Groups held for **adults** (18+ years)

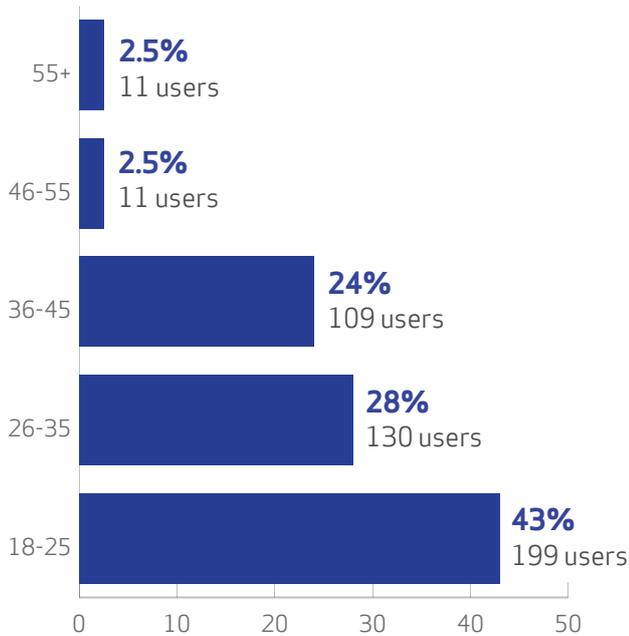


Youth Connect
Online Support Groups held for **teens** (13-18 years)



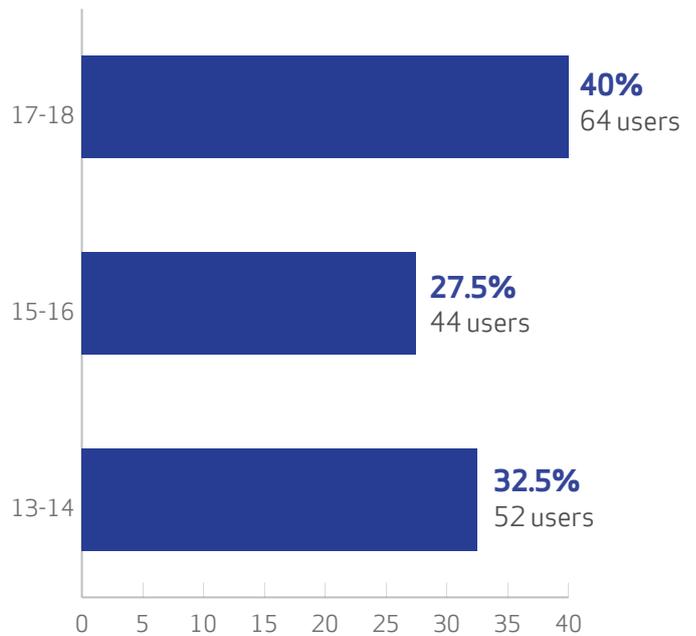
When registering for the Connect support groups, users are asked to choose an age category. In Figure 11 and 12 we can see the breakdown of adult users. The majority of BodywhysConnect users were aged 18 to 25.

Figure 11: Bodywhys Connect age demographics



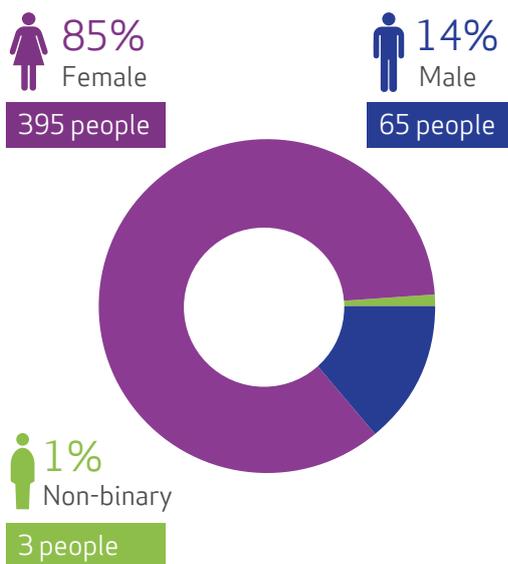
Bodywhys Connect

Figure 12: Youth Connect age demographics

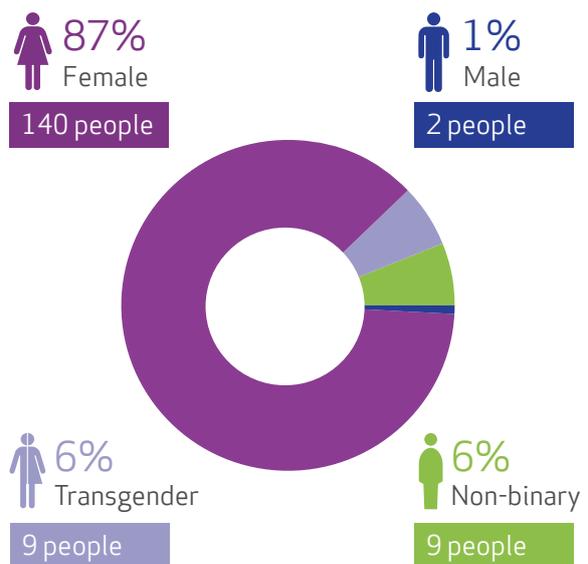


Youth Connect

Figure 13: Gender of online group users



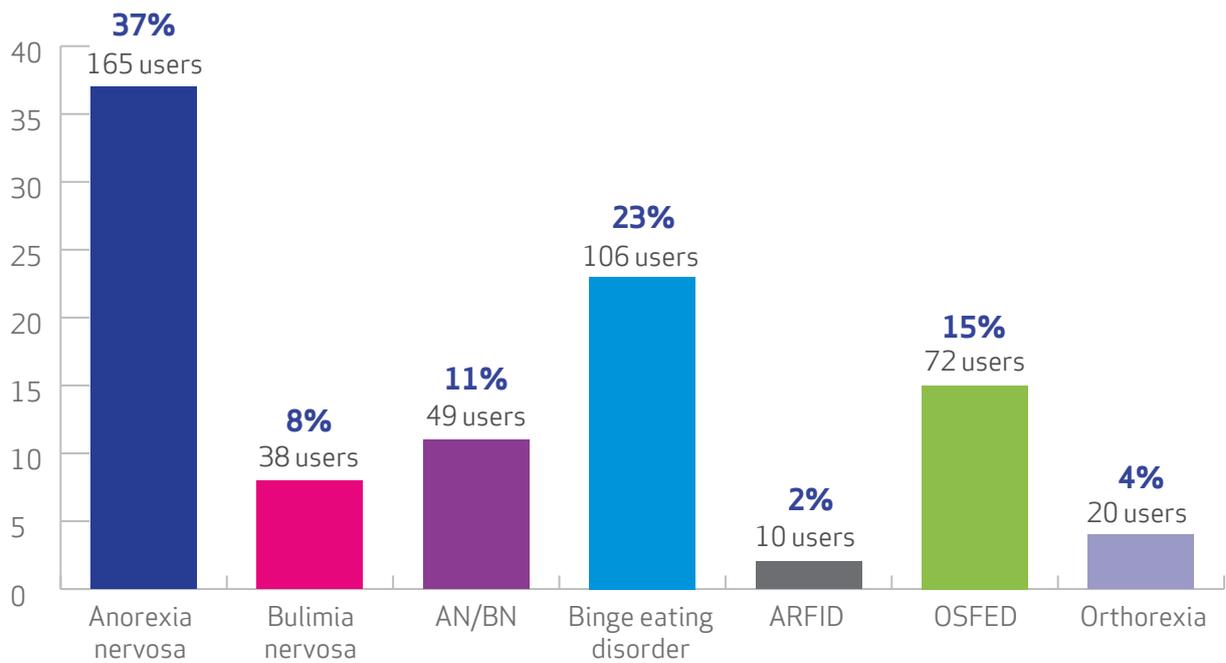
Bodywhys Connect



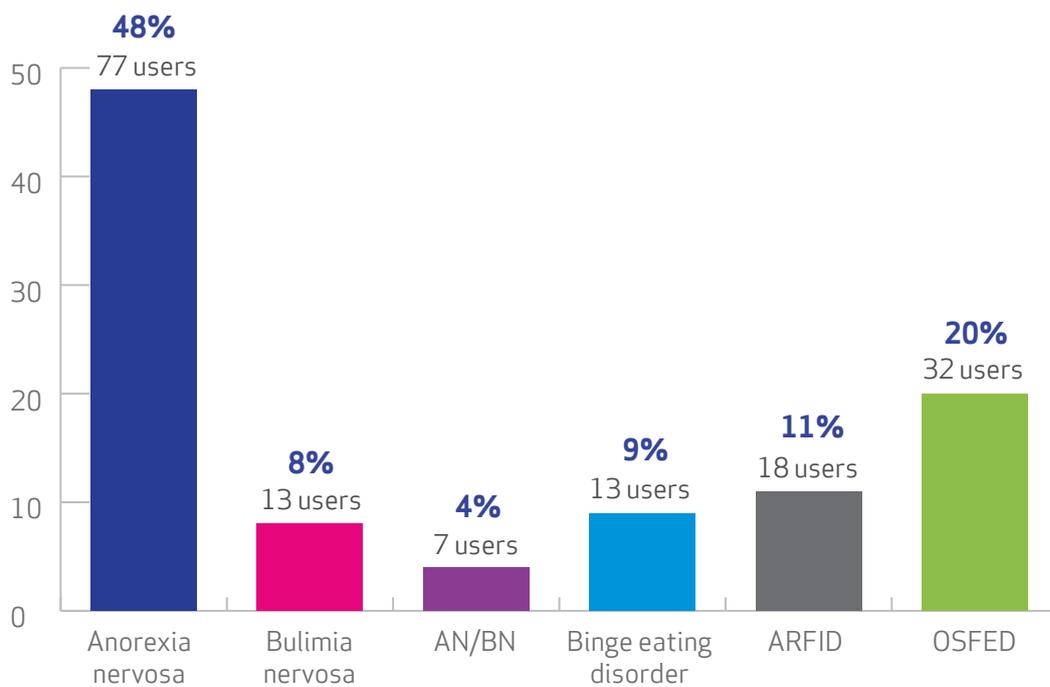
Youth Connect

In Figure 14, we look at the breakdown in types of eating disorder participants reported being affected by. This is something people select when setting up their user account.

Figure 14: Types of eating disorder



Bodywhys Connect



Youth Connect

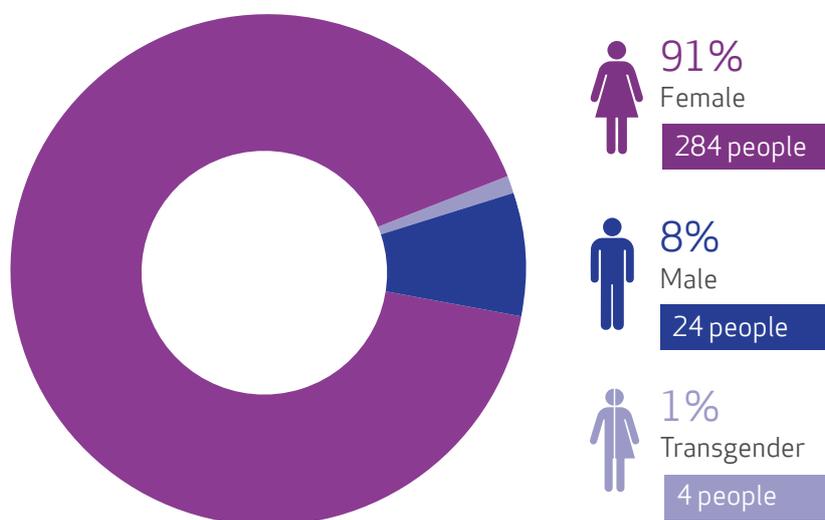


Virtual Support Group

The **Virtual Support Group** (18 years+) runs approximately fortnightly throughout the year. It differs from our Connect chat groups because it uses audio and video communication. It is open to adults experiencing eating disorders in Ireland.

This year, **335** people signed up to this group, highlighting the demand for a space where people can feel an increased sense of connection. Figure 15 reflects the gender breakdown out of 312 sign ups, where individuals have identified a gender.

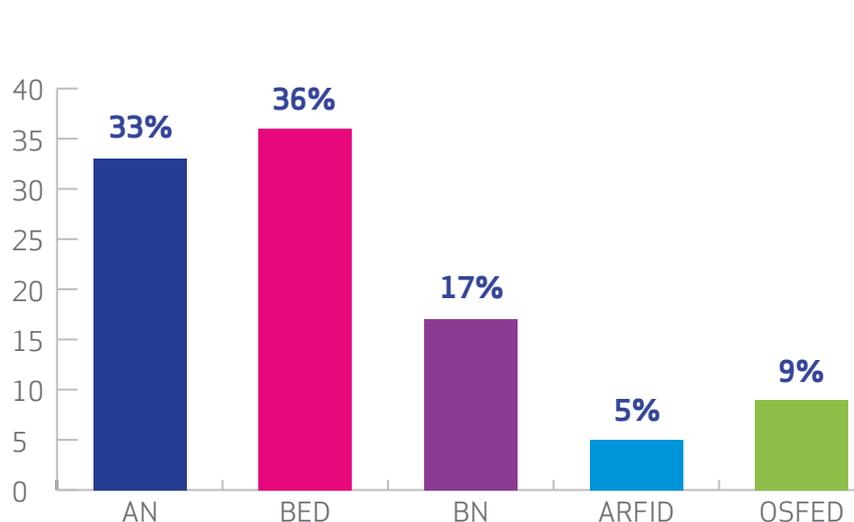
Figure 15: Breakdown of Gender



Where people specified a type of eating disorder, that is **335** sign ups, we can look at the breakdown, in Figure 16.

Of note, the percentage of service users with binge eating disorder outnumbered all disorders presenting, including anorexia nervosa, this is something we haven't seen on any other service.

Figure 16: Eating disorder type





Email Support

'Alex' is a group of volunteers who write our email replies. This is a listening ear service, whilst also offering understanding and information. "Like a helpline call in an email", is one way of describing our email support service.

In 2023, our email support service received and answered **2,346** support emails. The service typically grows annually and in 2023 we saw a growth of 1% in the number of emails received.

The email service offers a range of options to service users. Where we are clear on why people emailed, in **1,574** emails, we can see that over half of service users, nearly 60%, wrote in need of a listening ear. People can write as often as they wish, and many of our email contacts correspond with us over many years. Out of all emails in 2023, we know that 817, or 35% of emailers are recurring writers.

Figure 17: Why did people email Bodywhys?

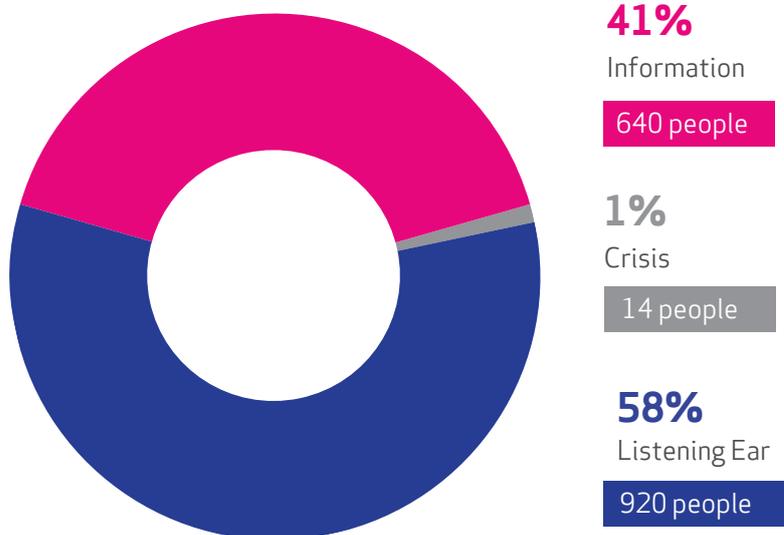


Figure 18: Who contacted the email service?



In Figure 19, where people named a particular gender of the person with an eating disorder we can see this breakdown of emails. We can see there was contact concerning more females than males to this service, but of note, the percentage for males increases year-on-year, in 2023 increasing by nearly 10% to over 20%.

Figure 19: Gender of person with an eating disorder

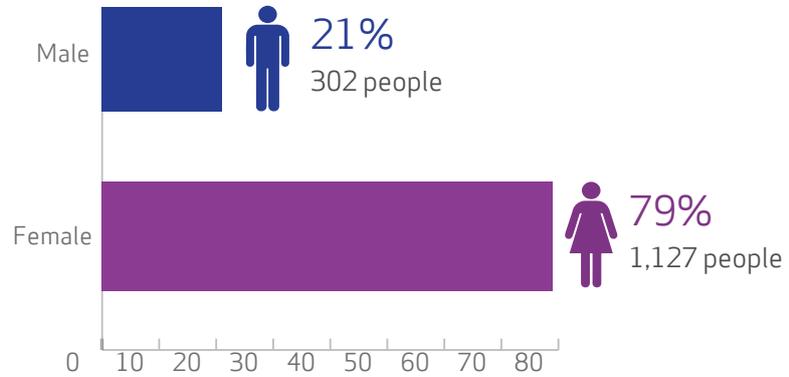
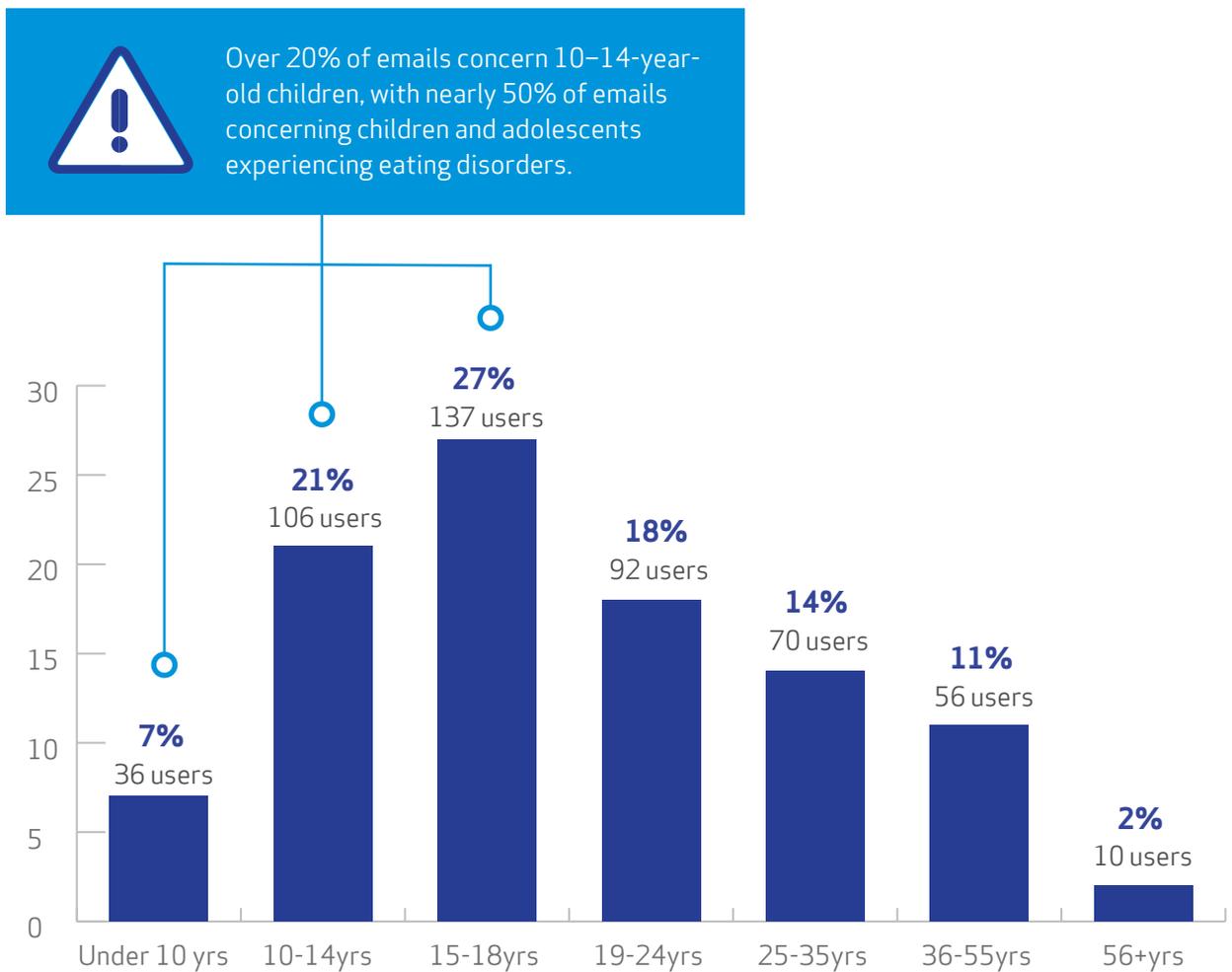


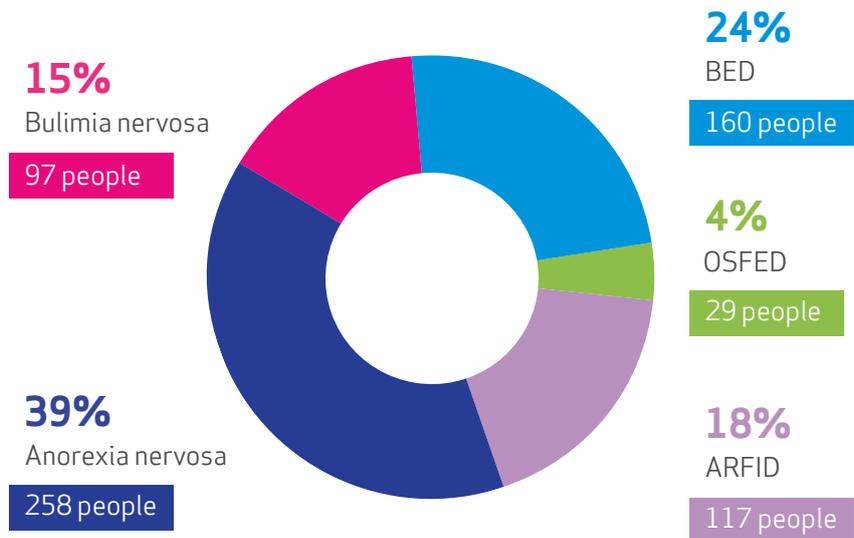
Figure 20: What age is the person with the eating disorder?



