

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

Annual
Report
2024



DRCC

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre



Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC)
Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024
Published May 2025

Charity information:

DRCC is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, registered (CRO 147318).

It holds charitable tax exemption from the Revenue Commissioners (CHY 8529).

It is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority (RCN 20021078).

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Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision is of an Ireland free from sexual violence.

Our mission is to prevent the harm and heal the trauma of sexual violence.

Values

Trustworthy

We are a trusted brand, informed by evidence and our understanding of the trauma of sexual violence, committed to speaking out and seeking supports and justice for all victims/survivors of sexual violence.

Respectful

We are respectful of the lived experience of victims/survivors of sexual violence and listen in a careful and non-judgemental manner, providing an empathetic and empowering response to victims/survivors, while also ensuring that our engagement with our staff, volunteers and Board is both respectful and empowering.

Professional

Our services and interactions with clients, partners and staff are of a high standard, targeted at meeting the needs of all those who seek support and engagement with the organisation.

Informed

Our work is informed on an ongoing basis by the voices and lived experiences of the callers and clients with whom we work, as well as international and sectoral best practice.

Inclusive & diverse

We work to ensure our services and supports are accessible to all who need them and are provided by a diverse and inclusive staff and Board.

Action learning

We are an action learning organisation that learns from our successes and our challenges, taking action in order to develop creative, flexible solutions and strategies to pressing problems.

A note on statistics for 2024: The statistics contained in this report relate to details disclosed by callers, clients and those availing of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre's other support services during 2024. These have varying levels of detail and have been anonymised to preserve confidentiality, as we aim to provide confidential support and information. The information collected in these statistics relates to details disclosed by callers, clients and people availing of our other support services during 2024. Our primary aim as an organisation is to provide confidential support and information, and for this reason our statistics have varying levels of detail. Their value is that they tell of the experiences of the people who availed of our services.

Director Information

Chair:

Ann Marie Gill (to June)
Anne Marie James (from June)

Company Secretary:

Carol Keane

Chief Executive:

Rachel Morrogh

Directors:

Ann Marie Gill
Anne Marie James
Aibhlín McCrann
Síona Cahill
Eoghan Cleary
Fergus Finlay
John Fanning
Nikki Gallagher
Carol Keane
Madeleine McCarthy
Grace O'Malley
Nóirín O'Sullivan

Charity Number:

CHY 8529

Company Number:

CRO 147318

Charity Registered Number:

RCN 20021078

Registered Office:

McGonnell House, 70 Lower Leeson Street,
Dublin 2, D02VW13

Auditors:

PKF Brenson Lawlor, Argyle Square,
Morehampton Road, Dublin 4

Bankers:

Permanent TSB, 70 Grafton Street, Dublin 2
Allied Irish Banks, 40/41 Westmoreland
Street, Dublin 2

Solicitors:

Byrne Wallace Shields Solicitors LLP,
88 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2, D02 DK18

Donations link:

www.drcc.ie/donate

Glossary

Accompaniment: A service offering practical information, emotional support and personal accompaniment to victims and survivors and those supporting them, such as friends or family, in accessing facilities. Our support workers accompany survivors attending the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) in the Rotunda Hospital, reporting sexual crimes to An Garda Síochána, and attending court and other such settings. It can include familiarisation, which means visiting the courtroom before the trial to allow the survivor to get a sense of the workings of the courtroom and the trial process.

Consent: A freely given, ongoing and voluntary agreement between people in a sexual encounter that allows each individual to decide what they want and do not want, and to have that respected. For more on consent visit [we-consent.ie](https://www.drc.ie/we-consent.ie)

Coercion: The use of force to make someone do something they do not want to, such as engage in sexual activity. Coercion can involve physical force, psychological intimidation, blackmail or other threats.

Counselling and psychotherapy: Forms of therapy involving a one-to-one relationship between a client and therapist. They provide the support and encouragement necessary to allow someone to talk about the experiences and events that have affected their lives and their way of being in the world. Counselling is usually for a shorter term than psychotherapy, which is a more in-depth, longer-term process.

Director of Public Prosecutions: The independent State service that decides whether criminal cases will be prosecuted in Ireland.

An Garda Síochána: The Irish police force that enforces laws, gathers evidence and investigates crimes on behalf of the State.

