

Annual Report

2025

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 ”

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Chairperson & CEO's Report



Siobhain McArdle
Chairperson

As Chairperson and CEO of Bodywhys – The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland, we are pleased to present the Annual Report for 2025.

This year has been one of both reflection and transition for Bodywhys, as we marked 30 years of supporting people affected by eating disorders in Ireland, whilst also entering a new phase in the organisation's leadership.



Harriet Parsons
*Chief Executive Officer
(CEO)*

In **March** 2025, our CEO of eighteen and a half years, Jacinta Hastings, retired. Jacinta's commitment, vision and steady leadership has made a lasting contribution to Bodywhys. During her tenure, Jacinta led the organisation through a period of significant change and growth, working collaboratively with the HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders, resulting in Bodywhys becoming the support partner to the programme.

Following this, Jacinta steered us through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which the organisation developed more online and virtual supports, ultimately leading to the establishment of the Family Support Package. Jacinta's focus on ensuring that services remain free to access, responsive and grounded in lived experience, has shaped Bodywhys in a meaningful and lasting way.

**Jacinta
Hastings**



She ensured that the organisation grew in a way that never lost sight of its core values and mission. As such, her influence continues to be reflected in how we approach our work each and every day.

In **June**, Harriet Parsons was appointed as CEO. Having originally joined Bodywhys as the part-time helpline co-ordinator in 2005, Harriet has been with the organisation for over twenty years.

Harriet Parsons



Of her appointment, Harriet stated:

"It is a privilege to step into the CEO role and continue the work that has, for three decades, remained grounded in compassion and understanding, keeping the voice of lived experience at the heart of all we do."

In reviewing this year, what is immediately clear is that demand for support continues to grow and one theme remains consistent: people are not just looking for information—they are looking to be heard, to make sense of what they are experiencing, and to find a way forward."

Eating disorders are complex illnesses. They are not simply about food or weight but are deeply connected to how a person experiences themselves and the world around them. This understanding continues to inform all aspects of our work. Our role is not only to provide information, but to offer a space where the complexity of the illness can be acknowledged, and where people can begin to feel less alone in what they are facing."

In 2025, approximately



6,696

individuals used
Bodywhys services

Behind this number are people at many different points in their experience—those at the beginning of an eating disorder, those living with an eating disorder for many years, and those supporting a loved one, often feeling uncertain about where to turn.

Our new call management system recorded



2,612

calls to the Helpline

including those outside
helpline hours and
messages left.

Of these, **748** were answered. This provides, for the first time, a clearer picture of the demand on the helpline service. We have utilised this data to guide our plans for expanding the helpline in 2026. In 2025, **43%** of calls concerned a young person or child under 18 years. Yet **57%** of calls concerned adults with eating disorders, with a quarter of calls from an adult over 36 years. Of note, is that **10%** of callers have had an eating disorder for over 15 years, which includes **7%** of calls concerning a person who has had an eating disorder for over

25 years. Looking at the overall helpline statistics, it seems that there are two main groups who use the service; those at the very beginning of an eating disorder, and those who have been living with an eating disorder for an extended period of time. Looking at the figures from the last three years, there has been a yearly growth in the number of calls from or about people at the beginning of an eating disorder. Perhaps this indicates people's understanding of Bodywhys as an initial port of call when there is concern for oneself or a loved one.



1,815
emails

Our **email support service** responded to **1,815 emails**, and **57%** of those in contact in 2025 were writing to us on a repeat basis.



44%
increase



Our **online and virtual groups** continued to provide important spaces for support, connection and shared understanding. Of note, is that attendance at our BodywhysConnect (adult) and YouthConnect (teen) groups increased by **44%** in 2025 and that on both the adult and YouthConnect groups, there are higher numbers of people returning to take part in the groups than joining for the first time.



REConnect

In 2025, we piloted and launched a new service for adults with eating disorders – the **REConnect Programme**, centred on the value of social connections for recovery from an eating disorder. Developed by Dr. Niamh McNamara from Nottingham Trent University in collaboration with Bodywhys, this programme is a first of its kind. It was a privilege for us to host the first ever programme in 2025. Feedback from participants was positive and interesting, and we look forward to being able to offer the REConnect programme as an ongoing part of our support services in the coming years.

Our **volunteers** remain central and crucial to the support Bodywhys provides.



In 2025,



56 trained volunteers

gave their time across our services.

The quality of their presence, the ability to listen, to stay with difficult conversations, and to offer support without judgement, is at the core of what Bodywhys provides. We are deeply grateful for their commitment.

Supporting families continues to be a key part of our work.

In 2025,



1,198
supporters

used our **family support services**



729
people

people took part in the **PiLaR programme** alongside engagement with our wider Family Support Package.

84% of carers who completed our PiLaR evaluation survey reported that their own mental health is impacted by supporting their loved one with an eating disorder. The feedback from carers is consistent: while the experience of supporting someone with an eating disorder can feel overwhelming and isolating, access to structured support, shared understanding, and practical skills can make a meaningful difference. At the same time, the data reminds us that many carers continue to experience a significant impact on their own mental health, reinforcing the need for ongoing, sustained support.





27,368
students

A significant development this year was the launch of the **'Inside Out' post-primary schools programme**, reflecting our continued commitment to early intervention and prevention. The level of engagement following its launch in late October, with an estimated reach of over **27,000 students** in this short period, highlights the need for resources that support young people to think critically about social media, body image, identity, the pressures they experience and eating disorders.

In addition, there was an increased number of primary school teachers attending our **webinar trainings**.

In 2025, the Youth Development Team engaged with approximately



13,910
young people

through school talks, workshops, webinars and youth events, a **45%** increase on 2024.



Alongside service delivery, Bodywhys continued to contribute to public awareness, research and policy discussions. **Media engagement** remained high throughout the year, with ongoing focus on issues such as access to services, the impact of digital environments, and the experiences of those affected by eating disorders. These conversations are important in shaping understanding, and they also point to the ongoing gaps in service provision and the need for continued investment in specialist care.



In **October**, we welcomed Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler TD's announcement regarding continued investment in the expansion of the HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED), with the establishment of two new specialist eating disorder teams (one CAMHS team and one adult team), bringing the total number to sixteen, which aligns with the recommendations set out in the 2018 HSE NCP-ED Model of Care. In **December**, Bodywhys welcomed the commitment by Minister Mary Butler TD to expand specialist adult eating disorder bed capacity and to enhance six priority acute mental health units as part of the Department of Health's Sectoral Plan 2026-2030.

As **Chairperson**, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their continued guidance and support. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication of the staff, whose work across all areas of the organisation has been central to what has been achieved this year. Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to our volunteers, fundraisers, donors and partners.

As we move forward, we do so with a clear awareness of both the need and the responsibility of our work. Our focus remains on ensuring that people affected by eating disorders - at any stage of their experience - can access support that is informed, compassionate, and consistent.

Siobhain McArdle

Siobhain McArdle
Chairperson

Harriet Parsons

Harriet Parsons
CEO



Celebrating 30 YEARS

In November 2025, Bodywhys celebrated its 30th anniversary – 30 years of providing support, information and understanding to people affected by eating disorders.



To mark this significant milestone, we hosted a celebratory event, inviting speakers and friends to reflect on all that Bodywhys has achieved during its thirty years.

Left to Right: Dr. Fiona Flynn, Bodywhys, Christopher Cash, Bodywhys, Miriam O'Callaghan, RTE, Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys, Mary O'Riordan, Bodywhys

Celebrating 30 years of Bodywhys

We were delighted to have Irish television and radio presenter with RTÉ, Miriam O'Callaghan, welcome everyone on the evening. She movingly spoke of her own lived experience and championed the value of organisations like Bodywhys in people's experience of recovery.



Bodywhys CEO, Harriet Parsons, opens the Bodywhys 30th Celebration

We had founding members, Jenny Kelly, Gemma and Tiggy Hudson, John Joe Byrnes, Fiona Waters, Dan and Aine McCarthy speak about the very beginnings of Bodywhys and what inspired them to come together to form the organisation. We had the opportunity to hear their stories and memories, and to see that the fundamental values upon which they founded the organisation remain at the core of our work today.

Dr. Alison Darcy, who developed the BodywhysConnect group, the first online support group of its kind, spoke about the idea of providing online support to combat the limitations of location and access. Listening to Alison reflect on the early groups, and recognising that these groups continue to operate in much the same way today, emphasises the principle "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Dr. Niamh McNamara, Professor of Psychology from Nottingham Trent University, and long-time collaborator and supporter of Bodywhys, couldn't be with us on the night. However, Niamh sent us a pre-recorded reflection on the past twenty years of engagement with Bodywhys. Niamh's collaboration with Bodywhys culminated in the REConnect programme, another first of its kind support programme for adults with an eating disorder, based on the importance of social connection for recovery.

Dr. Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Manager with Bodywhys, reflected on her time spent working with schools, and developing significant education and prevention programmes aimed at building young people's inner resilience in an increasingly difficult world to navigate in relation to social media and body image.

We also heard from Bodywhys volunteers, Celeste O'Reilly, Lorraine Powell, Petra McLoughlin and Robbyn Swan, who shared their heartfelt experiences of supporting people through our support services. Bodywhys is so much richer for the incredible volunteers we have working on our services. We can't thank them enough.

Dr. Michelle Clifford, Clinical Lead for the HSE NCP-ED spoke about the partnership between Bodywhys and the programme and how beneficial it has been to work together to improve services for people affected by eating disorders nationally.

And finally, we were incredibly lucky to hear from some parents and people with lived experience of an eating disorder, who spoke about how Bodywhys has supported them over the years. It was incredibly meaningful to hear our own ethos, the ideas we use to train our volunteers, and the heart of our understanding be spoken back to us from the people we strive to support every day: a powerful affirmation of all we do and all we will continue to do.



1995

Bodywhys is Founded.

1997

Helpline starts.

1998 - 1999

Support groups in Limerick, Galway, Mayo begin.

2000-2002

Louth support group starts.
Helpline hours extended.
BodywhysConnect launches.

2004-2006

Bodywhys.ie launches. Carlow support group set up. Email support service begins. iFigure launched.

2008-2010

Helpline hours extended again.
YouthConnect launches online.

2012-2014

SPHE resources launch. 'SeeMySelf' launches. PiLar is developed.

2015-2016

Development of HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders begins.

2017

'Happy to Be Me' and #MoreThanASelfie begin development.

2018

HSE NCP-ED launches.
'Be Body Positive' launches in secondary schools.

2021-2022

Bodywhys podcast launches.
Virtual support groups launch.
Family Support package is introduced.

2019-2021

PiLar evaluation begins.
All services go online due to Covid-19.
#MoreThanASelfie launches.

2023-2024

'Expert by Experience' group forms.
'Conversations with Carers' launches.

2025

The 'Inside Out' programme launches.

2025

Celebrating 30 years!!



Jacinta Hastings reflects on her tenure at Bodywhys

as spoken on the night...

It's such a privilege to celebrate 30 years of Bodywhys – three decades of compassion, commitment, and community.

When Bodywhys began in 1995, eating disorders were rarely spoken about in Ireland. There was silence, stigma, and far too little understanding. What Bodywhys brought into that silence was hope – a space where people could be heard, believed, and supported.

I had the honour of serving as CEO for 18 and a half of those 30 years, and it's hard to put into words what that time meant to me. I witnessed extraordinary courage every day – from those reaching out for help, from families walking the long road of recovery beside them, and from staff and volunteers who gave their hearts and energy to this work.

For some families, that journey has also included heartbreak and loss. We remember them tonight too – their love, their advocacy, and their strength in the face of unimaginable grief remind us why this work matters so deeply.

What stands out most over those years is how Bodywhys never lost sight of its values – empathy, respect, and the belief that recovery is possible. Whether through the helpline, support groups, education, or advocacy, the organisation has always met people where they are, with understanding rather than judgement.

We've seen enormous change too. Public awareness has grown, treatment pathways have improved, and conversations about mental health are now part of the national dialogue. Bodywhys has played a quiet but vital role in making that possible – bringing the voices of those with lived experience into policy rooms and professional training spaces.

Of course, none of this happened by chance. It happened because of people – the founders who had the vision, the staff and volunteers who sustained it, the Board members who guided it, the funders and partners who believed in it, and the community that kept it grounded in real lives and real stories.

As I look back, I feel deep gratitude – for the privilege of working alongside such dedicated people, and for being part of an organisation that has made such a profound difference to individuals and families across Ireland.

And as I look forward, I have no doubt that Bodywhys will continue to lead with the same compassion and integrity that have defined its first 30 years. The need is still great, but so is the hope.



And maybe that's the real story of Bodywhys – that even in the hardest times, hope quietly persists. Sometimes it comes through a phone call, a support group, or even a bit of laughter shared among colleagues at the end of a long day.

Thank you for letting me share this journey with you – and congratulations to everyone who has been part of Bodywhys' remarkable story. Here's to the next chapter'

Staff Reflections...



"The evening was incredibly special. As someone who has spent twenty years within the organisation, it was heartening to listen to all who are involved in providing Bodywhys support and those who are on the receiving end of that support, and hear the essence of our core values of therapeutic support being reflected in their experiences of getting and giving support on all our support services. Thanks to all who celebrated with us." - **Harriet**

"It was a pleasure to be a part of celebrating 30 years of Bodywhys, to look back on all of the incredible work that has been done over the past 30 years, to hear from those who have been involved in the journey and to see how the organisation has grown and adapted. Above all, it was inspiring to hear from those with lived experience about the impact that the organisation has had in their lives. I am honoured to be a part of this chapter with team Bodywhys, to mark this significant milestone, and to build on all of the important work that has come before." - **Ellen**



"For me, it was so moving and enriching to hear from volunteers and people who have used our services. I could see the value of the type of support we offer reflected back at us." - **Kathy**

"It was really lovely to be involved in the anniversary and see the great work that has been achieved in that time. What stayed with me the most that evening were the incredible stories from the volunteers and service users, especially those who had been through an ED and come out the other side – so touching and full of hope for anybody affected by an ED." - **Mary**

"It is a joy to work with such a dedicated and thoughtful team, and to see our services expand and evolve over the years. Celebrating 30 years of Bodywhys is a wonderful testament to the compassion and commitment that underpin our work" - **Christopher**



"Having only joined the team a few weeks prior to the 30th anniversary, it was inspiring to witness how far the organisation has come and see how many lives it has touched over the years. There was a genuine sense of connection in the room, and it left me feeling grateful to be part of something so meaningful. Meeting the founders also sparked in me a real sense of pride in carrying forward the Bodywhys baton." - **Roisin**

"The 30th anniversary event felt like a time capsule, that allowed everyone to look back at the journey, but also to look forward. By hearing from past founding members, professionals, volunteers, parents, family members and others who have availed of Bodywhys services and also from those involved in the design of some of the services currently offered, it only reiterated to me the power of listening, of honest intent followed by honest, hard work that goes into building something like Bodywhys. It was also an opportunity to reflect - this is what we do, this is where I come into the picture and what more can I do going forwards, taking into account my experience, learnings and skills." - **Prerna**





Overview of Services

Our Support Services Team



Kathy Downes | Support Services and Training Manager

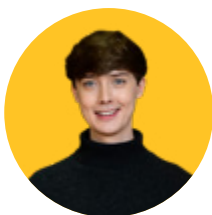
Kathy joined Bodywhys in 2017. She is an accredited psychotherapist, and supervisor, who works with children, adolescents and young adults. She is a seminar lead and regular teacher on the Trinity College Dublin (TCD) M.Sc. in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. She has also taught on University College Dublin (UCD) Art Psychotherapy Masters, and TCD's MPhil in Psychoanalysis.



Harriet Parsons | CEO and Training and Development Manager

Family Support Team (January – June 2025), CEO (June 2025 – Present)

Harriet joined Bodywhys in 2005 and is currently the organisation's Chief Executive Officer. Harriet holds an MSc. in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy from St. Vincent's Hospital School of Psychotherapy/ UCD, and an MA in Addiction Studies from Dublin Business School (DBS). Harriet is a member of the Irish Council of Psychotherapy (ICP) and is a registered practitioner with the Association for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in Ireland (APPI). She was Chairperson of APPI from 2014-2016 and is currently a member of the Editorial Board of the APPI peer reviewed journal Lacunae.



Christopher Cash | Training and Development Consultant - Family Support Team

Christopher is a PhD candidate in Clinical Psychology at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, under the supervision of Professor Alan Carr (University College Dublin) and Prof. Salvatore D'Amore (Université Libre de Bruxelles), and a graduate member of the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI). Christopher has been working with Bodywhys since 2021 and currently supports the provision, development and evaluation of the Family Support Package.



Terri Coffey | Support Services Co-Ordinator

Terri joined Bodywhys in 2020. Having worked in different roles within the organisation, Terri took up the position of Support Services Coordinator in 2025. In the same year, she graduated from the BSc Counselling & Psychotherapy programme at Personal Counselling Institute (PCI) and is a pre-accredited member of the Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (IACP). Terri also holds an MSc in Applied Psychology from DBS, a BA in Sociology from University College Cork (UCC), and has a Diploma in Criminal Forensic Psychology with Communications and Management Institute (CMI) Ireland. Terri is currently undertaking Advanced Perinatal Mental Health Specialist training with the Perinatal Mental Health Institute.



Prerna Shah | Support Services Officer

Prerna joined Bodywhys in 2023 and holds a BA in English Literature, a Master's in Communication Studies (MCS) and a MA in Creative and Life Writing from Goldsmiths, University of London. She is also involved with The Patient Voice in Cancer Research (PVCR) and is a member of the PVCR steering committee.

Overview of Support Services

The first strategic aim of Bodywhys is to respond to people with eating disorders and their family members/carers through support, information, resources and education. As such, we provide a range of support services, both for people with an eating disorder, and for those supporting people with eating disorders.



In 2025, we saw the demand for support services **continue to rise** with approximately



6,696
individuals

contacting our different services seeking support.



Our support services consist of a national telephone helpline, online virtual support groups, online chat groups, an email support service and a package of different family supports. Each service offers a place for individuals to express what they are experiencing in a safe way. We offer a supportive listening ear combined with up-to-date information and psychoeducation regarding the nature of eating disorders and their treatment.

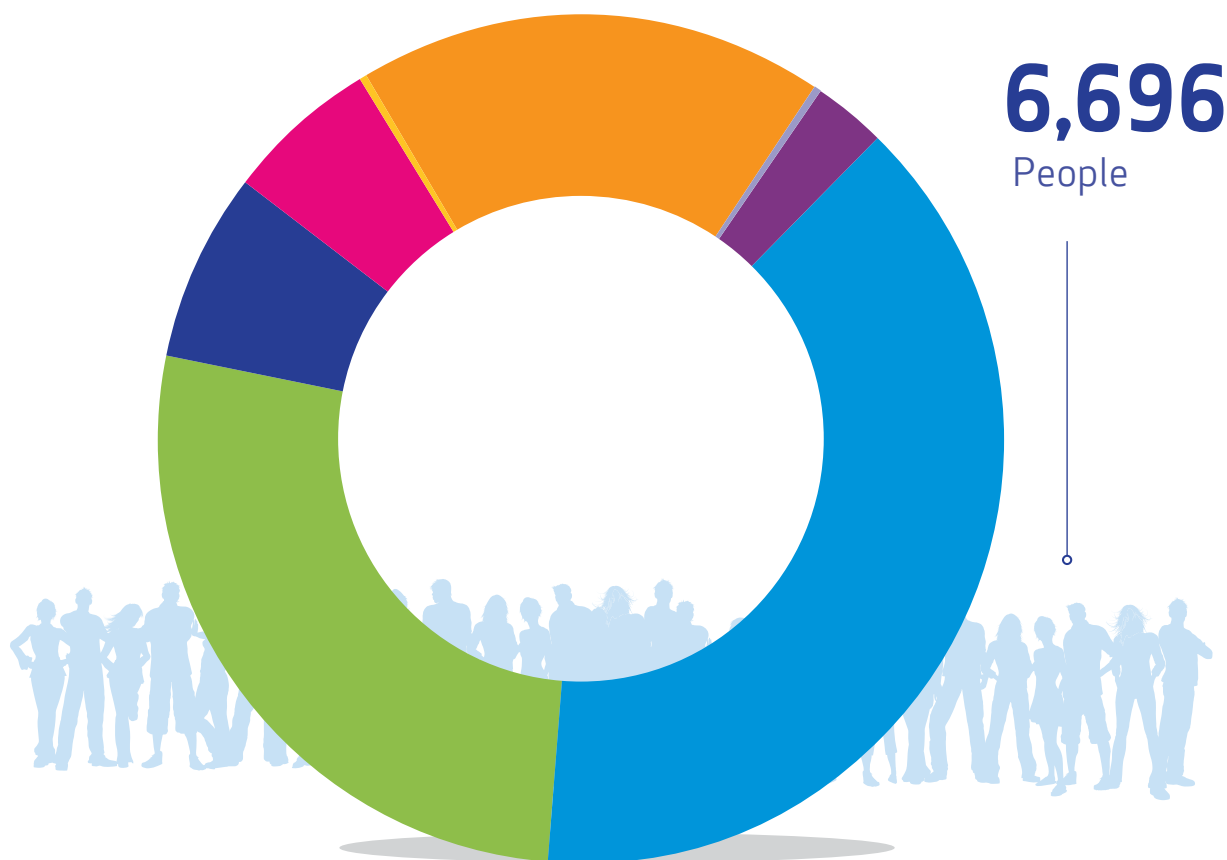
Bar the family supports, all services are delivered by trained Bodywhys volunteers. In 2025, we had 56 volunteers working across our support services, 18 of which were newly recruited and underwent an extensive training process before joining the support services.

Our volunteers are an indispensable part of the organisation. They give their time to offer non-judgmental support to everyone who gets in touch with us. As always, Bodywhys gratefully acknowledges the dedication that all our volunteers bring to their role, and we want to sincerely thank them for the commitment they gave the organisation in 2025.

All our support services are grounded in the understanding that an eating disorder is a complicated illness, extending beyond concerns related to food or weight. They often manifest through disordered eating behaviours and distorted thought patterns, which individuals can become trapped in as a means of managing their emotions and sense of self within the world.

Our approach is guided by a holistic appreciation of the various factors unique to each person experiencing the disorder. The resulting focus of the support services team is therefore to provide inclusive support and acceptance of everyone - whatever point they may be at. We provide support to a broad range of service users, at any point in their experience: some at the beginning of an eating disorder, others at a later stage, some with a formal diagnosis or in treatment, others not. We support families, friends and partners, who themselves need a supportive listening ear, or a pathway to support their loved ones with an eating disorder. Service users can and do use our services, whenever, and as often as they wish. Figure 1, overleaf shows the breakdown of how people contacted us for support in 2025.

Figure 1 How did people contact us for support?



Virtual Groups (video-based)

385 (6%)



Online Connect Groups (chat-based)

442 (7%)



Support email (Alex)

1,815 (27%)



SeeMySelf Programme

8 (0.1%)



Admin email and phone

228 (3%)



Helpline

2,612 (39%)



REConnect programme

8 (0.1%)



Family Support Package

1,198 (18%)



Helpline



2 Hours
Per Day

6 Days per
Week

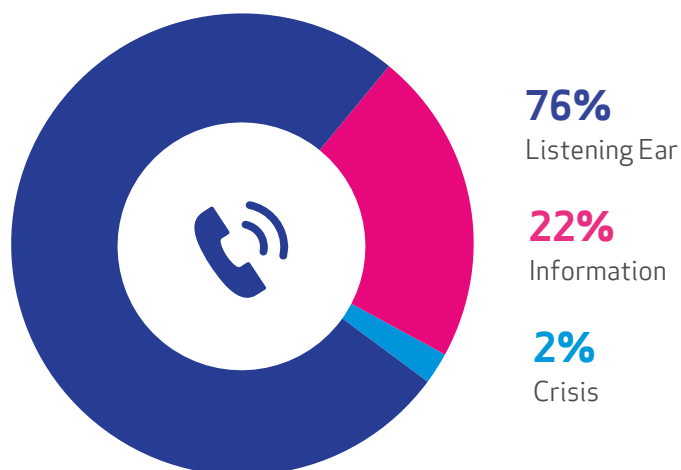
In 2025, our national helpline operated for 2 hours per day, 6 days per week. This telephone service aims to deliver safe, non-judgemental listening and support, along with provision of up-to-date, clear guidance and information, to people affected by eating disorders. Alongside this, we offer a call back service to those requesting a return call.

In 2025, with a new call system in place, for the first time we could see the total number of calls coming into our helpline, both during and outside helpline hours, regardless of whether the caller left a message or not. There were a total of 2,612 calls received. Of these, 748 calls were answered, which averages approximately 14 calls per week, or about 2 to 3 calls per two-hour helpline session.

As shown in Figure 3, the average duration of each call is approximately 30 minutes, which provides insight into the capacity for calls of this kind within the two-hour helpline timeframe. Recognising that demand for the service exceeds our current capacity, we plan to expand our helpline services in 2026.

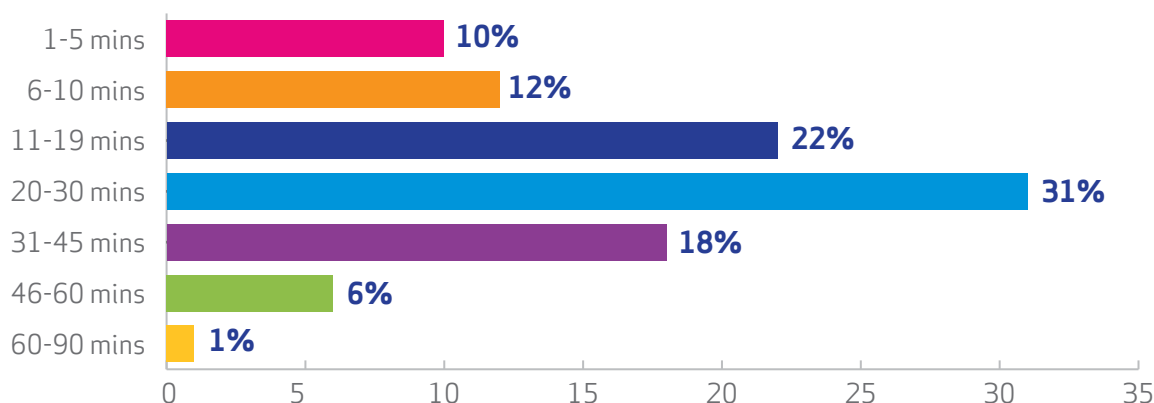
Calls vary on the helpline, depending on the service user's needs. Figure 2, shows a breakdown where we know **why people called**. We can see that over three quarters of all calls were listening ear calls.

Figure 2 Why did people call the helpline?



'We have time to listen' is a phrase often said by a helpline volunteer on a call. We also recognise that people need time to feel heard and this is reflected in the **duration of calls on the helpline**. Over half of all callers speak with a helpline volunteer for over 20 minutes.

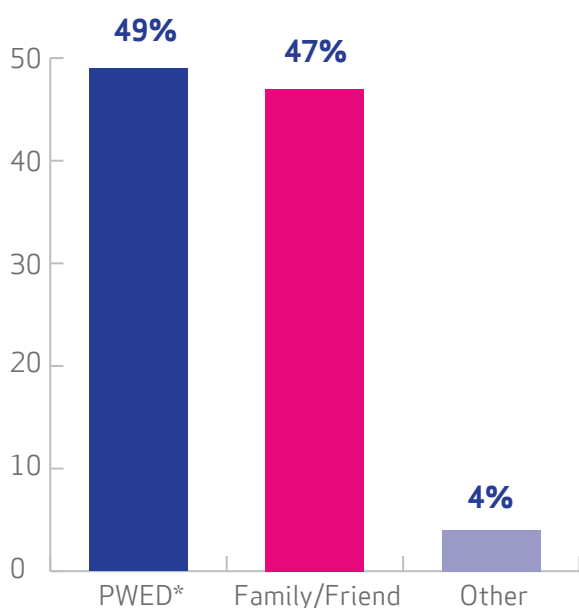
Figure 3 Duration of calls to the helpline



Many people call on an ongoing basis, some weekly, some every few days, others, over a period of years. Looking at the figures for 2025, where we know if people were first time, or repeat callers, we found that 65% of callers were calling us for the first time, and 35% were repeat callers.