Of all emails received, in 2023, with 72% or **1,685** emails, the writer has not specified the type of eating disorder they might be experiencing. However, Figure 21 illustrates where we know the type of eating disorder, in 661 emails.

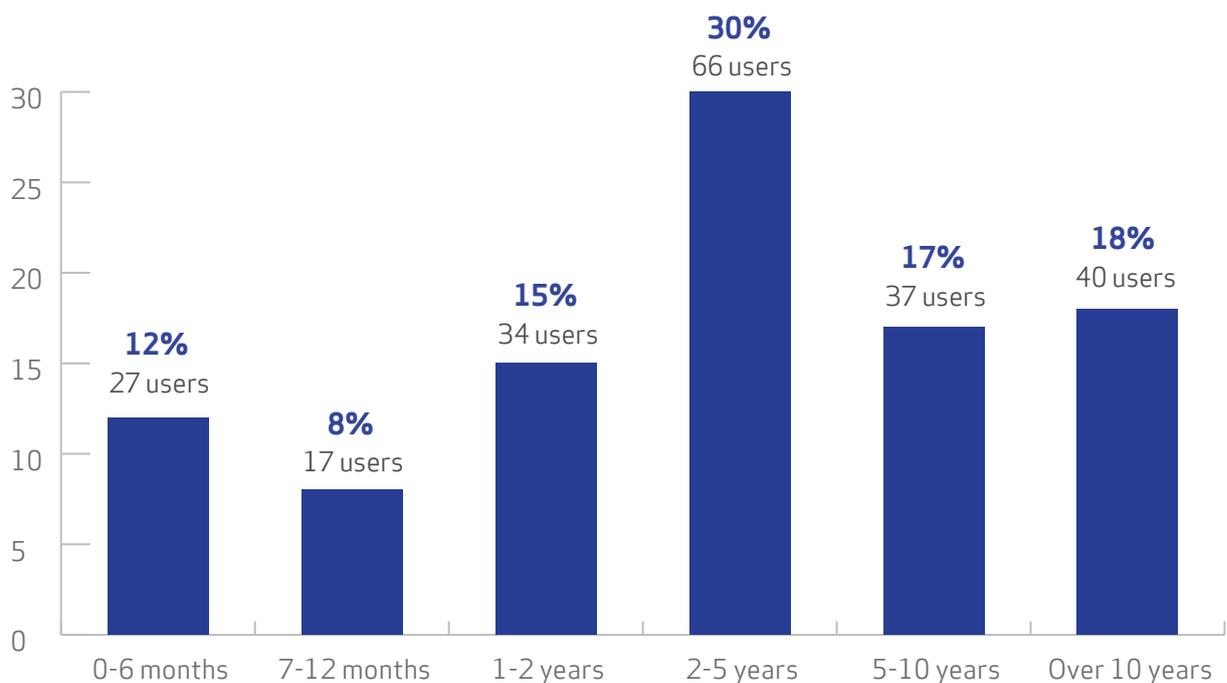
Anorexia nervosa is still the highest percentage, although of note there is a strong increase in ARFID queries, reflecting 18% of email support queries in 2023.

Figure 21: Type of eating disorder



In a small number of emails (221) we are aware of the duration of the eating disorder. See Figure 22.

Figure 22: How long has the person had an eating disorder?



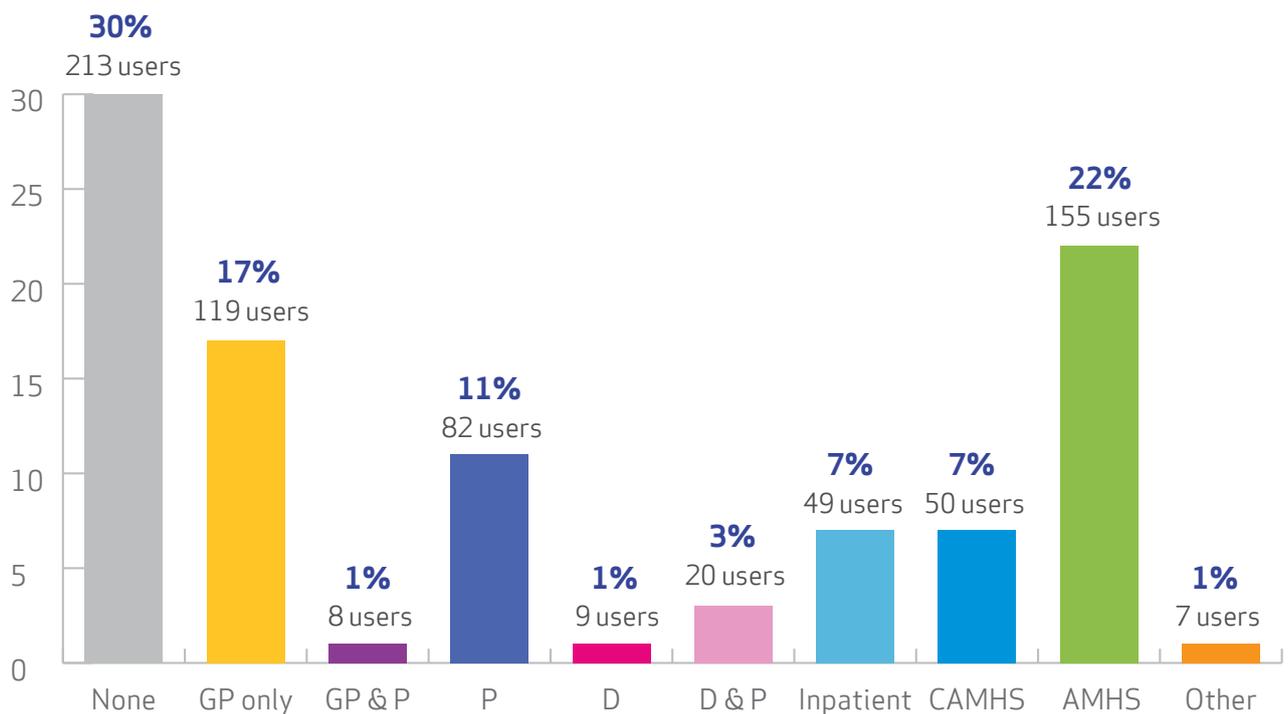
We do not always know from those who email whether they are in formal treatment or not. Part of the role of the service is to inform and to guide people to the treatment pathways available to them. Across approximately 70% of emails (1,634 queries) treatment status was unknown. Where we do know if a person is engaged in treatment or not, that number is 712 individuals. In this number we found that 30% or 213 people were not actively in any treatment process. This figure might be composed of people at the beginning of their journey, who we support to take a next step when they feel ready, some were those who were in treatment but are no longer, or those who may not feel able to be in treatment at

this time. Many people who use our email service, correspond with us on a regular basis whilst others use other Bodywhys supports like our groups, along with repeat emailing.

Where we know that service users on email were not in any formal treatment (213), 109 of them or nearly 51% use Bodywhys services on a returning basis for support.

As with the helpline, looking at treatment accessed this year, of those who have named a treatment, we have broken down individual treatment services, to get a more accurate picture (See Figure 23)

Figure 23: Type of Treatment



None	Dietitian (D)	AMHS
GP only	Dietitian and psychotherapy (D&P)	Other
GP and psychotherapy (GP & P)	Inpatient	
Psychotherapy (P)	CAMHS	



See My Self

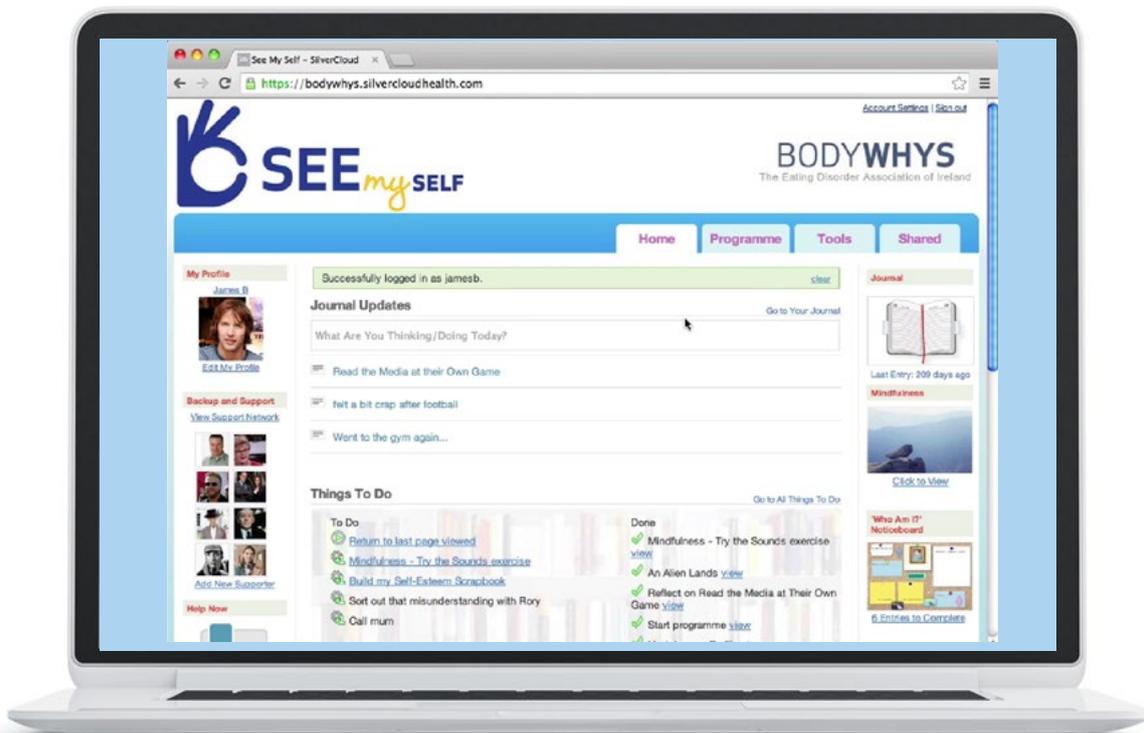
See My Self is a free 8-week programme running alongside other online supports. It is a psycho-education programme designed for young people aged 15-24 focusing on self-esteem, body image and media, and cultural effects on self-image. It is not specifically focused on eating disorders. Its aim is to provide education and offer understanding about self-image, body image and self-worth.

The programme is interactive with lots of activities, exercises and a journal and encourages participants to reflect upon their views of topics covered.

2023



12 Participants





Training and Development

Training & Development



Harriet Parsons

*Training and Development
Manager*



Christopher Cash

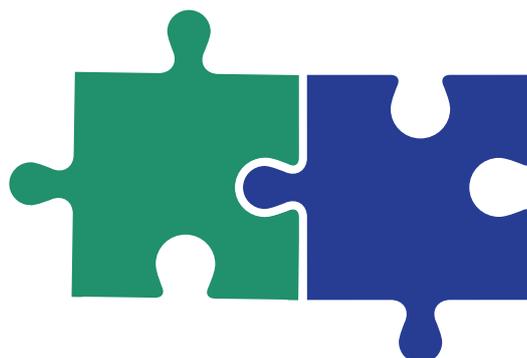
*Training and Development
Consultant*

The Training and Development Manager’s role is to provide, supervise and implement the support component of the HSE’s National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED) Model of Care, launched in 2018. A central aim of NCP-ED is to enhance public specialist eating disorders services on a regional and national basis.

Training and Development Workload

2023 saw the work of the Training and Development Manager go from strength-to-strength by providing supports to families and carers, and the wider eating disorder community and in providing support to the NCP-ED. We can see from the report overleaf, how the training aspect of the Training and Development Manager’s role continues to expand. This is vitally important for the knowledge base of a wide network of health professionals and allied health professionals in the Republic of Ireland.

The collaboration and co-production between the 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, not just regarding support services but also in relation to training the wider eating disorder treatment community. Ultimately, this relationship benefits 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. It is important to note that with the expansion of services provided to families and carers, as well as health professionals, so too comes greater demand.





Family Support Package (FSP)

Supporting families has always been a central component of services delivered by Bodywhys.

In 1995, when the organisation was established by a group of parents, the vision was to provide support to both people with an eating disorder and their families. Having a Training and Development Manager has seen our organisation's capacity to provide this support increase. The benefits to carers, people with eating disorders and the wider health services are evident, not only in the uptake of services, but are also evident in the feedback provided by those delivering services and from carers themselves.

The free FSP is designed for carers who are supporting a person of any age, and any eating disorder. It is important to be clear that the supports are not just for parents of young people, carers attending the FSP also support adults, people at any stage of the illness, and all types of eating disorders as often those who are supporting an adult with a longstanding eating disorder might not feel that a service is suitable for them. Our FSP is suitable for carers and parents in this situation.

In 2023, Bodywhys continued to provide its FSP and the uptake of these services and support has, at every point, been at capacity. Our vision is to expand these services in accordance with demand. When we look at the statistics from

treatment services, we can see that the post-pandemic landscape is very different to the landscape in 2018 when the NCP-ED was launched. Our services also need to be able to expand to provide adequate support to meet the increased demand from people being diagnosed and treated for eating disorders and their families.

The FSP provides psychoeducation, skills training, and ongoing support to carers of those with an eating disorder. The primary focus of the support package is to support the supporters, the carers. By providing carers with education, skills, and ongoing support, we aim to improve carers' well-being and mental health as well as helping them build a community to reduce the sense of isolation, and to help them develop the resilience needed to support their loved one towards recovery. We know that supporting someone through recovery from an eating disorder can be a long and difficult process. Carers need to be supported during this process not only to protect their own well-being but also to ensure their loved one with an eating disorder is supported well and within a supportive and motivating atmosphere. Carers are also supported through Bodywhys helpline and email support services.

Briefly, the FSP consists of:

- 1 The **PiLaR programme**: A four-week structured programme, run on four evenings over four weeks, providing psychoeducation, practical advice, and support through all the main issues that carers face when supporting a loved one with an eating disorder
- 2 The **Post-PiLaR support group**: A follow-on support group for those who have attended the PiLaR programme. This is a traditional style support group, facilitated by the Training and Development Manager, that runs twice a month. It is a smaller group, with limited spaces, where carers can speak, get, and give support to one another about the daily issues that are arising while supporting their loved one with an eating disorder
- 3 The New **Maudsley Carer Skills Workshop**: A series is an 8-workshop series run over four months in which carers are trained in core supportive skills originally developed by the Maudsley Hospital, London
- 4 A regular monthly New **Maudsley support group**: For those who have completed the New Maudsley workshop series, where carers can come, get, and give support to one another, as well as practice and refresh on skills learned.

Part One: The PiLaR Programme



The PiLaR programme is delivered by Bodywhys Training and Development Manager to those supporting a person with an eating disorder.

Working alongside the HSE’s NCP-ED/Model of Care, and the specialist training for clinicians, has meant that the PiLaR programme supports carers whose loved one is in treatment, giving accurate and helpful information, offering insights into the different situations that can arise, and supporting carers to provide the most effective support for their loved one.

The PiLaR programme incorporates both psychoeducation and support, as well as practical advice and skills to help carers support their loved one towards recovery.

In 2023, the PiLaR programme was delivered online, over four weeks, each one building on the knowledge from the previous week. The programme continues to be developed and improved.

Topics covered are:

- ✓ Understanding an eating disorder as a coping mechanism
- ✓ The main types of eating disorders 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 eating disorder cycle to provide a framework for understanding
- ✓ Understanding how the person with an eating disorder interprets their world – sensitivity, thinking style, the role of disordered eating behaviours
- ✓ Reframing behaviours to allow for better support
- ✓ Externalising the eating disorder and encouraging the person to separate themselves from their eating disorder
- ✓ Avoiding power struggles
- ✓ Communication skills - how to have important and sensitive conversations
- ✓ The role of an eating routine in recovery and how to provide meal support
- ✓ Support for siblings
- ✓ Understanding triggers
- ✓ Thinking about what recovery is and how it feels for a person
- ✓ Treatment, is it working or not working? How to ask questions of healthcare providers
- ✓ Managing relapse.

In 2023, we ran the PiLaR programme five times, with **637** people signing up to attend.

Month	PiLaR Attendance
January	115
March	103
May/June	134
September	182
November	103
Total	637

PiLaR demographics 2023

We ask attendees to complete an anonymous survey form so that we can gather demographic information. For example, of the people who completed the question 'What is your gender?' 84 people answered male, and 305 answered female, which means that 389 of 637 people completed the survey.

Figure 26: What is your gender?

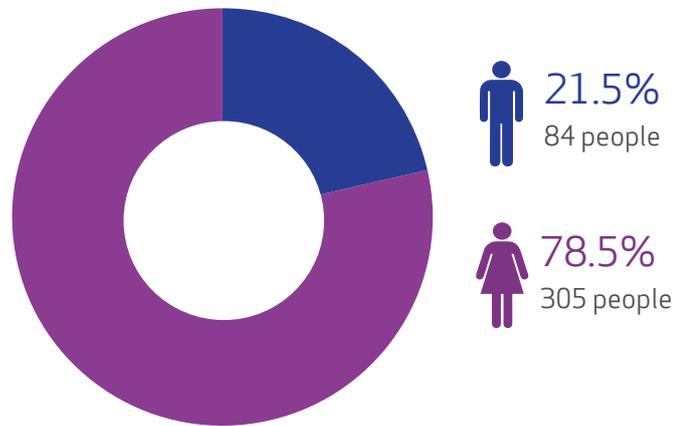


Figure 27: Where are you based?