Sexual assault treatment unit: A medical facility where victims and survivors of rape or sexual assault can go to have a forensic medical examination and receive specialised medical treatment. There are seven sexual assault treatment units (SATUs) in Ireland.

Sexual violence: Any kind of unwanted sexual activity or contact, whether physical or non-physical. This includes words or actions of a sexual nature forced upon a person without their consent. Sexual violence, including rape, is never the fault of the victim.

Trauma: A physical or emotional response experienced by a person following a distressing event, such as sexual violence. People react differently to trauma and it can affect emotions, behaviour and/or relationships with other people.

Trauma-sensitive or trauma-aware: Understanding and accommodating the ongoing effects of traumas like sexual violence on victims and survivors when delivering a service or in the course of your work.

Victim and survivor: We use these terms to refer to people who have been raped, assaulted or experienced other forms of sexual violence, acknowledging that not everyone will identify with these terms.

Abbreviations

CARI – Children at Risk in Ireland

CPD – continuing professional development

CSO – Central Statistics Office

DEIS – Delivering Equality of opportunity In Schools

DRCC – Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

DSGBV – domestic, sexual and gender-based violence

ESHTE – Ending Sexual Harassment & Violence in Third Level Education

HAP – Housing Assistance Payment

NAC – National Advisory Committee

NGO – non-governmental organisation

PTSD – post-traumatic stress disorder

RSE – relationships and sexuality education

SATU – Sexual Assault Treatment Unit

SAVI – Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland

SPHE – Social, Personal and Health Education

SVS – Sexual Violence Survey

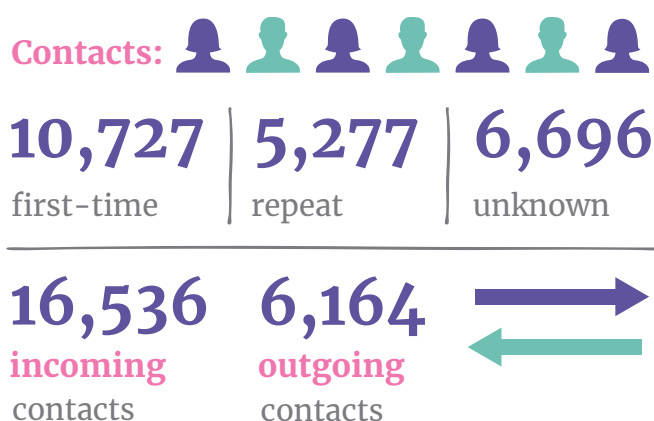
UK – United Kingdom

V-SAC – Victim Support at Court

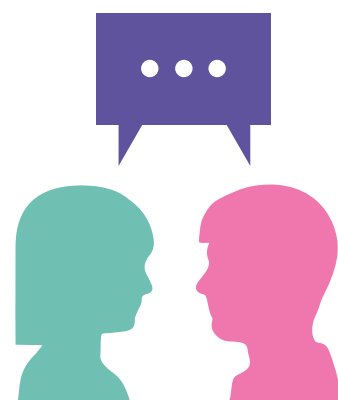
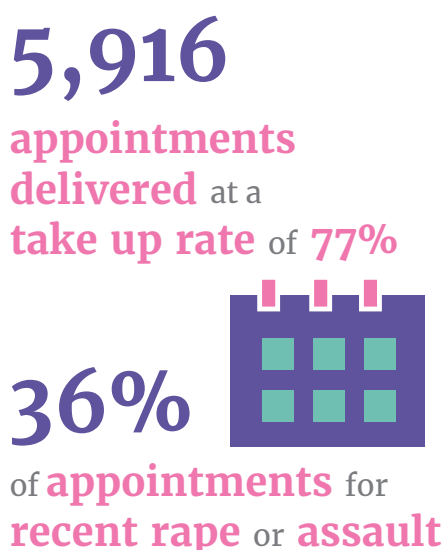
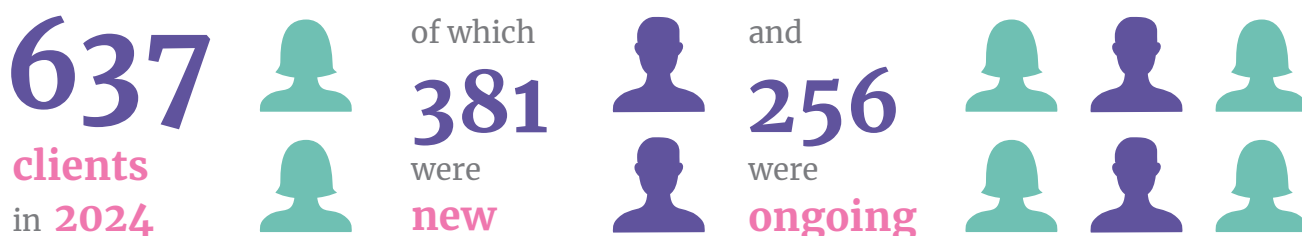