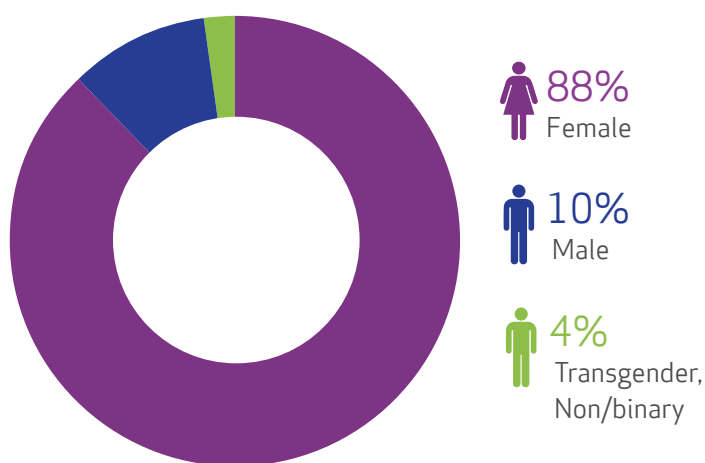
In the main, helpline calls tend to be broken down into calls from a person needing support for themselves, or calls from caregivers, and partners who are supporting a loved one. In Figure 4, again, where we know **who contacted the helpline**, slightly more callers were people with self-experience of an eating disorder. Figure 5 shows the breakdown of calls, where we know **the gender of the person with an eating disorder**.

Figure 4 Who contacted the helpline?



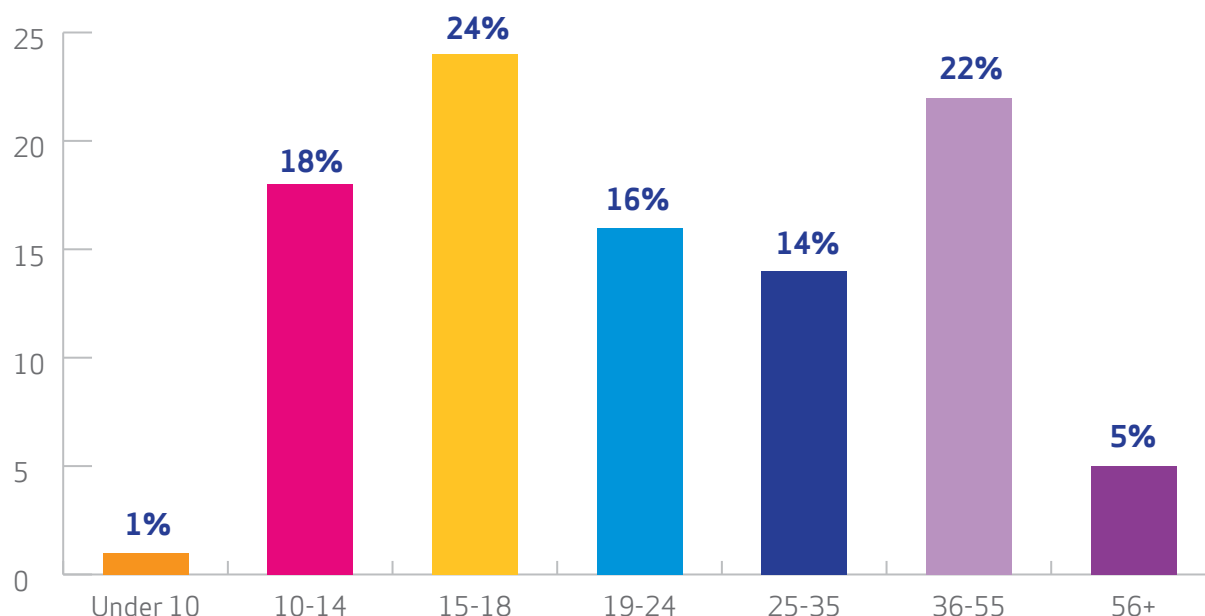
*PWED: Person with an Eating Disorder

Figure 5 Gender of person with an eating disorder



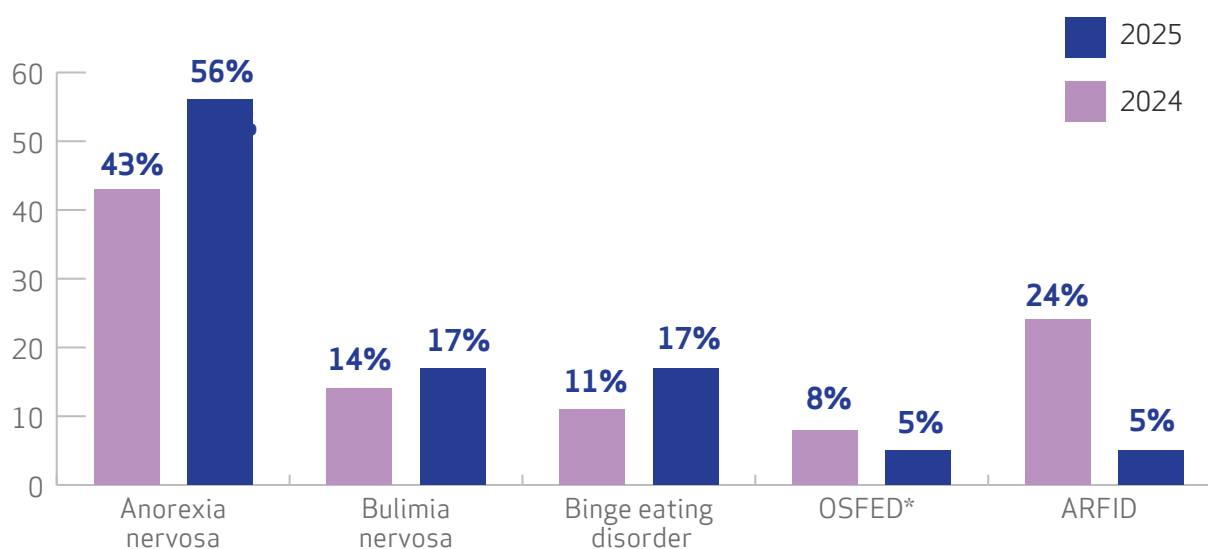
Sometimes we get information in the call, as to **the age of the person with an eating disorder**. In 2025, 43% of calls concerned a young person or child under 18 years. Yet 57% of calls concerned adults with eating disorders, with over a quarter of calls from an adult over 36 years.

Figure 6 What age is the person with the eating disorder?



People do not need to have a diagnosis to use our support services. Where we know **the type of eating disorder**, Figure 7, shows the breakdown.

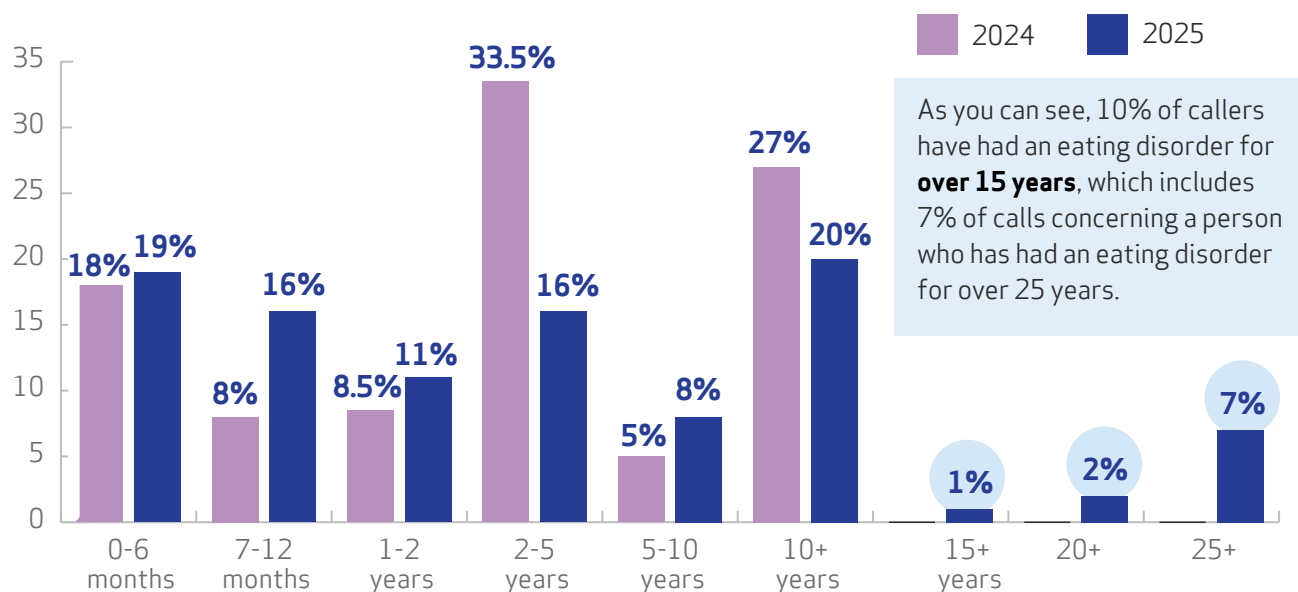
Figure 7 Helpline calls: What type of eating disorder?



* Other specified feeding or eating disorder (OSFED)

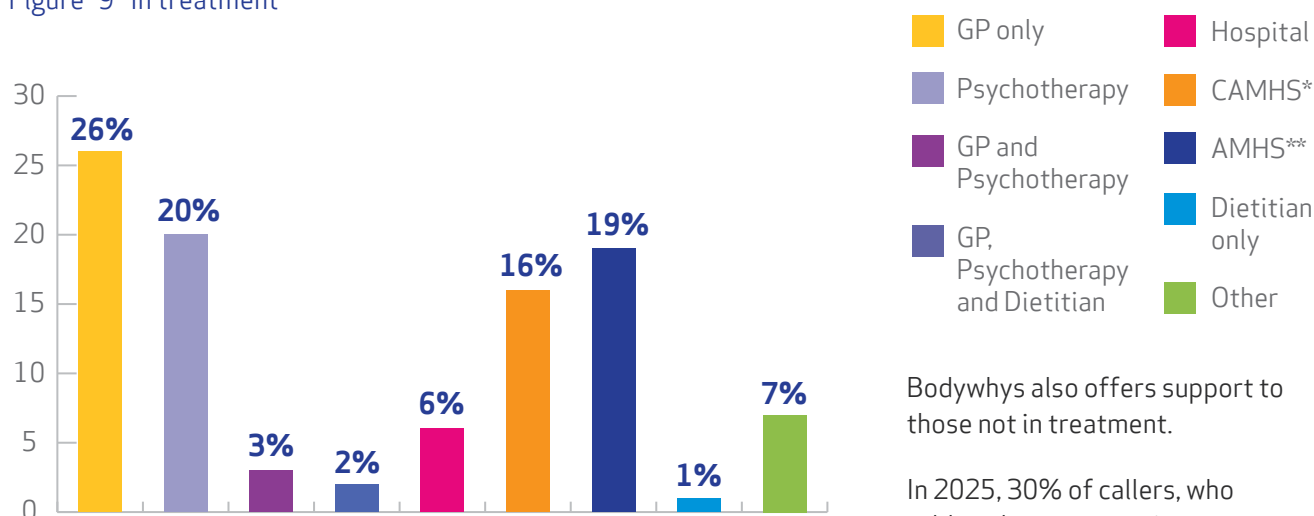
In Figure 8 below, we look at **how long a person has had an eating disorder for**. Again, the figures are taken from the calls where we know the duration of illness. Looking at the figures from 2024, there has been a yearly growth in the number of calls from or about people at the beginning of an eating disorder. Perhaps this indicates people's understanding of Bodywhys as an initial port of call when there is concern for oneself or a loved one. This year, thinking through the various types of calls we take on the helpline, we decided to break down this category further, to illustrate how we support people with a long-standing eating disorder and their supporters.

Figure 8 How long has the person had an eating disorder?



We do not always know from callers whether or not they are in treatment at the time of their call. In Figure 9, we can look at the overall breakdown of people calling the helpline who have told us they are **in treatment**. Part of the role of our services is to provide support to those going through treatment.

Figure 9 In treatment



* CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental health Services (Public HSE Service)

** AMHS - Adult Mental Health Services (Public HSE Service)

Bodywhys also offers support to those not in treatment.

In 2025, 30% of callers, who told us they were not in any treatment, used the helpline on an ongoing regular basis.



Online Support Groups *(Chat-based)*

At Bodywhys, we run different types of online support groups.



BodywhysConnect

is a support group for those aged

18+ yrs

We also run a once monthly group for third level students. These groups are chat-based, with participants typing via a secure platform to connect with each other. This provides anonymity and does not require a camera.

Our Connect groups are facilitated by trained Bodywhys volunteers and are supervised by our Support Services Manager.



YouthConnect

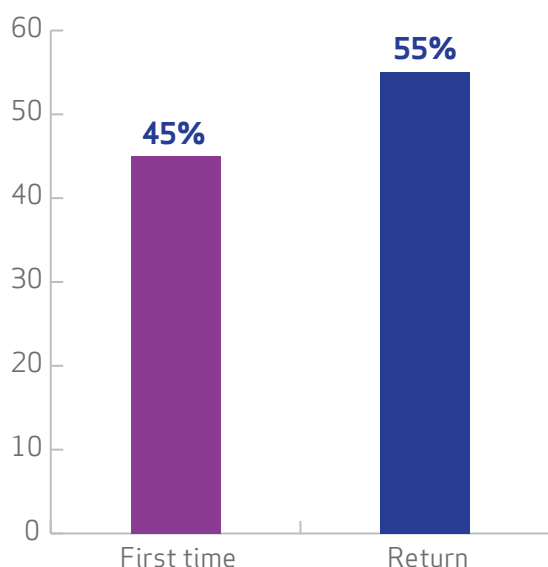
is a support group for adolescents

13-18 yrs

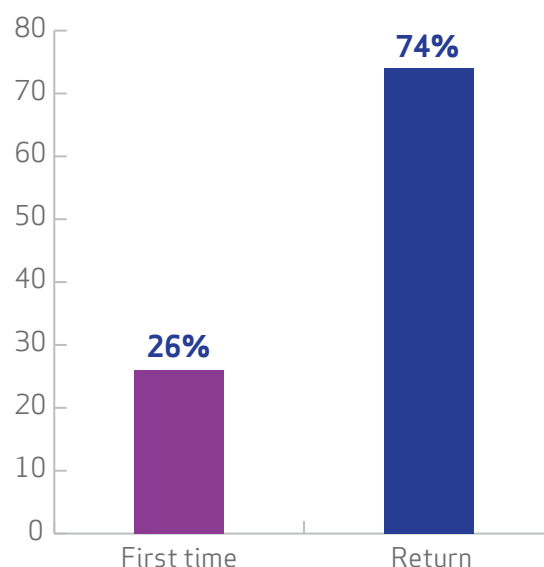
In 2025, 278 participants attended the adult Connect group, and 144 participants attended the teen Connect group. That is an increase in both groups by 8% and 44% respectively on 2024 attendance.

Figure 10 shows the breakdown of those attending groups for the first time versus those who are returning users, split out across adult (BodywhysConnect and Student Support Group) and teen (YouthConnect). Both groups have a stronger number of returning participants.

Figure 10 First time or return



BodywhysConnect



YouthConnect

When registering for the groups, users are asked to choose an age and gender category for themselves. Below in Figure 11, we can see the breakdown of adult users. Figure 12 shows the breakdown in age on our teen group (YouthConnect). Figure 13 shows the gender of participants

Figure 11 Age of adult users

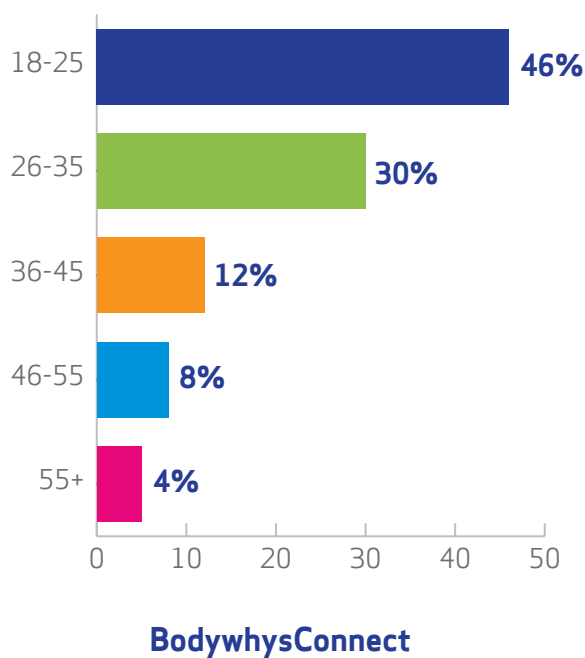


Figure 12 Age of teen users

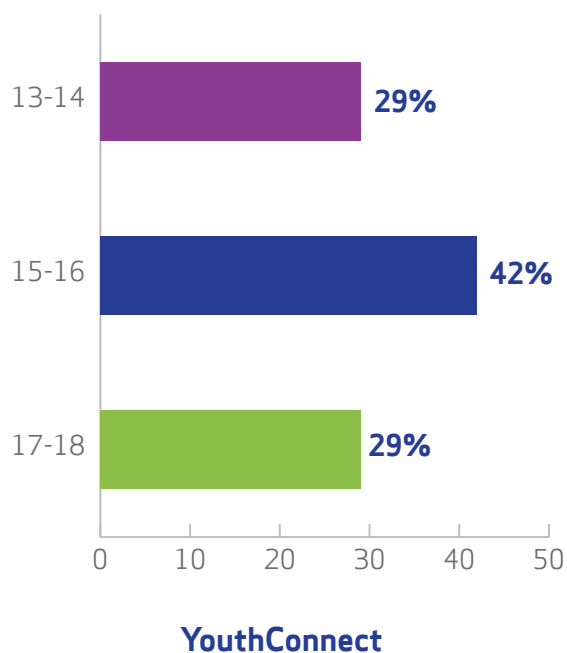
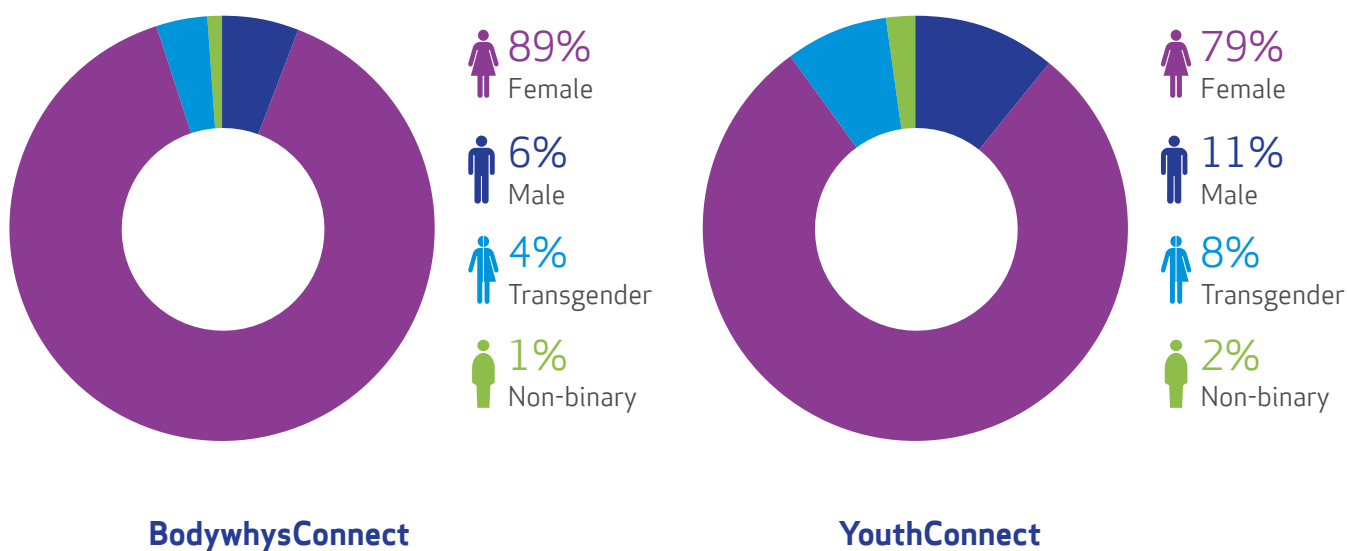
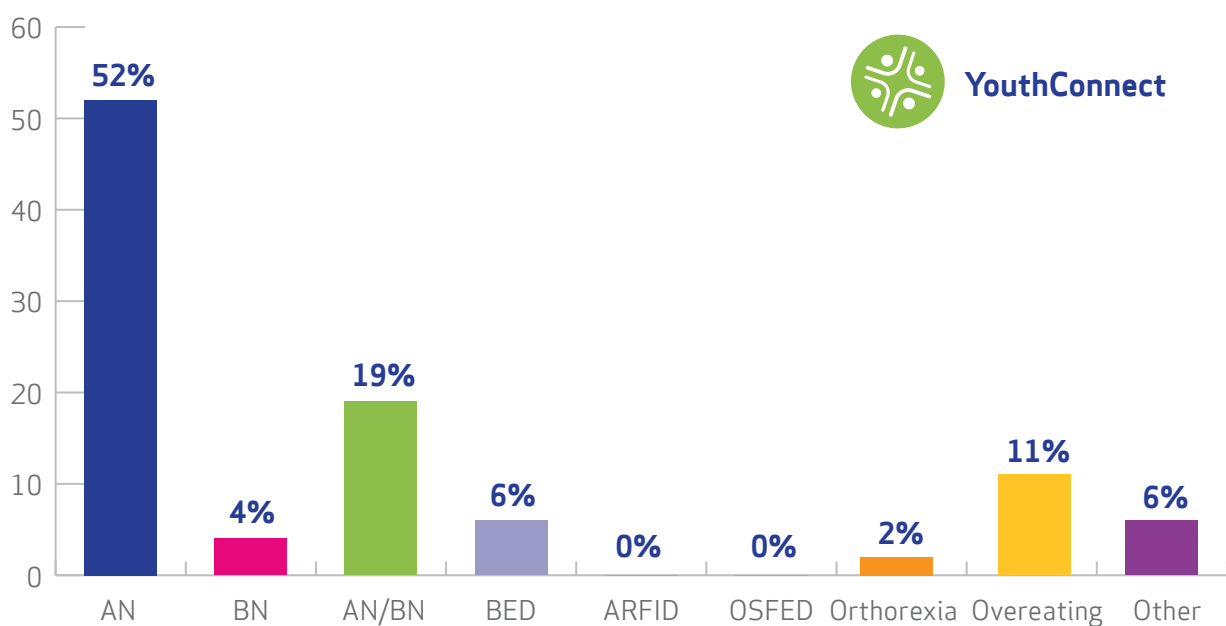
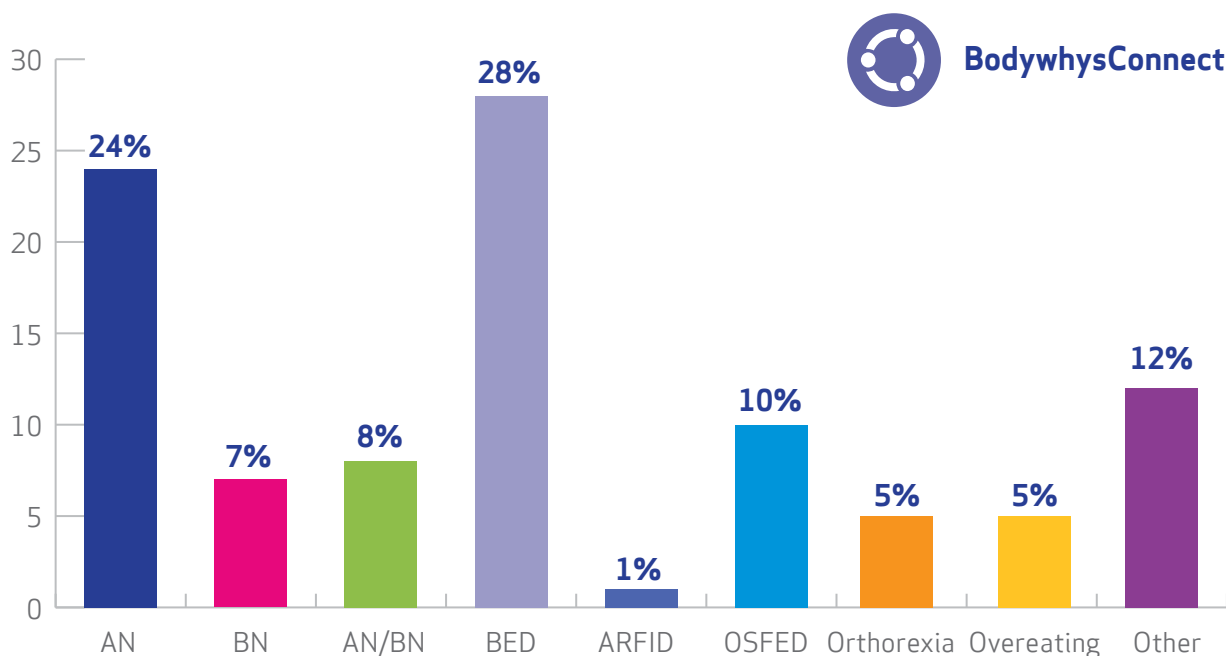


Figure 13 Gender of online group users



When registering for the Connect groups, participants are asked to select the type of eating disorder they are experiencing. Figure 14 shows the breakdown in types of eating disorder people have selected.

Figure 14 Breakdown in types of eating disorder



*Anorexia nervosa (AN), Bulimia nervosa (BN), Binge eating disorder (BED), Avoidant restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID), Other specified feeding and eating disorder (OSFED).



Virtual Support Groups *(Video-based)*

Our virtual groups run fortnightly throughout the year. These groups run through video, using cameras. The aim is to replicate our pre-COVID face to face groups; with the benefit that online participation allows people from all over the country to access group support.

We run two types of groups: one for those experiencing any type of eating disorder, and another, for those experiencing Binge Eating Disorder specifically. In 2025, 213 people signed up for the General Virtual Support Group, and 172 signed up

for the Binge Eating Disorder Virtual Support Group, giving a total of 385 signups. Figure 15 looks at the gender breakdown of both groups (where individuals have indicated a gender).

Figure 15 Breakdown of Gender

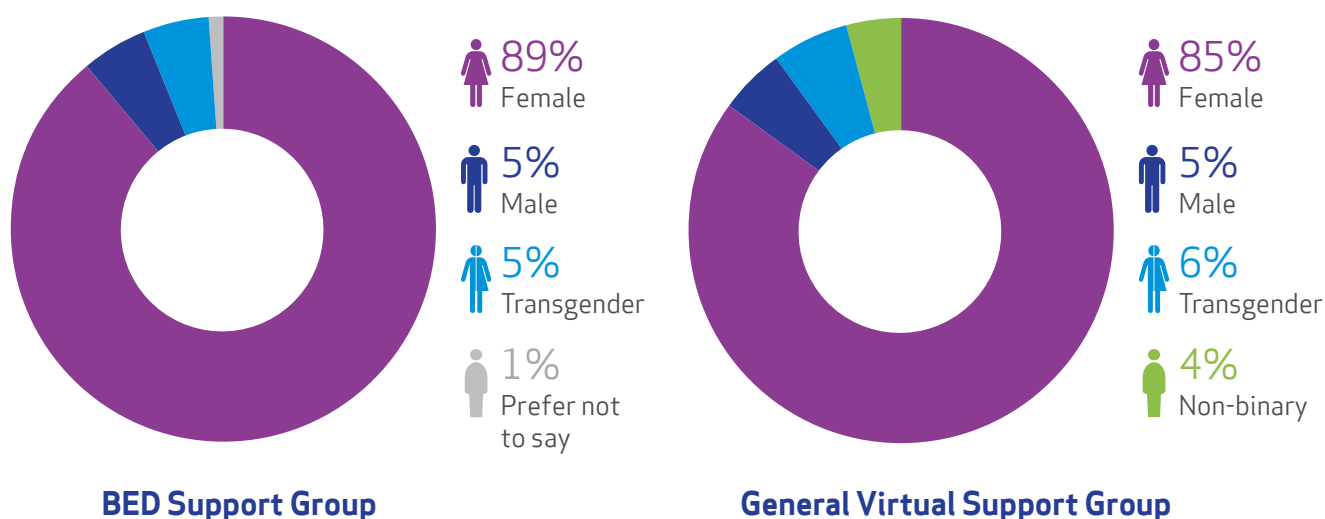
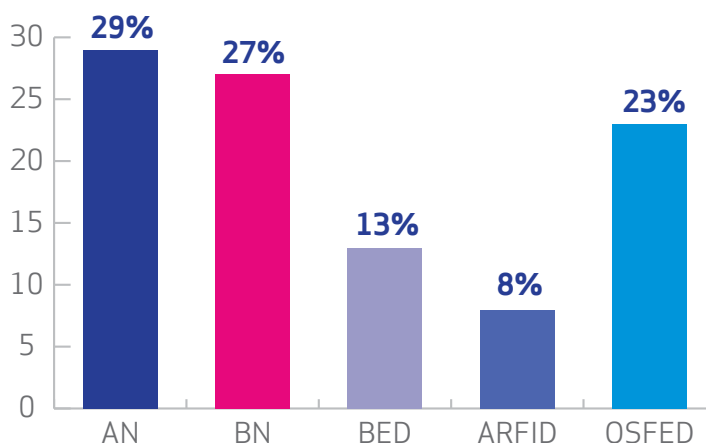


Figure 16 Eating Disorder Type

In the General Virtual Support Group, where people specified an eating disorder, we can see the breakdown, in Figure 16.