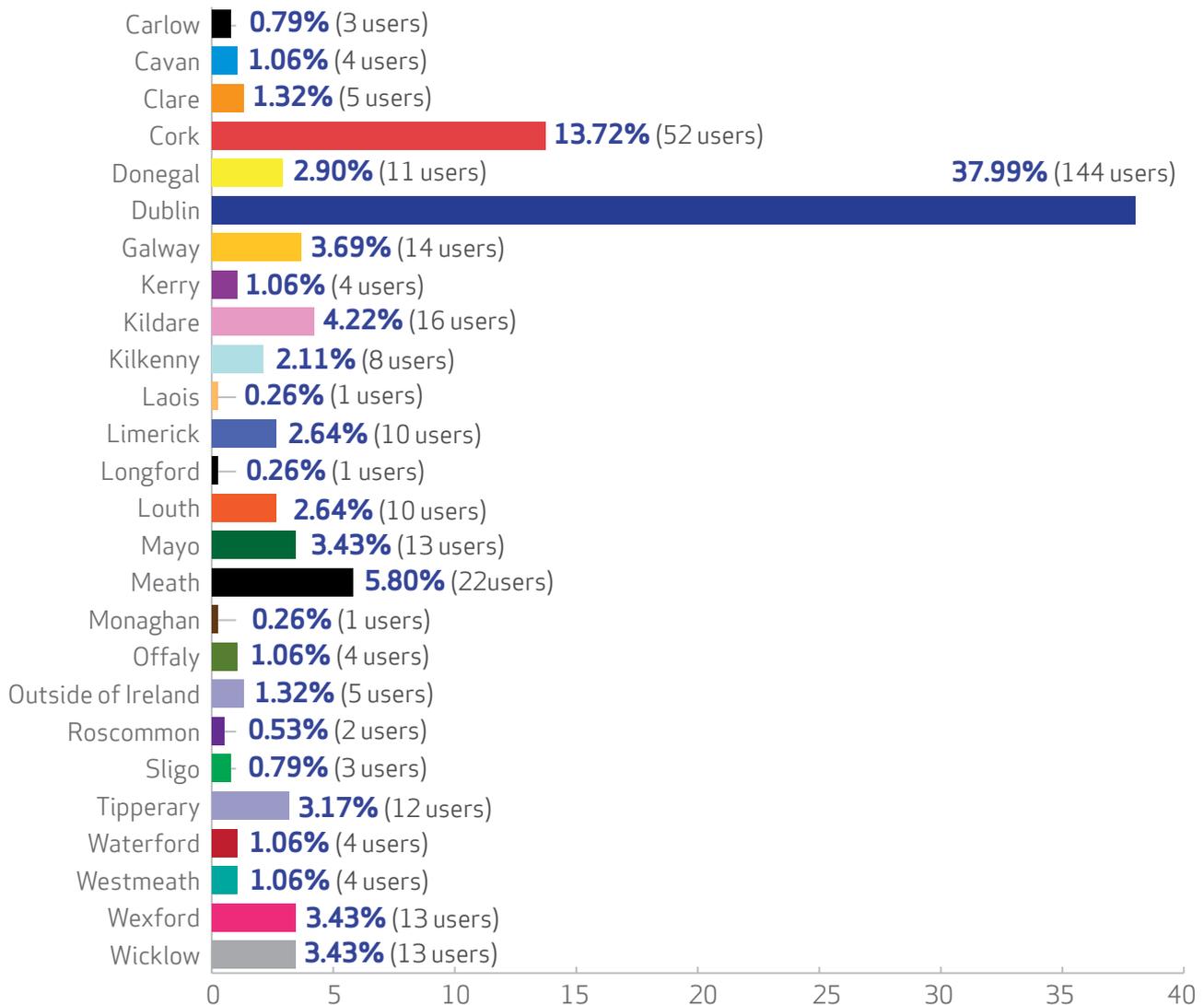


Figure 28: Person being supported

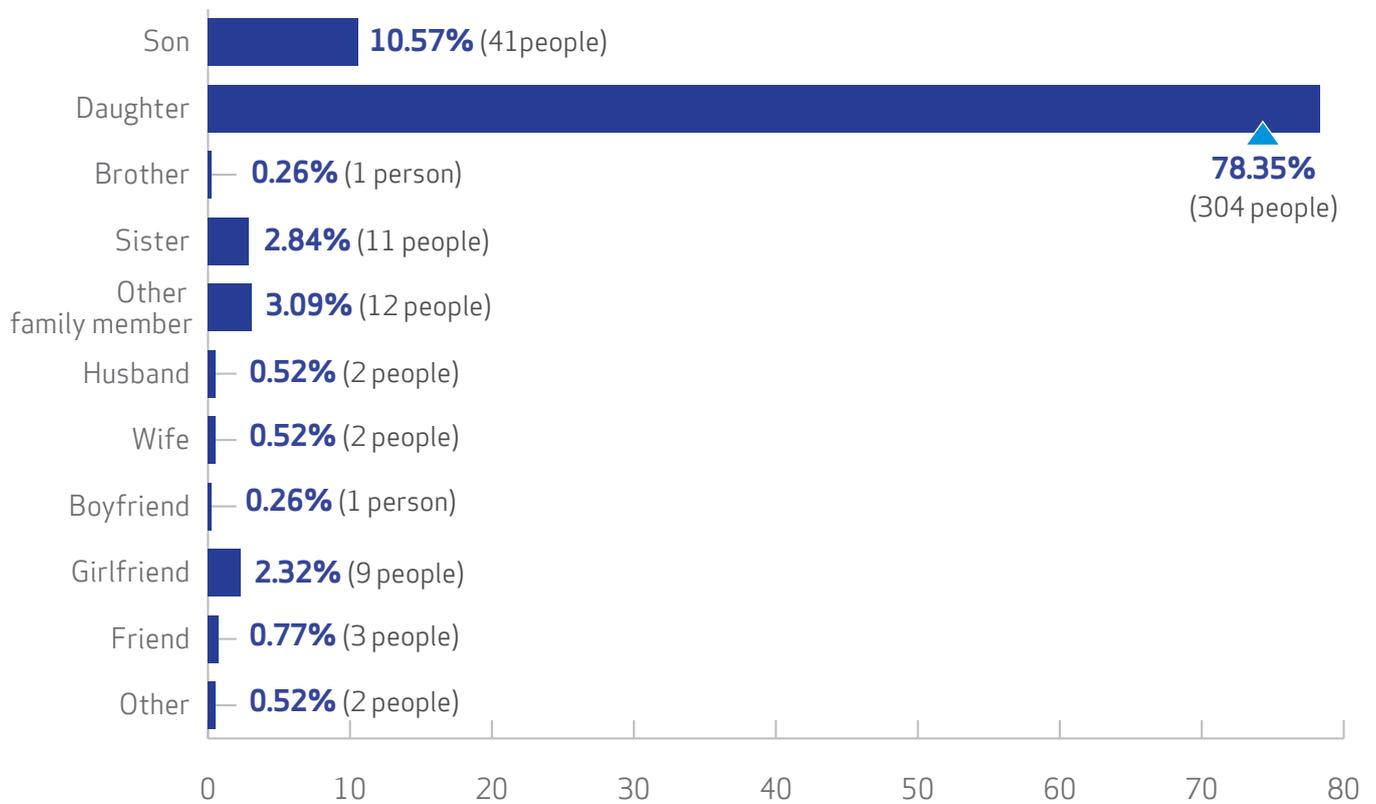


Figure 29: What is the gender of person you are supporting?

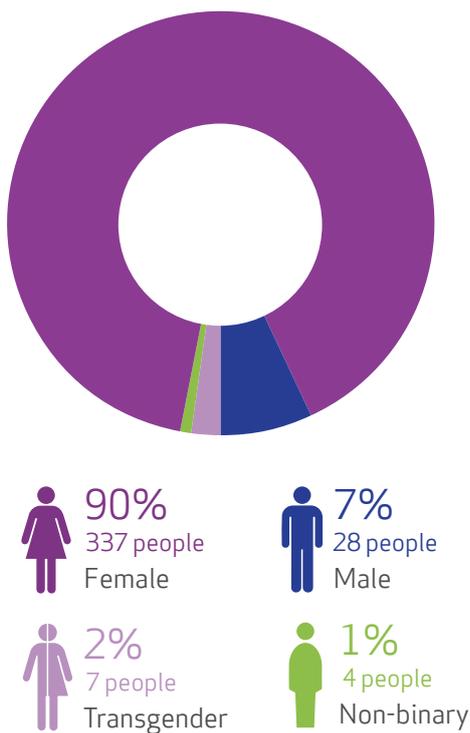


Figure 30: What is the age of the person you are supporting?

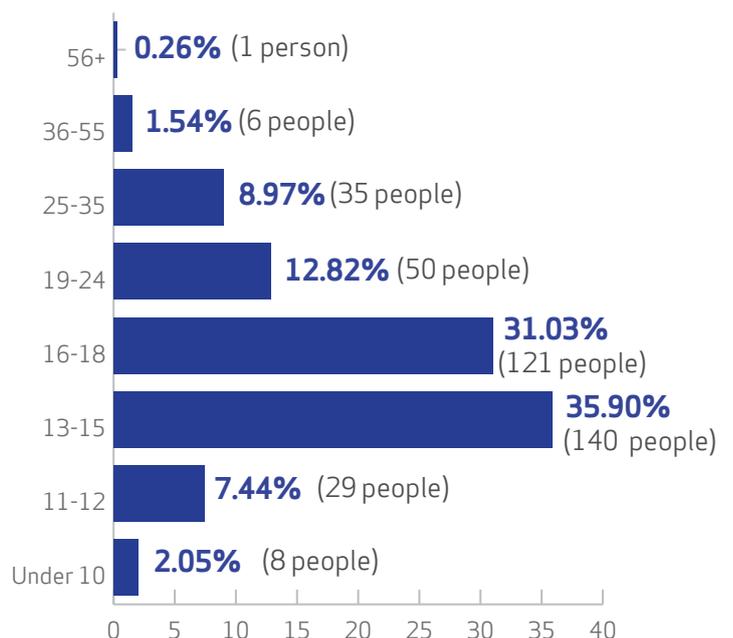


Figure 31: What type of ED do they have?

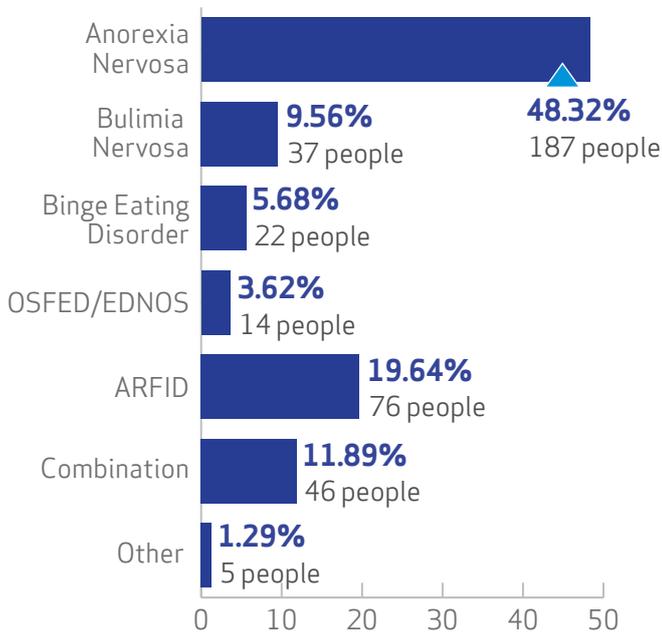


Figure 32: Where in the process is your person?

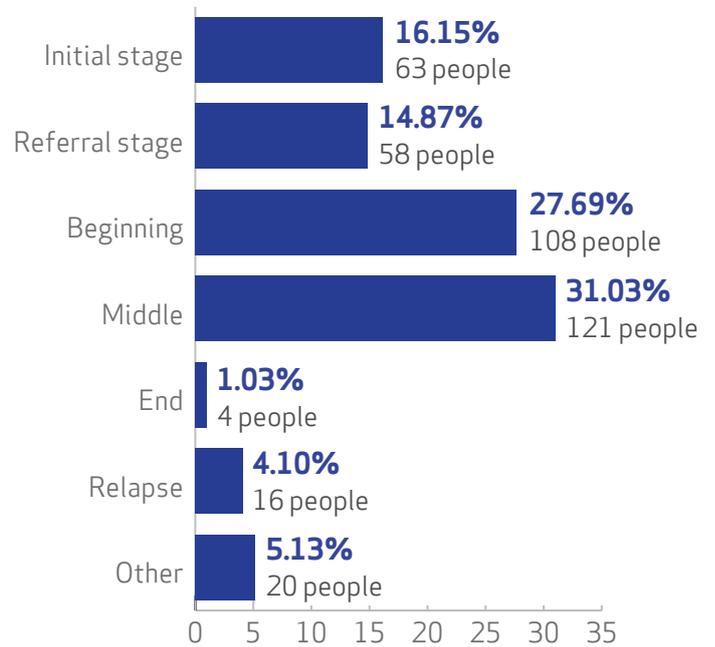
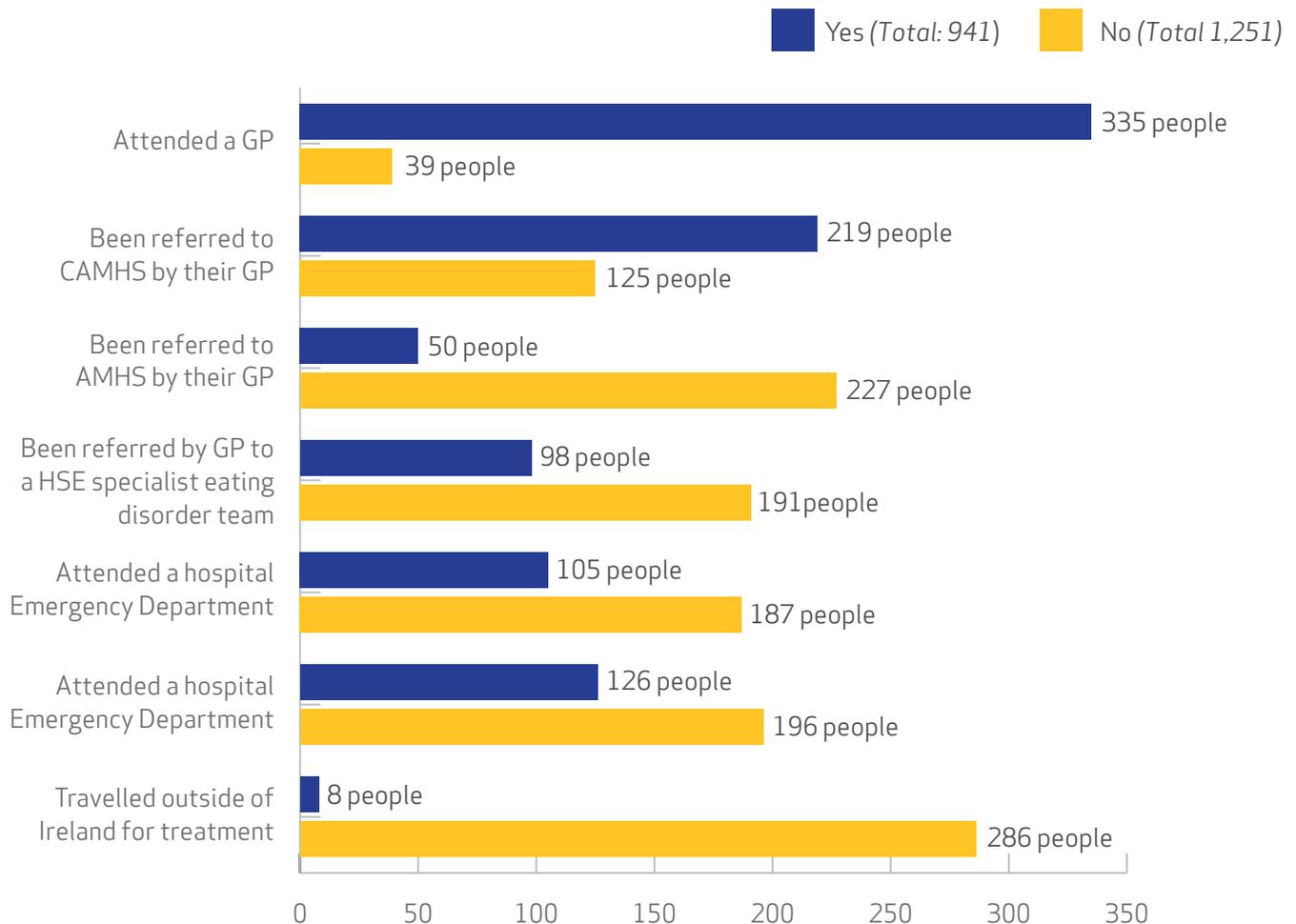


Figure 33: Due to the eating disorder...



Referral process experiences: Comments from carers and supporters

"The hospital made the CAMHS referral."

"Referral to AMHS is frighteningly slow and they do not have the expertise to deal with eating disorders."

"Doctor appointment booked for next week."

"GP excellent, but does not know how to refer, as CAMHS will not take the referral."

"Referred to dietitian."

"It was quite difficult to get correct care from the GP. If we had not accessed a wonderful psychotherapist and followed her advice, we would not be on the path of treatment."

"Did not use CAMHS at the time as waiting list long. Used a counsellor who specialised in eating disorders."

"We have been told that there is a 6-month waiting list to be seen for an outpatient appointment as a private patient."

"Really lucky to get a place having been referred by a GP. The service itself was very good, very caring. However, the transition from care to outpatient has been difficult at times."

"There is a long wait between referral and getting help."

"To be honest, it was very efficient and sensitive."



PiLaR
PEER LED RESILIENCE

What people report after attending the PiLaR Programme



QUESTION:

What, if anything, do you feel you gained from taking part in PiLaR at this time?



“A deep understanding of ways to communicate with my person and more insight into the eating disorder mindset.”

“Incredible insight and understanding of the illness and how complex the disease can be for the person I am supporting.”



“Better knowledge of the eating disorder and practical tips on how to help deal with it.”

“Better understanding of eating disorder thought processes. Improved language skills when having difficult discussions, better understanding of recovery process, help in dealing with relapses. A feeling of being less alone in battle, on seeing so many other parents also looking for help.”



“I am not so worried, I know how to talk back.”

“More confidence to support my son.”



“Insight into chain of thought. Acknowledgement of feelings and advice was very relevant.”



“Hugely benefitted how as a parent we interact and address issue with child.”

“More clarity removed a crippling sense of responsibility that I didn't even know I had. Interesting insights about praise.”



“I am not the only one in this situation, but everyone's situation is slightly different.”



PiLaR Programme Testimonials

"I highly recommend the PiLaR programme to anyone supporting a person with an eating disorder. The information shared was incredibly useful and I could immediately start to benefit from the content in how I engaged with my person with an eating disorder. I gained such useful insights into the complexity of the illness and that understanding has benefited me also. I am very grateful to have embarked upon the PiLaR programme and the kindness and time of those delivering the content. One of the biggest take away points for me was not to allow fear take over when dealing with the eating disorder."

"This course will greatly improve your understanding of eating disorders as well as giving you valuable skills around the language skills needed to show your person empathy and help you to have difficult discussions. The presenter is an excellent communicator, offering real practical help. The course materials provided were excellent and she gave consideration and time to every query we submitted on "chat". In addition, seeing and hearing questions submitted by parents/carers made us feel less alone in our battle and gave us much needed hope that recovery is possible."

"Embrace the course and come back after week one. It gets easier to hear and the guidance you receive is excellent. You realise that it's not only your person that's affected"

"The first step is signing up for the programme, once you attend week 1 you will not want to miss anymore sessions, it covers all areas."

"This class has given me the knowledge and confidence to help the person I'm supporting. I better understand the eating disorder and feel confident that recovery is possible!! I was struggling through the process and feeling lost and isolated before the class. I finally have hope that we can beat this together! Thank you so much, you have no idea how much I needed this!"

"Highly, highly recommend this course. Empowered me to feel I could engage with son on his terms."

"Overall, having taken part in this fantastic programme has positively impacted my own mental health, my relationship, and my partner too. Cannot recommend it enough."

Family Support Package Part Two: Post-PiLaR Support Group

Since March 2020, the PiLaR programme has been successfully delivered online. People can access the programme from their own home, and it doesn't matter where they are in the country. Multiple members of one family can access the programme, which is so important to enable everyone to be on the same page and have a shared understanding of what is happening to their loved one and how they can best support them.

However, due to the size of the groups, participants are muted and can ask questions via the chat only. Looking at feedback from every programme, whether in person or online, people always remark on the positive experience of being in the same space as others going through a similar experience. To provide ongoing support, and to facilitate a safe space for carers to talk and support one another, we set up the Post-PiLaR support group.

This group runs twice a month and is open to anyone who has attended the PiLaR programme. The group has limited places, and participants can talk to one another, share difficulties and experiences, and it is facilitated by the Training and Development Manager. We hope to expand this service in 2024 to include an additional evening group for those who cannot attend the daytime group.



In 2023 we ran



20
Post-PiLaR
Support Groups

with an overall
attendance of



209
People

Family Support Package Part Three: New Maudsley Carer Skills (NMCS) Training

We began running NMCS workshops in 2021. Currently, each group attends eight workshops over a four-month period, two workshops each month.

Each workshop lasts for two and a half hours, and the group works together, learning the core caring skills of the New Maudsley carer programme including:

- ✓ Externalising the eating disorder
- ✓ The red and blue balloon analogy
- ✓ Animal metaphors – understanding instinctive caring styles
- ✓ Basic communication skills – OARS (Open questions, affirmations, reflections, and summarising)
- ✓ Advanced communication skills – DEARS (Developing discrepancy, expressing empathy, amplifying ambivalence, rolling with resistance, supporting self-efficacy), DARN-C (Desire to want to change, ability and skills needed for change, reasons to change, need to change and commitment to change)
- ✓ Emotional intelligence coaching – ALVS (Attend, label, validate, soothe)
- ✓ The stages of change model and the decisional balance tool
- ✓ The reassurance trap
- ✓ Planning change and the five-step approach to change.

In 2023, we delivered the NMCS workshop series to five groups, bringing the total number of groups who have received the New Maudsley Carer training to eight since we began in 2021.

Following the PiLaR programme, carers can sign up for the New Maudsley workshop series. Figure 34 shows the number of people who participated. The numbers who participated are smaller because this group has limited capacity.

Figure 34: NMCS workshop series

New Maudsley Group Number	Participants
Maudsley Group 4	17
Maudsley Group 5	16
Maudsley Group 6	16
Maudsley Group 7	16
Maudsley Group 8	24
Total	89

Note: Groups 1-3 were held in 2022.



Family Support Package Part Four: New Maudsley Carer Skills Group

Following completion of the 8-part workshop series, carers can opt-in to a regular NMCS group, once a month. This group combines support with skills practice. The focus is on the application of the NMCS skills to situations carers are dealing with, as well as looking at content and modules that are not covered in the original workshop series. In 2023, we delivered 11 sessions of the regular Maudsley group and had **169** attendees.

Feedback on the NMCS workshop



This is a fantastic programme, extremely well run. The peer element is really important and it helped me learn with people that are going through the same challenge.”



“Every module had great learnings and the change in even my own thinking and framing of problems has changed for the better. It is much easier to cope and adjust to the ups and downs of an eating disorder. Great life and communications skills. The expertise, skills and experience of the presenter and her manner were critical to understanding and absorbing these skills. The combination of videos, workbooks, examples and workshops works really well. Also, repeating some of the key messages. We can’t hear them enough.”

Let’s hear from carers who have been engaging in our FSP in 2023.

“Bodywhys was such a fundamental support and part of the process in supporting our person (age 10) through her eating disorder.”

“We feel that CAMHS told us what to do and Bodywhys helped us with how to do it.”

“Timing was everything as we then took part in the New Maudsley programme for carers while working through FBT with CAMHS. I’m not sure that we would have had such a positive outcome had it not been for the Bodywhys programmes and that parallel support.”

“It started with being able to get myself informed via the website, in understanding symptoms and terminology which enabled me to have the conversations and escalate concerns with husband, school, GP and anyone else I could think of.”

“My husband and I both attended the PiLaR programme, which was again, fundamental in helping to understand the eating disorder and our person, so that we could help and navigate while we were getting the systems in place for support.”

Delivery of training

Currently, the following training talks and workshops are provided.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>A Understanding eating disorders</p> | <p>B Supporting a person with an eating disorder</p> | <p>C Supporting and working therapeutically with a person with an eating disorder</p> | <p>D New Maudsley Carer Skills.</p> |
|--|---|--|--|

A

Understanding eating disorders

A training for general knowledge purposes. This training is designed for those who might deal with people with eating disorders irregularly, and who are seeking to increase their knowledge about eating disorders or supporting a person with an eating disorder. This is a public information type session that lasts approximately 1-2 hours.

Topics covered:

- ✓ Basic concepts
- ✓ Different types of eating disorders
- ✓ Risk factors
- ✓ Dispelling common myths
- ✓ Basic tips on language
- ✓ Basics of support
- ✓ Bodywhys support services and resources (who we are and what we do).

B

Supporting a person with an eating disorder

A 2-3 hour session, for those working in supportive roles, such as other charities, agencies, foster carers, care workers that deal with people affected by eating disorders more frequently, and feel they need upskilling in this area. This session provides a foundational understanding as well as understanding key aspects of eating disorders that help build the confidence to support someone better.

Topics covered:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What is an eating disorder? ✓ Understanding an eating disorder as a coping mechanism or a functional illness ✓ Difference between disordered eating and eating disorders ✓ The different types of eating disorders ✓ Transdiagnostic perspective of eating disorders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Common clinical features: in particular, fear of fat and gaining weight, super-sensitivity, black and white thinking and intrusive thinking ✓ How a person with an eating disorder experiences the world ✓ Language and communication ✓ Common fears ✓ Treatment pathways ✓ Bodywhys services and resources. |
|--|---|

By the end of the training, attendees will have a better understanding of eating disorders and how they manifest in a person's experience as well as, accurate information about signposting, treatment and supports available. Essentially, this session equips people with the basic knowledge, information, and skills they need to provide 'once off' type support to a person affected by an eating disorder.

C

Supporting and working therapeutically with a person with an eating disorder

A 3-hour, full day session, developed for those who work face to face, one-to-one, with people affected by eating disorders, e.g. clinicians, allied health professionals, such as psychologists, dietitians, speech and language therapists (SLTs), occupational therapists (OTs), social workers, nurses, registrars, psychiatrists, psychotherapists of various disciplines and approaches. This training provides knowledge, insight, practical information, and skills to work with this client group.

Note: this is not a treatment training. This training is for the purposes of continued professional development (CPD). It is expected that those attending are fully qualified and accredited in their field of study. This training is for the purposes of adding to their knowledge base.

Training sessions are frequently adapted for the group, e.g. for school support teams and dietitians working in acute hospitals.

Specifically, the following is covered in the training session:

- ✓ Resources for clinicians working with people with eating disorders
- ✓ Common myths
- ✓ Understanding and detailing the main eating disorders - diagnostic features
- ✓ Difference between disordered eating and eating disorders
- ✓ Transdiagnostic perspective of eating disorders
- ✓ Common clinical features: in particular, fear of fat and gaining weight, super-sensitivity, black and white thinking and intrusive thinking
- ✓ Causes and risk factors
- ✓ Using formulation cycles to understand the problem being presented
- ✓ Reframing disordered behaviours
- ✓ Collaborative support and what that means within your focus as a clinician
- ✓ Externalising the eating disorder, separating the person from their eating disorder
- ✓ Avoiding power struggles
- ✓ Communication skills, language, dos and don'ts of communication
- ✓ Emotional coaching
- ✓ Common fears and anxieties
- ✓ Relapse.

D

New Maudsley Carer Skills

2023 saw Bodywhys provide NMCS training to HSE clinicians. There are two ways this training can be delivered:

- 1 A full day or 2-day workshop, outlining the skills for clinicians.
- 2 A 3-day training, in which teams are trained to run their own workshops with carers using their service. In this training, the first two days are for clinicians and the third day will be with clinicians and families/ carers, so that clinicians can see the workshop in 'action' and learn how to deliver the workshops to carers.

In keeping with trends in previous years, the 'training' aspect of the Training and Development Manager's role increased in 2023. This year saw continued demand for professional training in supporting people with eating disorders, with the total number of training sessions delivered increasing to 45, see Table 1.

Table 1: Training and Development activities delivered in 2023

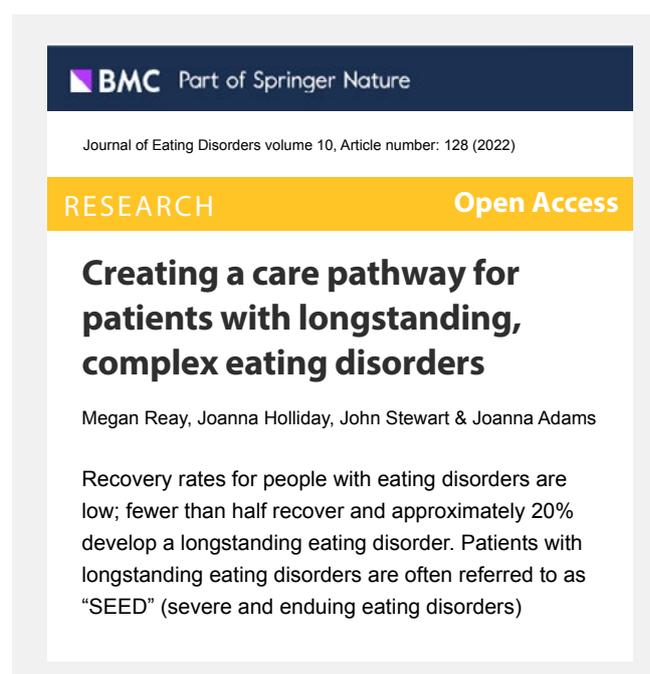
Training	When	Focus	For	Attendance
1	January	Supporting people with eating disorders (EDs)	Mental Health Team, Rotunda Hospital	9
2		Supporting people with EDs	Nursing students, St. Angela's College Sligo	9
3		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Trinity College Dublin's Postgraduate Diploma in Mental Health Nursing	7
4	February	Understanding Eating Disorders	Wexford General Nurses	40
5		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Tusla, Drogheda	15
6		NMCS Clinician Training Day 1	CAMHS Balbriggan and Day Hospital	15
7		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Law Society's Mental Health Team	10
8		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Jigsaw, Donegal	9
9		Supporting a Person with an Eating Disorder	Monaghan Library	13
10		NMCS Clinician Training Day 2	CAMHS Balbriggan and Day Hospital	15
11		Supporting a Person with an Eating Disorder	Fingal Library	26
12	March	Diverse male experiences	Healthcare Professionals, NCP-ED Study Day	437
13		Supporting a person with an ED	Central Statistics Office (CSO)	20
14		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Save Our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD)	35
15	April	Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	North Cork CAMHS	8
16		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Cork University Hospital (CUH) Dietitians	15
17		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Kerry CAMHS	9
18		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Dublin North City Centre CAMHS	14
19	May	NMCS Training Balbriggan Day 3 Family Training Day	Balbriggan CAMHS and Carers	24

Training	When	Focus	For	Attendance
20	May	Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Tusla Care Home	8
21		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Galway/Roscommon Mental Health Nurses in Training	41
22	June	Building Social Connections in Eating Disorder Recovery	Presentation at Conference in Nottingham Trent University	30
23		Working Therapeutically with People with EDs	Tusla, Carlow	16
24		Support Services Training Day 1	Incoming Bodywhys Volunteers	25
25		Support Services Training Day 2	Incoming Bodywhys Volunteers	25
26	July	Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating in the Perinatal Period	Healthcare Conferences UK Ltd	35
27	September	Supporting a person with an Eating Disorder	GALRO Ireland	13
28		Working Therapeutically with People with Eating Disorders	HAIL Housing Organisation	15
29	October	Working Therapeutically with People with Eating Disorders	UCD Nurses in Training	30
30		Supporting a person with an Eating Disorder	Carlow Mental Health Association	8
31		Understanding Eating Disorders Day 1, Presentation to post-primary level students	Cork Mental Health Foundation	700
32		Understanding Eating Disorders Day 2. Presentation to post-primary level students	Cork Mental Health Foundation	500
33		NMCS Training Day 1	CAMHS Blanchardstown / Lakeside	11
34		NMCS Training Day 2	CAMHS Blanchardstown / Lakeside	11
35		Working Therapeutically with People with Eating Disorders	Dietitians, University Hospital Galway (UHG)	15
36		NMCS Training Day 3	CAMHS Blanchardstown / Lakeside	25

Training	When	Focus	For	Attendance
37	November	Supporting a person with an Eating Disorder	Tusla Foster Carers Training, Cavan	8
38		Eating Disorders in Perinatal Health	Healthcare Conferences UK Ltd	35
39		Working Therapeutically with People with Eating Disorders	Galway HSE mental health teams and Jigsaw Galway	51
40		Supporting Students with EDs	UCC Dietetics and Food Science staff	15
41		Supporting a person with an Eating Disorder	Daughters of Charity Family Centre Blanchardstown Family Centre staff	8
42		Supporting students with EDs webinar	Educators, teachers, guidance counsellors. Bodywhys event	107
43		Coping with Christmas webinar	Carers, family members – open to the public. Bodywhys event	45
44		NMCS Training Day 1 and Day 2	HSE Cork Adult Eating Disorders Team	5
45	December	Working Therapeutically with People with Eating Disorders	Muiríosa Foundation	11
Total				2,523

Severe and Enduring Eating Disorders / Longstanding Eating Disorders Working group

In 2023, the Training and Development Manager co-chaired, with Dr. Art Malone of St. Vincent’s University Hospital’s eating disorders team, a working group looking at severe and enduring eating disorders (SEED): treatment, recovery, quality of life, and supports. We were delighted to have Dr. Megan Reay, Clinical Psychologist, in attendance, who wrote a research paper, ‘Creating a care pathway for patients with longstanding, complex eating disorders’ while working at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.



The Expert by Experience (eBe) Group

2023 has seen an exciting and important development for the improvement of eating disorder treatment services in Ireland. Bodywhys strives to ensure that the voice of the person with an eating disorder, and their carers, is heard and listened to, especially about shaping the future of treatment services in Ireland. As the support partner to the HSE's NCP-ED, Bodywhys worked with the NCP-ED to provide a channel for the voice of the person and their carer to be heard and listened to, through the eBe group.

In September, Bodywhys put out a call for people who wished to become part of this group. We had hoped to have six people with personal experience and six carers.

We were overwhelmed by the response and the breadth of experiences that people brought to us. To ensure that everyone's experience was validated, listened to, and heard, we took the decision to include everyone in the eBe group. This group is facilitated by the Training and Development Manager.

What is the process?

The NCP-ED will ask the Training and Development Manager to gather feedback, insight, and recommendations on a particular area of development from members of the eBe group. The Training and Development Manager will disseminate this 'ask' to the members of the eBe group to feedback in writing by a certain date. When all feedback is received, the Training and Development Manager will collate this feedback into a document and organise an online meeting of members of the eBe group to ensure that the feedback has been captured accurately and offer time for any additions or changes. The final document will then be provided to the NCP-ED.

The first piece of work by the eBe group will be undertaken for Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2024.

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

**SEEKING EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE
TO SHARE THEIR VOICES**

The perspectives of people with eating disorders and their carers are crucial in shaping the implementation and further evolution of the HSE's National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED).

We invite you to join an advisory group to guide the implementation and further development of the Model of Care for Eating Disorder services in Ireland.

HAVE YOUR SAY
To express an interest in getting involved please email Harriet on:
harriet@bodywhys.ie

CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2023

Networking and collaborating with NCP-ED's specialist teams

2023 has seen the development of a further seven specialist eating disorder teams, bringing the number of teams nationally to eleven. The Training and Development Manager has met with the newly formed teams to ensure they know about the work that Bodywhys does, and how Bodywhys can support their services. In addition to this, the Training and Development Manager can provide these teams with training in the New Maudsley Carer Skills and work collaboratively with them in different ways.

Attendance at NCP-ED meetings

Throughout 2023, the Training and Development Manager attended monthly NCP-ED oversight meetings. These meetings allow for the sharing of developments and information as well as ensuring collaboration and consistency of support to the NCP-ED.



Communications,
Research and Policy

Communications



Ellen Jennings
Communications Officer

Media Queries



There has been a sustained level of media attention on eating disorders and body image, as observed in previous years. This year, topics included:

- ✓ Weight stigma and television shows
- ✓ Service provision
- ✓ Recruitment and funding of the HSE's NCP-ED
- ✓ Bulimia nervosa
- ✓ Artificial intelligence (AI)-powered therapy chatbots and mental health
- ✓ Men and eating disorders
- ✓ Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID)
- ✓ Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW)
- ✓ Lived experiences of various eating disorders
- ✓ Support services for people affected by eating disorders
- ✓ Weight loss medications
- ✓ Young people and body image
- ✓ Parents and body image
- ✓ Body dysmorphic disorder in men
- ✓ Summer and body image
- ✓ Inconsistent clothing sizes and body image
- ✓ Calories on food menus
- ✓ Anorexia nervosa
- ✓ Image editing and body image
- ✓ Body image in sport
- ✓ Body image and teenagers and youth
- ✓ Body image and youth
- ✓ Increasing eating disorder presentations
- ✓ Disordered eating
- ✓ Fat shaming
- ✓ Emotional eating
- ✓ Mental health
- ✓ Family supports for people affected by eating disorders
- ✓ Young people
- ✓ Social media and body image
- ✓ Gym culture
- ✓ Carers
- ✓ Weight loss injections
- ✓ TikTok trends
- ✓ Media guidelines for reporting on eating disorders.

newSTALK

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Living with an eating disorder: ‘It consumes your entire life’

The latest annual report from Bodywhys, The Eating Disorder Association of Ireland, found that calls to their helpline have jumped by almost 10% compared to 2022.

Mairead spoke to callers Jess, Lisa, Micheál and Eoin on their experience living with an eating disorder.

8 NOV 2023 at 12.36

For more information on Bodywhys visit www.bodywhys.ie

The Bodywhys helpline: 01 2107906 - This service offers a non-judgemental and confidential support and information service.

Irish Independent 

News Opinion Business Sport Life Style Entertainment Travel Video

How to help our teenagers tackle negative body image

With so much pressure on looking a certain way, teenagers can be vulnerable to eating disorders. But by nurturing self-esteem from a young age, they’ll be better armed to deal with any issues they may encounter around body image.

Last week marked Eating Disorders Awareness Week led by Bodywhys, the national eating disorder support organisation. The Bodywhys team focused the week on boys and men, since it is often assumed that only girls and women suffer from issues about body image. Of course, the truth is that boys and girls have such issues and the prevalence of eating disorders is growing for both groups, especially since the pandemic.

Wed 8 Mar 2023 at 13:30

Irish Independent 

News Opinion Business Sport Life Style Entertainment

Kerry man’s journey from hell of anorexia to Ironman challenge – ‘If I survived that I can do this’

Ardfert native Micheál Costello talks about struggling with an eating disorder as he prepares for an Ironman in Barcelona to raise awareness of male anorexia

Fri 22 Sep 2023 at 02:10

 **Irish Examiner**

SUBSCRIBER NEWS SPORT LIFESTYLE BUSINESS PROPERTY OPINION

Families battle to save their loved ones from eating disorder ARFID

Hiding vitamins in chicken nuggets, grinding nuts into powder to conceal in yoghurt, driving long distances to large food retailers for a certain type of waffle or chicken nugget...

Sun 24 Sep 2023 at 18:20

Media Spotlight on Eating Disorders

During the months of **January** and **February**, the media focused on; the proposed weighing of children in schools, January and diet culture, men and eating disorders, weight loss TV shows, young people and eating disorders, recruitment difficulties and

service provision, myths about eating disorders and Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2023. *RTÉ Radio 1's Liveline* show focused on ARFID. Sheila Naughton, a member of the Bodywhys Board of Directors, featured on the *Virgin Media*

Television show 'Eating with the Enemy' alongside Dr. Eva Orsmond to share experience of living with an eating disorder. Roz Purcell, *RTÉ 2FM* presenter and content creator, shared her experience of eating disorders on the Tommy Tiernan show on *RTÉ One*.



Pictured above: Dr. Eva Orsmond (left) and Sheila Naughton (right) on 'Eating with the Enemy,' Virgin Media Television.

In **March** and **April**, coverage was given to; Eating Disorders Awareness Week, personal experiences, diet culture, service provision, the HSE's NCP-ED, a new digital service for people with disordered eating, binge eating disorder, male body image, teen body image, mental health services and young people. *TG4* released a documentary on body image titled 'Síomha: Idir Anam is Corp' which featured Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Manager with Bodywhys. Irish singer Lyra described her experience of bulimia nervosa in the *Irish Independent*.



May and **June** saw an increase in media coverage around service provision, funding issues and staff shortages within the NCP-ED. There was also coverage of binge eating disorder, eating disorders and teenage girls, social media, body dysmorphia and toxic online gym culture, children and smartphones, the impact of Covid-19 on mental health and body image in athletes. Eoin Kernan, a member of the Bodywhys Media Panel, spoke out about his eating disorder on *Ireland AM* and former Miss Ireland, Lynda Duffy, shared her experience with binge eating disorder on *Newstalk FM*.