Email Support

Our email support service is a supportive listening ear and information service. Each email is read carefully and responded to, providing resources if requested, and always offering support and understanding.

'Alex' is a group of volunteers who write our email replies. The service is overseen and managed by a Bodywhys member of staff.

In 2025, our email support service took in and answered

1,815
support emails



Like a
helpline call
in an **email**

1

The email service provides different things to different service users. 'Alex' emails can be classified into three categories: information, a listening ear (often including information), and crisis. Figure 17 shows this breakdown.

People can write as often as they wish, and many of our emailers correspond with us over many years, with 57% of those in contact in 2025 writing to us on a repeat basis.

In Figure 18 we look at the breakdown of those who contacted the service.

Figure 17 Why did people email Alex?



46%

Listening Ear

52%

Information

2%

Crisis

Figure 18 Who contacted the 'Alex' email service?



58%

Self

28%

Family/
Friend

3%

Other

7%

Teacher/
Clinician

3%

Unknown

We do not always know the demographic information of those who are contacting 'Alex'. Figures 19 to 23 below, show the breakdown of the information when we do know. This relates specifically to those who are a 'person with an eating disorder'.

Figure 19 shows the breakdown by gender of the person with an eating disorder.

Figure 20 shows a breakdown of the age of those with an eating disorder on the email service.

Figure 19 Gender of person with an eating disorder

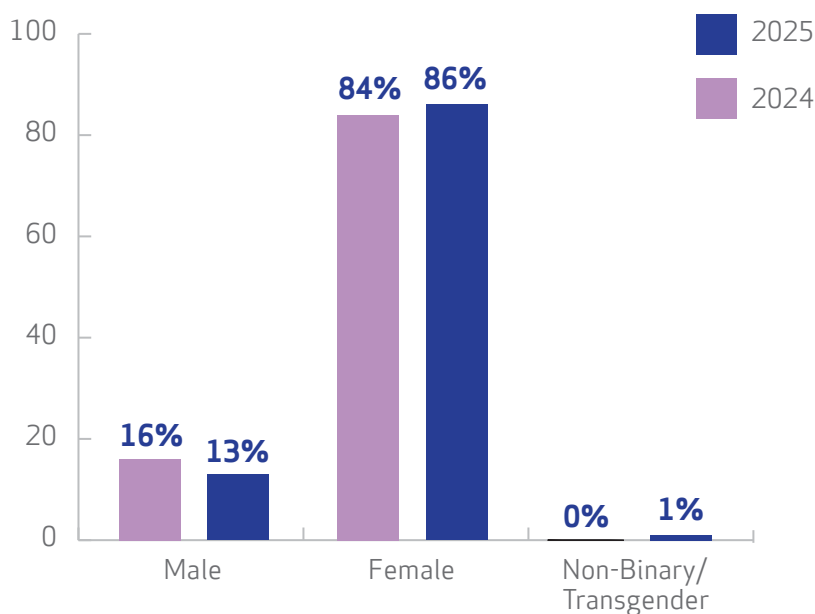
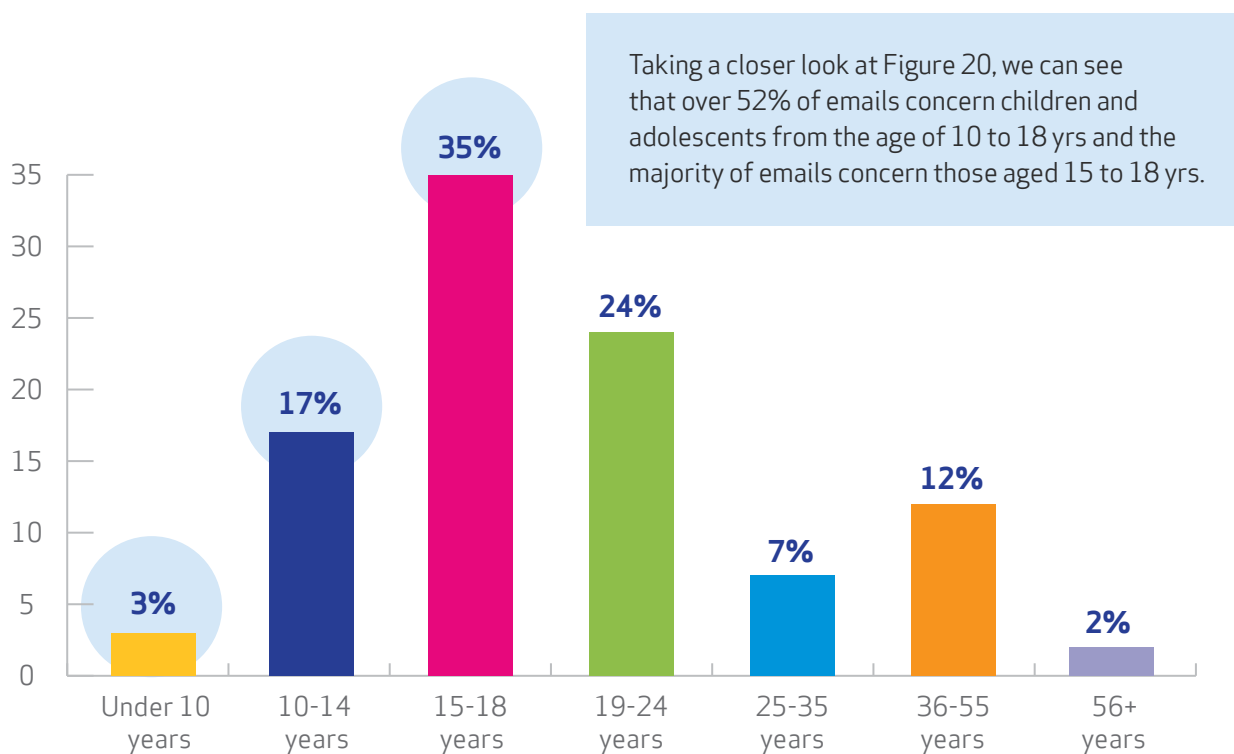
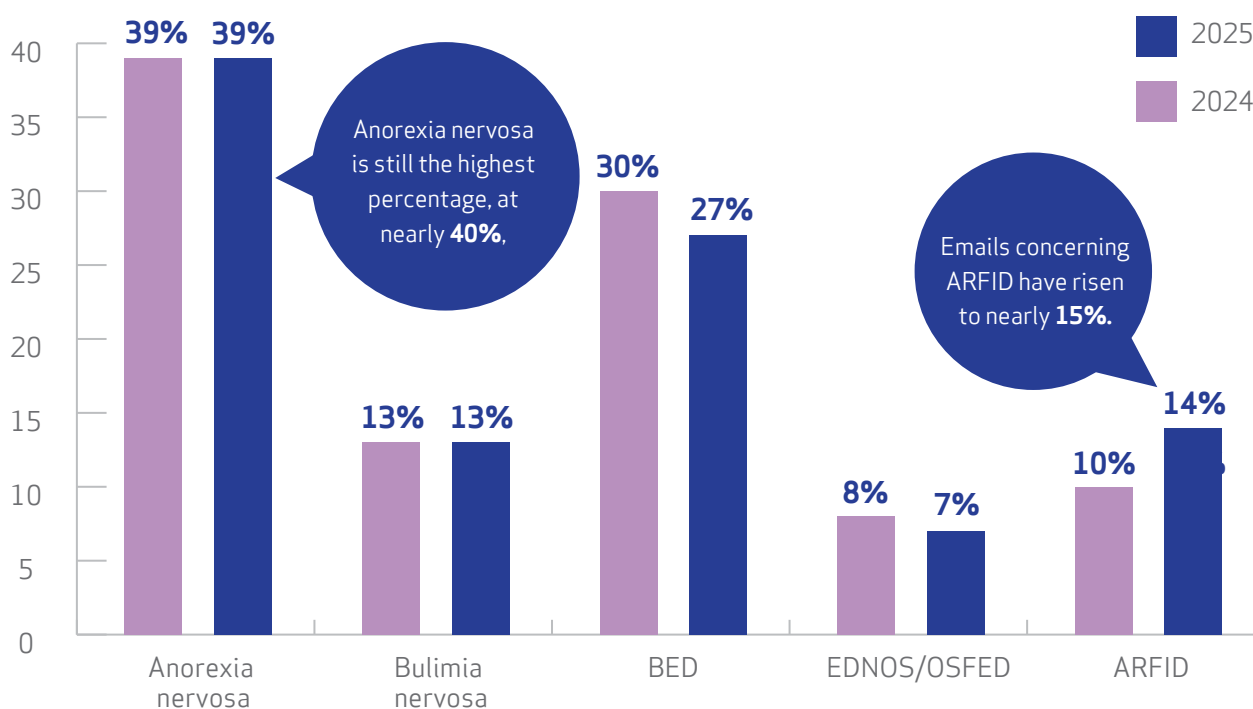


Figure 20 What age is the person with the eating disorder?



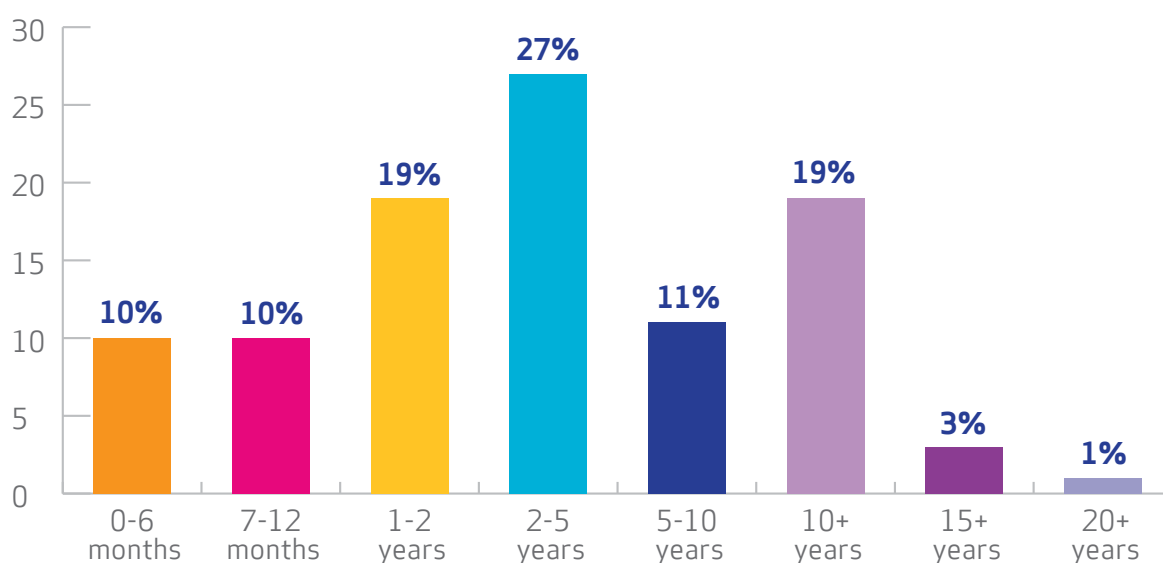
As with all our support services, people do not need to have a formal diagnosis to use our email support service, nor do we diagnose anyone who contacts us. In many emails we do not know if the person has received a particular diagnosis. However, where we know the type of eating disorder, Figure 21 shows the breakdown.

Figure 21 Type of eating disorder, where known



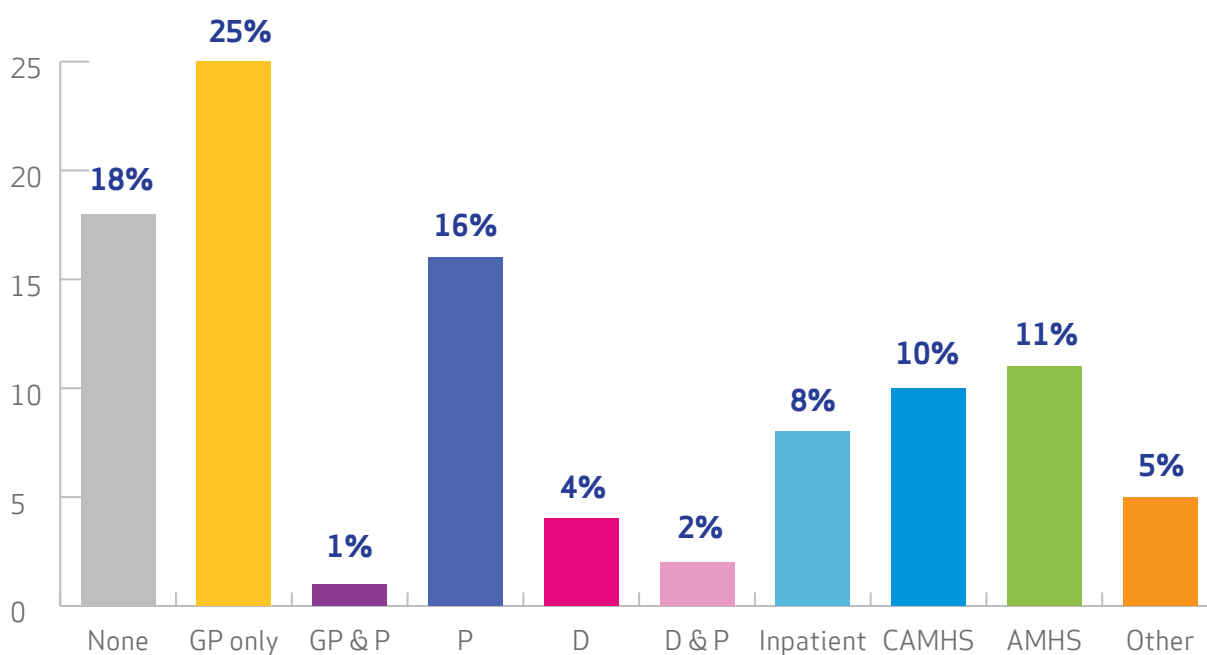
A number of emails indicated the duration of the eating disorder, as detailed in Figure 22. 23% of emails concerned a person who has been living with an eating disorder for over ten years, which we hope indicates that the email support service is meeting a need from those with a long-standing eating disorder.

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



We do not always know if a person is in treatment or not. Where we do know, Figure 23 shows the different types of treatment people were engaged with. As you can see in Figure 23, 18% were not in any formal treatment.

Figure 23 Type of treatment?



	None
	GP only
	GP and psychotherapy (GP & P)
	Psychotherapy (P)
	Dietitian (D)

	Dietitian and psychotherapy (D&P)
	Inpatient
	CAMHS
	AMHS
	Other

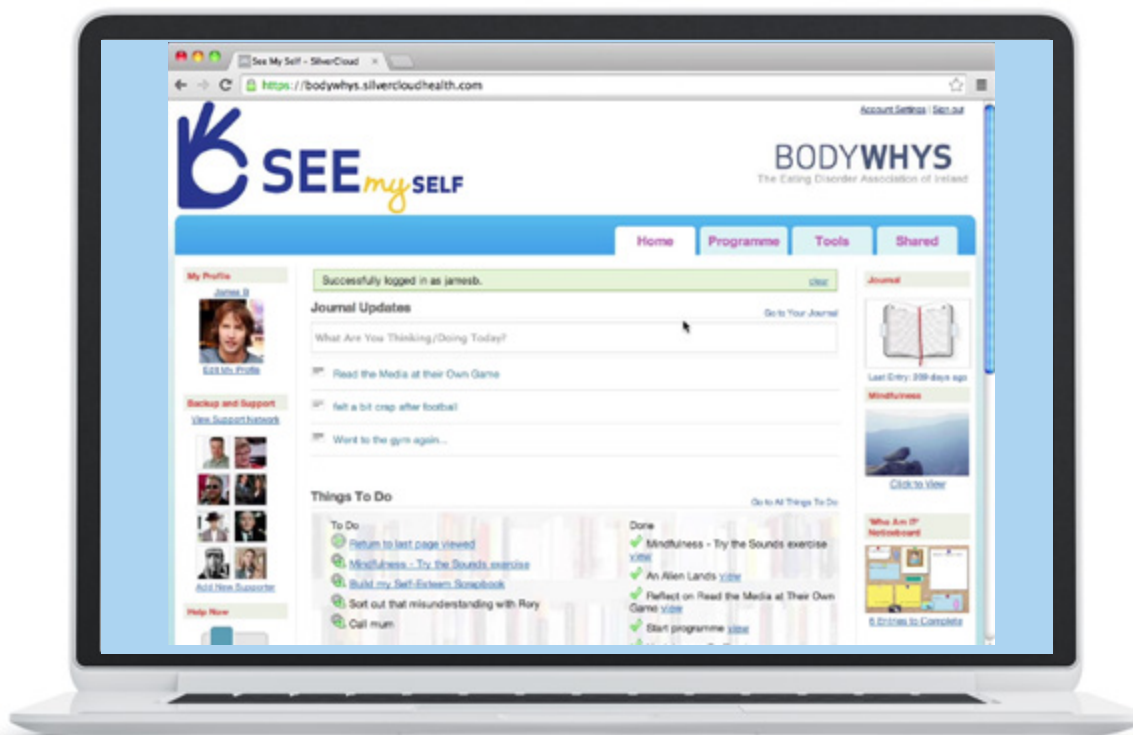


SeeMySelf Programme

SeeMySelf is an 8-week psycho-education programme designed for young people aged 15-24 focusing on self-esteem, body image and media, food and mood. 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, which encourages participants to reflect upon their views of topics covered. The service offers weekly email check-ins, support, and encouragement by trained Bodywhys volunteers.

8 people signed up for the **Seemyself** programme in 2025.





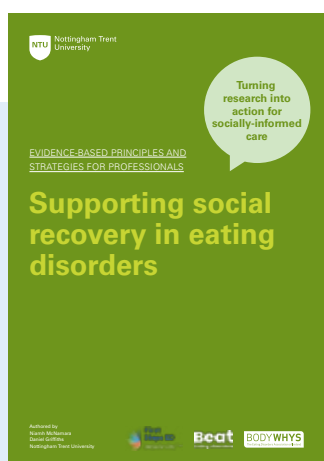
REConnect Programme

REConnect is a structured, online group programme designed to support adults recovering from eating disorders. It focuses on rebuilding social connections and fostering identity change—two key factors often overlooked in traditional treatment models.

Developed by researchers at Nottingham Trent University in collaboration with Bodywhys, REConnect is informed by **evidence** showing that social isolation and stigma are major barriers to sustained recovery.

In 2025, REConnect was facilitated by two trained Bodywhys volunteers. The programme consists of six structured sessions:

- 1 The Importance of Social Connection
- 2 Connection in Everyday Life
- 3 Talking about Your Eating Disorder with Others (or not)
- 4 Building a Support Network
- 5 Moving Out into the World – Building a Social Network
- 6 Bringing it All Together



A key principle that was central when developing the REConnect programme was that of 'curiosity'. By listening to what we have learned from people with lived experience, we tried to distinguish this programme, and the experience of taking part, from other such interventions by valuing the process of thinking about and discussing social connections, rather than formal goal setting focused on the future.

So often, the perfectionism that goes with an eating disorder, as well as the focus on the future and often, fear of the future, can impede a person's ability to be present. When developing REConnect, we addressed this by intentionally not focusing on goal setting but rather, focusing on taking part in the session. As such, the act of taking part is affirmed rather than any outcome that may be future focused.

"Practice taking the risk of taking care of myself...without the distraction of punishment or judgement or expectation of others"

(McNamara et al., 2021, p.57)

There were 10 places available in the pilot group in 2025, which were filled through self-referral via the Bodywhys website. The programme ran for 6 weeks from 19th March – 23rd April, with a follow-up session in June 2025. A total of eight individuals participated, with six attending four or more sessions. Two participants withdrew from the programme. Four participants attended all six sessions.

Participants shared their experience below.

"I really enjoyed connecting with the other participants and having the space to talk about what I am going through."

"I think I will try and be more open to connecting with people"

"Going through the REConnect sessions I had time to reflect on my feelings, and we had one session when we looked at a pie chart of our experiences with groups and then broke it down into its different layers of experience and that was really illuminating. I feel like I [will] use that as a template to understand what is happening and what has happened."

"Because I have isolated myself, I didn't always have the experience needed to consider some of the situations."





Family Support Package (FSP)

Supporting families is a central component of services delivered by Bodywhys. In 1995, when the organisation was established by a small group of parents, clinicians, and people with lived experience, the vision was to provide support to both people with an eating disorder and their families.

In 2025, Bodywhys provided carers with a free Family Support Package, working alongside the HSE, providing, supervising and implementing the support component to the NCP-ED’s Model of Care.

The primary focus of the Bodywhys FSP is to support the supporters. We know that supporting someone through recovery from an eating disorder can be a long and difficult process. Carers can feel isolated, hopeless, and frustrated, alongside unconditional love and hope. Our core aim, therefore, is to improve carers’ well-being and mental health as well as reducing their sense of isolation by building a community around them. This helps carers develop the resilience needed to support their loved one towards recovery. The benefits to carers, people with eating disorders and the wider health services are evident by the consistent uptake of services, and the feedback provided from carers, clinicians and people with an eating disorder themselves.

The Bodywhys FSP is free to avail of and is designed for carers who are supporting a person of any age, any eating disorder and any severity of illness. Looking at the demographics of those attending, we can see that carers are supporting people in many different situations.

Briefly, the FSP consists of:



Attendees

1	The Peer Led Resilience (PiLaR) family support programme	729
2	The Post-PiLaR support group	195
3	The New Maudsley Carer skills workshop series	94
4	The Regular Maudsley support group	77
5	Conversations with Carers	103
Total		1,198

Carers can also avail of our helpline, email support, and website resources throughout their time with us, as much or as little as they need.

One of the benefits of the partnership between Bodywhys and the HSE NCP-ED has been the shared learning, training and open exchange of knowledge and information between both. This means that our FSP supports the work of the HSE NCP-ED, ensuring that carers receive consistent information that supports their involvement with treatment services. Furthermore, the FSP gives carers safe, accurate and helpful information, offering insights into different situations that can arise both within and outside treatment, supporting carers to provide the most effective support for their loved one.

1 The Peer Led Resilience (PiLaR) family support programme



In 2025, the PiLaR programme was delivered by Christopher Cash and Harriet Parsons, to those supporting a person with an eating disorder.

The PiLaR programme is delivered online, over four weeks, with each week's session building on the knowledge from the previous week. Incorporating psychoeducation, support, practical advice and skills, the programme aims to help carers support their loved one towards recovery.



The programme continues to be developed and improved and in 2025 topics included were;

- ✓ Understanding an eating disorder as a coping mechanism
- ✓ The main types of eating disorders (including a new section on ARFID) and the mindset that accompanies each
- ✓ Common features including distorted body image, black and white thinking, 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
- ✓ 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 pathways, and how to think about whether treatment is working or whether questions need to be asked. How to ask questions of healthcare providers
- ✓ Managing relapse.

In 2025, we ran the PiLaR programme 6 times, with 729 people signing up to attend. Figure 24. shows the sign-ups per programme:

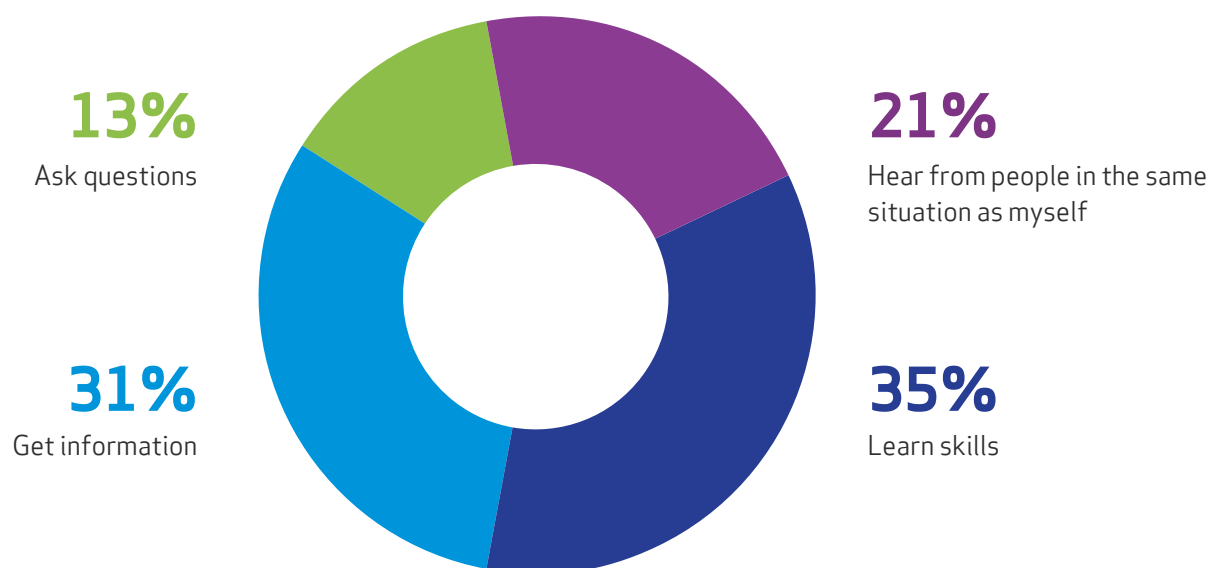
Figure 24 PiLaR sign-ups

Month	PiLaR Sign-ups
January	129
March	119
May	118
July	94
September	133
November	136
Total	729



We ask attendees to complete an anonymous survey form to gather demographic information. Due to this, the overall figures attending is higher than the total numbers counted for each question. The data below provides a snapshot of the PiLaR demographics from our November 2025 PiLaR, based on responses received from 97 participants.

Figure 25 Why are you attending PiLaR



Participants can select more than one option

Figure 26 What is your gender?

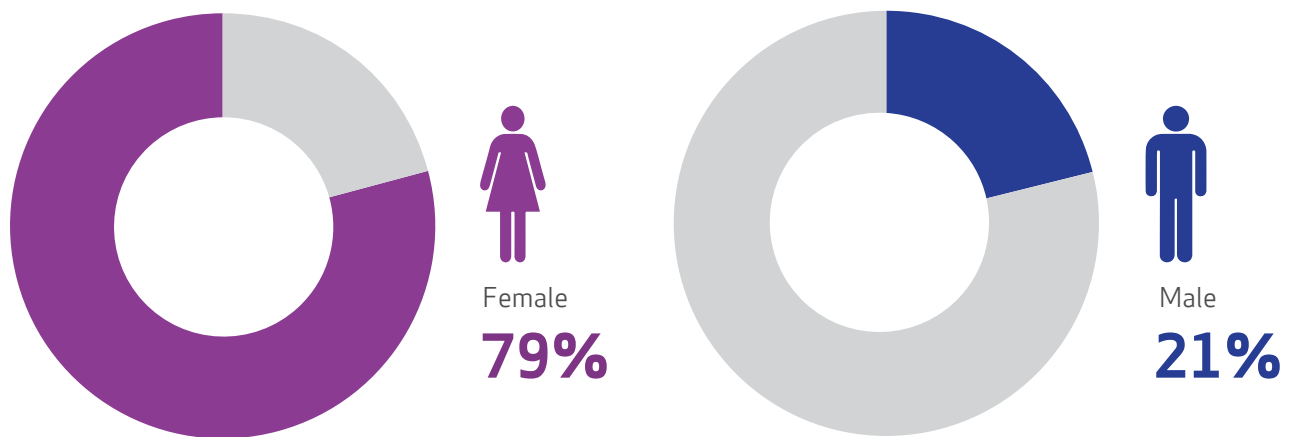


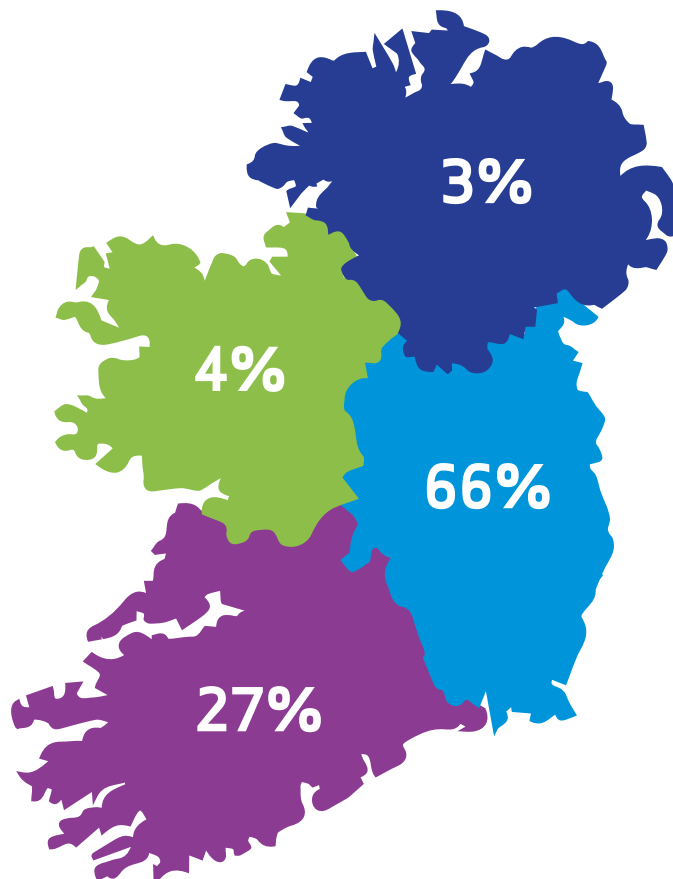
Figure 27 Where are you based?