Eoin Kernan speaks about his experience on Ireland AM'



Young people and body image were highlighted in **July** and **August**, alongside increased attention on the new Digital Services Act. *The Journal.ie* featured two Bodywhys articles on body image focusing on 'summer body image' and 'supporting children with body image issues'. Coverage was given to inconsistent clothing sizes, smartphones and mental health, body image and photo editing, recruitment difficulties and waiting lists within HSE's eating disorder services, increasing presentations of eating disorders amongst young people, the Health Research Board 2022 data on admissions to psychiatric inpatient facilities, body positivity, and psilocybin as a potential treatment for anorexia nervosa.

The Journal Irish News FactCheck

Parenting | Tips for supporting children and young people with body image issues



Fiona Flynn of Bodywhys has some helpful advice for parents and guardians of young children and teens.

7.01pm, 8 Aug 2023

September and **October** saw coverage of increased hospital admissions for eating disorders, difficulties in accessing specialist treatment, ARFID, calls for increased media literacy on social media, mental health stigma, concern over the number of girls dropping out of sport with body image concerns and difficulties within CAMHS. In October, the UK's online safety bill became law and a series focusing on eating disorder recovery was released on *Netflix*.



Pictured above: Mary Byrne, Bodywhys Media Panel member, featured in 'So This is Christmas' documentary directed by Ken Wardrop.

In **November** and **December**, the media focused on online safety, mental health, Christmas time, CAMHS and waiting lists. A documentary from Irish filmmaker Ken Wardrop, titled 'So This Is Christmas,' featuring a member of our Media Panel, Mary Byrne, and was released in cinemas across Ireland. Stephanie Preissner, Irish writer and actress, spoke out about pregnancy and eating disorders. Media coverage focused on protests organised by the Mind Everybody campaign outside the Department of Health calling for reform of eating disorder services in Ireland. December saw the focus move to the challenges of Christmas and New Year for people affected by eating disorders.

The volume of print articles remained consistent throughout the year. September, October, and November saw a spike in the volume of web articles.



1,300 articles were **web based**



1,294 articles were from **print media**

164 articles referenced



83 of those were **web-based**

81 of those were **print articles**

Irish Independent

News Opinion Business Sport Life Style Entertainment

Protesters call for reform of eating disorder services – ‘We’re spending every day trying to keep our children alive’

Parents whose children have been affected by the lack of services for the treatment of eating disorders marched from the Department of Health towards the Dáil today to demand reform.

Sat 18 Nov 2023 at 07:17

Articles by keyword (print and online), sourced from media monitoring analytics

Keyword	Number of articles
Anorexia nervosa	485
ARFID	19
Bulimia nervosa	174
Binge eating disorder	98
Eating disorders	992
Body image	517
Bodywhys	164
Orthorexia	7
Body dysmorphia	138
Total	2,594

Top news sources by potential reach

(Figures represent ‘opportunity to see’):

- Irish Independent (web: 103M)
- The Irish Times (web: 61M)
- Irish Examiner (web: 11.5M)
- Sunday Independent (print: 9.99M)

Top news sources by volume of articles:

- Irish Independent (web: **194**)
- Irish Daily Mail (print: **95**)
- The Irish Sun (print: **91**)
- The Irish Times (web: **90**)

Top sources with Bodywhys as keyword

- Irish Independent (web: **17** articles)
- Irish Examiner (web: **8** articles)
- Sunday Independent (print: **8** articles)

Website



The number of users on www.bodywhys.ie in 2023 was

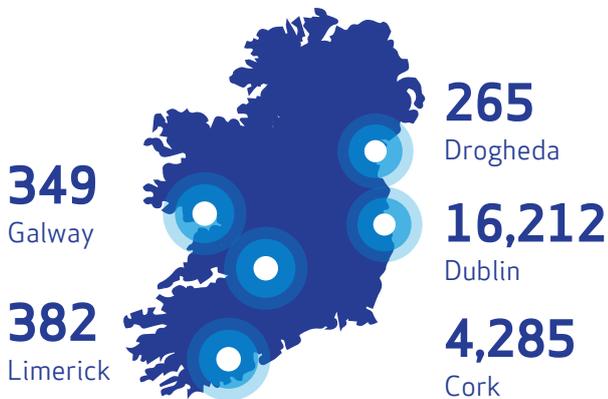
29,572

and the total number of user sessions was

44,992

There was a period when users were not being tracked due to a move to Google Analytics version 4, from 27th July – 22nd August, meaning that the figures presented are slightly under representative of the true figures.

25,978 users who accessed www.bodywhys.ie in 2023 were based in Ireland.



Users accessed the site from **661** cities worldwide.



February, March and April were busy on the site with

8,168

users during these months

In keeping with previous years, the **summer months** were quieter with between

50-100

users each day

September, October and November were busy on the site with

10,120

users during this time

and consistently over

3,000

users per month



Visitor numbers spiked on the **25th January**, **27th February** and **23rd March** which saw over

250

users each day



29,417

of visitors in 2023 were **new users**



22,761

users found the site via **organic search**



the remainder came through a **direct link** or via **social media**

Website



The **top search terms on google** that lead people to the site were:

- ✓ Bodywhys
- ✓ Body whys (sic)
- ✓ ARFID
- ✓ Eating disorders
- ✓ Binge eating disorder



Page views stood at

174,602

page views throughout the year



22,560

users accessed the site via **mobile phone**



6,769

were on a **desktop**



354

on a **tablet device**

The most accessed sections of the site, in order, were:

- 1 Homepage (**31,590** page views)
- 2 Services directory (**6,926** page views)
- 3 Treatment guide (**5,671** page views)
- 4 Support services (**4,957** page views)
- 5 ARFID (**4,411** page views)
- 6 Binge eating disorder (**2,911** page views).

There were

3,797

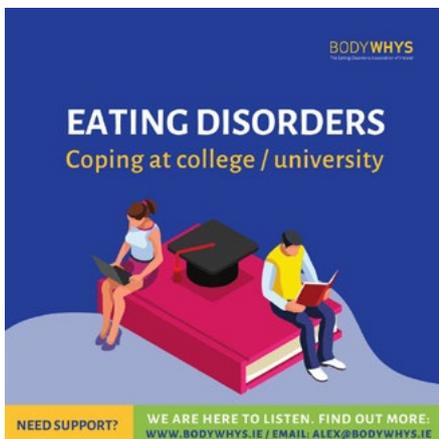


files downloaded from the website in 2023

Top downloads included:

- ✓ The binge eating disorder self-help booklet (approximately **864** downloads)
- ✓ Eating disorders: A guide for families (approximately **576** downloads)
- ✓ Treatment guide for eating disorders (approximately **859** downloads).

Throughout the year we made some additions to the website including:



In **August**, we added a new section on **navigating college** with an eating disorder. This was viewed **91** times in 2023.

In **November**, we launched a new section on coping with **lapses and relapse**. This was viewed **57** times in 2023.



We developed new free resources in 2023:

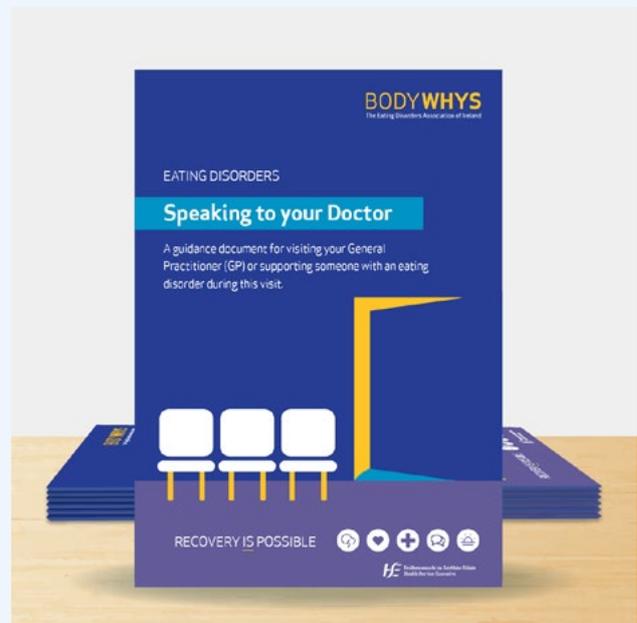
Eating Disorders: Speaking to your Doctor

In March, we launched our new resource – Eating Disorders: Speaking to Your Doctor. This free resource was developed as a comprehensive guide to navigating a visit to the GP or supporting someone during that visit. It is informed by the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) guidelines, which provides detailed guidance on diagnosis, assessment, and management of patients with eating disorders in a primary care setting.



This resource was downloaded approximately

93 times in 2023



Eating Disorders: A Guide for Families

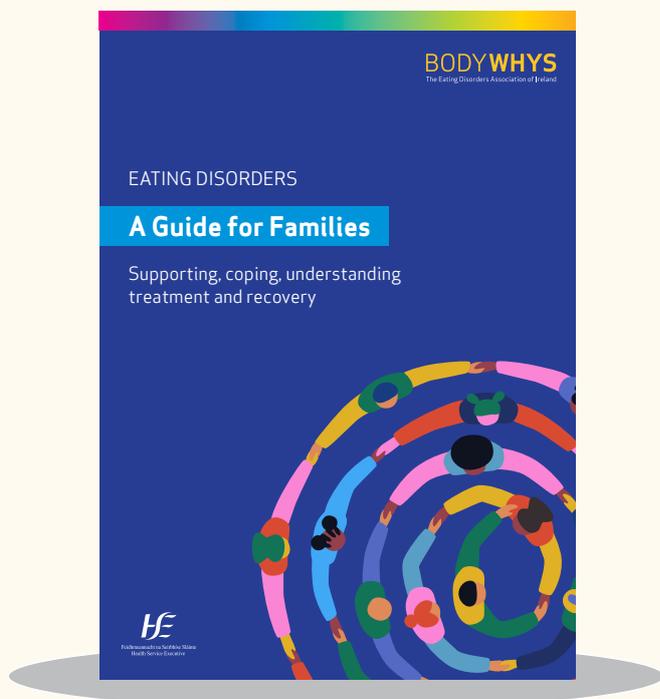
In May, we launched a new resource – Eating Disorders: A Guide for Families

This free resource is based on our experience of supporting and listening to families caring for someone with an eating disorder and is intended to help families think about their family member and how the eating disorder is influencing how they think, behave, and feel.



This resource was downloaded approximately

576 times in 2023



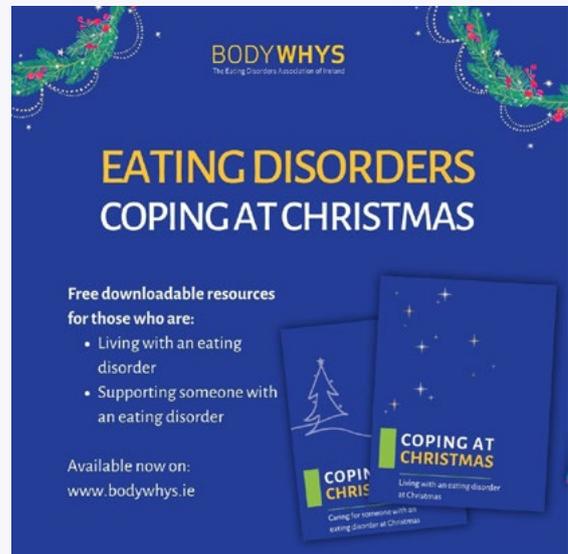
Eating Disorders: Coping at Christmas

In November, we launched our new 'Coping at Christmas' resources. The Christmas period can be particularly challenging for those affected by eating disorders. The build up to the season, changes in routine, expectations around socialising and food can contribute to stress, pressure and conflicted thoughts and feelings.

For this reason, we developed free 'Coping with Christmas' resources for people with eating disorders and those supporting someone with an eating disorder at this time of year.



This resource was downloaded **182** times in 2023 approximately



Stories of Hope - Bodywhys Media Panel

As part of our Christmas campaign, we asked the Bodywhys Media Panel to share their 'Stories of Hope.'

Social Media



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



We published **224** Facebook posts



Our Facebook reach was **21,354**

We gained **207** new Facebook followers



We published **205** Instagram posts and **500** Instagram stories

Our Instagram reach was **21,053**

We gained **743** new Instagram followers

Popular posts on Facebook and Instagram included:

- ✓ EDAW content
- ✓ Upcoming *Netflix* series disclaimer for people affected by eating disorders
- ✓ Lived experience quotes
- ✓ Calls for research participants
- ✓ Statements from Bodywhys.



On Twitter, Bodywhys generated approximately

457,300 IMPRESSIONS

throughout the year

Popular tweets throughout the year included:

- ✓ The PiLaR programme
- ✓ Training for teachers and youth workers
- ✓ Calls for volunteers
- ✓ Podcast clips
- ✓ EDAW 2023 posts
- ✓ Webinar recordings.

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

My worry was that no one would believe me and yes, because I was a 40 year old male. I also worried that people would judge me because I have 4 kids. I felt that most people would be thinking negatively about me. I experienced the complete opposite from people.

In support of

Sean Blake (Lived Experience)
on Judgement & Eating Disorders

27TH FEB - 5TH MARCH

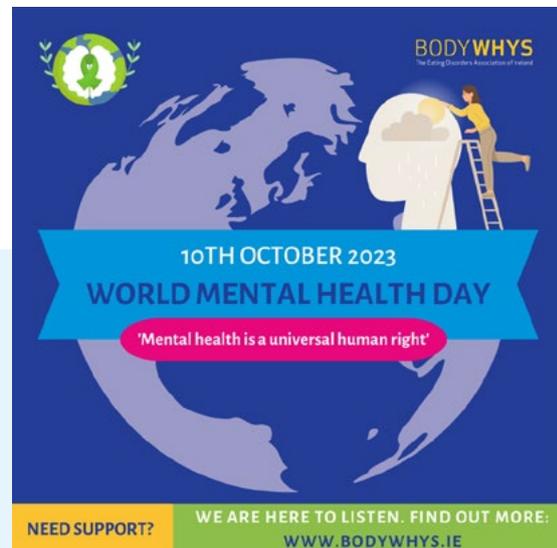
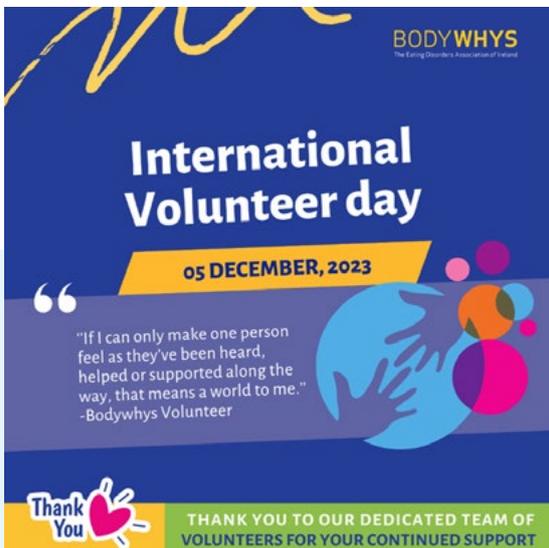
**EATING DISORDERS
AWARENESS WEEK
2023**

Save the Date

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

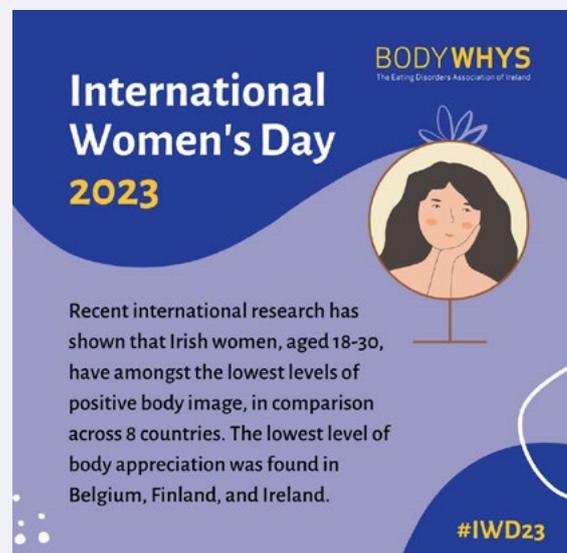
In 2023, Bodywhys supported:

- ✓ EDAW 2023
- ✓ Pride Month
- ✓ World Eating Disorders Action Day
- ✓ International Women’s Day
- ✓ Carer’s week
- ✓ Men’s Health Week
- ✓ Trans and Intersex Pride
- ✓ See Change Green Ribbon Campaign
- ✓ World Suicide Prevention Day
- ✓ National Volunteering Week
- ✓ World Mental Health Day
- ✓ Men’s Health Month
- ✓ International Volunteer Day.



International Women’s Day (IWD) 2023

On International Women’s Day 2023, we highlighted recent research by Dr Sandra Torres and colleagues on body image and women in eight European countries. The article, An International Study of Correlates of Women’s Positive Body Image, was published in the *European Journal of Investigation of Psychology and Health Education*.



Men's Health Week 2023

During Men's Health Week 2023, Eoin Kernan (Bodywhys Media Panel) appeared on *Ireland AM* alongside Harriet Parsons (Bodywhys Training and Development Manager) to share his experience with an eating disorder.



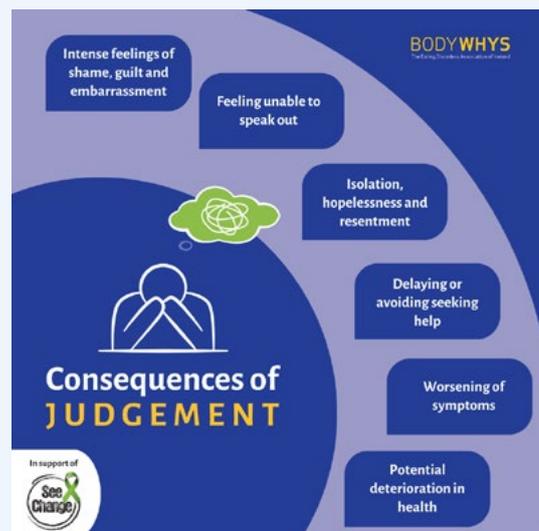
Eoin Kernan and Harriet Parsons

"An eating disorder becomes like your best friend, it becomes the only thing in the world that you believe you can trust and control, in a safety and security sense. When you go to approach looking for help for an ED, imagine asking someone to give up their best friend, you wouldn't want to do that, it would be heart-breaking to do that, so it is a very soft and slow approach"

Eoin Kernan, Bodywhys Media Panel

See Change Green Ribbon Campaign

We supported the See Change Green Ribbon Campaign through the month of September. The theme of the campaign centred around 'Judgement' in the context of having a mental health difficulty. Throughout the month we explored how judgement can impact people affected by eating disorders. Thank you to everyone involved for your continued support, in particular, our Media Panel, who kindly shared their lived experiences.



Niamh's story - A sibling's perspective

In February, we launched a new animation focusing on a sibling's perspective - to give a sense of what a sibling can experience when a family member has an eating disorder.

We thank the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) for supporting this project.

Watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vl84_DxjTBc



Connecting for Life

You Tube

We posted **3 public videos** in 2023 including **two webinar recordings** and **one animation**.



Overall, our videos received
10,399
views in 2023

98

people subscribed to our channel throughout the year

In 2023, our **top 5** videos were:

- ✓ The Eating Disorder Voice: Bodywhys (**2,521** views)
- ✓ Kate's Dad - A father's perspective: Bodywhys (**1,985** views)
- ✓ Autism and Eating Disorders Across the Lifespan – Bodywhys webinar (**995** views)
- ✓ Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID): Bodywhys Webinar – (**878** views)
- ✓ Eating Disorders: How to support someone - Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys – (**638** views).



Media Panel Training



On 23rd March, Ellen facilitated a virtual Media Panel training with Headline. Headline is the national programme for responsible reporting and representation of mental ill health and suicide. A core piece of their work is training students and media professionals on how to report responsibly on mental ill health. In

2023, they extended their training to ambassadors who share their lived experience with the media.

Four members of the Bodywhys Media availed of the training, which took place over one-hour and covered: what to expect when doing media interviews,

how to manage boundaries around interviews, what details are appropriate to share publicly and language use. The aim was for the Media Panel to leave the training feeling prepared to tell their story in a way that is comfortable and safe. We look forward to another session in future.

Podcast



Overall we published

38 

podcast episodes
in 2023

There were

13,508

listens throughout
the year



In **May** and **August**, the podcast reached **number one** in the Irish non-profit charts.