Connaught 

Galway	3
Leitrim	0
Mayo	0
Roscommon	0
Sligo	1

Munster 

Clare	1
Cork	10
Kerry	4
Limerick	4
Tipperary	2
Waterford	5



Ulster 

Cavan	1
Donegal	2
Monaghan	0

Leinster 

Carlow	1
Dublin	34
Kildare	7
Kilkenny	2
Laois	1
Longford	1
Louth	1
Meath	8
Offaly	2
Westmeath	0
Wexford	0
Wicklow	4

Figure 28 Do you plan to take part in the PiLaR programme with other people you know?
(E.g. others in your household, family, friends, etc)

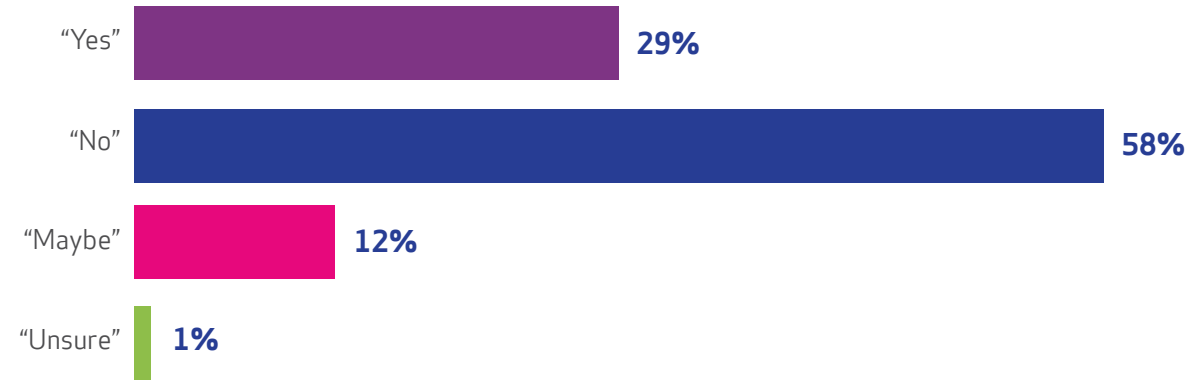


Figure 30 Who are you supporting?

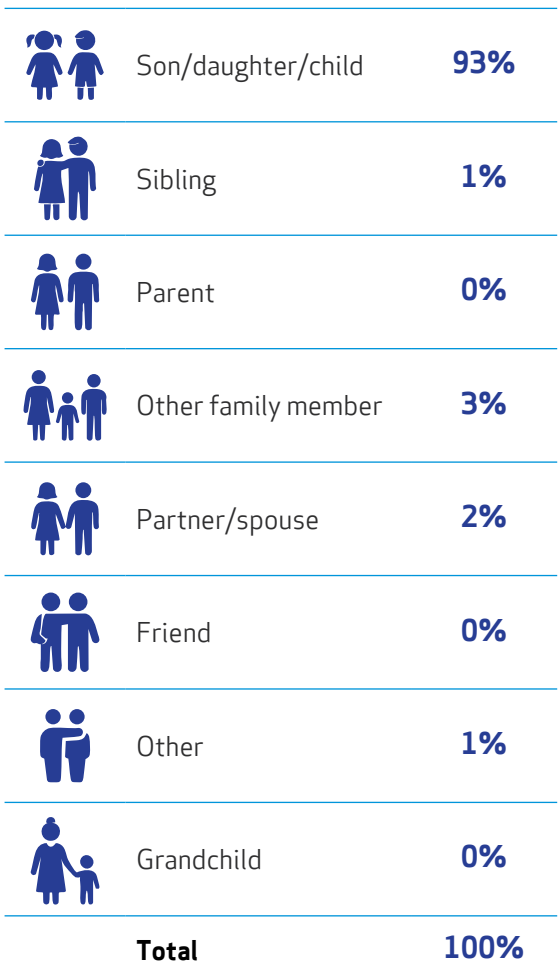


Figure 29 What is the gender of person you are supporting?

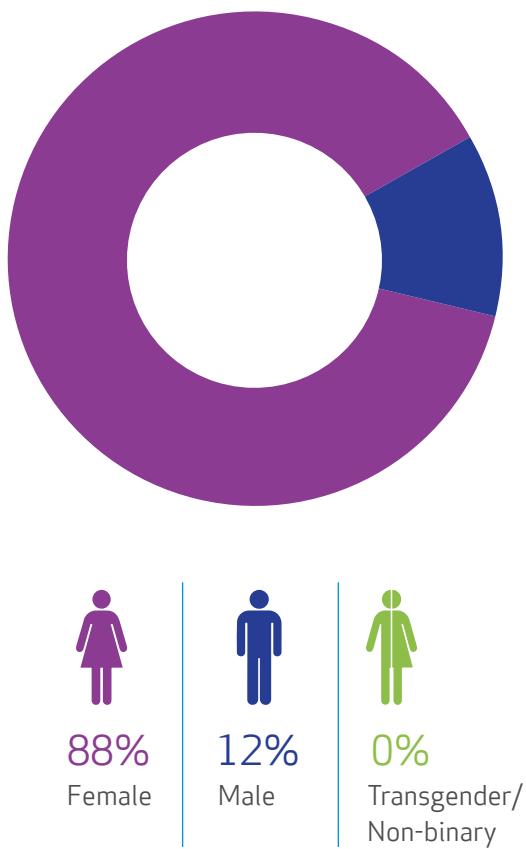


Figure 31 What is the age of the person you are supporting?

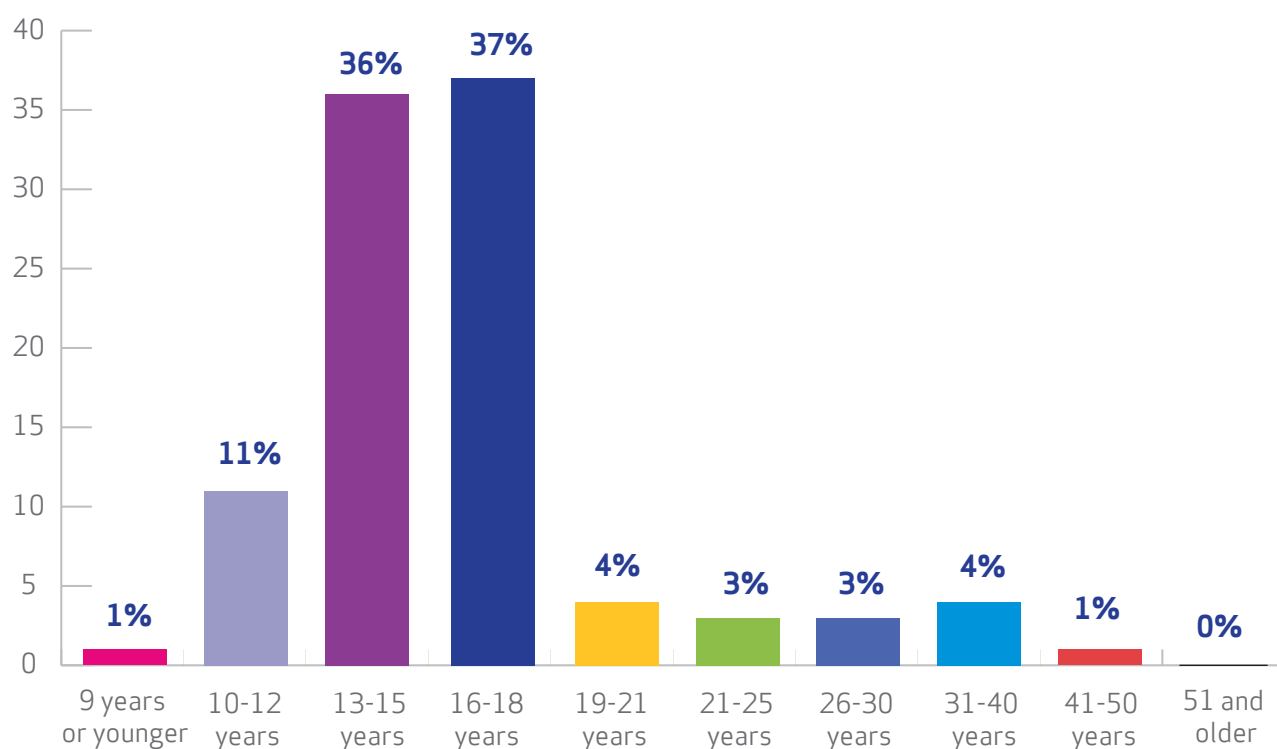


Figure 32 What type of eating disorder does the person you are supporting have?

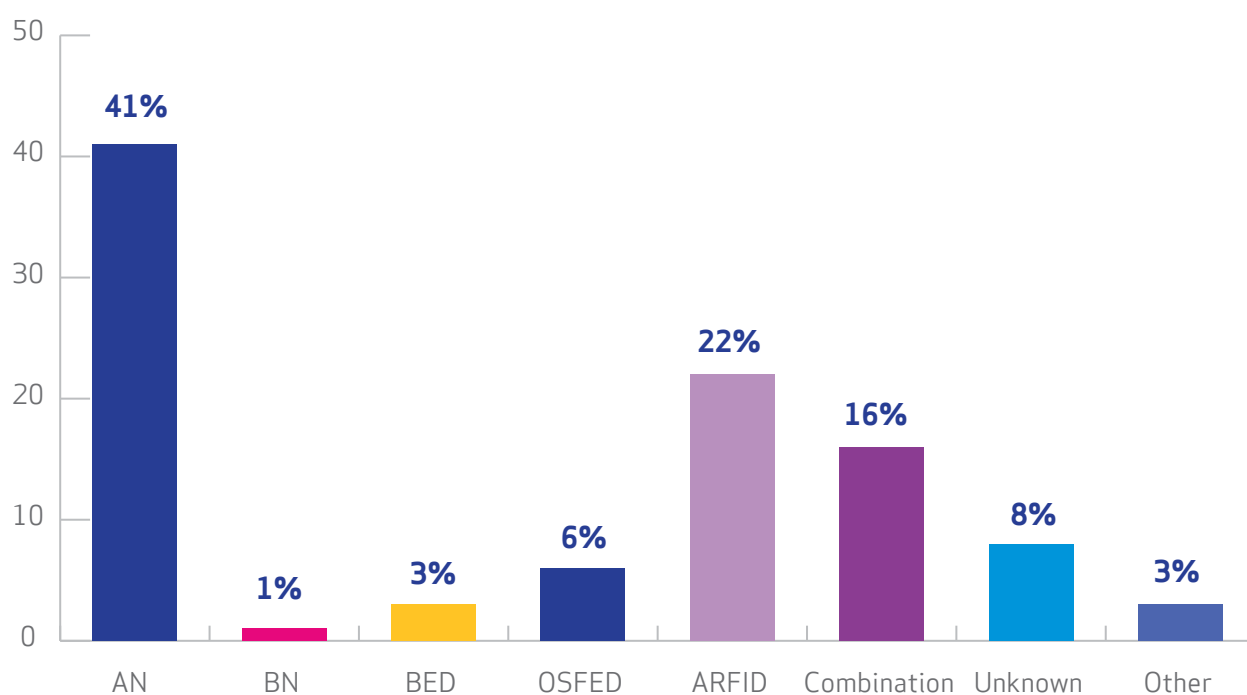


Figure 33 Where in the process is the person you are supporting?

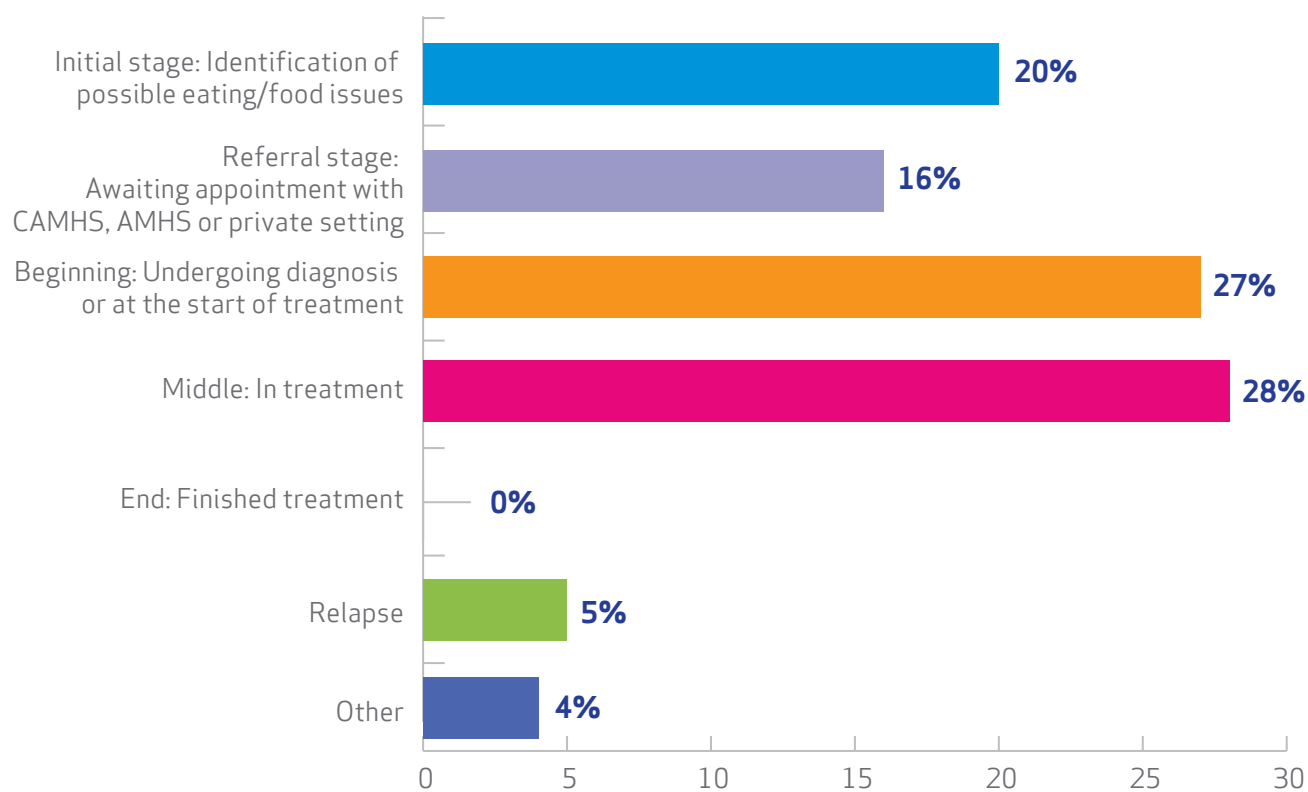


Figure 34 How long have they had an eating disorder?

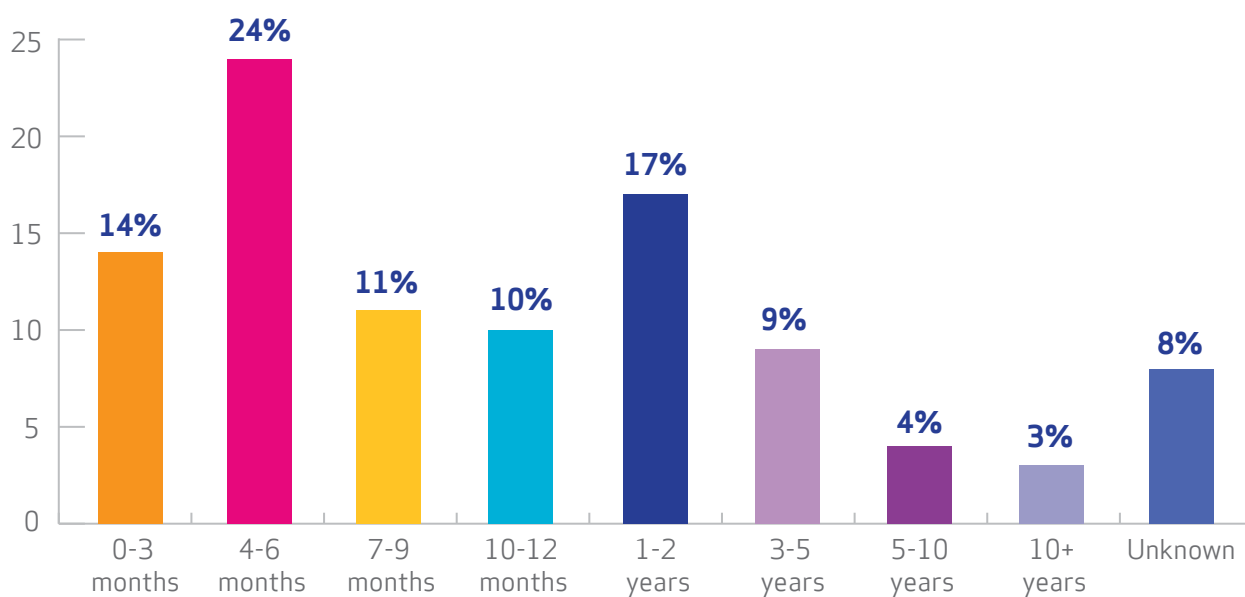


Figure 35 Are they currently engaged in treatment.



Figure 36 Due to the eating disorder, the person I support has...
(Participants can select more than one answer)

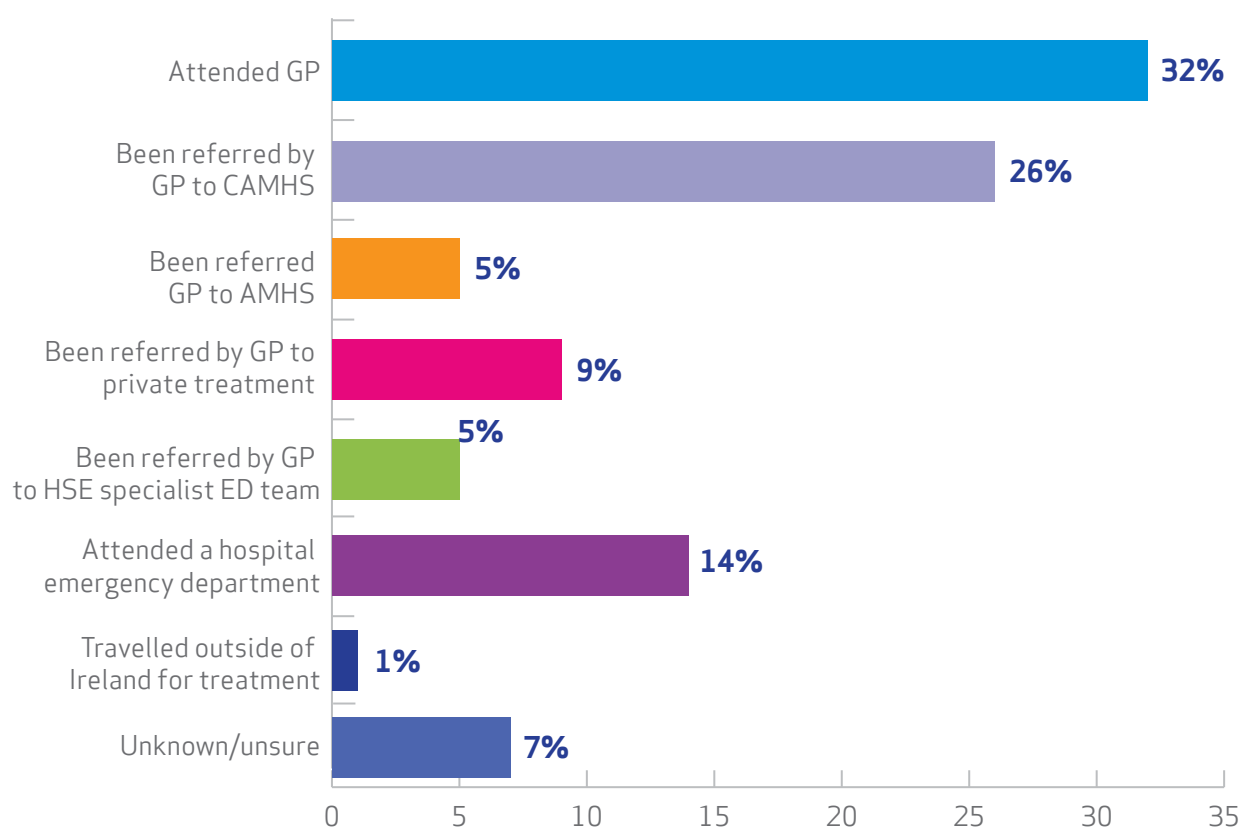


Figure 37 Which professionals has your person met with due to their eating disorder?

(Can select more than one answer)

	Number of responses	Percentage
GP	74	22%
Dietician	43	13%
Psychiatrist	38	12%
Clinical Psychologist	29	9%
General Nurse	25	8%
Specialist Nurse	21	6%
Counselling Psychologist	20	6%
Psychotherapist	13	4%
Counsellor	11	3%
Social Worker	11	3%
Unknown/Unsure	10	3%
Occupational Therapist (OT)	8	2%
Speech & Language Therapist (SLT)	7	2%
Guidance Counsellor/School Counsellor	7	2%
Art Therapist	5	2%
Other	3	%
Other Psychologist	2	1%
Gastroenterologist	2	1%
Total	329	100%



Figure 38 Is the person you are currently supporting taking part in other supports or other activity which is not directly 'treatment'?

For example: online support groups, helpline or email support from Bodywhys



At the end of each PiLaR Programme, we ask carers to complete **an anonymous follow-up survey**, to evaluate their experience attending. The following data reflects the combined information collected after all 6 PiLaR Programmes delivered in 2025.



We asked carers to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with 12 statements, on a 5-point Likert Scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree).

Across all twelve statements shown in Figure 39:

90%	of carers reported an improved understanding of eating disorders
82%	reported behavioural change
86%	reported that they now know where to seek information
79%	now know who to contact in difficult situations
87%	agreed that recovery is possible.



Figure 39 Experiences completing the PiLaR Programme (N = 189)



Although this data reflects the effectiveness of the PiLaR Programme in increasing knowledge, behavioural change, and hope, many carers (40%) do not report confidence in supporting someone with an eating disorder, and a large number of carers (84%) report their own mental health is being impacted by supporting for someone with an eating disorder. This highlights the need for regular, structured, on-going support for carers, in the form of our Family Support Package.

Finally, we ask carers, what, if anything, do they feel they have gained from taking part in the PiLaR Programme at this time.

Carers shared the following insights:

"A Positive outlook."

"Knowledge. Awareness. How to approach the subject of an ED. The importance of giving space to talk. Understanding that the ED is a coping mechanism. Identifying the differences between the Young Person & the ED."

"Support, ideas, strategies, empathy, a better understanding of the path to recover and approaches to experiment with, in overcoming challenges."

"It gave me an insight into what it is like to have an eating disorder. It also provided tools to deal with the person with the eating disorder and also their immediate family."

"A greater understanding. Felt calmer, less isolated, supported, helped me understand the ED & gave me hope, patience & greater resilience."

"To take a more gradual calm approach to helping my daughter. That it is more than thoughts just related to eating that she struggles with general decision making and to support her through that."

"A general understanding of eating disorders. A view on how people with ED's mind is thinking and a great set of tools on how to communicate with someone who has an eating disorder. The attention to detail in the programme is amazing, the examples are all extremely helpful and gives me and my family tools and examples of how to deal with certain situations and support other family members."

"Language is important, silence is an okay response, no answer is okay, you don't have to have all the answers."

"We are not alone, recovery is possible, better understanding of complexity of condition."

"Really helped with language to use and practical tools for dealing with the daily challenges of caring for my child, helped me understand her experience and collaborate with her in dealing with the ED."

"My husband and I attended together each week. It gave us much more information and understanding of eating disorders and how to support our daughter."

"More education around EDs and what to do and what not to do."

"Understanding, confidence in ability to address the problems, comfort in the group, knowledge of EDs."

"I think it helped me develop more empathy."

"Much better understanding of BED and how to support my son."

"I have gained an insight into the thought processes within my daughter's head- which has allowed me to understand certain behaviours and become less frustrated by them. I feel I now know how to broach conversations and gained comfort from recognising we are not alone."

"Very empowering to be taught about EDs and to use the empathetic words and phrases to help and try to understand and guide my person."

"Confidence in how to approach sensitive topics, conversations and difficult situations with the person with ED."

"Meet her where she is at. What is it like for her."

Testimonials

"I would recommend the Pillar Programme to any family/person embarking on a journey with a person experiencing an eating disorder. I feel much more confident supporting my young person now and it has also helped my own mental health in supporting as it does take a toll on your family."

"I would strongly advise anyone who knows someone with an eating disorder to do this course. It provides a real insight into what is going on in their head and how they perceive the world. We all wonder what to do, this course teaches you what to do."

"Well worthwhile. The programme has given me hope. I have learned so much and I am taking action to help my daughter."

"It's a wonderfully supportive programme that informs, educates and empowers you to meet this new challenge."

"This programme has really helped our family and empowered us as parents, practical helpful advice that you can implement immediately and that can really reduce the stress."

"You have given me so much strength to keep on supporting my child. So much strength in knowing I'm not alone. Thank you."

"Excellent programme so grateful it's there as little support out there for caregivers. It's so difficult and it really affects the whole family."

"I would definitely recommend the Pilar programme; it is a huge support and give you the confidence to help and support your person and to also help you understand and separate the ED from the person. I found it gave me much more confidence in how to approach mealtimes and how to diffuse tense situations. Wonderful programme and presenters were excellent and very non-judgemental."

"This training is excellent. It has given me the tools and language appropriate for speaking to my daughter. The ED is still extremely challenging, but at least we are not shooting in the dark."

"This is an excellent programme. Brilliantly and emphatically articulated by both speakers. Gives us confidence in dealing with our person. The one great lesson we learn is not to praise and appreciate the deadly dance with same. We are so immensely grateful for your extremely generous voluntary contribution to us as distraught grandparents. You have helped to give us hope."

"I joined the Pilar program while my daughter was in hospital receiving treatment for an eating disorder following admission to A&E. The course gave me relief, information and confidence to support my child. The Pilar course is invaluable to anyone supporting a person with an eating disorder. Thank you."



2 Post-PiLaR Support Group (PPSG)

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 large 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 three times per month and is open to anyone who has attended the PiLaR programme. In 2025, we trialled a new format, with one morning session dedicated to carers who have engaged with our services for over one year (the 'Regulars' group), and one morning session dedicated to those who have recently completed our PiLaR Programme (the 'Newcomers' group).

The group has limited places, and participants can talk to one another, share difficulties and experiences, and it is facilitated by the Family Support Services Team.

In 2025, we ran



24

morning sessions



11

evening sessions



Overall attendance was

195

people



PiLaR
PEER LED RESILIENCE

"The practical demands of supporting my daughter in her recovery journey mean I cannot always participate in Post-PiLaR Support Group, but the knowledge that Pilar is there matters deeply. It stands for me as a quiet and vital safety net. In crisis situations like ours that awareness alone provides reassurance, strength and a sense that we are not facing this alone."

(Post-PiLaR Support Group Participant)

Feedback on PPSG

"Pilar Bodywhys Support Group has made a real difference to me. The support has been consistent, compassionate and practical and I've learned valuable skills that have genuinely helped me."

"I've met lovely, genuine people through the group – everyone shares openly and supports one another. It truly feels like a safe, non-judgemental space where you can speak honestly and feel understood."

"Christopher is an excellent facilitator. He creates a relaxed, safe environment that encourages real contribution and meaningful discussion from everyone attending. I'm very grateful for the support and guidance I've received and continue to receive from this group."

"Participation in the post-Pilar support group was extremely beneficial. Hearing the experiences of other families and carers and being able to relate our own was very therapeutic and supportive. I learned a lot and I felt less isolated. The group was ably managed by Christopher whose professionalism, wisdom and kindness shone through. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this group."

"It's a tremendous support to meet with other parents who actually get the struggles you are facing. The support group helps you feel less alone and able to talk about things you might not be able to share with other people. Christopher is a brilliant facilitator, holding a non-judgmental, compassionate, gentle space where you feel safe to share the challenges you face supporting your loved ones. Knowing you are not alone is huge and Bodywhys has been such a support to me."

"The Pilar support group is my lifeline for supporting my daughter with anorexia, keep up the amazing work."



3 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 2025, we delivered the NMCS workshop series to 3 groups, bringing the total number of groups who have received the New Maudsley Carer training to 14 since we began in 2021.

Figure 40 shows the number of people who signed up to each series in 2025, and the number of participants who attended each workshop. Should our resources increase, we would be able to provide more groups so that no carer would have to wait for a Maudsley Group.

Figure 40 New Maudsley Carer Skills workshop series

New Maudsley Group Number	Sign-ups	Participants
Maudsley Group 12	33	20
Maudsley Group 13	25	13
Maudsley Group 14	36	28
Total	94	61

Note: Groups 1-3 were held in 2022, and 4-8 were held in 2023, 9-11 held in 2024.



4

Regular New Maudsley Carer Skills Support Group

Following completion of the 8-part workshop series, carers can opt-in to a Regular NMCS Support 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 2025 we delivered

11

sessions of the Regular New Maudsley Support Group



77

attendees overall



24

individual participants attending multiple times.

On average, individual participants attended 3 sessions. Notably, 6 individual participants (25%) attended 5 or more sessions, which highlights the demand for regular on-going support.

Feedback on the NMCS Workshop Series and the Regular Maudsley Support Group

"I appreciated the respectful atmosphere that was created, which allowed for open conversation without discomfort. The content was relevant, practical, and thoughtfully presented. Overall, it was a valuable and beneficial experience that I'm glad I attended."

"To have this service available, free of charge, for carers dealing with loved ones with Eating Disorders, is invaluable."

"The importance of speaking to people who are also caring for someone with an Eating Disorder, is that it helps me to see the patterns of behaviour that have become commonplace in our family life but are really not normal, but at the same time, you know you are sane, you are not alone and you can do it."

"It was like a helping hand pulling me up from tumultuous waters and guiding me through unknowns of eating disorders; I felt supported, listened to, understood and courageous to continue my care for the loved one."

"Navigating life with a person with an Eating Disorder is incredibly challenging, so to have the opportunity to discuss how best to deal with certain situations is a game changer. As a carer, I had already spent a few years educating myself and was amazed at how much more the programme taught me. The various workshops were insightful and interactive."



5 Conversations with Carers (CwC)

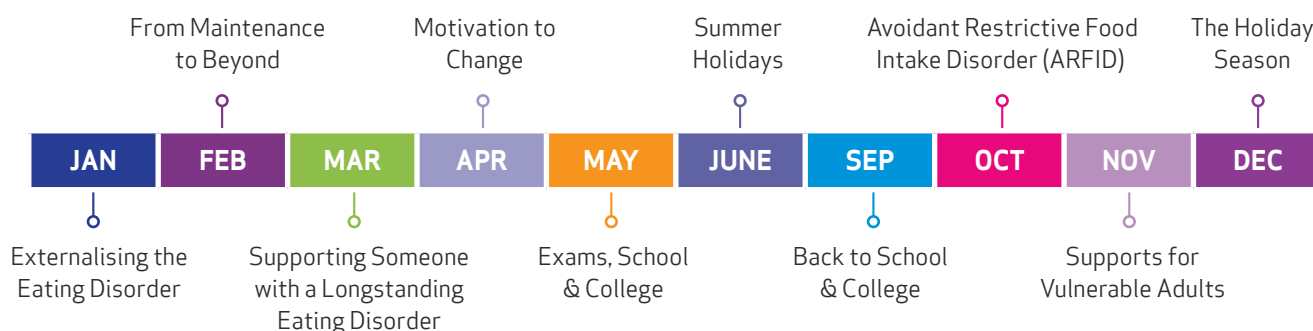
We launched the latest service in our FSP in September 2024, Conversations with Carers, a space for carers to come together and explore common themes that arise when supporting someone with an eating disorder.

Each session focuses on a specific theme related to supporting a person with an eating disorder. Carers think through the challenges that particular theme may cause and share what has helped and not helped, so that they have the opportunity to learn from one another. Each session lasts 1.5 hours and following an introduction to the theme by the facilitator, which

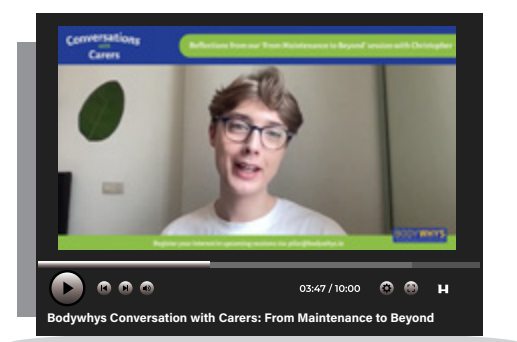
synthesises theory and research with feedback received from carers, participants engage with each other regarding the session's unique theme.

In 2025, we delivered **10 sessions of Conversations with Carers** and had **103 attendees**. This attendance comprises 44 individual participants attending multiple times (from 1 to 6 sessions). On average, individual participants attended 1-2 sessions in 2025. Notably, 30 individual participants (68%) attended only 1 session, which highlights the unique nature of this support group, as each session focuses on a specific theme.

Themes of 2025 have been:



In recognising the wealth of knowledge carers have in relation to supporting someone with an eating disorder, we then create accessible text and video resources following each session. The resources summarise the main themes that arose, helpful ideas for supporting, and answers to common questions. These [resources](#) are published on our website and social media.



Feedback on Conversations with Carers

"I find these sessions an enormous help, having the support of other carers and the opportunity to express your thoughts and concerns in a place of understanding is of real benefit to me."

"I found the Conversations with Carers to be a very helpful and supportive offering from Bodywhys. The topics covered are very relevant and the sessions are facilitated in a caring and warm manner. The conversations provide reassurance, encouragement and inspiration, both from the facilitator and the participants, and remind me of how much we can learn from one another in an open and supportive environment."



Eating Disorder Training for Professionals

One of Bodywhys' primary strategic objectives is to advocate for specialist healthcare provision for individuals affected by eating disorders. Over the past thirty years, the organisation has developed extensive expertise in this area. A core component of our work involves delivering free professional training and educational sessions to clinicians and allied health professionals. These sessions are provided across a variety of settings, including acute hospitals, community services, universities, residential care homes, and other charitable organisations.

In delivering this vital professional development, Bodywhys endeavours to enhance understanding of eating disorders among professionals, and emphasise the significance of appropriate language and skilled communication. The training focuses on the nuances of therapeutic support that are helpful for people with eating disorders and incorporates insights derived from lived experience, which is at the heart of these training sessions.

Currently, the following training talks and workshops are provided.

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 Someone / Supporting a Young 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:

- ✓ 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
- ✓ 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, do's and don'ts of communication
- ✓ Emotional coaching
- ✓ Common fears and anxieties
- ✓ Relapse.

D New Maudsley Carer Skills

2025 saw Bodywhys provide NMCS training to HSE clinicians working in community mental health teams and specialist NCP-ED teams. This is a 3-day training, in which, teams are trained to run their own workshops with carers. The first two days of this training are for clinicians, and the third day is with clinicians and families/carers, so that clinicians can see the workshop in 'action' and learn how to deliver the workshops to carers.

In 2025, Bodywhys continued to provide professional training in supporting and working with people with eating disorders, with a total of 52 training sessions delivered.

Table 1 lists the training sessions delivered in 2025. In total, 1,056 clinicians and allied health professionals received training.



Table 1: Training delivered in 2025

**Working Therapeutically with People
with Eating Disorders Training**



29 Trainings



535 Attendees

Date	Organisation / Location	Audience	Attendees
15/1/2025	HSE Dublin South, Kildare, and West Wicklow (CHO7)	New adult eating disorder team and clinicians	71
19/2/2025	Mater Private Hospital, Dublin	Psychiatric and psychology department clinicians	15
25/2/2025	HSE Southeast	Dietitians	30
15/04/25	Youth Work Ireland, Tipperary	Youth worker staff	3
15/5/25	HSE, Portlaoise General Hospital, Laois	Dietitians	15
27/5/25	Clover Hill Care Home, Roscommon	Social care staff at residential care home	10
30/5/25	HSE, Cork University Hospital, Cork	Dietitians	20
10/6/25	Maynooth University, Kildare	Student health services team	13
17/6/24	Pathways Ireland, Kildare	Social care staff from various residential care homes	11
19/6/2025	Spellman Centre RDRD, Dublin	Drug rehabilitation staff, family support and key workers	3
23/6/25	HSE, Children's Disability Network Team, Sligo	Autism and intellectual disability therapists, Children's Disability Network team	5
1/7/25	Save our sons and daughters (SOSAD) counselling service, Louth	Therapists and counsellors	9
1/7/25	Daffodil care services, Kilkenny	Social care staff at residential care home	10
3/7/25	WALK intellectual disability service, Dublin	Support staff for people with intellectual disabilities	15
10/7/25	Coolmine therapeutic community, Dublin	Drug and alcohol treatment therapists and counsellors	20
21/7/2025	Northern trust, Northern Ireland	Adult eating disorder service staff	7
22/7/25	St John Of God (SJOG) University Hospital, Dublin	Eating disorder team social worker	1
18/8/25	Daffodil care adolescent home services, Kilkenny	Social care team in residential care home.	15

Date	Organisation / Location	Audience	Attendees
21/8/25	Connolly Hospital (UCD) , Dublin	Trainee nurses	38
09/09/2025	Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Letterkenny	Trainee nurses	45
22/9/2025	University College Dublin, Dublin	Social Science, Nurses	40
25/09/2025	Children's Health Ireland, Dublin	Dieticians and clinicians	20
2/10/2026	DePaul Ireland, Dublin	Support staff, homeless services.	5
1/10/2025	Mater Private Hospital, Dublin	Registrars and psychiatric higher specialist trainees	20
06/10/2025	Ruhama	Various social care workers, HSE clinicians and charity workers	6
09/10/2025	HSE, North Kerry CAMHS	Multi-disciplinary team clinicians	9
17/11/2025	My Project Family Services Monkstown, Dublin	Staff, therapists and family support workers	9
20/11/2025	Regional Centre of Nursing & Midwifery Education - Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore, Offaly	Different HSE Clinical staff from various midlands public services.	65

Supporting someone / Supporting a young person with an eating disorder



13 Trainings



202 Attendees

Date	Organisation/Location	Audience	Attendees
21/1/2025	Royal College of Surgeons Ireland	Staff	20
4/2/2025	TUSLA	Foster carers	5
12/2/2025	Blessington Parents Council, Wicklow	Parents	15
3/4/25	TUSLA	Foster carers	5
04/09/225	Síol Blathú 24hr residential services, Meath	Social care staff	15
08/09/2025	Pathways adolescent residential care services, Kildare	Social care staff	15
3/10/2025	TUSLA, Navan	Foster carers	6
16/10/25	DMC Children's disability service	Therapists and family support workers	20
22/10/2025	The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) Childline	Helpline volunteers, staff	25
11/11/2025	Donegal Education and Training Board	Teaching staff	15
19/11/2025	PMV Trust residential services	Social care residential staff	31
27/11/2025	Solas Og, Cope Galway Domestic Abuse service	Residential and non-residential, family support and individual support staff	10
09/12/25	Odessey social care residential homes	Social care residential staff	20

New Maudsley Carer Skills Training



4 Trainings



106 Attendees

Date	Organisation	Format	Audience	Attendees
23/1/2025	Royal College of Surgeons Ireland	3 day training	Galway eating disorders teams and clinicians	30
24/3/2025	TUSLA	1 day training	Louth Meath CAMHS/AMHS	25 clinicians (20 CAMHS & 5 AMHS)
24/9/2025	Blessington Parents Council, Wicklow	3 day training	Limerick, North Tipperary, Clare CAMHS	30
4/10/2025	Bodywhys	2 day training	Carers	21

Other talks, psychoeducation and specialist training



6 Trainings



218 Attendees

Date	Topic	Organisation	Audience	Attendees
30/1/2025	Eating disorders in the perinatal period	Healthcare Conferences UK	Clinicians	30
27/2/2025	Bodywhys, Supporting people affected by eating disorders in Ireland	St. John of God Eating Disorder Service	Families	10
20/10/2025	About Bodywhys	Ballsbridge College of Further Education	Staff	25
21/10/2025	ADHD and eating disorders	ADHD Ireland	General public	71
26/11/2025	Understanding eating disorders and Bodywhys supports	South West Inner City Child & Family Support Networks (CFSN)	Social workers and family support workers	22
04/12/2025	Understanding eating disorders and referral process	Carlow South East Technological University (SETU)	Social care students	60

Feedback from those who attended professional training in 2025:

'A huge thank you to Bodywhys for an outstanding day of training! Your expertise, energy, and commitment to excellence made learning both impactful and enjoyable. We leave inspired, empowered, and ready to put these skills into action.'

'We continue to use the excellent educational literature created and distributed by Bodywhys in our clinics and are pleased to have these on hand for relatives and carers. Many thanks again to Bodywhys for all your strong links and services throughout the years.'

'Christopher was an amazing instructor and his information has greatly helped our staff to have a better understanding of eating disorders and the behaviours that come with them'

'It was such an informative insightful talk, delivered in a very engaging, empathetic way. We could have listened to you for hours more. Thank you again for taking the time to visit and present to us'

'The foster carers provided some amazing feedback. They found it very insightful and really enjoyed the talk' - TUSLA

'It was really an excellent session. Hopefully we can repeat it in the new year as there is a definite need for this education'

'Thank you so much to have made the trip to Galway to deliver the training, it was brilliant, I think in-person has more scope for conversation. From speaking with the group that completed the training, they found it very beneficial and really enjoyed it. They felt it was very relevant to have the knowledge around this and supporting the people we work with'



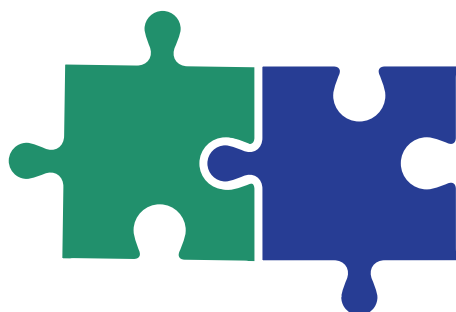
Bodywhys and the HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (HSE NCP-ED)

2025 saw the continued successful partnership between Bodywhys and the HSE NCP-ED. We attended monthly oversight meetings together with the HSE NCP-ED and Dr. Aoife O'Sullivan, the Primary Care representative. These meetings are a fruitful way of sharing updates and information so that the partnership can continue to grow and enable Bodywhys to meet the needs of those with eating disorders being treated within the NCP-ED. At the HSE NCP-ED Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW) webinar, Bodywhys invited Dr. Niamh McNamara to present on the REConnect Programme which was piloted by Bodywhys in 2025.

Bodywhys would like to thank Rhona Jennings (Programme Manager), and Dr. Michelle Clifford (Clinical Lead) for their expertise, and collaboration during 2025. As Dr. Clifford steps away from her position as clinical lead, we would like to acknowledge the extensive developments that have come to fruition under her leadership, namely the establishment of eight new specialist eating disorder community teams, and the growth of the wider network of clinicians who have been trained in specialist eating disorder interventions, in particular the roll out of Family Based Treatment training. Dr. Clifford leaves the NCP-ED in an excellent position to move forward into the next phase of development including the review of the 2018 Model of Care.

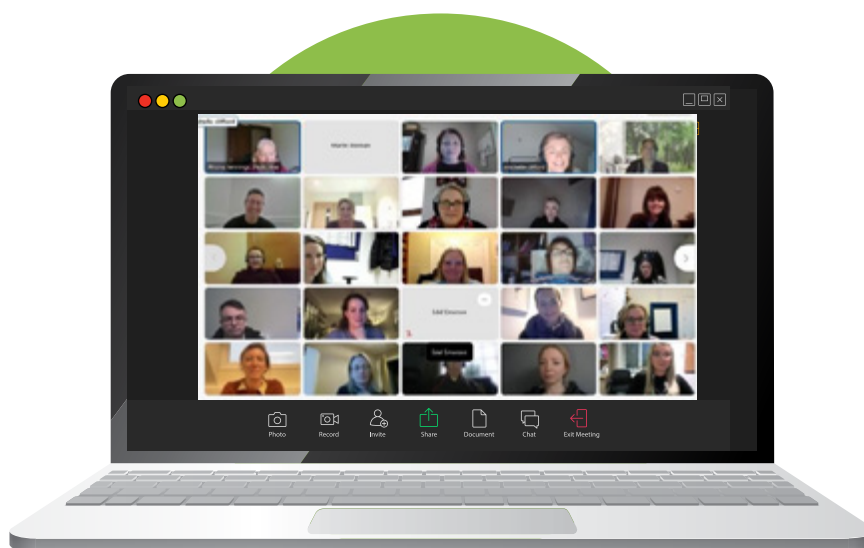
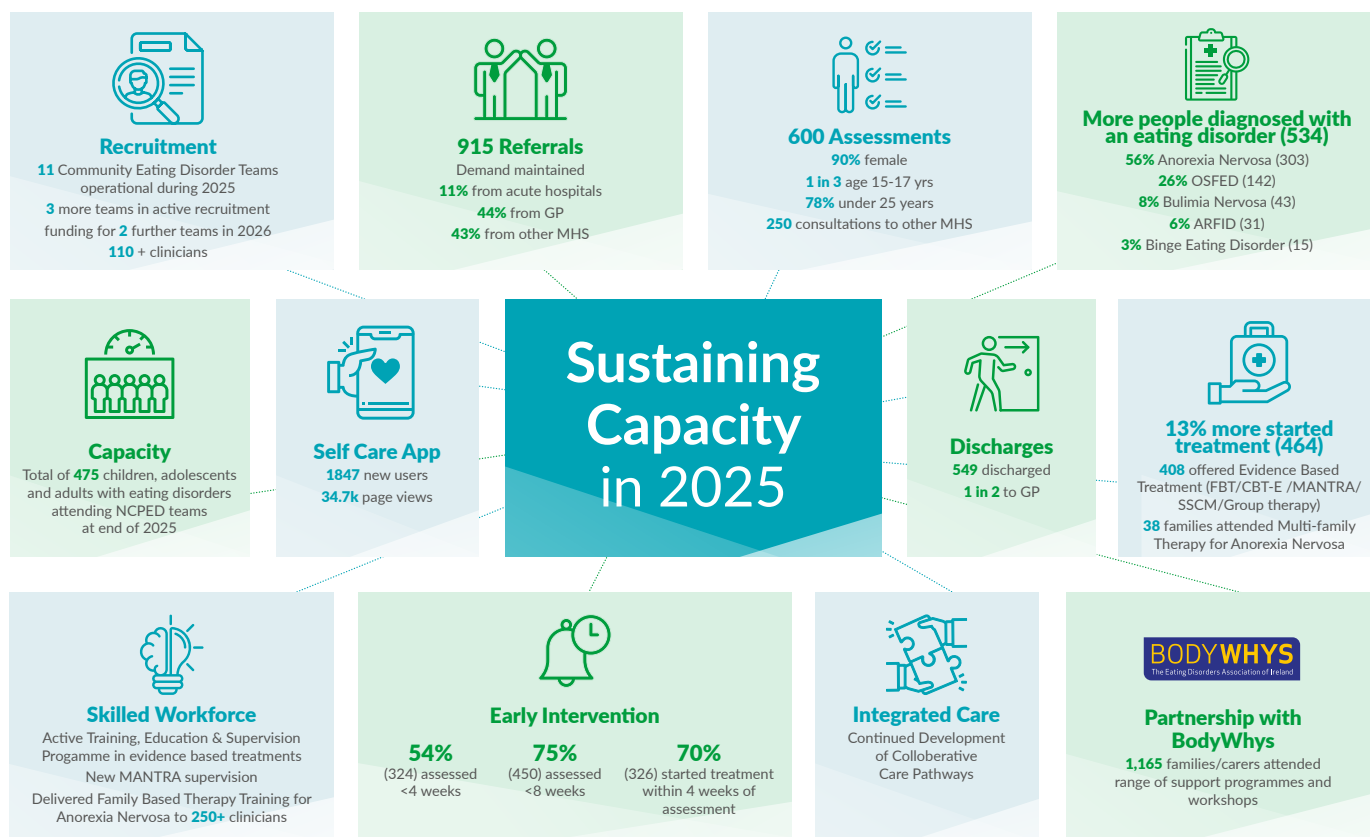
One of the important collaborations between the NCP-ED and Bodywhys has been the establishment of the Expert by Experience (eBe) group, ensuring that patient and carer perspectives inform policy, service design and implementation. At the end of 2025, the group had 49 members and had met twice with Bodywhys and the NCP-ED during 2025. The eBe group contributed invaluable feedback on the content of the eating disorder section of the HSE website.

In April 2026, Harriet Parsons met with Minister Mary Butler and lived experience advocate, Amanda Lynch, to discuss services for adults with eating disorders, and the need for increases in adult inpatient beds. Amanda is a member of the eBe group and tirelessly advocates for improvements in services for people with eating disorders, especially adults. We cannot stress enough the value in having the voices of the eBe group heard at a political level to work towards meaningful change on the ground.



Harriet Parsons, CEO, Bodywhys, Minister Mary Butler, Amanda Lynch, eBe group member.

National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders





Youth Development

Youth Development



Dr Fiona Flynn
Youth Development Manager



Molly Nee
Regional Youth Development Officer

Throughout 2025, the Youth Development team led a broad range of activities focused on promoting positive body image, increasing awareness and understanding of eating disorders, and developing evidence-informed educational resources for schools. The work combined programme development, research engagement, teacher training, youth participation, and national media outreach.

A key focus during the year was the development and launch of the Bodywhys 'Inside Out' post-primary school programme. The programme was designed with the objective of improving body image, promoting awareness of eating disorders and the supports available, and providing teachers with a user-friendly educational resource to incorporate into SPHE lessons to address these sensitive topics with students. The development of the programme involved collaboration with teachers, researchers, youth organisations, and young people themselves to ensure that the final materials were practical, evidence-informed, and relevant to students.

Development of Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme

The Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme builds upon the success of the previous #MoreThanASelfie programme, which was developed through a comprehensive, multi-stage research process involving educators, young people, and key stakeholders in education and mental health. The research, conducted in 2018, was funded by the Irish Research Council in partnership with Maynooth University and the Centre for Mental Health and Community Research (CMHCR) at Maynooth. Its aim was to develop and evaluate a school-based intervention focused on promoting positive body image and social media literacy among young adolescents.

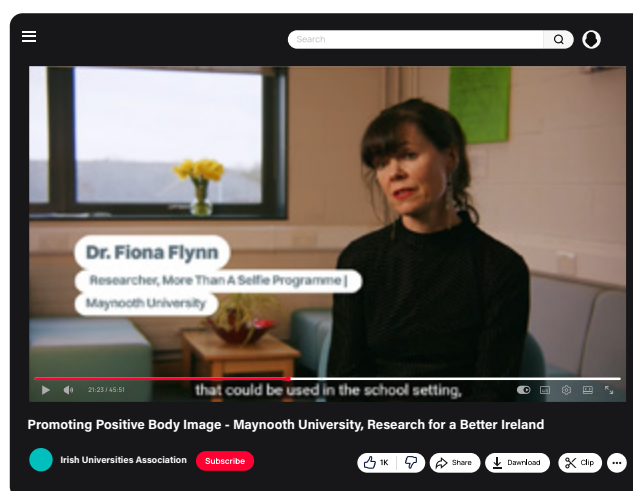


The *#MoreThanASelfie* programme was tested in a selection of schools nationwide and the **findings** indicated promising improvements in body image and enhanced media literacy amongst participating young people. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 88% of participating students reporting that they enjoyed the programme and would recommend it to a friend or sibling and 91% of participants across all schools reporting that the programme was 'good for their class.'

Bodywhys '*Inside Out*' programme was developed through a similar engaged research process, involving focus groups and semi-structured interviews with educators (including post-primary school principals, guidance counsellors and SPHE teachers). These stakeholders participated at each stage of programme development, ensuring the resources are appropriate and practical for classroom implementation. A total of twelve educators contributed to this process.

Young people were also involved in each stage of the programme development process to ensure the resources are engaging and relevant. In total, 85 young people participated in the research process, including focus groups organised with Foroige and within schools, as well as semi-structured interviews with young people aged 16 to 21 through Comhairle na n'Og, Spunout, BeLong To, and the Bodywhys Youth Panel.

Both educators and young people highlighted the importance of high quality and relevant video content to promote discussion and to convey expert messaging in an accessible way. Taking on this key aspect, Bodywhys was delighted to work with award winning documentary maker, Alan Bradley, in the development of all video content for the new programme.



Molly Nee, Bodywhys Youth Development Officer, filming Bodywhys '*Inside Out*' programme in July 2025

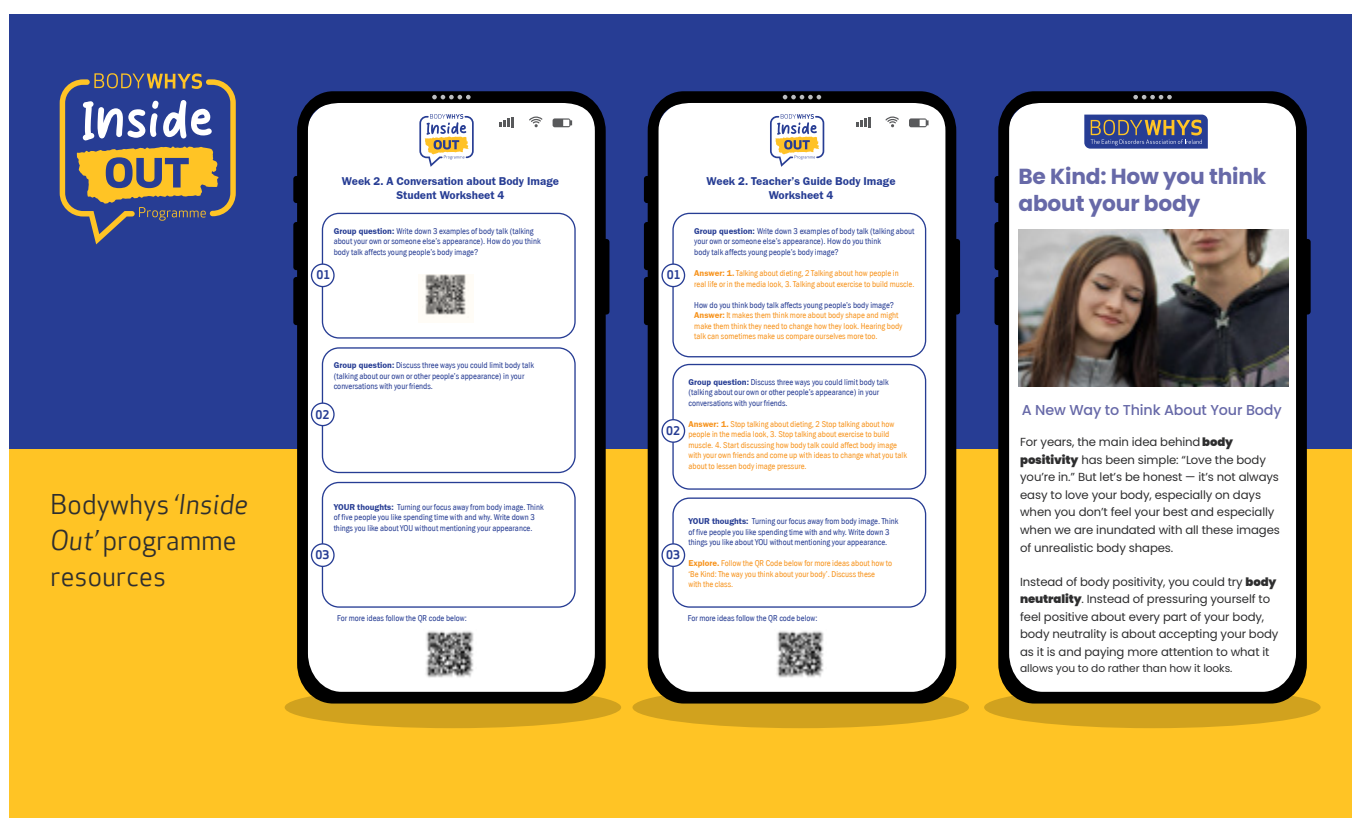


Filming Bodywhys '*Inside Out*' programme in July 2025

About the Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme

The Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme provides teachers with structured resources to facilitate classroom discussions on issues relating to body image, eating disorders, and overall well-being. Designed for integration within the Junior Cycle SPHE curriculum, the programme's materials are age-appropriate, evidence-informed, and designed to empower both teachers and students to engage with these important topics safely and confidently. The content combines expert knowledge, lived experience stories, and interactive classroom activities to promote open, respectful conversations about body image, eating disorders and mental health. It includes comprehensive teacher guides, question prompts, and suggested answers.