Episodes included:

- ✓ Learning about emotion difficulties in eating disorders
- ✓ Learnings from men who share their experiences on YouTube
- ✓ Learning about gender salience in recovery
- ✓ It's not all about control
- ✓ A care pathway for longstanding eating disorders
- ✓ Eating disorders in the emergency department
- ✓ Psychological recovery from relative energy deficiency in sport (RED-S)
- ✓ How lived experience can inform interventions
- ✓ Occupational therapy and eating disorders
- ✓ Neurodivergence and eating disorders
- ✓ Hormones, excessive sports and midlife men
- ✓ Adult patients' experiences of clinical team meetings (ward rounds)
- ✓ Body image: A global mental health concern
- ✓ Body functionality: What is it?
- ✓ Autism and body image
- ✓ Body image interventions
- ✓ ARFID – Listening to and learning from families
- ✓ Longstanding anorexia nervosa – Time for a rethink
- ✓ An ecological framework for recovery
- ✓ Improving the adult inpatient experience
- ✓ Conceptualising early intervention
- ✓ Causal discovery analysis and precision medicine
- ✓ Coping with Christmas and New Year (webinar recording audio)
- ✓ Voices of Lived Experience: Coping with Christmas and New Year.

We look forward to creating more episodes in 2024

New Maudsley Carer Skills Podcast

This podcast is hosted by Harriet Parsons, Training and Development Manager with Bodywhys, in collaboration with Jenny Langley, Lead Facilitator at New Maudsley Carers Kent and author of the New Maudsley training manual.

Episodes in 2023 included:

- ✓ Collaborating with care teams
- ✓ An emergency visit to A&E
- ✓ Going to the GP
- ✓ Reclaiming core family values
- ✓ Managing food and eating – Part 1
- ✓ Managing food and eating – Part 2
- ✓ Managing food and eating – Part 3
- ✓ Physically well but not yet recovered
- ✓ Autism and eating disorders
- ✓ Preparing for summer holidays
- ✓ Preparing for college/university
- ✓ Back to school
- ✓ A conversation with Gillian Todd.



Ongoing International Meetings

Ellen Jennings and Barry Murphy, the Research and Policy Officer, attended virtual meetings bi-monthly throughout the year with representatives from international eating disorders organisations, including **Beat (United Kingdom)**, the **Butterfly Foundation (Australia)**, **National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA; United States)** and **National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC; Canada)**. It has been very beneficial to keep in touch with international colleagues and learn about their work. We look forward to future meetings in 2024.

eBulletin

Overall, there were 5 editions of the eBulletin sent out to our 2,259 subscribers throughout the year. The quarterly updates were sent in February, May, August and October, followed by a Christmas special in December.



Webinars and Events



During EDAW, Ellen supported the co-ordination and preparation of

- ✓ Body Image: A male perspective – Bodywhys webinar
- ✓ Learning from the diversity of families experiences with Dr. Colman Noctor - Bodywhys webinar.

‘Understanding Eating Disorders’ presentations hosted by Ellen:

When	Format	Organisation	Attendance (number of people)
March	Online	Suicide or Survive	61
		Slack/Salesforce	22
April	Online	Bristol Meyers Squibb	18
May	Online	Wicklow Library	5
July	In Person	Transition Longford	3
September	Online	Maynooth University: Professional Master of Education (PME) Year 2 students	60

Attendance at events throughout the year:

Topic	Title of webinar/event	Host
Eating Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mental health first aid ■ Perfectionism and eating disorders ■ Meal planning and meal support ■ The teenage brain and eating disorders ■ Caring for an adult with an eating disorder 	Jenny Langley
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recovering from Body Image Disturbances in Anorexia Nervosa 	UCD Psychology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eating Disorders: Support for the Frontline 	Beat
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Digital inclusion and access to mental health services ■ Innovation in youth mental health ■ Digital accessibility & the European accessibility act ■ I am A Reason - Launch of Mental Health Reform's 2024 Pre-Budget Submission 	Mental Health Reform
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Body Image Disturbance Across Female Adulthood ■ The problem with mental health interventions in schools 	UCD Psychology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communications apps for use with children and young people 	The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coimisiún na Meán work programme launch 	Coimisiún na Meán
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 'Let's Talk' Mental Health Judgement Event in Tuam 	See Change and West Be Well

Ellen represented Bodywhys at various events and meetings throughout the year, including:

Month	Organisation	Event / Meeting
January	Aware	Exploring eating disorders and mental health
March	Men's Health Forum in Ireland	Men's Health Week planning meetings
	Eating Disorder Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador	Annual General Meeting
April	TikTok	'Safety and Transparency' day in Dublin city centre
May	Coimisiún na Meán	Planning meeting regarding online safety and eating disorders
June	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)	Eating disorders and mortgage protection meeting
November	Mind Everybody (sic)	Peaceful protest at the Department of Health to support families affected by eating disorders
	SupportED Families	Special interest group for those who work with people affected by eating disorders



Research & Policy

Research & Policy

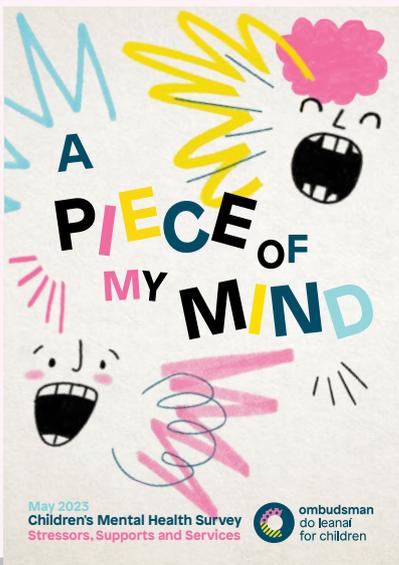


Barry Murphy

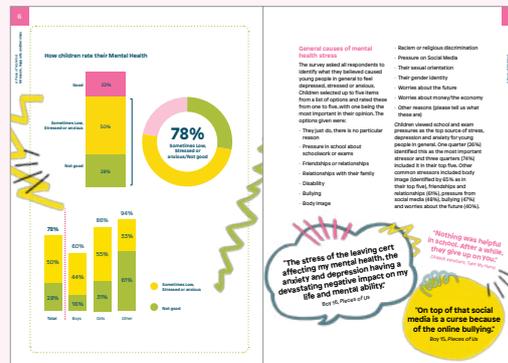
Research & Policy Officer

Irish research and developments

Barry attended BeLonG To's Research Advisory Committee online meetings throughout the year, to support their research on mental health in the LGBTQI+ community. The research included use of the SCOFF questionnaire for eating disorders. This research is a follow up study from 2016's LGBTIreland (sic) study. We look forward to the publication of the next report in 2024.



In **May**, the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) published *A Piece of my Mind*, a new report on children's mental health, which surveyed 2,166 children aged 12-17. Body image was highlighted as the second highest concern with pressure in school being the first.



In **October**, the Irish Association of Emergency Medicine (IAEM) published *Guidelines for the Assessment and Management of Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Eating Disorders in the Emergency Department*. This work was led by Dr. Aileen McCabe, Tallaght University Hospital (TUH), with contributions from NCP-ED.



International developments

In **June**, Swim England announced the banning of weighing of children after swimmers spoke out about eating disorders and anxiety. In the United Kingdom, the Paediatric Mental Health Association published guidance on bodily distress disorder in children and young people.

In **July**, the World Health Organisation (WHO) published a document called *Policies to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing*.

In **October**, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) published an updated consensus statement on relative energy deficit in sport (REDS), an update on the 2018 statement. The latest statement included new infographics and further REDS papers were published.

Also in October, *Physiotherapy in eating disorders: a guidance document* was published by the Physiotherapy Professional Eating Disorder Network in the UK.

In **November**, the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCP) updated its webpage on binge eating disorder, highlighting a need to consider additional potential aspects of a person's experiences, such as trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), depression, anxiety, diabetes and hypertension.

Severe and enduring/longstanding eating disorders working group (SEED/LED-WG)

In **February**, Barry and Harriet attended a (SEED/LED-WG) online meeting, followed by a further meeting in April. In **October**, Dr Megan Reay, guest on the Bodywhys podcast, and author of a research paper about a care pathway for longstanding eating disorders, attended the final working group meeting of the year.



BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Episode 15

A care pathway for longstanding eating disorders

with:
Dr Megan Reay, Clinical Psychologist, Oxford NHS Foundation Trust



BODYWHYS
PODCAST

Men's Health Forum Ireland (MHFI) meetings

Bodywhys and several other organisations attended planning and brainstorming meetings through the first half of the year. The theme for 2023 was: "What's your picture of health?"



Mental Health Reform (MHR)

We attended MHR's Policy and Advocacy Working Group meetings throughout the year. In **August**, MHR called on the Government to show greater urgency in response to the Mental Health Commission's Independent Review of CAMHS.

In **October**, MHR welcomed the allocation of an additional €75.2M for mental health in Budget 2024 but also expressed concern at the lack of funding for new mental health services. Also in October, MHR, in partnership with the HSE Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Office, published a new report entitled Digital Inclusion and Access to Mental Health Services.



Online Safety

In **February**, the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) published a report called *The influence of social media on the development of children and young people*. This work was undertaken by Professor Brian O'Neill, Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin).

Page 68 of this report notes:

'Children encounter issues such as unfair practices, clickbait strategies, and hidden marketing practices that contravene their rights and which are not in their best interests. Research shows that children are often ill-prepared with low levels of awareness of commercial practices and lack the critical skills to disaggregate marketing content in the context of their experience of social media.'

In **March**, a new State regulator, Coimisiún na Meán, was formally established, following the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022.

In April

- ✔ YouTube updated its approach to eating disorders content, in conjunction with the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA)
- ✔ Bodywhys and other groups from the community and voluntary sector attended TikTok's safety and transparency day in Dublin city
- ✔ Bodywhys launched a survey to capture people's experiences of harmful online eating disorders content on social media platforms.

In **May**, Bodywhys attended a virtual meeting with a team from Coimisiún na Meán.

In **September**, Bodywhys completed an evidence-based submission to Coimisiún na Meán, following a public call for inputs related to regulating video-sharing platform services (VSPS).



Online harms survey

The following quotes are from an online harms survey undertaken by Bodywhys in April 2023.

"I found it harmful as I've seen videos promoting calorie restriction and tips on how to lose weight quickly and dangerously."

"Specifically, on TikTok and Instagram, 'what I eat in a day' videos promoting extremely restrictive low-calorie diets. 'Recovery' accounts that promote extreme exercise, for example people claiming to be in eating disorder recovery but really have just turned from one ED to another, like from a restrictive ED to an obsessive exercise focused ED, anything from marathon training to gym obsessed. These accounts are harmful because they're suggesting that recovery should look this certain way, still controlling the way your body looks through a different means."

"I did not seek it out. I tried to block that type of content but no luck. I feel like it is coming into my personal space and head space repeatedly."

"It had a lot of tips and tricks encouraging other sufferers like myself to want to relapse instead of trying to recover."

"Tips on how to avoid eating around family, content shaming fat people and encouraging anorexic behaviour and tips to make yourself sick after eating."

Internationally, the American Psychological Association (APA) and United States Surgeon General published guidance and advisory statements about social media and youth mental health.



Other groups

Throughout the year, Barry attended Family Carer Research Group (FCRG) meetings organised by Care Alliance Ireland.

The Stepping Up website, which addresses transitioning from paediatrics to adult healthcare, was refreshed by Children in Hospital Ireland (CIHI). Barry attended the Network of Childhood Illness Organisations (NCIO) online meetings hosted by CIHI. In November, CIHI launched its Information Hub, a new digital resource to support families with the information they need when their child requires



hospital care. The Hub includes information on how to prepare for hospital, financial and well-being supports available, home and community care, as well as practical information about

individual hospitals including parking, accommodation and accessibility. Development of the project included a consultation process with families, community organisations/and hospital staff.

SteppingUp.ie

Supporting Researchers

This year, we shared calls for participants for research projects including:

- ✔ Online study: Anxiety, fear and disgust conditioning in people with eating disorders
- ✔ Research on the eating disorder voice – looking for psychotherapists working with eating disorders
- ✔ Mental health first aid for eating disorders
- ✔ Impact of the CAMHS Kerry Review and Maskey Report on caregiver and staff views of CAMHS
- ✔ Efficacy and safety of COMP360 psilocybin therapy in anorexia nervosa: a proof-of-concept study
- ✔ The lived experience of binge eating disorder: An exploration of diagnosis and therapeutic treatment
- ✔ Adult eating disorders: The counsellor's experience
- ✔ Surveying expert groups to progress translational research for eating disorders
- ✔ TikTok advisory group recruitment - PhD research, Dublin City University
- ✔ Imagining the body: Do our beliefs about our appearance affect how we imagine movement?
- ✔ Eating disorder symptomatology in orthorexia: A qualitative exploration.

Attendance at Consultations, Forums and Webinars

When	Focus	Organisation
January	Infection Prevention and Control in Dentistry Sustainability Advisory Group	Dublin Dental Hospital/Trinity College Dublin (Online)
March	Eating disorders in the workplace	Meeting with Spectrum Life (Online)
May	Building body confident schools	Webinar by Jigsaw and Education Support Centres Ireland (ESCI)
June	Social prescribing	Webinar by HSE and Mental Health Reform
	People with eating disorders having difficulty getting mortgage protection	Bodywhys online meeting with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)
September	The problem with mental health interventions in schools	Webinar by UCD School of Medicine
	2024 Pre-budget submission	Launch by Mental Health Reform (online)
	Creating Hope Through Action event ahead of World Suicide Prevention Day.	HSE NOSP, Dublin City
	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Care Alliance Ireland (online)
	Use Your Voice – The Power of Lived Experience in Effecting Positive Change	Facilitated by Mental Health Reform, part of Coalition Conversations (online)
	Information session: Child safeguarding statements	National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and Tusla's Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit (CSSCU) held online
November	Sláintecare workshop	HSE National Patient and Service User Forum held in Dublin
December	Digital Accessibility and the European Accessibility Act	Webinar by Mental Health Reform



Youth Development

Youth Development



Fiona Flynn

Youth Development Manager

Due to ever increasing demand from schools and youth organisations for Bodywhys talks, resources and schools' programmes, Bodywhys secured additional funding to expand the Youth Development team.

Claire Thornton began as Regional Youth Development Officer (West) on January 3rd. Claire's initial training focused on school talks, the provision of webinars and video content and utilising key slides. Training also included all items pertaining to communication with schools, teachers and students. Other aspects included answering questions in groups, acknowledging all responses from students and tips on engaging students and promoting class interaction. Claire shadowed, with

Fiona delivering talks, in schools in Roscommon and Westmeath. In January and February, Claire shadowed Fiona's delivery of school talks in Roscommon and Westmeath, which reached 380 students. Claire was quickly comfortable and confident with the content and delivery and progressed to delivering talks from March 2023. In November, we welcomed Molly Nee as Regional Development Officer (West). During the year, the Youth Development team met regularly online.

Youth Events

In February, Fiona presented on the main stage in the RDS to an audience of over 4,000 students and over 500+ teachers at the Cycle Against Suicide Student Congress to promote awareness of eating disorders and supports that are available. Fiona also highlighted the link between body image and mental health and shared practical tips 'by young people for young people' to improve body image. Fiona spoke to teachers and young people at the Bodywhys information stand on the day.



Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Manager, at the Cycle Against Suicide Student Congress

EDAW 2023

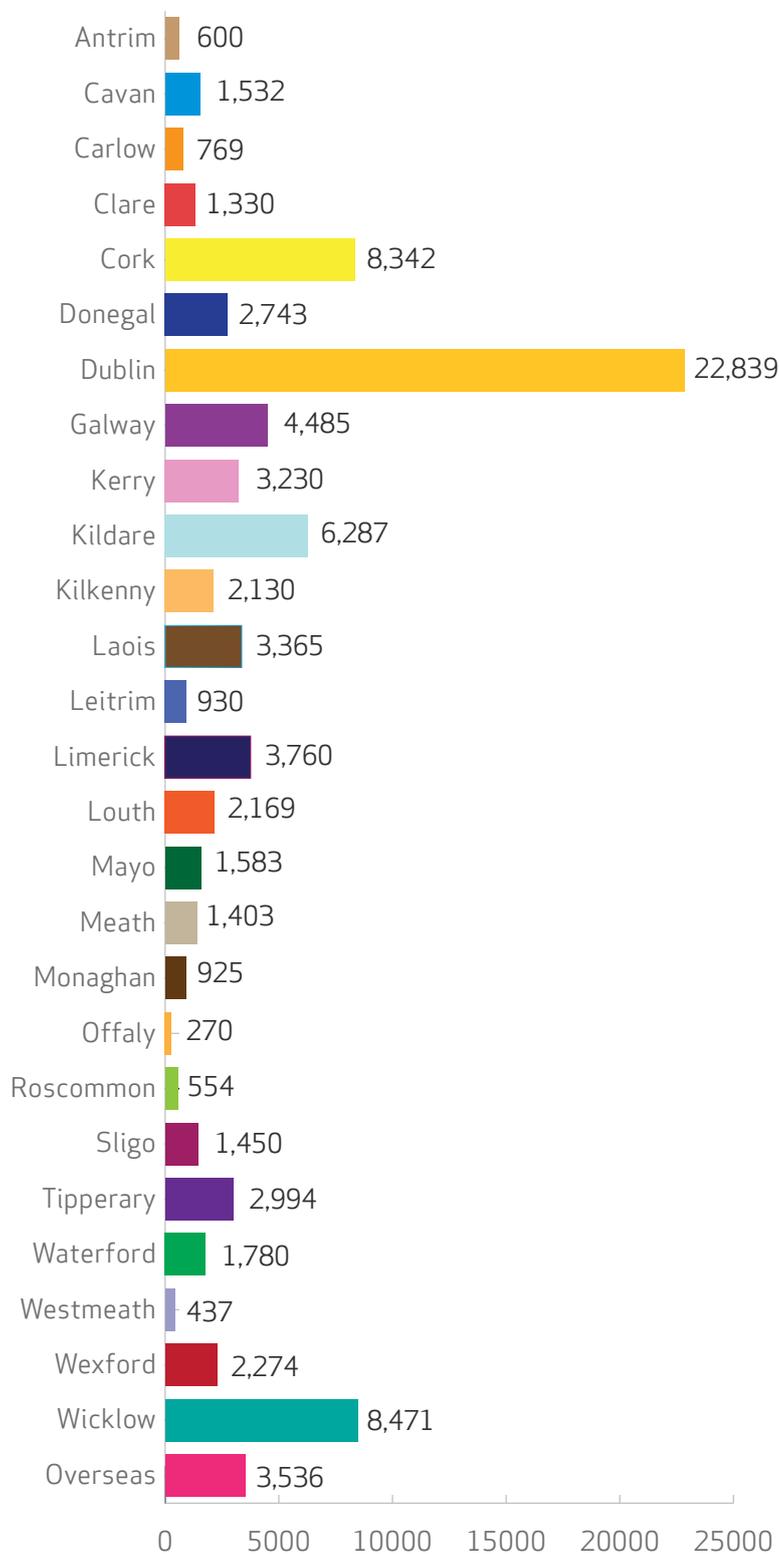
During EDAW, Fiona hosted a webinar called 'Body Image: A Male Perspective'. Fiona also provided a webinar for Transition Year (TY) students to promote awareness of eating disorders, to discuss body image and to provide practical tips and project ideas for TY students on how to promote positive body image within the school environment. All schools who signed up received the webinar recordings, posters for their staff rooms and classrooms, information on the 'Be Body Positive' flag initiative and application forms. Teachers were also encouraged to share the webinar recordings with their colleagues.

Online Resources for Schools

The Bodywhys online #MoreThanASelfie programme for post-primary schools which was launched in October 2020 was again widely used in 2023. In 2023, these resources were accessed by teachers 360 times and delivered to 90,188 students.