Consistent with the #MoreThanASelfie programme, the lessons incorporate evidence-informed approaches such as cognitive dissonance activities to enable students to challenge unrealistic media ideals, media and social media literacy exercises to promote critical thinking in relation to media messaging, media techniques used pre and post-production and discussion in the peer environment to effect attitude and behavioural change. The lessons also feature psychoeducational content to improve awareness of eating disorders, covering symptoms, causes, and progression, as well as skill-building components to support early identification of risk factors and help-seeking.



Each session includes engaging videos, guided discussions, reflective worksheets, and additional resources available on the www.bodywhysbodyimage.ie website, providing students with a range of relevant information and support.

Launch of Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme

The new Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme was officially launched on 15th October 2025 at Europe House, Dublin. The event was attended by young people, post-primary educators and representatives from partner organisations such as Foroige, Belong To, Spunout, and Comhairle na n'Og. That same day, resources on www.bodywhysbodyimage.ie were launched, links were shared on social media via Bodywhys and partner organisation channels and the programme became accessible to teachers nationwide.



(L-R) Conor Nolan, Ciara Regan (Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme lived experience participants), Fiona Flynn (Bodywhys Youth Development Manager), Harriet Parsons (Bodywhys CEO), Shriya Mishra (Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme youth contributor), Julie Lee (Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme lived experience participant).



(L-R) Jospeh Ingersoll (Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme Production Team), Fiona Flynn (Bodywhys Youth Development Manager), Alan Bradley (Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme Director), Harriet Parsons (Bodywhys CEO).

The 'Inside Out' programme attracted significant national media interest, reflecting widespread recognition of the need for a programme to promote awareness of eating disorders, positive body image, and to improve social media literacy. Following the launch of the programme, Fiona was invited to speak about the programme on Newstalk, Flirt FM, Connemara FM, LMFM, Kildare FM, Spin1038, Galway Bay FM, South East Radio Wexford, and to newspapers including the Irish Independent and Irish Examiner. During these appearances, she highlighted its objectives, spoke about body image and eating disorders in young people and outlined key ways parents and teachers can support young people.

Bodywhys 'Inside Out' Programme Impact

Following the launch of the programme...



...early metrics indicated **strong engagement from schools**, with the programme and resources accessed by teachers



342
times

to be
delivered
to

27,368
junior cycle students



Teacher feedback on the new resources has been very positive:

"You have thought of everything. I can't wait to use these resources with my class".

"It's so relatable - it's all so relevant and so important - really well done".

"It's so needed - it's one part of the SPHE programme that we don't really do - there's not a lot of resources on body image or eating disorders".

"It's incredible I think this will be really brilliant in classrooms with boys and with girls"



Further research on the Bodywhys 'Inside Out' Programme will be conducted in 2026 at a cross selection of schools nationwide.

This will be completed in collaboration with Maynooth University and the Centre for Mental Health and Community Research and with support from Miguel Hernández University, Spain and the CREA – Emotional and Eating Recovery Center in Alicante.

Teacher training webinars for schools

In addition to programme development, teacher engagement and training remained an important component of our youth development work in 2025.

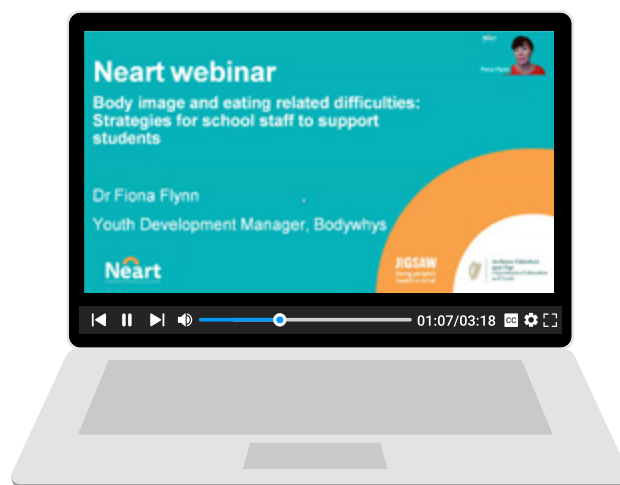
32  nationwide attended live webinars throughout the year, and recordings were circulated widely.
primary schools

Primary school teacher training: In January, May and September, Fiona delivered three webinars aimed at primary school educators and support staff on using Bodywhys' 'Happy To Be Me' primary school resources and fostering positive body image within the classroom. A total of 32 schools joined the live webinars.

208  teachers participated in live webinars throughout the year, and recordings were circulated widely.
post-primary school

Post-primary school teacher training: In January, February and April, Fiona delivered teacher training webinars for post-primary school teachers, entitled 'Promoting Positive Body Image & Awareness of Eating Disorders in Secondary Schools' and 'Understanding Eating Disorders'. Over 130 post-primary teachers joined Bodywhys for a live webinar. Recordings were also circulated to teachers on request.

In **November** and **December**, two further [teacher training webinars](#) were delivered by Fiona in collaboration with Neart and Jigsaw with 79 post-primary school teachers participating in the live sessions. Recordings of the webinars were also made accessible through Bodywhys and Neart websites, extending their reach to a further 48 teachers. The sessions were well received by attendees, as demonstrated through feedback collected by Neart. Teachers reported that the webinars were well delivered and beneficial, feeling better equipped to support students' wellbeing, and indicated a high likelihood of implementing changes in their practice as a result of their participation.



Number of teachers accessing resources and potential reach

The Bodywhys 'Happy To Be Me' programme was accessed by:

108 across the country
Primary school teachers in 2025, reaching
a total of

7,458
students



The Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme was accessed:

342 from Oct - Dec
times 2025 with
intended use with

27,368
Junior Cycle students



School talks, workshops and youth events

In total this year, the Youth Development team engaged with approximately **13,910** young people through school talks, workshops, webinars and youth events.

Figure 41 Number of young people reached in 2025



School talks

The Youth Development team delivered 31 in-person 'Be Body Positive' school talks across schools and youth organisations in Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow and Cavan during 2025, reaching approximately:



3,098
students



Workshops

In **March** and **August**, Molly delivered two body image workshops with Ballyfermot Star, a registered charity that provides non-judgmental support, guidance, and education to individuals with problematic substance use, their families, and the community. The feedback received was positive, and following the workshop in March, a subsequent session was requested in August.

Student webinars

In **January** and **February**, Fiona delivered two webinars for post-primary school students nationwide, titled 'Understanding Eating Disorders' and 'Let's Talk Body Image'. Over 50 schools joined live, reaching an estimated 1,250 students, and recordings of webinars were made available to teachers for use in classroom settings throughout the year, further increasing their reach. Additionally, Molly delivered two further webinar sessions to Youthreach centres in Limerick (March) and Waterford (September).

Youth events

The Youth Development team attended various events throughout the year, as shown in Table 2, with over 9,550 young people attending the events.

Table 2 Youth Events Attendance

When	Title of event	Organisation & Location	Attendance	Format
February	Wellness Month	Whitewater Shopping Centre, Co. Kildare	400	In person
March	Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) Career Day	Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Letterkenny	4,000	In person
	International Women's Day Fair	Claremont Stadium, Co. Meath	350	In person
September	Transition Year Show	The Curragh, Co. Kildare	4,500	In person
October	Cycle Against Suicide congress	Cycle against suicide	300	In person



Information stand at the Whitewater Shopping Centre in Newbridge in September 2025



Molly at the International Women's Day fair in Claremont Stadium, Navan in March 2025

At the TY show in **September** 2025, young people enthusiastically took part in co-creating posters on the topics of “How to Lessen Social Media Pressure” and “Ways To Be More Body Positive.” Conversations throughout the day showed just how attuned young people are to the impact of body image on their lives.



Molly at the TY show in the Curragh Racecourse, Kildare in September 2025



Bodywhys body image stickers developed for the TY show

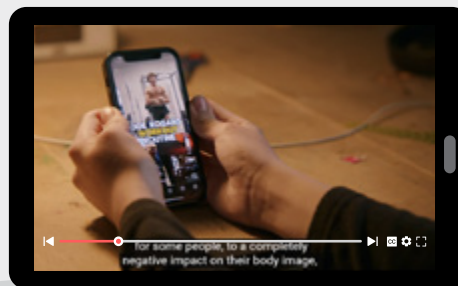
Bodywhys Youth Panel (BYP)

The Youth Development team continued meetings with the Bodywhys Youth Panel (BYP) in 2025. This year, the BYP grew to 20 members aged 16-24 from across the country. The BYP are instrumental to the work of the Youth Development team, providing an essential youth voice and perspective. They reviewed resources, content and provided constructive feedback. This year, they informed the development of the Bodywhys ‘Inside Out’ programme. Three members of the BYP also took part in the filming for the resources. We extend our thanks to them for their time, knowledge and contributions.



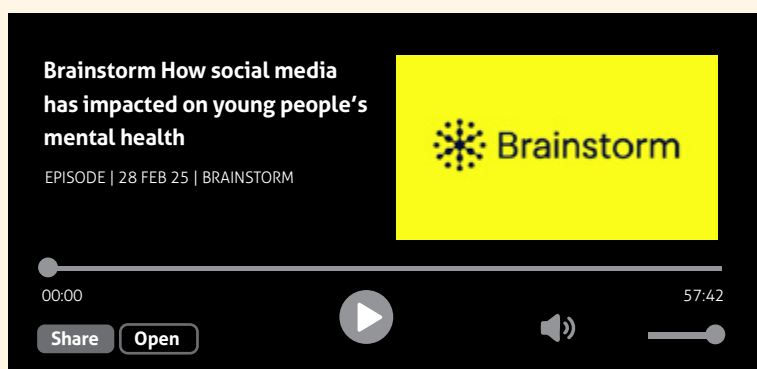
Research Recognition

The Bodywhys #MoreThanASelfie research was recognised by the Irish Universities Association (IUA) as an exemplar of best practice in engaged research. A [video feature](#) highlighting the research was produced at Maynooth University and subsequently launched on the IUA website and social media channels.



Promoting Positive Body Image - Maynooth University, Research for a Better Ireland

RTÉ | 100



RTE Brainstorm podcast

Fiona was also invited to discuss this research on the [RTÉ Brainstorm Podcast](#), focusing on 'Social Media and Body Image' with presenter Ella McSweeney. This episode was released in February.

Additionally, Fiona presented research at the 7th Irish National Eating Disorders Conference in **February**, entitled 'A Real-World Perspective: Promoting Positive Body Image & Awareness of Eating Disorders in Secondary Schools'.



In 2025, Molly undertook a review and update of www.bodywhysbodyimage.ie, incorporating up to date research findings and additional resources. New materials and research concerning disability and body image were added in **June**, with the page subsequently reviewed by Muscular Dystrophy Ireland.





Communications,
Research and Policy

Communications, Research and Policy



Ellen Jennings

Communications Officer

(January – August 2025)

*Communications, Research
and Policy Manager*

(September – December 2025)

A key strategic objective of Bodywhys is to raise public awareness of eating disorders through various initiatives, including efforts to challenge discrimination and stigma, and to advocate for the rights and needs of all individuals affected by eating disorders.

The Bodywhys Communications, Research and Policy team continued to advance this objective in 2025, ensuring that lived experience remained at the forefront of their work. Throughout the year, the team collaborated to produce and distribute key communications informed by lived experience and research.

During this period, there were changes within the team. We bid farewell to Barry Murphy, a longstanding and dedicated member of staff who contributed significantly over many years.



Barry Murphy

Research & Policy Officer

(January – August 2025)

Barry Murphy began his career with Bodywhys as an email support volunteer in 2008. His attention to detail, ability to communicate with empathy and meet emailers with understanding was noticeably expert, and he quickly became integral to the service.

In 2012, he joined the Bodywhys team as Communications Officer, where he brought this attention to detail, his quiet confidence, and a commitment to supporting people in spades. Barry remained in the Communications team for the next 13 years, eventually taking on the additional responsibility of Research and Policy.

A supportive and caring colleague, Barry's voice will be familiar to anyone who has listened to the numerous podcasts he recorded. Saying farewell to Barry was a major change for our small team, and we know that he will bring all of his skills and commitment to his new role.

We wish Barry well and thank him for his years of work dedicated to supporting those affected by eating disorders.



Roisin Roberts

Communications Officer

(October-December 2025)

After Barry's departure, Ellen Jennings was appointed as Communications, Research and Policy Manager and we welcomed Roisin Roberts into the role of Communications Officer. We look forward to ongoing growth and development within the Communications team, and to implementing the team's many communications ideas and initiatives.

In 2025, communications efforts were realised through a range of activities, including engagement with mainstream media, social media campaigns, podcasts, events, resource development, website maintenance, and meetings with key stakeholder groups.

Media Queries

 Radio - Local/ Regional 32	 Newspaper Print - National 22	 Radio - National 17	 Television 7	 Online 4
 Documentary / Independent film 3	 Other 2	 Magazine 1	 Newspaper Print - Local/Regional 1	 Podcast 1

Total
90

In 2025, we saw continued interest from the media in relation to eating disorders and body image.

Key areas of inquiry included:

- ✓ Social media, body image and eating disorders
- ✓ TikTok trends and body image
- ✓ Algorithms and harmful content online
- ✓ Impact of influencer content
- ✓ Social media filters
- ✓ Misuse of weight loss drugs
- ✓ Rising adolescent mental health struggles
- ✓ Body image pressure
- ✓ Hospitalisation of children and young people with eating disorders
- ✓ Waiting lists and service provision
- ✓ Lack of eating disorder beds
- ✓ HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (HSE NCP-ED)
- ✓ Treatment abroad
- ✓ Hospital statistics related to eating disorders
- ✓ Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW)
- ✓ Lived experience and personal stories of eating disorders
- ✓ Christmas and eating disorders
- ✓ Family impact of eating disorders
- ✓ Navigating treatment of eating disorders
- ✓ Eating disorders in men
- ✓ Body positivity
- ✓ Weight stigma
- ✓ The fashion industry and clothing sizes
- ✓ Thinness culture
- ✓ Body dysmorphia
- ✓ Rural isolation in relation to eating disorders
- ✓ Access to eating disorder support for minority groups
- ✓ Binge eating disorder
- ✓ Weight loss injections and their availability on the black market
- ✓ Diet culture and alcohol
- ✓ Alcohol and eating disorders Food phobias
- ✓ Binge eating
- ✓ Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme

Media spotlight on eating disorders

Media coverage throughout 2025 reflected sustained public and political attention on eating disorders. Key themes that arose consistently throughout the year included ongoing concerns about access to specialist public services in Ireland, rising demand for treatment services – particularly among children and young people, as well as commentary around the funding and implementation of the HSE NCP-ED. This narrative was prevalent throughout the year, starting in January/February, through the summer and into the winter months.



Digital environments remained a central theme, with coverage emphasising the risks of social media trends, appearance-based comparisons, and online access to weight-loss medications, alongside discussions of online safety measures and emerging digital support tools. The impact of social media on young people received regular coverage through the first part of the year, with concerns around access to weight loss drugs seeing consistent mentions throughout 2025, particularly from July onwards.

Political and policy attention grew, and lived-experience voices continued to shape awareness, challenge stereotypes, and highlight the importance of accessible, person-centred supports.



January–February

Media coverage during the early months of the year highlighted growing concern about the mental health of children and young people, including those affected by eating disorders. Social media trends and their potential impact on young people were also widely discussed. Coverage examined viral online challenges and trends, prompting debate about their potential to encourage restrictive or disordered eating behaviours.

Concerns were also expressed regarding the overall relationship between social media use and the mental health of children and adolescents, particularly concerning body image pressures and exposure to potentially harmful content. Additionally, issues were raised about the possibility that calorie labelling on menus could serve as a trigger for individuals with eating disorders, alongside cautions regarding the risks linked to the online prescription of weight loss medications.

In **February**, Bodywhys then Training and Development Manager (Family Support Team), Harriet Parsons, appeared on *The Hard Shoulder* (Newstalk) with Kieran Cuddihy, as part of the *Kid's Health Check* segment. The discussion focused on how to communicate effectively with children experiencing concerns about their body image and how to recognise early signs of eating disorders, emphasising the challenges faced by individuals and families affected by eating disorders and the role of awareness, early intervention, and accessible support services.

The Hard Shoulder

with Ciara Kelly and Shane Colman

Kids Health Check: Eating Disorders

For this week's Kids Health Check we are exploring how to talk to your children if they are having issues with their body image, and how to spot any early signs of eating disorders. Joining Kieran to discuss is Harriet Parsons, Psychotherapist and Training and Development at BodyWhys.

Eating Disorders Awareness Week in **February** generated significant media coverage, highlighting the experiences of individuals and families affected by eating disorders. Bodywhys Media Panel member, Mirin Pearce, contributed to a piece in *The Irish Times*, describing the intrusive and bullying nature of the eating disorder voice, while emphasising that recovery is possible with the appropriate support. Additional contributions from Media Panel members Chris Duff, Emmy Snelgrove and Bláithín Carroll, reinforced messages of hope and recovery throughout the week.

Coverage during this period also highlighted advocacy voices calling for increased political engagement and improved service provision, highlighting gaps in domestic services and continued reliance on the Treatment Abroad Scheme. Advocates and individuals with lived experience highlighted the profound impact of gaps in services, with some describing how the lack of appropriate care can leave those affected by eating disorders feeling invisible or unsupported.

March–April

Media coverage throughout **March** and **April** continued to emphasise concerns regarding service provision across Ireland. Several regional developments were reported on in relation to the HSE NCP-ED. Political interest in eating disorder services was evident in the media coverage.

Digital influences on body image and eating behaviours remained a recurring theme. Media discussions focused on the potential impact of fitness tracking apps and social media tools on eating disorder risk, including concerns about the use of appearance-altering filters. Commentators highlighted how such technologies may reinforce unrealistic body ideals and contribute to harmful comparisons, particularly among young people.

May to June

In **May** and **June**, media discussions continued to examine the influence of online platforms on body image and eating behaviours. Particular attention was given to the rise of so-called “SkinnyTok” content on TikTok, which sparked concern about the promotion of extreme thinness and restrictive eating practices. Across this period, media continued to highlight the growing visibility of extreme thinness in popular culture and its potential impact on body image and eating disorder risk.

Bodywhys Research and Policy Officer, Barry Murphy, contributed to national media discussions, including appearances on *Ireland AM* and *The Last Word with Matt Cooper* (Today FM), where he addressed the impact of social media trends on body image and eating disorders, the growing online focus on extreme thinness and the role of social media platforms in shaping harmful body ideals.



Barry Murphy speaking on *Ireland AM*

Elsewhere in the team, Bodywhys Youth Development Manager, Dr. Fiona Flynn participated in a panel event as part of the Cavan Community Cinema initiative, featuring a screening of the Alley Cats documentary 'Unspoken'. The documentary examines the rising prevalence of eating disorders among Irish men through the personal stories of Cormac, Eoin, and Daniel - each sharing their lived experiences with an eating disorder. Following a discussion facilitated by Director Alan Bradley, the panel then engaged with the audience, responding to comments and questions concerning eating disorders.



Alan Bradley and Dr. Fiona Flynn at the Cavan Community Cinema initiative screening of the AlleyCats documentary 'Unspoken'

The broader cultural and social factors influencing body image also received attention in the media. Reports highlighted concerns about the pressures faced by young people in school environments, with body image pressures identified as one contributing factor. These discussions reflected wider concerns about how societal attitudes towards appearance can affect young people's wellbeing.

Bodywhys Board Member, Sheila Naughton, was shortlisted for the Justice Media Awards 2025 in the Human Rights/Social Justice Reporting (Broadcast) category for the RTÉ Morning Ireland feature "Starved of Care: Desperate Calls for Improved Eating Disorder Services."

Internationally, coverage referenced amendments to the proposed assisted dying legislation in the UK, including provisions to exclude eating disorders, reflecting ethical concerns regarding how such conditions are defined.

July to August

Media coverage during July and August continued to highlight rising demand for eating disorder services and growing concerns about the mental health of young people. Reports noted a significant increase in referrals in children and adolescents, alongside Health Research Board (HRB) data indicating that hospital admissions for eating disorders among children had doubled over the previous five years. You can find more information about this research on page 98 of this report.

Coverage also highlighted the need for increased specialist adult bed capacity and ongoing waiting times for access to specialist services. Emerging research into ARFID was also reported, with studies suggesting possible links to differences in brain structure.

Discussions around online safety regulations received attention in July. Coverage noted that some young people were turning to artificial intelligence tools for mental health support, raising broader questions about access to appropriate support services and the role of digital technologies in mental health care.

Media coverage also explored changing perceptions and experiences of eating disorders. Personal accounts and feature articles emphasised that eating disorders can affect individuals of all genders, body sizes and backgrounds, challenging common stereotypes about who may be affected. Several reports highlighted a growing recognition of eating disorders among men, alongside calls for greater awareness and support.

Other topics discussed during this period included concerns about weight-loss medications, 'summer body' pressures, and the broader complexity of eating disorder recovery, with continued emphasis on the need for timely and appropriate support.

September–October

Coverage of Budget 2026 referenced eating disorder services within wider discussions about healthcare funding and waiting lists. More broadly, media reporting pointed to rising levels of anxiety among students and the increasing demand for mental health supports among young people.

Several articles focused on emerging research and awareness around specific eating disorders and related conditions. The coverage emphasised the impact of ARFID on children and their families. Additionally, reports explored potential correlations between eating disorders and other conditions, including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Social media and digital platforms remained a prominent topic of discussion, with reporting on new protective measures introduced by Meta, including restrictions on exposure to content relating to self-harm, suicide, and eating disorders. At the same time, broader commentary highlighted increasing scepticism among some young people about the impact of social media on their wellbeing.

Public figures sharing personal experiences of eating disorders contributed to wider media conversations during this period. Irish singer Lyra and Irish rugby player Andrew Porter spoke publicly about their experiences, helping to challenge stereotypes and increase understanding of eating disorders.



Media coverage also highlighted the launch of Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme. Dr. Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Manager with Bodywhys, spoke with several media outlets about the new programme. Further information on this programme can be found in the Youth Development section of this report, page 60.



NEWS

New Programme Developed To Help Secondary Schools Tackle Eating Disorders



45% of teachers say they're aware of students with eating disorders.

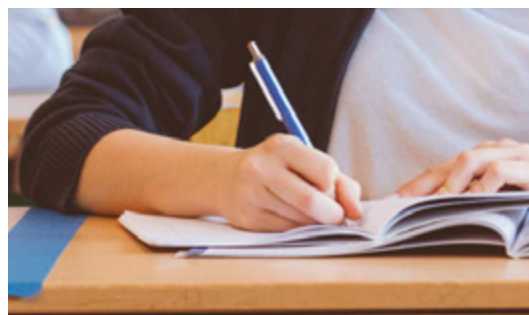
The survey from Bodywhys also found 74% of teachers surveyed have observed students struggling with body image concerns.



Irish Examiner

HOME PAGE / NEWS

Almost half of teachers identify students suffering an eating disorder



Almost half of teachers are aware of students in their classes who are experiencing an eating disorder, according to a survey by Bodywhys.

The eating disorders association revealed the findings of the research to coincide with the launch of a new secondary school programme, called Inside Out.

November–December

Media coverage during **November** and **December** continued to highlight rising demand for support for eating disorders in Ireland. Harriet Parsons, now CEO with Bodwhys, spoke with *The Irish Independent* about an increase in the number of people seeking support for restrictive eating behaviours. The opening of Riverside House, a new centre for specialist eating disorder care in South Dublin, was also reported, representing a further development in the provision of specialist services.

Bodywhys Youth Development Manager, Dr. Fiona Flynn was involved in an episode of The Neart Youth Mental Health Podcast, published on 15th December 2025. In the episode, Neart spoke to Fiona and Jigsaw Clinical Manager and Occupational Therapist, Clare O'Reilly, about the impact of body image on youth mental health.

Social media and its influence on young people's wellbeing remained a key topic. In December, Australia's introduction of a ban on social media access for children under the age of 16 generated discussion about online safety and mental health.

Personal accounts shared by public figures continued to contribute to public awareness of eating disorders. This included Irish comedian Joanne McNally, Irish author and broadcaster Roz Purcell and former international cricketer Freddie Flintoff, highlighting a diverse range of experiences.



Spotify

Podcast Episode

Promoting Positive Body Image



The Neart Youth Mental Health Podcast

Episode Description

In this episode we talk about body image, what feeds into the development of our body image, the impact that negative body image can have on a young person's mental health, and some things that parents and guardians can do to support young people with their body image.

RTÉ | 100

Joanne McNally: "I kind of had to press eject on my life"

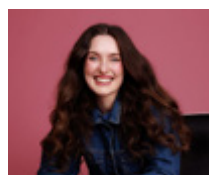


She's renowned for her lightning fast wit and endearing candor in her stand-up comedy, and Joanne McNally brings the same light touch and realism to talking about the less funny parts of her life.

Irish Independent

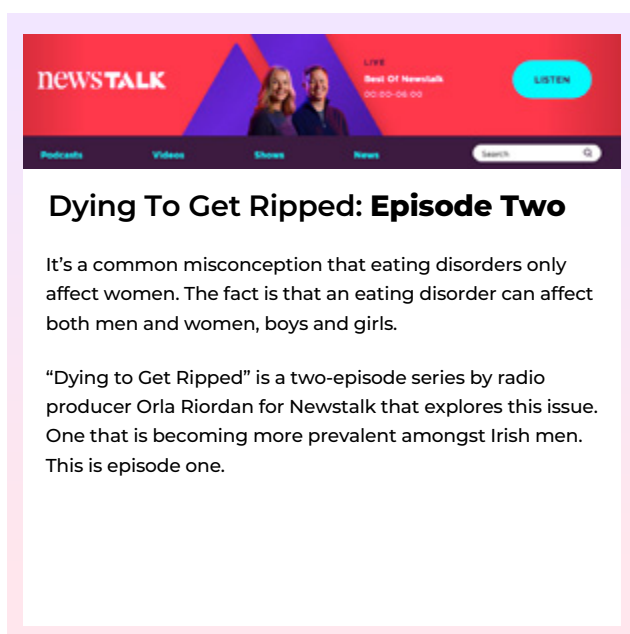
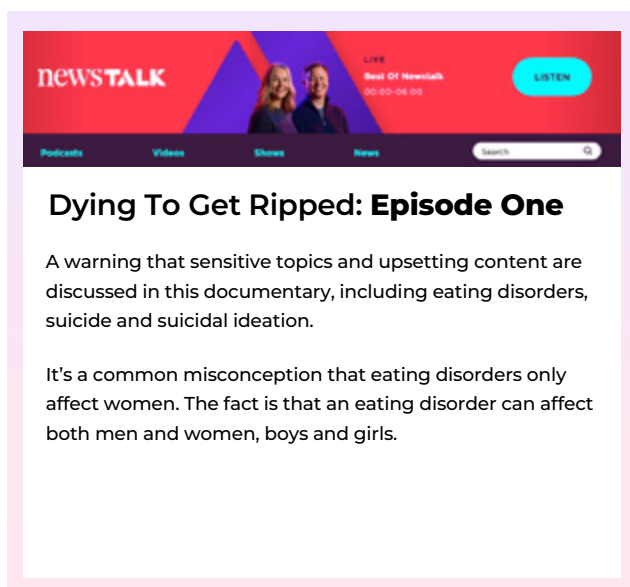
Home / Life

Roz Purcell: 'Behind closed doors, I was just falling apart'



The former Miss Universe opens up about wedding 'decision fatigue' and her struggles with eating disorders and alopecia.

Additional coverage explored restrictive eating behaviours among students, particularly in relation to alcohol intake, as well as wider cultural pressures related to body image and fitness. Documentary programming, such as Orla Riordan's two-part Newstalk programme "*Dying To Get Ripped*," also examined extreme fitness culture and its potential links to disordered eating behaviours.



Investment in the HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders – Statements from Bodywhys

Following extensive media coverage of the HSE NCP-ED throughout the year, notable announcements were made in the latter months by the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler TD.

In **October**, Bodywhys welcomed the announcement by Minister Mary Butler regarding continued investment in the expansion of the HSE NCP-ED and the establishment of two new specialist eating disorder teams – one CAMHS team and one adult team.

'As of 2025, fourteen specialist eating disorder teams are funded – eleven are operational and providing vital treatment services nationwide, and three are in active recruitment. The recent allocation of funding for two additional teams in 2026 will bring the total number to sixteen, aligning with the recommendations set out in the 2018 HSE National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders Model of Care. It is vital that these commitments are implemented effectively to achieve tangible improvements on the ground, including better access, reduced waiting times, and continuity of care across all regions.'

Bodywhys statement, 20th October 2026

In **December**, Bodywhys welcomed the commitment by Minister Mary Butler to expand specialist adult eating disorder bed capacity and to enhance six priority acute mental health units as part of the Department of Health's Sectoral Plan 2026-2030.

‘When someone is acutely unwell, timely access to specialist inpatient treatment is vital – delays can have profound and lasting consequences. This investment is a critical step toward ensuring that the needs of adults affected by eating disorders are met, and that specialist inpatient beds are available when and where they are needed.’

Bodywhys statement, 2nd December 2025

Articles by key word (print and web)

Keyword	Number of articles where keyword was mentioned
Eating Disorders	1,359
Body Image	1,118
Anorexia nervosa	697
Bulimia nervosa	317
Body dysmorphia	235
Binge eating	191
Bodywhys	151
ARFID	34
Orthorexia	31
Muscle dysmorphia	6
OSFED	4
EDNOS	1
Total	4,144

Note: The above represents the number of mentions of each keyword. It does not match the total volume of articles throughout 2025 since multiple keywords often appeared in the same article.

Volume of articles where keywords appear:



1,267 articles were **print based**



3,196 articles were **web based**

151 articles referenced

BODYWHYS
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

89 of those were **web-based**

62 of those were **print** articles

Top news sources by volume of articles:

- *Thesun.ie* - 637 articles
- *MSN (Ireland)* - 456 articles
- *Irish Daily Mail* – 172 articles
- *Independent.ie* - 116 articles
- *The Sun (Eire)* - 91 articles

Top sources with Bodywhys as keyword:

- *Irish Independent* – 11 articles
- *Independent.ie* - 8 articles
- *The Sun.ie* – 7 articles
- *MSN (Ireland)* - 4 articles

Bodywhys Media Panel

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Bodywhys Media Panel for their time, collaboration and dedication to raising awareness of the lived experiences of individuals with eating disorders throughout the year. Their efforts have greatly contributed to shaping Bodywhys’ communications and have informed numerous media engagements. Additionally, we thank our colleagues from Shine’s Media Programme for making two media training sessions available to the Bodywhys Media Panel in June and July 2025.

Website

Traffic and user reach

The number of **users**

26,443

User sessions

42,928

Page views

103,500

Most accessed sections of the site by page views:

Homepage

17,420

Services directory

8,628

Helpline

5,744

Guide to Treatment

3,728

Overview of support services

3,194

There were:

3,048 files downloaded from the website in 2025



Our most popular resources are outlined below, with each being downloaded at least 450 times throughout the year:

- ✓ Eating Disorders: A Guide for Families
- ✓ Binge Eating: Breaking the Cycle
- ✓ Eating Disorders Treatment guide
- ✓ Speaking to your Doctor Guide

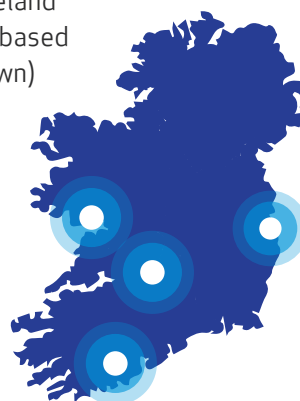
Where in Ireland were users based (where known)

388

Galway

314

Limerick



13,543

Dublin

4,558

Cork



18,532

users accessed the site via **mobile phone**



7,560

were on a **desktop**



283

were on a **tablet device**

Busiest times of year:



February

4,730

user sessions

March

4,725

user sessions

Quietest times of year:

August

2,344

user sessions

October

2,322

user sessions

Spikes in activity:

26th February
(middle of EDAW 2025)

1,016

views

12th December
(EDAW 2026 theme announced)

608

views

15th December
(Christmas support services social posts)

922

views

16th December
(Navigating Christmas social posts)

964

views



25,905

of visitors in 2025 were **new users**



18,239

users found the site via **organic search**



7,079

users via **direct link** or **social media**

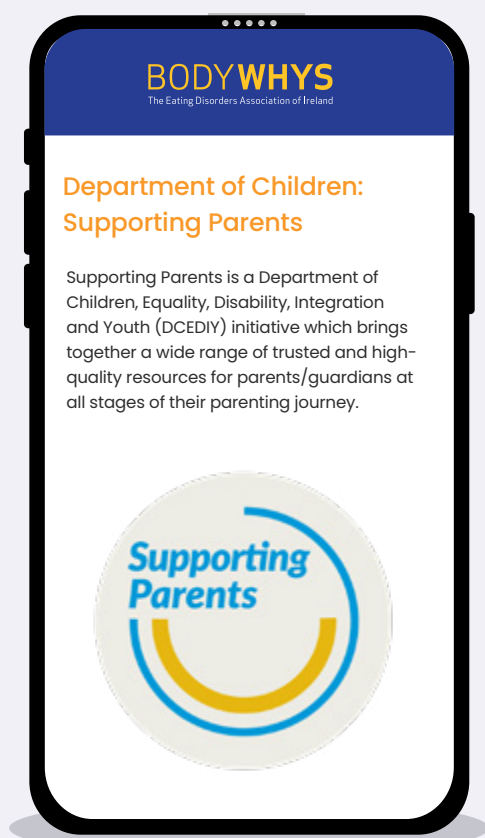
The **top search terms on Google** that lead to the site were:

- ✓ bodywhys, **8,889**
- ✓ bodywhys ireland, **496**
- ✓ bodywyse, **345**
- ✓ body whys, **813**
- ✓ arfid meaning, **402**
- ✓ anorexia stories, **341**
- ✓ bodywise, **740**
- ✓ arfid, **363**
- ✓ bodywhys helpline, **599**
- ✓ eating disorders ireland, **360**



Website updates

A new link was included on the website to **'Supporting Parents'**, an initiative by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), that consolidates a diverse selection of trusted and high-quality resources for parents and guardians at all stages of their parenting journey. This can be accessed through the [Bodywhys website: Department of Children: Supporting Parents](#)



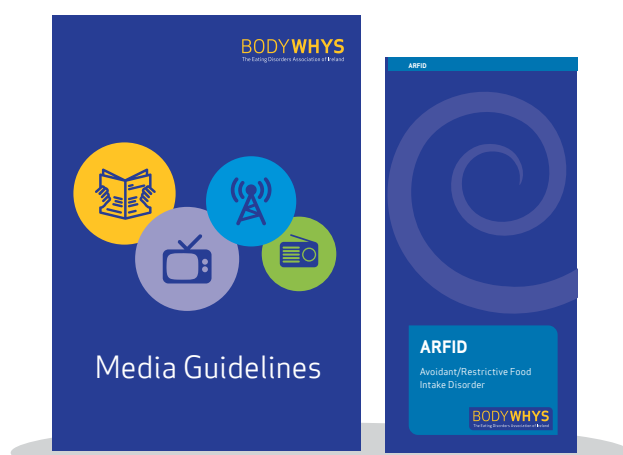
The Bodywhys website was updated to include dermatological issues linked to [nutritional deficiencies associated with eating disorders](#), including conditions such as hair loss, xerosis, and brittle nails. This information was informed by research conducted by Rallis et al. (2024), titled *"The Nutrient–Skin Connection: Diagnosing Eating Disorders Through Dermatologic Signs"* published in the Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI).

Literature Updates

In **March**, an updated version of the Bodywhys Media Guidelines was launched to help those who work in the media to report on eating disorders safely and responsibly.

In **June**, revised versions of the Bodywhys Eating Disorder Treatment Guide and the Binge Eating: Breaking the Cycle booklets were launched, with current information, lived experience quotes and fresh designs.

In **July**, we launched a new leaflet resource on ARFID.



Hard copies of all our resources can be requested using via www.bodywhys.ie/requestresources

Social Media



Facebook

Facebook views **130,144**

Facebook interactions **1,142**

New Facebook followers **267**

Popular posts on Facebook

- ✓ Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme launch
- ✓ Bodywhys statement on Budget 2026
- ✓ Irish National Eating Disorders conference posts
- ✓ EDAW 2025 posts
- ✓ Bodywhys 30th Birthday content



Instagram

Instagram views **264,876**

Instagram reach **81,411**

Instagram interactions **3,330**

Instagram followers **1,486**

Popular posts on Instagram

- ✓ Navigating the festive period
- ✓ Welcome to Eating Disorders Awareness Week
- ✓ Bodywhys statements in response to Minister Mary Butlers announcements regarding the HSE NCP-ED



Twitter

Twitter impressions **35,541**

Popular tweets

- ✓ Details of the 7th Irish National Eating Disorders Conference #INEDCONF2025
- ✓ Bodywhys 'Understanding eating disorders' webinar for secondary school students and staff
- ✓ Bodywhys new service for adults, REConnect.

You Tube

YouTube Views **9,000**

YouTube Videos **12**

YouTube Subscriptions **55**

Top 5 YouTube videos

- ✓ Eating disorders: Kate's Dad - A father's perspective (3,082 views)
- ✓ The Eating Disorder Voice (1,738 views)
- ✓ Autism and Eating Disorders Across the Lifespan - Bodywhys webinar (384 views):
- ✓ Eating Disorders: How to support someone - Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys (345 views)
- ✓ Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID): Bodywhys Webinar (282 views)

Social media campaigns throughout the year



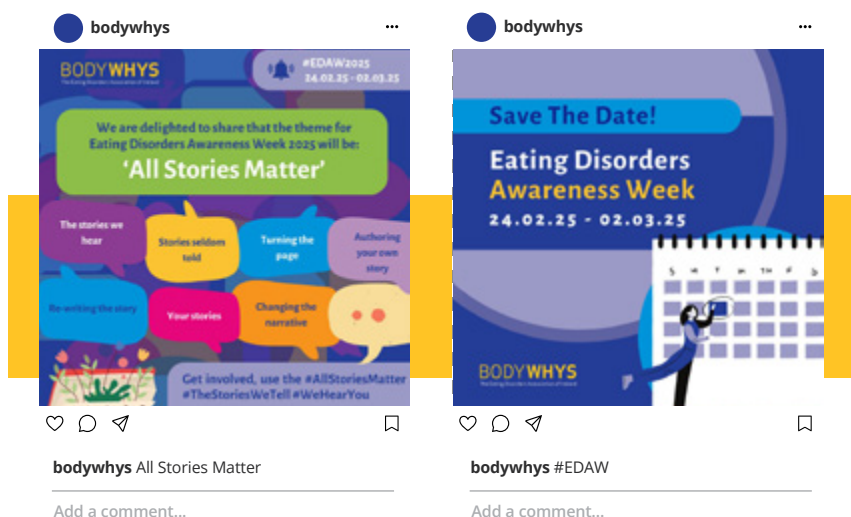
CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play a vital role in ensuring regular and safe support services can be provided to a wide range of individuals in need of guidance and support. A dedicated recruitment campaign ran on social media in February to expand the Bodywhys volunteer pool.



Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2025 (EDAW 2025):

EDAW 2025 took place from 24th Feb – 2nd March 2025, for which the theme was 'All Stories Matter.' The aim of EDAW 2025 was to offer a space to share and listen to stories about experiences with eating disorders, both those that had personally experienced an eating disorder or had supported a loved one through their journey. There were a range of in-person and online events throughout the week, featuring lived experience and research-focused content.



Gerard J. Butcher (second left), Minister Jennifer Carroll MacNeill (third left), Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys CEO (fourth left), Dr. Michelle Clifford (far right) and others attend the seventh Irish National Eating Disorders Conference.

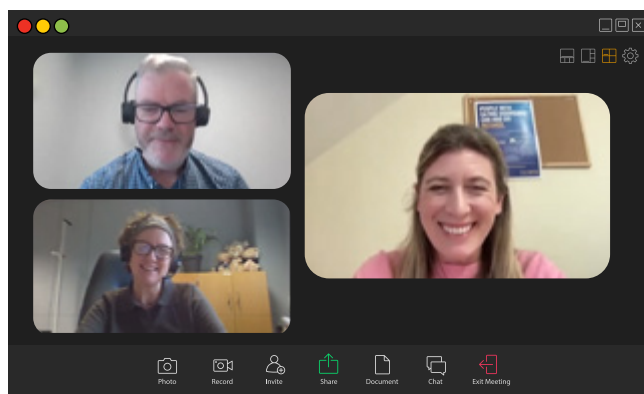
Events that took place during EDAW 2025 below:

Organisation	Focus	Format
Bodywhys	Exploring Family Based Treatment (FBT)	Online
National Eating Disorders Recovery Centre (NEDRC)	Recovery Really is Possible, with Peer Support Worker Alice Richardson.	Online
Bodywhys	Conversations with Carers: A Webinar with Jenny Langley	Online
Bodywhys	<i>Understanding Eating Disorders: For Secondary School Staff and Students</i>	Online
Bodywhys	A Real-World Perspective on Promoting Positive Body Image & Awareness of Eating Disorders in Secondary Schools	Online
HSE National Eating Clinical Programme for Disorders (NCP-ED)	Webinar: Building Momentum in Eating Disorder Awareness and Service Development	Online
NEDRC	ARFID – What it Is, What it's Not and What We Can Do.	Online
Bodywhys	REConnect: The Launch of a New Service	Online
Lois Bridges	What's Your Why? Staying on Track During Eating Disorder Recovery	Online
Addictive Eaters Anonymous	Public Event by Addictive Eaters Anonymous Ireland	Online
Conference Networking Ireland, Gerry Butcher	7th Irish National Eating Disorders Conference 2025	In person
SupportED Families	How to Have the Strength to Carry On	Online
SupportED Families	What Your Loved One Wishes You Knew About Eating Disorders	Online
NEDRC	Honouring Neurodivergent Stories	Online
Lois Bridges	How Family Members and Friends Can Support Someone in Recovery from an Eating Disorder	Online
St. Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS)	Eating Disorders: Navigating the Recovery Journey	Online

Webinars that took place during EDAW 2025:



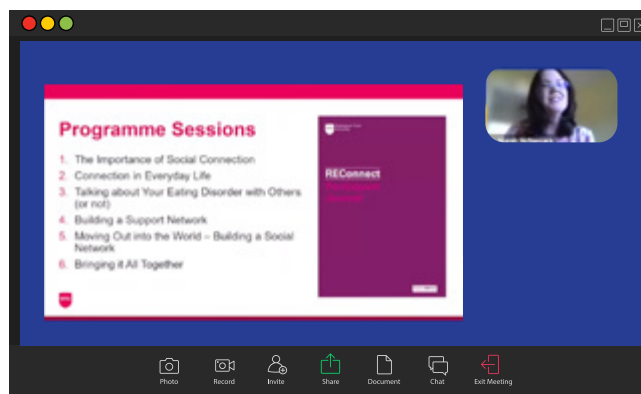
**Exploring Family Based Treatment (FBT):
[Bodywhys webinar](#)**



(L-R) Nivard Whelan, Family Therapist, Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys CEO, Dr. Orla Moore, Senior Clinical Psychologist and Family Therapist.

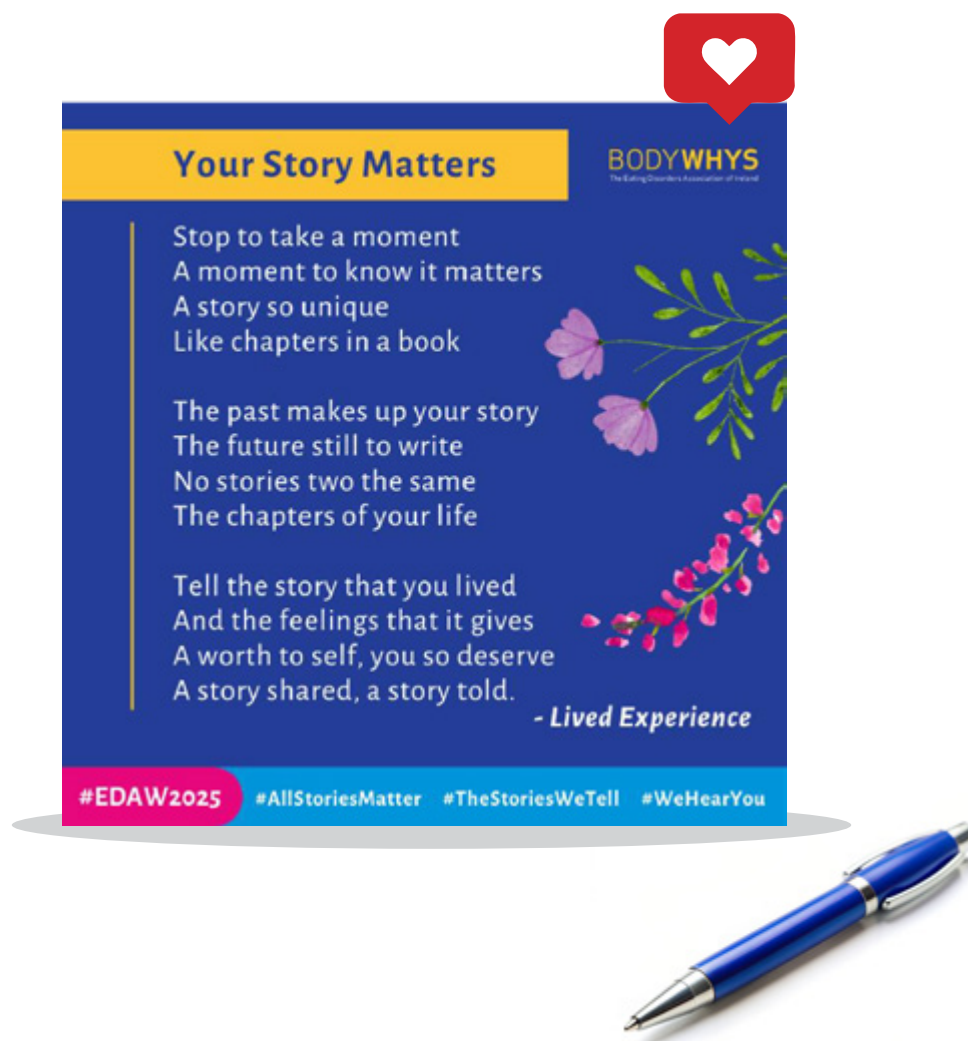


Introducing REConnect: [A new Bodywhys service to build support and social connections](#)



Dr. Niamh McNamara talks through the Bodywhys REConnect programme.

As part of EDAW 2025, Edel Higgins kindly shared a poem titled 'Your Story Matters' based on lived experience of eating disorders.



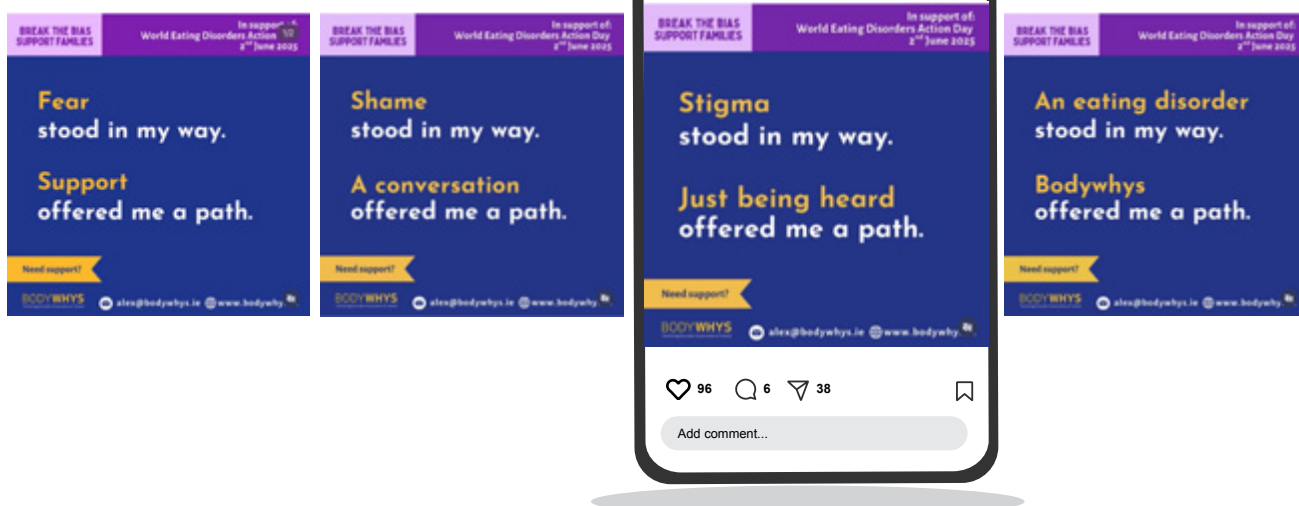
Exam stress and eating disorders

In **May**, content was shared in relation to navigating exam stress whilst coping with an eating disorder, providing guidance and signposting to Bodywhys support services.



World Eating Disorders Action Day

On 2nd June, in recognition of World Eating Disorders Action Day, the themes 'Break the Bias' and 'Support Families' were highlighted. A short video was produced to illustrate some of the barriers and biases that may hinder individuals from seeking help.



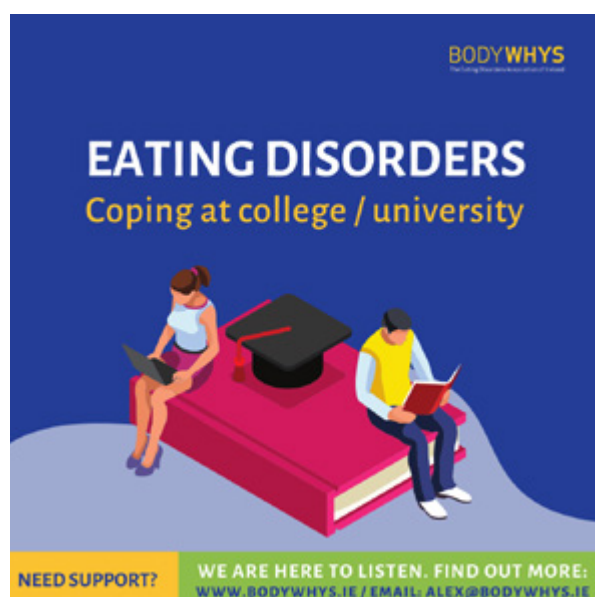
ARFID Awareness Day

On 5th July, ARFID Awareness Day was supported by emphasising key research questions in the field, such as whether the diagnostic criteria for ARFID should be revised and how effectively current self-report measures assess ARFID symptoms.



College and University Support

In August, relevant content was shared for individuals starting college or university. Useful resources were shared via links to the Bodywhys website and podcast episode for those providing care to someone during this transition.



Shine Green Ribbon Campaign and World Suicide Prevention Day

In September, Shine's Green Ribbon campaign, titled '*Step Up to Stamp Out Stigma*', was promoted across Bodywhys' social media platforms. Additionally, support was expressed for the International Association for Suicide Prevention's World Suicide Prevention Day, which emphasised '*Changing the Narrative on Suicide*'.

Join the social movement and Step Up to Stamp Out Stigma



- **Wear** the Green Ribbon to show you are open to talking about mental health
- **Talk** to others about this important campaign; talking about mental health helps to **increase recovery rates**
- **Donate** to support the growth of this movement



Launch of Bodywhys new school wellbeing programme

In **October**, the launch event for the Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme was promoted across all Bodywhys social channels.



International Men's Day

International Men's Day on 19th November was supported through Bodywhys social media channels, emphasising that, contrary to common misconceptions, eating disorders do not discriminate and can affect both men and women. Statistics relating to men from Bodywhys support services were shared.



International Volunteer Day

In **December**, International Volunteer Day was marked by sharing insights from Bodywhys volunteers regarding their experiences as volunteers and the value they take from their involvement.



“Sometimes it’s the little wins that matter the most, like when someone calls in a state of distress and hopelessness and by the end of the call I can hear the calm return in their voice.”

Celeste, Bodywhys volunteer



“Eating disorders are relentless and we all know how hard it is, when one is in the middle of that vortex, to just hold on. As a Bodywhys volunteer, I know that we are there for our clients [service users] to hold on to.”

Robbyn, Bodywhys volunteer



Navigating the festive period

In **December**, a series of messages were shared for individuals with eating disorders navigating the festive period, as well as for those supporting someone. Messages suggested trying to:

- ✓ Focus on the present moment
- ✓ Consider self-care strategies that are unrelated to the eating disorder
- ✓ Be aware of thought patterns, such as dichotomous (black and white) thinking
- ✓ Plan ahead and establish support systems





Podcast

The Bodywhys podcast **continued to grow in 2025**, with a second season of the New Maudsley Carer Skills (NMCS) podcast released in Autumn 2025.



Podcast episodes published

21

Streams and downloads on all platforms

10,106

Consumption hours on Spotify

2,211



255

Increase in followers on Spotify



Total followers at the end of 2025

1,051



Spotify demographics where known

81%

Female

14%

Male

0.9%

Non-binary

3.5%

not specified

Age:

52% of listeners were in the 45-59 year age group

19% of listeners were in the 35-44 year age group

13% of listeners were in the 28-34 year age group

Episode titles (oldest to newest)

Bodywhys podcast

- ✓ Family based treatment (FBT) delivered in the home
- ✓ Pre-treatment intervention: Keeping Safe
- ✓ The role of agency: The life project account of eating disorders
- ✓ Social media detox strategies, body image and well-being
- ✓ "I want to hold an umbrella over you because I have been in the rain"
- ✓ Thomistic virtue ethics and a "good" appetite
- ✓ Male musical theatre performers' experiences of body image
- ✓ The experiences and support needs of mothers with eating disorders
- ✓ Tending the roots: Trauma and women's experiences
- ✓ How bodies matter and intrude in recovery

NMCS podcast

- ✓ Binge eating and neurodiversity
- ✓ Understanding extreme hunger when recovering from an eating disorder
- ✓ In conversation with autistic advocate and recovery coach Livia Sara
- ✓ ARFID: Fear of aversive consequences (Mini-series Part 5)
- ✓ In conversation with Livia Sara, part 2
- ✓ Nasogastric (NG) feeding: Tolerating the distress
- ✓ Compulsive exercise and eating disorders
- ✓ Perfectionism and eating disorders
- ✓ A conversation about eating disorder recovery with Hannah Hickinbotham
- ✓ The teenage brain and eating disorders
- ✓ Body dysmorphic disorder and body image distortion

Ongoing international meetings

Ellen Jennings and Barry Murphy, attended virtual meetings bimonthly throughout the year with representatives from international eating disorder organisations, including Beat (United Kingdom), the Butterfly Foundation (Australia), National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA; United States) and National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC; Canada). In 2025, the group expanded to include the National Alliance for Eating Disorders (United States) and the Consortium for Research in Eating Disorders (CoRe-ED; Australia). It has been very beneficial to keep in touch with international colleagues and learn about their work. We look forward to future meetings in 2026.

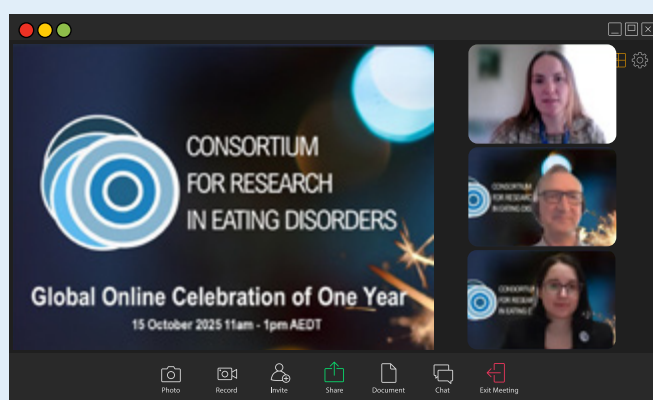
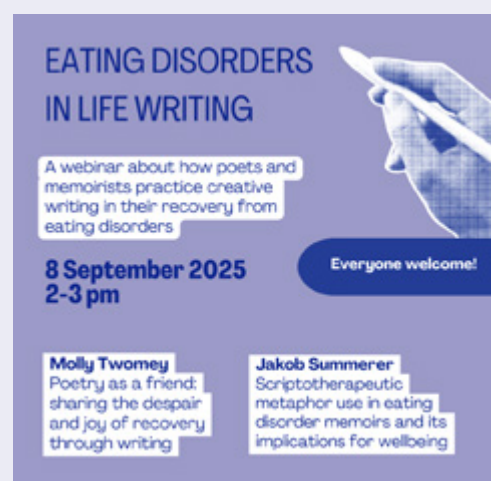
eBulletin

There were 5 editions of the eBulletin sent to our 2,806 subscribers throughout the year. Updates were sent in February, May, August and November plus the festive edition in December.

Webinars and events

The Communications Research and Policy team supported the co-ordination and preparation of various Bodywhys events throughout the year, including:

- ✓ EDAW events
- ✓ The Bodywhys 'Inside Out' programme launch
- ✓ Bodywhys 30 year celebration event
- ✓ Bodywhys webinar: Eating Disorders in Life Writing



In **October**, Ellen presented on Bodywhys services at the Consortium for Research in Eating Disorders (CoRe-ED) global research showcase and 1 year celebratory event (15 October 2025).

European Food Forum Event: “Eating Disorders, Mental Health and EU policies: Challenges and Future Perspectives”

As part of EDAW 2025, Harriet Parsons, travelled to the European Parliament in March to represent Bodywhys at the European Food Forum’s Symposium on ‘Eating Disorders, Mental Health and EU policies: Challenges and Future Perspectives’ organised by MEP Antonella Sberna, and Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Maria Walsh.