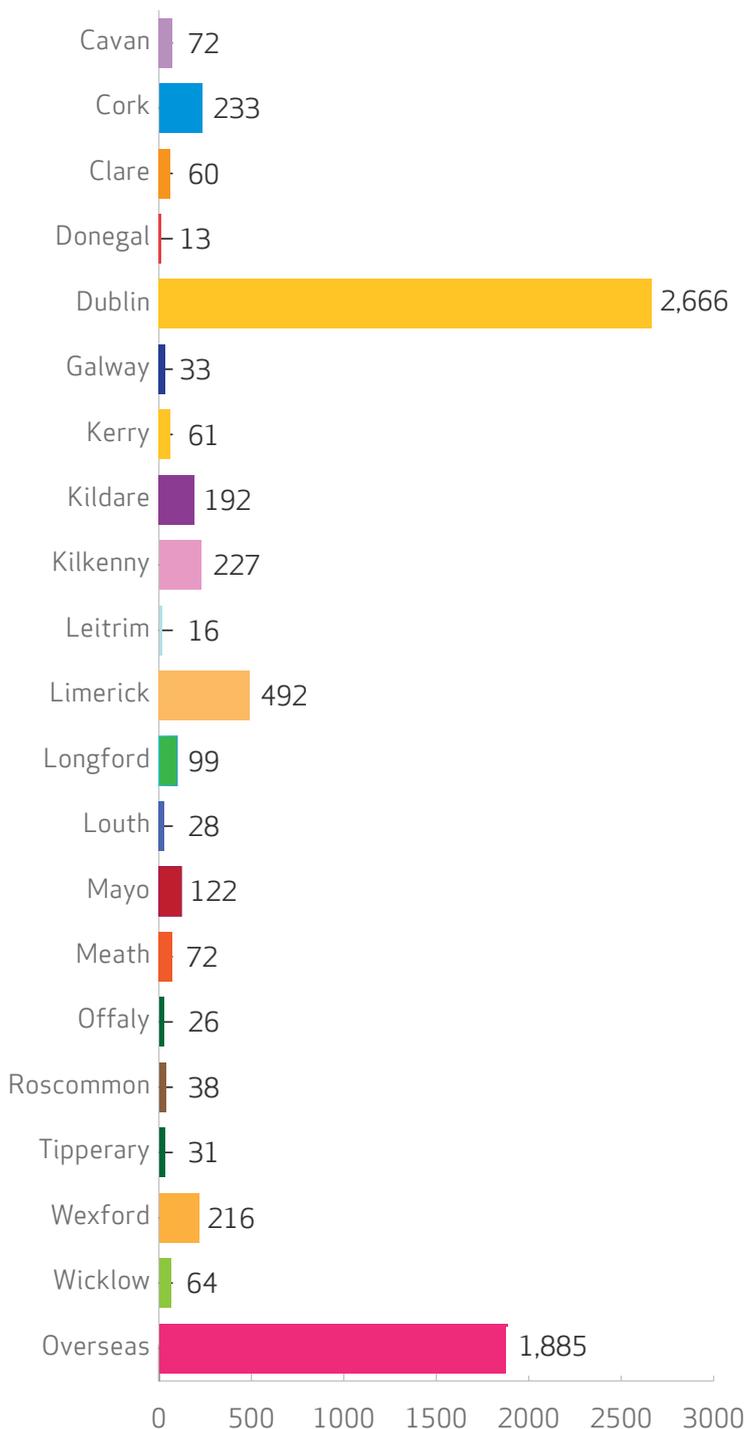
This online programme which includes four lessons with videos and discussion points embedded, easy to use facilitators guides and student workbooks was widely used throughout Ireland by 86,612 students. It was also accessed internationally and delivered to 3,536 students outside of Ireland, including in schools in the USA, UK, Australia, Spain, Croatia, Switzerland, Poland and China. A breakdown by location of the number of students who received the #MoreThanASelfie programme is outlined in Figure 35.

Figure 35. Geographic representation of those who accessed the #MoreThanASelfie programme



The **'Happy To Be Me'** online programme is designed to promote positive body image and self-esteem in primary schools and to promote media and social media literacy from second class onwards, at age-appropriate stages. The programme was accessed by 137 schools and was delivered to a total of 6,646 primary school students in 2023. The breakdown by location is outlined in Figure 36. The resources were also delivered to students overseas in the USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

Figure 36. Geographic representation of those who accessed the 'Happy To Be Me' programme



Due to more requests for talks and workshops in the primary school setting, Fiona devised a 1-hour workshop for senior students in primary school. Four sessions were delivered in a school in Dublin in May. The workshops were well-received. Fiona spoke to the students in small groups of 10-12 throughout the day, followed by an informal discussion with their class teachers. A follow up webinar was provided for parents. This webinar was recorded and was made available to parents. Bodywhys provided links to useful resources to support parents in promoting positive body image and information on Bodywhys support services. Bodywhys continued to work with other relevant agencies in 2023 to consider new approaches to promoting positive body image in primary school children with plans underway to expand on the existing 'Happy To Be Me' programme and resources for primary schools in 2024.

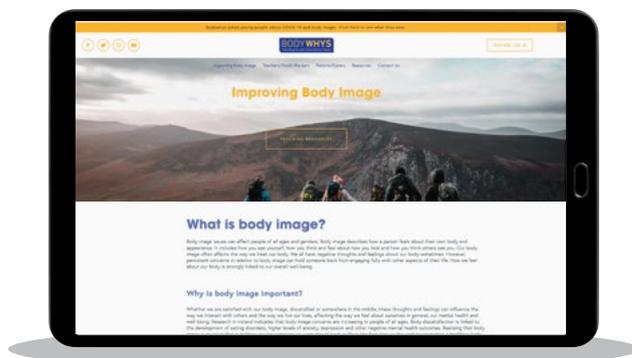
"The lessons are very well pitched, age appropriate and full of varied activities that will engage the children"

"This is really set within an Irish context and meeting a definite need"

"Amazing resource"

Body image website

The body image website www.bodywhysbodyimage.ie received 34,652 page views and 19,082 visitors across the year. 12,401 visitors were through desktop computer format, 6,471 logged on by mobile devices and 210 via tablet. 58% of web traffic was from Ireland. Key areas of the site accessed included the significance of body image, guidance for schools concerned about students who are experiencing eating disorders, coping with media and social media pressure, body image research and promoting positive body image in schools.



34,652 page views



19,082 visitors

Fingal CYPSC, Tusla and Healthy Ireland

In 2023, Bodywhys collaborated with Fingal Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC), Tusla and Healthy Ireland to provide a series of webinars for students and teachers. Body image had been identified as a key issue affecting young people in the Fingal area. Fiona liaised with representatives from Fingal CYPSC, Tusla and Healthy Ireland to co-ordinate training dates for teachers in the Fingal area and talks for Transition Year students. Training webinars for teachers and schools were delivered in February and March. These were promoted by the Fingal CYPSC representatives in Fingal schools and were well attended. In addition, Harriet Parsons, Training and Development Manager, delivered the Bodywhys Family Support Package (FSP).



Teacher Training

Fiona provided online teacher training to primary and post-primary school teachers in February and April. Webinars were recorded and circulated to all schools who had registered to attend. Bodywhys also provided 3 additional live questions and answers sessions for teachers and TY students who had viewed recordings but were unable to attend the live webinars. These were held on March 7th, 15th and 22nd.

DATE	TIME	VENUE
Thursday 20th April	11am - 1pm	Online via Zoom

Bodywhys is delighted to offer a training workshop to support teachers in **promoting awareness of eating disorders and body image** in the school environment.

THIS IS A FREE TWO HOUR WEBINAR WHICH WILL ADDRESS:

- Understanding Eating disorders to enable you to approach and support students you may be concerned about
- Learn about the role of body image to mental health and understand how to promote positive body image within the school environment
- Learn about the signs and symptoms of an eating disorder
- Understanding social media pressure to body image and promoting awareness within the school environment
- Learn tips for supportive communication
- Guidance on accessing and utilising the Bodywhys schools resources for secondary schools

These sessions are for school staff only. To book your free place please contact shauna@bodywhys.ie
Please put 'Teacher Training 20th April' in the subject heading and provide your name and contact details (email, phone) school name and address and your role.

Research

Research continued to form an important component of the youth development role in 2023. Bodywhys signed up as potential collaborators with the Centre for Mental Health and Community Research (CMHCR) in Maynooth University to a global study led by Dr Jay Van Bavel, New York University, to test the causal impact of social media on psychological outcomes (mental health, polarisation) around the world.

In June, Fiona successfully defended her PhD thesis at a viva voce examination of her research. This research was conducted with the support of

Bodywhys, funding from the Irish Research Council and with guidance from her employment mentor and CEO of Bodywhys, Jacinta Hastings, research supervisors, Professor Sinéad McGilloway and Dr Catriona O'Toole at Maynooth University. The PhD examiners commended the work indicating that it was 'important and wonderful to see such an emphasis on knowledge translation and stakeholder involvement. Also terrific to see such applied (and needed) work supported by @IrishResearch and @Bodywhys.'



Dr. Catriona O'Toole (left), Associate Professor, School of Education, Maynooth University, with Fiona Flynn (centre), Youth Development Manager, Bodywhys and Professor Sinéad McGilloway (right), Director, Centre for Mental Health and Community Research, Maynooth University.

Media

In 2023, Fiona contributed to media requests in relation to body image, eating disorders and youth mental health including; a contribution to 'Idir Anam is Corp', presented by Siomha Ni Ruairc which aired on TG4 in August; an article in the Education Reference Guide which was published in September; an article on body image and parenting in *The Journal.ie* in July and another article in *Country Life* – (a supplement with the *Farmer's Journal*) on supporting positive body image in children and young people which was published in July.



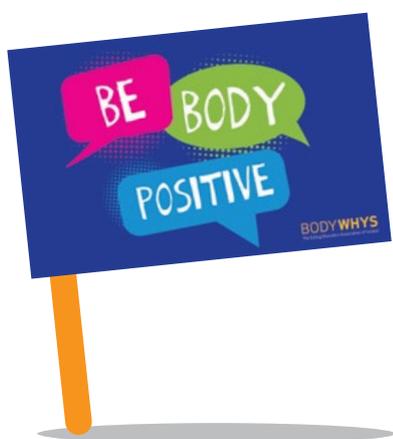
Fiona Flynn speaking with TG4.





Shauna McGroarty

Regional Youth Development Officer (East)



Be Body Positive

Over the course of 2023, Shauna delivered 'Be Body Positive' school talks to a total of 5,223 young people in 47 schools across Carlow, Donegal, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Mayo, Westmeath, Wexford, Wicklow and Sligo.

Requests for the 'Be Body Positive' school talks increased significantly in 2023, almost tripling that of the number of requests received in 2022.

Figure 37. Overview of 'Be Body Positive' talks

2023	No. of schools	No. of young people
January	6	465
February	5	655
March	12	1825
April	4	370
May	6	555
June	1	8
September	3	320
October	4	400
November	1	75
December	5	550
Total	47	5,223

The total figure of **5,223** reflects talks delivered to young people, including in specialist schools, youth reach centres and online via school webinars. Specialist schools are committed to providing specialist education for young people with additional educational needs, and or, a mild learning disability. Youthreach is an education, training, and work programme for young people aged between 15-20 years of age, who left mainstream education early.



Shauna McGroarty (centre) with fifth year Leaving Certificate Physical Education (LCPE) students from St Mary's Academy CBS, Carlow.

As outlined in Figure 38, Shauna facilitated Bodywhys information stands at a broad range of youth events over the course of 2023, at which approximately 11,600 young people attended.

Figure 38. Youth Events

2023	# Events	Estimated no. of young people in attendance
January	2	2,000
February	1	4,500
March	1	2,000
September	1	700
October	2	1,200
November	2	1,200
Total	9	11,600



Shauna attended Bodywhys Youth Panel meetings in January and April. In September, Shauna delivered a webinar to 20 youth workers from organisations located all over the country, who were enrolled in the National Youth Health Programme (NYHP). The NYHP is a partnership between the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), HSE and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The NYHP provides a broad-based, flexible health promotion/education support and training service to youth organisations and to all those working with young people in out-of-school settings. In May and October, Shauna delivered talks to approximately 56 third level students.

Shauna attended the following events in 2023.

Month	Event	Organisation	Event Type
February	Body Image: A Male Perspective Lived Experience	Bodywhys	Webinar
March	Bodywhys PiLaR Programme	Bodywhys	Webinar
May	Recovering from body image disturbances in anorexia nervosa	UCD School of Psychology	Webinar

Month	Event	Organisation	Event Type
June	Body Image in Adult Women	UCD School of Psychology	Webinar
	Supporting LGBTQ+ Young People online certified course	Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland	Certified course
	Body Positive School initiative	ECSI/Jigsaw	Webinar
	Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S) and Eating Disorders in Athletes	National Centre of Excellence for Eating Disorders (NCEED)	Webinar
July	Type 1 Diabetes and Eating Disorders (T1ED)	Beat	Webinar
	The biopsychosocial model: not dead but in need of revival	UCD School of Psychology	Webinar
	Future of Education	Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU)/Children's Rights Alliance	Consultation
	<i>Sharing the Vision - A Mental Health Policy for Everyone: Youth Mental Health Transitions Stakeholder Consultation</i>	HSE, Convention Centre, Dublin	Consultation
	Beyond Telehealth: Advances in Digital Mental Health Research and Practical Clinical Considerations for Smartphone Apps in Care	UCD School of Psychology	Webinar
September	See Change Green Ribbon campaign	Shine, Mansion House, Dublin	Launch
	Better Out Than In: A Mental Health Seminar for Professionals working with LGBTQ+ Youth	Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland	Seminar
	Mental Health Stigma	First Fortnight	Workshop
	Creating a Body Kind School Culture	Butterfly Foundation	Webinar
	Communication and Assessment Apps for use with children and young people	The Association of Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH)	Webinar
	Connect Safely Programme Facilitator Training	Foróige	Certified Course
	Body Composition: More Than Just a Number HPX Performance Nutrition event	Sport Ireland, Dublin	Seminar

Month	Event	Organisation	Event Type
October	Senior Cycle SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) stakeholder consultation	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Consultation
	Eating disorders in times of global uncertainty conference	Eastern European Eating Disorder Network (EEEDN), Krakow, Poland	Conference
November	Recovery in the Queer Community: Supporting your LGBTQ+ Loved Ones	Families Empowered And Supporting Treatment for Eating Disorders (F.E.A.S.T)	Webinar
	Gender and Eating disorders	Eating Disorders Health Integration Team (ED HIT)	Conference
	Stress and mental health presentations in post-primary school-aged young people	Association of Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH)	Webinar
	An Introduction to Children First	Tusla	Certified Course
December	Founder's Day 2023 The Mental Health of Migrants and Refugees	St. Patricks Mental Health Services	Conference

Shauna managed the registration process of for all attendees for the post-primary school teacher training webinar hosted by the Youth Development Manager.

Figure 39. Number of teachers registered per county (plus four international registrations).

Country	County	Registra-tions	Country	County	Registra-tions	
Ireland	Dublin	22	Ireland	Galway	3	
	Cork	17		Leitrim	3	
	Louth	7		Offaly	3	
	Meath	7		Roscommon	3	
	Wexford	6		Sligo	3	
	Kildare	5		Waterford	3	
	Kilkenny	5		Carlow	2	
	Clare	4		Cavan	2	
	Laois	4		Donegal	2	
	Limerick	4		Westmeath	2	
	Mayo	4		Monaghan	1	
	Canada	N/A		4	Tipperary	1
					Wicklow	1

Total
118

In **July**, Shauna prepared an article for publication in the online publication *The Journal.ie*, titled “How to help young people with body image concerns in an ever-changing world”. Additionally, Shauna linked in with a selection of key youth work agencies to highlight the supports services Bodywhys offer for young people.

In **October**, Shauna reviewed the Bodywhys #MoreThanASelfie SPHE teaching resource programme, making recommendations as to how it could be updated ahead of 2024.

Shauna also worked collaboratively with the Bodywhys Research and Policy Officer, Barry Murphy on the Senior Cycle SPHE submission, which was submitted for review to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in November 2023 by Bodywhys CEO, Jacinta Hastings.

Research and Development

Throughout 2023, Shauna actively and continually sought to broaden and deepen her knowledge of eating disorders, body image and youth mental health by consulting the following:

- ✓ Skate Canada Body Positive Guidelines – Canada
- ✓ The Parents Website – Australia
- ✓ Butterfly Foundation Body Kind Youth Survey findings 2022 – Australia
- ✓ Butterfly Foundation RESET initiative: A Conversation about Boys’ Body Image – Australia
- ✓ The Body Confident Collectives’ “Body Image and Sports” guidelines – Australia
- ✓ A Piece of my Mind: Ombudsman for Children’s Office (OCO) Youth Mental Health survey – Ireland
- ✓ Wicked Bodies “Safe, Seen & Supported” Full Report - Navigating eating disorders recovery in the 2SLGBTQ+ community – Canada
- ✓ AsIAm (Ireland’s National Autism charity)
- ✓ ADHD Ireland.

Observations and findings

Shauna made the below notable observations and findings in her role as Youth Development Officer in 2023:

- An increase in the number of boys only post-primary schools requesting ‘Be Body Positive’ talks and supports for male students
- An increase in the number of queries from schools about ARFID
- An increase in the volume of primary post-primary school teachers enquiring about Bodywhys information talks for parents and guardians
- Young people reporting school as one of the most stressful environments to be in when experiencing negative thoughts around body image
- Young people reporting the gym as a particularly difficult space to navigate when experiencing negative body image
- An increase in requests and queries from professionals working with young people outside of mainstream schools (e.g. HSE, youthreach, NYCI, Rehab Group, National Learning Network, youth workers)
- Sports’ coaches (working with young people) requesting information about eating disorders and body image
- Principals reporting students arriving to school late in the morning for reasons relating to body image
- An increase in the number of teachers reporting students not eating their lunch or avoiding food when in school
- Some teachers reporting that students were spending their lunch break engaging in exercise by working out.



Claire Thornton

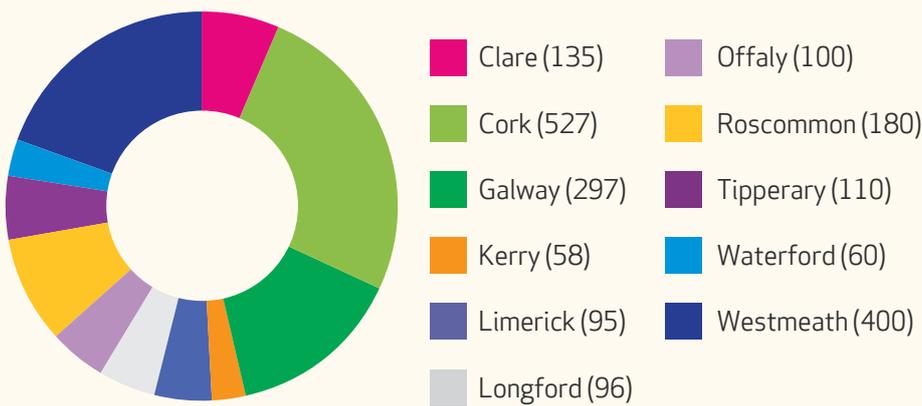
Regional Youth Development Officer (West)

Claire Thornton commenced employment in the role of Regional Youth Development Officer (West) on January 3rd, 2023. Prior to commencing her role with Bodywhys, Claire has worked in the health and fitness industry for seven years. Claire recently finished her master’s degree studying applied sport and exercise psychology. Claire concluded her role with Bodywhys in August to pursue a PhD degree.

Schools, Youth Events and Third Level

During her time with Bodywhys, Claire spoke to **2,058** students in post-primary schools. A breakdown by location is provided in the chart below (Figure 40).

Figure 40. Geographic spread of school talks delivered by Claire



Claire attended youth events on behalf of Bodywhys, hosting an information stand at the Transition Year Show in January which was attended by 2,000 post-primary level students and at mental health events in third level institutions in Technological University of Shannon in Limerick and Athlone.

Project work

Claire was also involved in developing content on body image in sport including guidance for coaches which will be utilised in a new section of the www.bodywhysbodyimage.ie website which is currently under development.

Shauna McGroarty (left) and Claire Thornton (right) at the Transition Year Exhibition Show held in Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) in January.





Molly Nee
*Regional Youth Development
Officer (West)*

Molly Nee commenced in the role of Regional Youth Development Officer (West) on November 20th 2023. Previously, Molly has worked with young people in varying roles as a swimming teacher, childminder and most recently as an English teaching assistant in a post-primary school. She has had an interest in body image for many years and pursued this interest in her dissertation for her MA in Gender Studies in University College London where she conducted qualitative research on the topic of body positivity on Instagram.

Molly was trained in the provision of school talks, this included delivery of the 'Be Body Positive' talk, facilitation including answering questions in groups, acknowledging all responses from students, and tips on engaging students and promoting class interaction. Training also included discussion of all items pertaining to communication with schools, teachers, scheduling talks, and formal email style. Molly shadowed Shauna McGroarty's work in schools in December and was quickly up-to-speed with content and delivery. Molly was invited to review and update the slides to suit her own delivery style. Molly will deliver talks in January 2024 with Shauna present for support, if required, and will then be ready to deliver and schedule schools talks for 2024.