The event examined the current regulatory landscape and the EU’s strategies for preventing and treating eating disorders, as well as exploring the crucial role of mental health and nutrition in European healthcare policies, identifying ways to enhance their integration for more effective support.

A key focus was on the broader social determinants that influence mental health, including limited education, gender inequality, poverty, and unemployment. Addressing these factors through a comprehensive, intersectoral approach is essential to promoting mental well-being and ensuring early intervention when challenges arise. Additionally, the event explored the role of social media and influencers in shaping youth behaviours, particularly their impact on body image and the promotion of unhealthy habits.



Harriet Parsons and Christopher Cash of Bodywhys

While awareness and treatment options have expanded, challenges remain. The European Food Forum wrote of the event, “By fostering an open dialogue among policymakers, healthcare professionals, associations, and those affected, this event aims to drive forward-thinking solutions in regulation and healthcare. With a strong emphasis on prevention and evidence-based strategies, the European Food Forum seeks to elevate the conversation around eating disorders and mental health.”

Speakers and topics covered at the event were:

- ✓ **MEP Maria Walsh:** *Policies addressing mental health and eating disorders*
- ✓ **Umberto Nizzoli** – President, European Chapter of the Academy for Eating Disorders: *Do we need a better policy framework for Eating Disorders?*
- ✓ **Cortney Price** – Lead for Behavioural Science, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO): *The Role of Behavioural Science in Poorly Regulated Food Environments*
- ✓ **Nadia Accetti** – Founder, DonnaDonna Onlus: *Experience, activities, best practices and envisaged solutions*
- ✓ **Harriet Parsons** – Interim CEO, Bodywhys – The Eating Disorder Association of Ireland
- ✓ **Clodagh Dowling** – Director of Psychology, St Patrick’s Mental Health Services (SPMHS) / Adjunct Professor, School of Psychology University College Dublin (UCD): *Compassion Focused Therapy for Eating Disorders: Why Compassion is a Necessity*
- ✓ **Zeynep Demirelli SaD, MSc.** – Psychologist/ Influencer: *Testimony and expectations from policymakers*
- ✓ **Tara Hopkins** – Global Director of Public Policy, Instagram - *The role of social media platforms and their contribution to a healthier online environment*
- ✓ **MEP Antonella Sberna**

During the year, Ellen attended the following events:

Event topic	Organisation	Format
European accessibility act	The Wheel	Online
Specialist Psychotherapy with Emotion for Anorexia in Kent and Sussex (SPEAKS) book launch	Emotion Speaks	Online
Green ribbon campaign launch	Shine	Online
Queer caring	Care Alliance Ireland	Online
Annual report launch	HSE Health and Wellbeing	Online
Promoting and supporting mental health initiatives	HSE	Online
Sláintecare 'Healthy Communities' national conference	HSE and the Department of Health	In person, Dublin City University
Online briefing on child safeguarding policy and procedure	TUSLA	Online
An update from the charity regulator	The Wheel	Online
Launch of global guideline on the use of GLP-1 medicines in treating obesity	The World Health Organisation	Online
Engaged in recovery	HSE	Online
HSE public health strategy launch	HSE	Online



Sláintecare 'Healthy Communities' national conference

Barry attended the following events:

Event topic	Organisation	Format
Engaged research	The Wheel	Online
Eating disorder voice	Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust	Online
Launch of 'Neart' - Jigsaw's mental health supports for post-primary schools	Jigsaw and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)	In-person, Department of Education
HSE health regions restructuring	Mental Health Reform (MHR)	Online
Data protection for charities	The Wheel and Data Protection Commissioner	Online



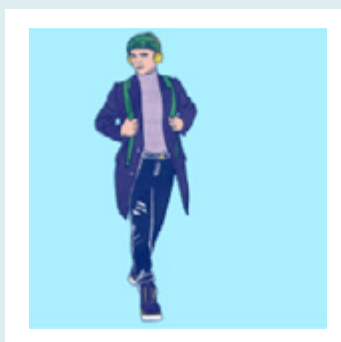
**Stronger Charities.
Stronger Communities**



Mental Health Reform
Promoting Improved Mental Health Services

Connecting with other groups

Bodywhys linked in with SpunOut throughout the year to review body image and eating disorder related content for the SpunOut navigator, Ireland's online tool connecting people to personalised mental health information, resources and support.



**Eating disorders
and body image**

If you spend a lot of time worrying about food, eating, exercise or your weight, it could be a sign that you need support for an eating disorder.

The Communications, Research and Policy team represented Bodywhys at the following meetings:

Event topic	Organisation		Format
February	Health Research Board	Collaborative research network in mental health	In-person, in Dublin
May	Mental Health Reform	Policy and advocacy working group. Budget 2026	Online
June	Public Health Agency of Sweden	Digital media and its impact on children and adolescents. Nordic and EU expert meeting	Online
July	Mental Health Reform	Research interest group	Online
September	Mental Health Reform	Policy and advocacy working group	Online
	Children in Hospital Ireland	Network meeting	Online
	Early Childhood Ireland	Social policy network	Online
October	YouTube	Global eating disorder organisations consultation with YouTube Health	Online
December	Children's Rights Alliance	Online safety meeting	Online
	Mental Health Reform	Policy and advocacy working group	Online
	Men's Health Forum in Ireland	Men's Health Week planning meeting	Online

Ellen attended the following research related events and conferences:

- ✓ **25th September** - Healthcare Conferences UK virtual conference on eating disorders & disordered eating in the perinatal period
- ✓ **26th September** – The British Eating Disorder Society inaugural adult eating disorders research consortium
- ✓ **17th October** – The eating disorders health integration team research conference

Irish research

In April, the 'Growing Up in Ireland Research Needs Report for Cohort 24 at 3 years' highlighted research on intergenerational eating disorders and binge eating. The report noted a lack of Irish data on the long-term effects of maternal eating disorders on child development.



Hospital Inpatient Figures: Health Research Board (HRB)



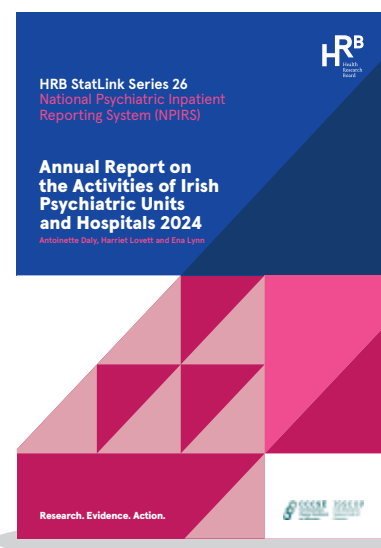
In **July**, the HRB reported that in 2024, hospital admissions for eating disorders were the most common diagnosis amongst children and adolescents for the second consecutive year.

Quote from HRB report:

“Over the last five years we have seen a progressive increase in admission rates for children and adolescents presenting with eating disorders, rising from 18% in 2020 to 26% in 2024.”

In **August**, a study by the HRB found that between 2018-2022, hospital admissions for eating disorders in under-18s more than doubled in Ireland. The study identified that 1,573 children and adolescents had an eating disorder eating diagnosis, with 1,203 having been admitted to acute medical hospitals.

Lovett, H., Casey, C., Daly, A. et al. (2025) Trends and description of inpatient admissions for eating disorders among children and adolescents in Ireland: 2018-2022. *Journal of Eating Disorders*, 13, 174



Supporting researchers



Call for participants

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

- ✓ Online survey on body sensations
- ✓ Attitudes towards body positivity: Developing a scale to capture another important body image construct
- ✓ An Investigation into the association between eating disorder risk and self esteem levels of college athletes and non-athletes
- ✓ Parents with disabilities: understanding needs and service delivery preferences
- ✓ Exploring attitudes towards skin tone and appearance anxiety in women living in Ireland
- ✓ How does awareness of our bodies and emotions shape body image?
- ✓ Exploring the experiences of individuals with body dysmorphic disorder
- ✓ An exploration of binge eating behaviour in adult-gym going men in Ireland
- ✓ Do first impressions count? Help us understand how people form impressions on social media
- ✓ Sensory processing, eating disorders, and neurodivergent traits
- ✓ The experiences of family members supporting loved ones with mental illness
- ✓ The experiences of care for adolescents with mental health difficulties in an acute paediatric setting in Ireland
- ✓ The influence of food diary social media content on body image perception and disordered eating behaviours among young adults
- ✓ A qualitative study exploring the lived experiences of adults diagnosed with avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID)

The research requests were from a variety of institutions, including Dublin Business School, Dublin City University, Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences, Munster Technological University, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, University College Dublin, University of New South Wales, University of York, the University of Edinburgh, and the University of Ulster.

Online Safety

Online safety remained a key concern in 2025, as reflected in sustained media coverage and ongoing political discussions throughout the year.

In **April**, Coimisiún na Meán published its inaugural three-year [Strategy Statement 2025-2027](#). During this period, Bodywhys also wrote to the European Commission about the issue of online safety, online harms and associated risks.



In **May**, so-called ‘SkinnyTok’ content emerged as a key issue and generated significant media interest. European Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection, Michael McGrath, raised concerns with TikTok’s CEO about the platform’s role in amplifying harmful content.

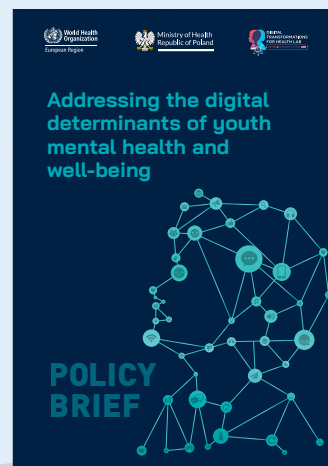


Michael McGrath on the need to strengthen the protection of citizens’ rights on social media platforms’

Later in **May**, Bodywhys met with the Office of Communications (Ofcom), the UK’s regulator for broadcasting, telecommunications, and postal services, to discuss harmful content online, including material that encourages self-harm and eating disorders. At a policy level, the World Health Organisation (WHO) published ‘Addressing the Digital Determinants of Youth Mental Health’.

Key points included:

- ✓ Technology use affects youth mental health in complex and contradictory ways– with both positive and harmful outcomes;
- ✓ Experiencing offline risks and vulnerabilities due to an existing mental health condition, being part of a marginalised group or based on their gender, makes young people more likely to be impacted by online risks;
- ✓ Exposure to cyberbullying, unrealistic body standards, self-harm content and harmful marketing is widespread and under-regulated;
- ✓ Inappropriate data governance and algorithm-driven platforms amplify risks, particularly when there is no transparency or youth consent;
- ✓ Many national policies place the burden of safety on parents and children, while industry accountability and youth participation remain limited.



In **June**, the Minister for Health, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill published the Interim Report of the Online Health Taskforce, further underscoring the policy focus on digital health and safety.



Public submissions

In 2025, Bodywhys completed submissions related to online safety and regulation of online platforms to:

- ✓ **Coimisiún na Meán** - Ireland's agency for developing and regulating a thriving, diverse, creative, safe and trusted media landscape.
- ✓ **The Online Health Task Force** - Established by Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly to develop a public health response to harms caused to children and young people by certain types of online activity.
- ✓ **The European Commission** - the executive cabinet of the European Union.
- ✓ **The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Arts, Media, Communication, Culture and Sport** – Responsible for examining legislation, policy, and expenditure related to the arts and media sectors in Ireland.

Other contributions from Bodywhys to submissions and consultations throughout the year included:

- ✓ A suicide consultation survey conducted by the Department of Health (DOH), aimed at informing Ireland's future suicide reduction strategy, building on '*Connecting for Life*'. Barry Murphy also participated in a roundtable discussion in the DOH.
- ✓ Bodywhys' pre-budget submission, '*Addressing Gaps in Services*', advocated for sustained investment in public specialist eating disorder services, as well as continued support for Bodywhys' support services
- ✓ The Department of Health public consultation on a new obesity strategy for Ireland, highlighting the intersection between eating disorders and obesity, and the importance of adopting a balanced, non-stigmatising approach to policy development.

Other developments

New documents under 'Sharing the Vision' were published.

These included '[Enhanced Transition Plan CAMHS-to-AMHS](#)' prepared by Youth Mental Health Transitions Specialist group, and '[Transforming Youth Mental Health Services in Ireland: A New Model](#)'.



Enhanced Transition Plan

Recommendations and implementation plan to support transition from HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to HSE Adult Mental Health Services. Prepared by the Youth Mental Health Transitions Specialist group to support the implementation of Sharing the Vision.



Sharing the Vision
A Mental Health Policy for Everyone

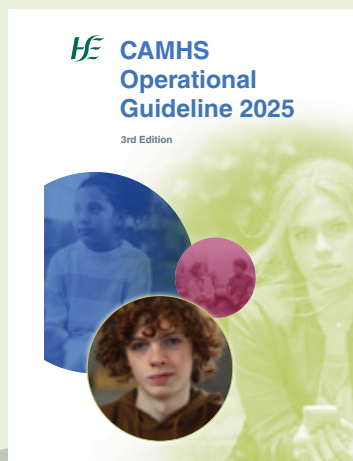
Transforming Youth Mental Health Services in Ireland: A New Model

Recommendations to enhance, improve and transform youth mental health services in the adult, medium and long-term. Prepared by the Youth Mental Health Transitions Specialist group to support the implementation of Sharing the Vision. Recommendation 1.1B.



Sharing the Vision
A Mental Health Policy for Everyone

The third edition of the '[CAMHS Operational Guideline](#)' was published by the Health Service Executive, with the aim of standardising and streamlining operational practice and ensuring a consistent national approach to delivering Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) nationally.



The HSE also launched [National Lived Experience Awareness Day](#) on 15th October, bringing together agencies and organisations to highlight the value of lived experience in improving, designing, and delivering health and other public services.





Fundraising

Fundraising



Niamh Nutty
Office Manager
(January - April 2025)

Thank You!

Bodywhys would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to everyone who fundraised for us in 2025. To everyone who raised money for birthdays, through sporting events, coffee mornings and generous donations, we are so grateful that you chose to support Bodywhys.



In **May 2025, Alana Cunningham** bravely completed a skydive to raise funds for Bodywhys, following her own lived experience. Not only did she help us in our efforts to bring attention to eating disorders, but she raised an incredible



€18,355

Thank you so much
Alana!





Roisin Roberts, Bodywhys Communications Officer, ran the Dublin marathon in October, raising

€2,575



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN
DANCE



UCC Dance held its annual charity showcase 'So UCC Thinks It Can Dance' during which teams from across the college had the opportunity to perform in front of a panel of judges.

The event raised a total of

€5,715.60



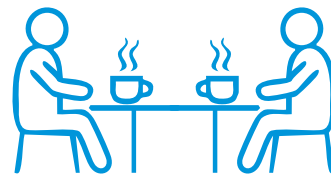


**COFFEE
MORNING**

**St. John of God's
University Hospital**
hosted a coffee
morning in March
2025 and kindly
donated



€360



**st John
of God** 
University Hospital

**SWAP
& SHOP**

Aine Sheehan hosted a
swap shop in Naas Arts &
Community Centre in April.



Attendees could donate
pre-loved items in
exchange for something
new, with proceeds of.

€1,814.20

being donated to
Bodywhys



Service user feedback from 2025





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 2025

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
		2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	Notes	€	€	€	€	€	€
Incoming Resources							
Voluntary Income	5.1	41,120	-	41,120	26,402	-	26,402
Activities for generating funds	5.2	541,773	15,000	556,773	553,111	55,098	608,209
Other income	5.3	1,457	-	1,457	55,167	-	55,167
Total incoming resources		584,350	15,000	599,350	634,680	55,098	689,778
Resources Expended							
Raising funds	6.1	8,647	-	8,647	44,965	-	44,965
Charitable activities	6.2	593,364	37,682	591,046	593,918	46,410	640,326
Total Resources Expended		562,011	37,682	599,693	638,883	46,410	685,293
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		22,339	(22,682)	(343)	(4,203)	8,688	4,485
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year		22,339	(22,682)	(343)	(4,203)	8,688	4,485
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds beginning of the year	14	540,625	74,490	615,115	544,828	65,802	610,630
Total funds at the end of the year		540,625	51,808	614,772	540,625	74,490	615,115

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 Trustees on 19 August 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

IMELDA REDMOND
Trustee

JUDITH BLAKE
Trustee

THINK BODYWHYS Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 €	2024 €
Current Assets			
Debtors	10	7,029	55,047
Cash at bank and at hand	11	722,531	612,566
		729,560	667,613
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	(114,788)	(52,498)
Net Current Assets		614,772	615,115
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		614,772	615,115
Funds			
Restricted trust funds		51,808	74,490
Designated funds (Unrestricted)		226,730	226,730
General fund (unrestricted)		336,234	313,895
Total Funds	14	614,772	615,115

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 19 August 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

IMELDA REDMOND

Trustee

JUDITH 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 2025. Your interest in, and support of our work is much appreciated.

Department of Health and Staff

Health Service Executive and Staff

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

Our volunteers

Our volunteers and Expert by Experience (EbE) group

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

Directors Tiggy Hudson

Sheila Naughton

Imelda Redmond

Judith Blake

Siobhan McArdle

Emmet Anthony Gleeson (Appointed 20 March 2025)

Angela Mullins (Appointed 20 March 2025)

Urszula Welenc (Appointed 20 March 2025)

Jason Costello (Resigned 26 September 2025)

Henry Blake (Resigned 28 February 2025)

Company Secretary Imelda Redmond (Appointed 28 February 2025)

Henry Blake (Resigned 28 February 2025)

Registered Office 18 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2

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

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.

Company Number (CRO) 236310

Charity Registration Number (CRA) 2003405

Charity Number (CHY) 11961

Principal Bankers Bank of Ireland, Stillorgan Shopping Centre, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin

Legal Name Think Bodywhys a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG)

Bodywhys Team 2025

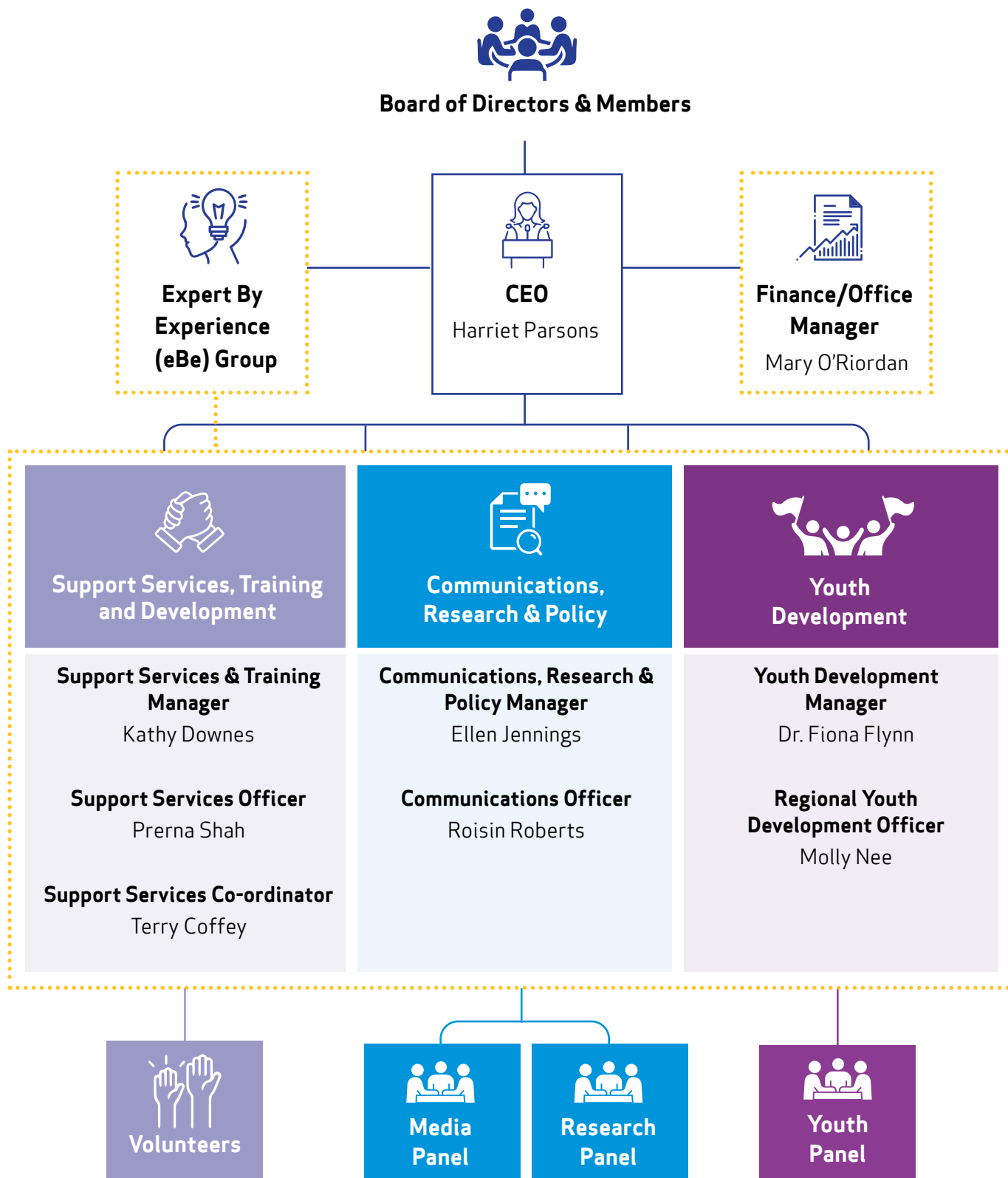
Jacinta Hastings	Chief Executive Officer (Retired March 2025)
Harriet Parsons	Training and Development Manager - Family Support Team (Until January 2025), Interim Chief Executive Officer (From March to July 2025), Chief Executive Officer (From August 2025)
Kathy Downes	Support Services Manager (Until March 2025), Support Services and Training Manager (From April 2025)
Danielle Mac Innes	Services Support Officer (May to October 2025)
Terri Coffey	Support Services Co-Ordinator (From October 2025)
Perna Shah	Support Services Officer
Christopher Cash	Training and Development Consultant - Family Support Team
Dr Fiona Flynn	Youth Development Manager
Molly Nee	Regional Youth Development Officer (West)
Barry Murphy	Research and Policy Officer (Resigned August 2025)
Ellen Jennings	Communications Officer (Until August 2025), Communications, Research and Policy Manager (From September 2025)
Roisin Roberts	Communications Officer (From October 2025)
Niamh Nutty	Office Manager (Resigned April 2025)
Mary O'Riordan	Finance Manager, Office Manager (From July 2025)



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 ”

Organisational Structure: End of 2025



Governance

Governance

Internal policies and procedures were reviewed and updated as required including the Child Protection Policy, Data Protection Policy, Media Panel Policy, Social Media Policy and Podcast Policy.

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.

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 2025, there was no expense claims raised by the Trustees.

Members of the Board shall be Directors for a period of three years from the date of their appointment and thereafter shall be eligible for reappointment for a further period of three years.

Any Director may, after the expiration of such six year term, be subsequently reappointed for one further, but not consecutive, term of three years.

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

Board Meetings and Reporting

The Board of Directors met a total of 5 times in 2025, including the AGM which took place on October 14th. In addition to Board meetings, Trustees are available to consult over the course of the year to review issues which need consideration between Board meetings. The CEO reports to the Board.

The Board Sub-Committee: Finance & Audit Committee

The Finance and Audit Committee consists of five members including the Treasurer and two other members. 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 four times in 2025.

Governance Code Compliance

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

In 2025, 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 Charity's Regulators 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 2025.

Director's Remuneration

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

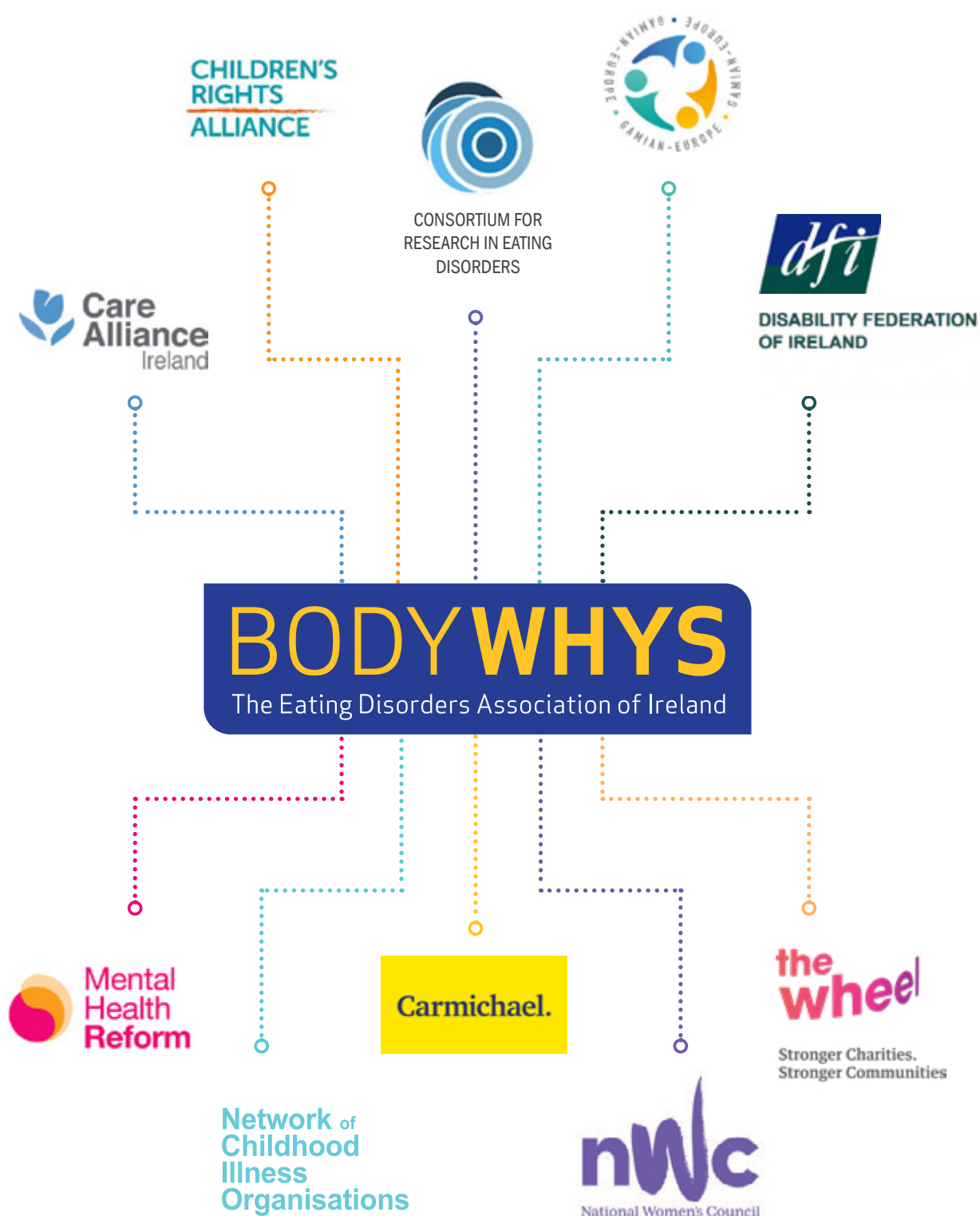
Salary Bands	No. of Staff
€20,000 – €29,999	1
€30,000 – €39,999	5
€40,000 – €49,999	1
€50,000 – €59,000	1
€60,000 – €69,000	0
€70,000 – €79,000	1

Remuneration

The CEO's salary for the year was €75,735. 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. Apart from the CEO, no employee of the organisation earned more than €60K in 2025. All staff members who worked for the organisation during the financial year fell within the following bands:

Memberships



Glossary

ALVS	Attend, label, validate, soothe
AMHS	Adult Mental Health Services
AN	Anorexia Nervosa
ARFID	Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder
BED	Binge Eating Disorder
BN	Bulimia Nervosa
BYP	Bodywhys Youth Panel
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CWC	Conversations with Carers
D	Dietician
DARN-C	Desire to want to change, ability and skills needed for change, reasons to change, need to change and commitment to change
DEARS	Developing discrepancy, expressing empathy, amplifying ambivalence, rolling with resistance, supporting self-efficacy
EbE	Expert by Experience
ED	Eating Disorder
EDAW	Eating Disorders Awareness Week
FBT	Family Based Therapy
FSP	Family Support Package
GP	General Practitioner
HRB	Health Research Board
HSE	Health Service Executive
NCP-ED	National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders
NMCS	New Maudsley Carer Skills
OARS	Open questions, affirmations, reflections, and summarising
OSFED	Other Specified Feeding and Eating Disorder
OT	Occupational Therapist
P	Psychotherapy
PiLaR	Bodywhys 'Peer Led Resilience' family support programme
PPSG	Post-PiLaR Support Group
SLT	Speech and Language Therapist

Notes

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Notes

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BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

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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