Shadowing as part of training

Month	County	School Name	Gender	No.
December	Westmeath	Coláiste Chiaráin, Athlone	Mixed	120
	Westmeath	Mullingar Community College	Mixed	120
	Dublin	Presentation Community College Ter-enure	Mixed	60
Total				300

Youth Panel

The Bodywhys Youth Panel met in-person in January and April of 2023 with all other communication conducted online. The Youth Panel, consisting of 8 members, provided valuable insights relating to current 'body positive' influences, relevant body image advocates on social media, activists, lived experience and other items relevant to youth workshops and school talks. The Youth Panel reviewed youth related posters, resources and content and provided constructive feedback on same. The Youth Panel contributed to an EDAW webinar, and Maeve O'Keeffe, Bodywhys Youth Panel, presented her research on body dissatisfaction in Irish males.



Awareness Activities & Fundraising

Awareness Activities & Fundraising



Niamh Nutty
Office Manager (from May)

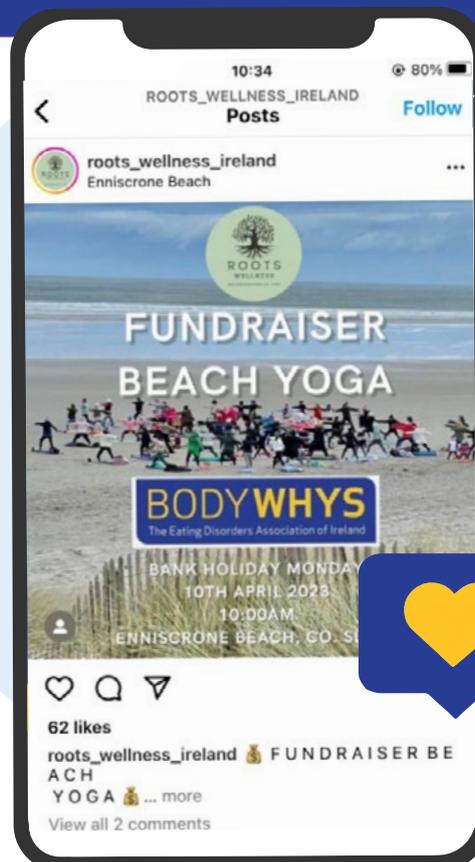
Niamh joined the team in May 2023. She holds her degree in English with Drama from University College Dublin (UCD) and has completed several other diplomas across a wide range of subjects. She was the co-owner of a local drama school and a drama teacher for several years. Niamh has always had a keen interest in helping people through various services.

In August, Niamh attended youth mental health training, with Mental Health Ireland in Portlaoise. In September, Niamh managed an information table at the Transition Year show.



Thank You!

The Bodywhys team would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to each person who has been involved with and/or donated to fundraisers in support of our organisation.



EDAW 2023

In 2023, we focused on the theme ‘Breaking the Stigma: Diverse Male Experiences with Eating Disorders and Body Image.’

Some of the events held throughout the week included:

Organisation	Title	Contributors	Format
Bodywhys	Learning from the diversity of family experiences	Harriet Parsons, Dr Colman Noctor, parents	Webinar
A Lust for Life	Hope and Recovery	Dr Malie Coyne, Bernie Keogh, Brodie Thompson, Vicky Cornick	Webinar
Bodywhys	Supporting people with eating disorders	Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys	Webinar
Bodywhys	Body image: A male perspective	Fiona Flynn, Barry Hennessy, Conor Nolan, Daniel O’Boyle, Maeve O’Keeffe	Webinar
St Patrick’s Mental Health Services (SPMHS)	Medical emergencies in eating disorders	Specialist eating disorders team at SPMHS	Webinar
HSE NCP-ED	Raising awareness and improving services	Dr Michelle Clifford, National Clinical Lead and NCP-ED staff	Webinar
SPMHS	Evidence based treatment for adults experiencing an eating disorder	Specialist eating disorders team at SPMHS	Webinar
Bodywhys and A Lust for Life	Instagram Live	Ellen Jennings, Bodywhys Lived experience: Michelle McCarthy, Chris Duff (Bodywhys Media Panel)	Instagram
National Eating Disorders Recovery Centre (NEDRC)	Healthy gone too far?	Becky Lyons, CORU Registered Dietitian	Webinar
Bodywhys	‘Be Body Positive’ for Transition Year students	Fiona Flynn, Bodywhys	Webinar
Bodywhys and Suicide and Survive (SOS)	Understanding eating disorders	Ellen Jennings, Bodywhys Michelle McCarthy, Bodywhys Media Panel	Webinar
NEDRC	Autism and eating disorders	Dr. Andreaana Pulcrano, Chartered Clinical Psychologist	Webinar

#EDAW2023

Breaking the Stigma: Diverse Male Experiences
WITH EATING DISORDERS AND BODY IMAGE

BODY IMAGE: A MALE PERSPECTIVE

JOIN US FOR A LIVE WEBINAR
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH
12-1PM

WITH GUESTS:

- Barry Hennessy - Limerick Hurler
Personal experience
- Conor Nolan - Author
Personal experience
- Maeve O'Keeffe - Bodywhys Youth Panel
*Research on Body Dissatisfaction
in Irish Males*



BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

#EDAW2023

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

BREAKING THE STIGMA: Diverse Male Experiences Eating Disorders & Body Image

Featuring:

- Lived experience
- Research
- Webinars
- Podcasts
- Animations
and more...

27TH FEB - 5TH MARCH

EATING DISORDERS
AWARENESS WEEK
2023

Save the Date





Financial Statements and Balance Sheet

THINK BODYWHYS Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the financial year ended 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 €	Restricted Funds 2023 €	Total Funds 2023 €	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Total 2022 €
Incoming Resources						
Voluntary Income	44,509	-	44,509	61,103	-	61,103
Activities for generating funds	468,936	50,000	518,936	469,125	57,815	526,940
Other income	-	-	-	9	-	9
Total incoming resources	513,445	50,000	563,445	530,237	57,815	588,052
Resources Expended						
Raising funds	4,500	-	4,500	-	-	-
Charitable activities	580,279	35,788	616,067	492,603	6,225	498,828
Total Resources Expended	584,779	35,788	620,567	492,603	6,225	498,828
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers	(71,334)	14,212	(57,122)	37,634	51,590	89,224
Gross transfers between funds	-	-	-	17,104	(17,104)	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year	71,334	14,212	57,122	54,738	34,486	89,224
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds beginning of the year	616,162	51,590	667,752	561,424	17,104	578,528
Total funds at the end of the year	544,828	65,802	610,630	616,162	51,590	667,752

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 31 July 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

IMELDA REDMOND

Trustee

HENRY BLAKE

Trustee

THINK BODYWHYS Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2023

	2023 €	2022 €
Current Assets		
Debtors	9,456	11,324
Cash at bank and at hand	649,454	696,983
	658,910	708,307
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(48,280)	(40,555)
Net Current Assets	610,630	667,752
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	610,630	667,752
Funds		
Restricted trust funds	65,802	51,590
Designated funds (Unrestricted)	226,730	226,730
General fund (unrestricted)	318,098	389,432
Total Funds	610,630	667,752

Approved by the Board of Directors on 31 July 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

IMELDA REDMOND

Trustee

HENRY BLAKE

Trustee

Acknowledgements

The Chair, Board of Directors and Staff wish to record their sincere thanks to all those who volunteered, supported, or donated to Bodywhys in 2023. Your interest in, and support of our work is much appreciated.

Department of Health and Staff

Health Service Executive and Staff

National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) and Staff

St. John of God Brothers: CEO, Staff and Order

Sully Productions: Eavan O'Sullivan

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



Organisational Structure and Governance

Overview of Company Structure

Board of Directors	Sene Naoupu
	Henry Blake
	Jason Costello (appointed 21/11/2023)
	Tiggy Hudson
	Siobhain McArdle
	Ann McCann (resigned 22/6/2023)
	Sheila Naughton
	Imelda Redmond
Chairperson	Sene Naoupu
Company Secretary	Henry Blake
Treasurer	Jason Costello
Chief Executive Officer	Jacinta Hastings
Charity Number (CHY)	11961
Charity Registration Number (CRA)	2003405
Company Number (CRO)	236310
Registered Office	18 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2
Postal Address	PO Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
Auditors	Dillon, Kelly Cregan & Co., 18 Upper Mount St. Dublin 2.
Principal Bankers	Bank of Ireland, Stillorgan Shopping Centre, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
Legal Name	Think Bodywhys a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG)

Think Bodywhys CLG, trading as Bodywhys – the Eating Disorders Association of Ireland, is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. It was incorporated in 1995. Bodywhys is a charitable organisation registered with the Charities Regulator (CRA) in accordance with the Charities Act 2009.

Organisational Structure 2023



Board of Directors



Office Manager
Niamh Nutty



CEO
Jacinta Hastings



Accounts
Mary Crea*
Mary O'Riordan
DKC Accounts



Support Services

Support Services Manager
Kathy Downes

Support Services Officer
Terri Coffey

Email Support Officer
Perna Arvind Shah



Training & Development

Training & Development Manager
Harriet Parsons



Communications

Communications Officer
Ellen Jennings



Research & Policy

Research & Policy Officer
Barry Murphy



Youth Development

Youth Development Manager
Fiona Flynn

Regional Youth Development Officer
Shauna McGroarty
Claire Thornton*
Molly Nee



Volunteers



Media Panel



Research Panel



Youth Panel

* left during the year

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 ”

Governance

Board Structure and Composition

Bodywhys is governed by a Board of Directors not exceeding 9 (including the Chairperson). The Board is made up of individuals with experience in law, finance, business, media, eating disorder clinicians, psychology and expert by experience.

All Trustees are non-executive and sit on the Board on a voluntary basis, receiving no remuneration for their time and contribution. In 2023, there was no expense claims raised by the Trustees.

A Board member's term of office is for three years; however, a Trustee is eligible for re-election for a further two consecutive terms of three years. The maximum term of office for a Trustee is three consecutive three-year terms to a maximum of 9 years. The purpose of applying a limit to the number of terms a Trustee can hold is to ensure a cycle of new ideas, skills and expertise.

The Board of Directors is empowered to fill a board vacancy on a temporary basis in order to meet the organisation's specific requirements, any such nomination to the Board must be brought to the next Annual General Meeting (AGM) for ratification or alternative nomination proposed for ratification.

Board Meetings and Reporting

The Board of Directors met a total of six times in 2023 excluding the AGM which took place on 28th September, 2023. In addition to board meetings, Trustees are available to consult over the course of the year to consider particular issues which need consideration between board meetings.

The Board Minutes of the board meeting are approved as the first order of business at the following board meeting. Since COVID-19, a hybrid approach to board meetings has been adopted. The CEO reports to the Board.

The Board Sub-Committee

Finance & Audit Committee

The Finance & Audit Committee consists of three members including the Treasurer and two other members. The CEO and, if required, the Finance Manager attend also.

The Finance and Audit Committee's responsibilities relate to governance oversight of: reserves and deposits, financial reporting and external audit, internal financial control and risk, budgeting and financial performance, insurance and procurement. The committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending to the Board for approval: the annual budget,

monthly management accounts, audited accounts and risk register. The committee met 8 times in 2023.

Conflicts of Interest/ Loyalty

The Board of Directors, on appointment, are provided with a copy of Conflicts of Interest/ Loyalty Policy and are required to complete a conflicts of interest/ loyalty declaration when taking up their position on the Board. At the beginning of each board meeting, members have the opportunity to disclose any conflicts of interest/ loyalty which may arise before any agenda items are considered by the Board and if any events have arisen which may impact their independence and/or loyalty. Any instances which may arise can be recorded in the minutes.

Once an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest/ loyalty is identified, it must be raised at a meeting of the Board of Directors. A record of all information related to a conflict of interest/loyalty, including the nature and extend of the conflict of interest and any steps taken to address it, will be recorded as part of the proceedings of the Board.

Once a conflict of interest/loyalty has been appropriately disclosed, the Trustee making the disclosure may be asked to refrain from discussing, debating and voting

on the matter or leave the room during the debate and voting. In exceptional circumstances, such as where a conflict is very significant or likely to prevent a Trustee from regularly participating in discussions, the Board may need to consider whether it is appropriate for the person with the relevant conflict to resign from the Board. All Board members are reminded that they must update the Company Secretary on any changes in this regard.

Risk Management

The Board of Directors recognises and regularly reviews the major risks to which we could be exposed. We consider risk not only in terms of safety and security of staff but equally in terms of financial, operational, reputational, governance and other risks that might affect our ability to deliver a quality service for our stakeholders and the public. The Trustees are satisfied that policies and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks.

Reserves Policy

As part of its good governance requirements and to ensure strong financial controls and the internal management of its resources, Bodywhys has a Board approved Reserves Policy.

The policy stipulates that the organisation must hold a minimum of 3 months unrestricted reserves equal to its average expenditure. This would facilitate the remuneration of employees and maintain the organisation's

running costs for the period until new funding can be sourced. The Reserves Policy was reviewed in 2023, and as per the policy, the unrestricted reserves can be used to:

- Cover gaps in available funding
- Fund shortfalls in income being received from funders
- Address unexpected difficulties or crises.

Investment Policy

Bodywhys does not hold any fixed or cash assets for the purposes of investing, therefore the organisation does not have an investment policy.

Governance Code Compliance

The Board of Directors are committed to maintaining the highest levels of corporate governance and transparency.

In 2023, Bodywhys complied with the Charities Regulator's Governance Code and completed the annual return. Bodywhys is not identified as a complex charity and therefore is not required to adhere to the additional requirements under the Code. In addition to the Charities Regulator's Governance Code, Bodywhys is committed to meeting specific legislation and standards which include:

- The Companies Act 2014
- The Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Bodywhys is fully tax compliant and has an up-to-date Tax Clearance Certificate from Revenue.

Lobbying

As required under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, Bodywhys records all lobbying activity and communications engaged in with the Designated Public Officials (DPOs). It has made all the returns and submissions required by the Act during 2023.

Director's Remuneration

No remuneration or other benefits were paid to any directors directly or indirectly.

Remuneration

The CEO's salary for the year was €66,521. In addition, 5% of her salary was paid as employer contribution into a defined contribution pension on her behalf.

The CEO is appointed by the Board of Directors but is not a board member. With the exception of the CEO, no employee of the organisation earned more than 60K in 2023. All staff members who worked for the organisation during the financial year fell within the following bands:

Salary Bands	No. of Staff
€20,000 – €29,999	1
€30,000 – €39,999	7
€40,000 – €49,999	1
€50,000 – €59,000	1
€60,000 – €69,000	1



Bodywhys Team (2023)

Jacinta Hastings, Chief Executive Officer

Harriet Parsons, Training and Development Manager

Christopher Cash, Training and Development Consultant

Kathy Downes, Support Services Manager

Terri Coffey, Support Services Officer

Prerna Shah, Email Support Officer (Maternity leave cover)

Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Manager

Shauna McGroarty, Regional Youth Development Officer (East)

Claire Thornton, Regional Youth Development Officer (West, until August)

Molly Nee, Regional Youth Development Officer (West, from November)

Barry Murphy, Research and Policy Officer

Ellen Jennings, Communications Officer

Maja Dumana, Office Manager (from January-April)

Niamh Nutty, Office Manager (from May)

Mary Crean, Accounts Officer (until May)

Mary O'Riordan, Finance Manager (from June)

Collaborative Engagements

This Annual Report highlights the breadth of reach of all of Bodywhys' work in innovative way which align with the goals of our Strategic Plan 2022-2025. All our work is underpinned by high level of engagements to inform and share insights, evidence, and perspectives to support our Vision, Mission and Values.

HSE National Patient and Service User Forum

The CEO represents Bodywhys on the HSE's National Patient and Service User Forum. The forum members met regularly throughout the year to progress actions on patient and service user engagement with health services. Through this forum, requests for participation in various aspects of health care engagements are convened. Activities throughout the year included designing patient and service user experience model co-design workshops. A Patient Partnership Conference was held In October in the Convention Centre, Dublin, and virtually.

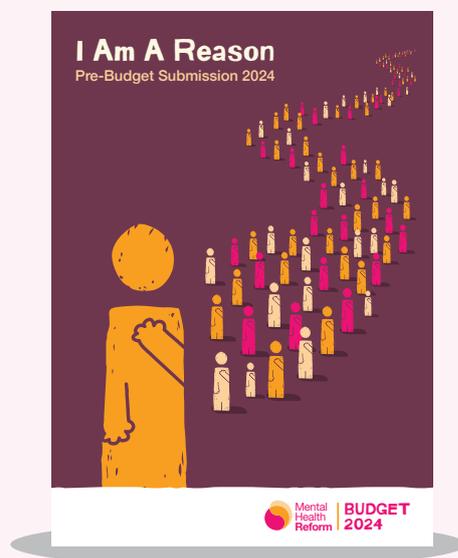


Mental Health Reform

As members of Mental Health Reform, Bodywhys availed of many briefings and events throughout the year, including the Policy and Advocacy Working Group. In July, the CEO attended, along with MHR members, an online Sector Dialogue discussion with Bernard Gloster, the CEO of the HSE. The issues of staff recruitment and retention and the geographical changes from Community Health Organisations (CHOs) to Regional Health Authorities (RHA) in 2024 dominated the agenda.

The 'I Am A Reason Campaign' called on the Government to invest €115 million in Ireland's mental health services for Budget 2024. The campaign emphasised the need for sustainable funding for the voluntary and community sector which delivers vital prevention and early intervention services across Ireland.

A major piece of work for 2024 will be progressing the reform of the Mental Health Act 2001 to ensure the Mental Health Amendment Bill is prioritised. A parallel and important piece of legislation was that of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 which came into effect in April 2023.



Mental Health Commission

The Mental Health Commission held a stakeholder engagement webinar on 28th July. The discussion focussed on a human rights-based approach to mental health service delivery in Ireland.



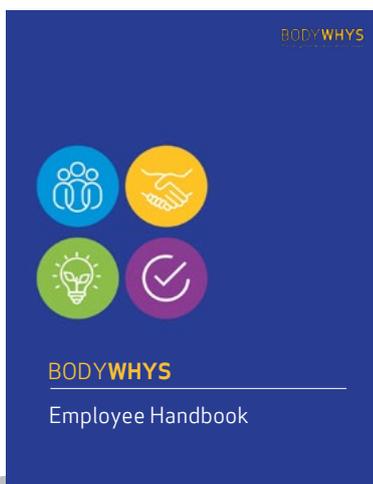
GAMIAN-Europe

Bodywhys is a member of the Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks (GAMIAN-Europe). The CEO represents Bodywhys at meetings and events. A Strategy Planning meeting was held in April to develop a new Strategic Plan. Representing GAMIAN-Europe, the CEO attended thematic webinars throughout the year as well as virtual meetings of the European Medicines Agency.

Governance

Trustee training was undertaken with Boardmatch on Saturday, 4th March, 2023 in Stillorgan, Co. Dublin.

Internal policies and procedures were reviewed and updated as required including the Employee Handbook; Finance Manual and Reserves Policy. Engagement with an external review on policies and procedures was commenced and is ongoing.



Sharing the Vision Learning Event

The CEO and Parvez Butt attended a 'Sharing the Vision' Learning Event organised by the HSE and held in Dublin on 23rd March.



Sharing the Vision
A Mental Health Policy
for Everyone



Dialogue Forum with Voluntary Organisations

The CEO represents Bodywhys on the Health Dialogue Forum Advisory Group convened by The Wheel for organisations receiving core funding from the HSE.

The Wheel

The Wheel convened regular CEO briefings as well as discussions with HSE Funded Network Members.

National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP)

The CEO attended the NOSP AGM virtually on 25th July, 2023. The NOSP Annual Report is available on the NOSP website.

European Conference on Eating Disorders (ECED)

In September, Bodywhys was represented at the ECED conference in Lieden, the Netherlands by two of the board members, Sene Naoupu and Imelda Redmond.

Caring About Recovery from Eating Disorders (CARED Ireland and Mind Every Body)

Ongoing engagements with the parent groups CARED Ireland and Mind Everybody were held throughout the year.



*Caring About Recovery from
Eating Disorders*



Memberships



BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Postal Address: P.O. Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Office: 01-2834963

Helpline: 01-2107906

Office email: info@bodywhys.ie

Email support: alex@bodywhys.ie

Websites: www.bodywhys.ie and www.bodywhysbodyimage.ie

Think Bodywhys CLG, trading as Bodywhys – the Eating Disorders Association of Ireland, is a company limited by guarantee.

Registered Company Number 236310. Registered Office 18 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2.

Registered Charity Number 20034054. CHY number 11961