Annual Statistics 2024

National Helpline



Therapy Clients



Accompaniment at Sexual Assault Treatment Unit

255 victims
and **survivors** supported
at **forensic medical
treatment** in **SATU**



and
130
at **follow up clinic**



145
friends and
family offered
**emotional
support**

Accompaniment in justice system

A total of **324**
people supported
in **justice system**



226 **people supported with
information** and/or
accompaniment to
report in **Garda stations**
& other settings

98

people supported
with **information** and/
or **accompaniment**
in **trials, hearings** &
other **court processes**



51



days of support
in **Garda stations**

287

days in court &
other **hearings**

Education

54



**training
sessions**

903



**people
trained**



144

participants in
youth programmes
over **11 sessions**

Website

over

106,400
views

over

40,000
unique users



2,699

telephone calls

3,860

downloads



almost

837

emails



Media

More than

2,000

media contacts
and **coverage**

with a reach of

142.7

million



Chairperson's Foreword!



It is my privilege to present the Annual Report of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for 2024.

It is difficult to have to report that data from the Central Statistics Office revealed a further 8% increase in reported rape and sexual violence in Ireland in 2024, which totalled 3,709 incidents.

Calls to our helpline have increased hugely – up 22% since 2023 – and the increase in clients seeking therapy following rape or sexual violence has also increased by a massive 28% since 2023.

With the rising figures in sexual violence and increased demands on our service, it became clear that our home at McGonnell House was no longer viable to accommodate the needs of our staff or our clients to enable us to provide the best service to our clients.

So this year, after much soul searching and with all the additional demands on our service and resources, the board of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has made the momentous decision to move from McGonnell House to a new home at Equity House Ormond Quay.

We will in our new facility have immensely improved services for our clients, including soundproofed therapy rooms and healing spaces, as well as accompaniment liaison rooms where our clients' dignity and privacy is respected, where the workers who accompany and support our clients at court can meet in a setting that is fitting to the upholding of their dignity before they face the ordeal of the court process.



We thank the McGonnell Family Trust sincerely for their incredible philanthropy and support to our organisation over the years

No matter where we are located, including all of our outreach centres, we will continue to provide a haven for victims and survivors to come and tell their story in a safe place, where they will be believed, supported and healed.

In recognition of the increase in rape and sexual violence against women and girls, a dedicated governmental agency Cuan was established under Minister McEntee's tenure in 2024 to coordinate the state's response to victims and survivors. We warmly welcome the establishment of Cuan with whom we worked closely over the year and look forward to continuing this positive relationship into the future.

We would like to welcome the appointment of Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan who has already signified his concern about the level of sexual violence in Ireland. He has illustrated this by outlining his clear intention to amend the laws around access to counselling notes, following the advocacy of our amazing clients and ourselves. This is an issue that remains close to our hearts in Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and one on which we will continue to advocate.

We also appreciate the Minister's intention to bring in legislation to criminalise the exploitative practice of seeking sex in lieu of rent and to ensure that the most vulnerable in our society are protected.

We have always strived to ensure that the Centre remains financially stable, thanks to careful management of our resources, continued support from statutory and voluntary funders, and the generosity of the public. We are deeply grateful to all who make our work possible, from government and statutory partners to individual donors and philanthropists.

Advocacy stands at the heart of our mission. We witness the trauma of our victims as they speak to us day and night on our 24-hour national helpline. We are deeply aware of what our clients have endured as they speak to our therapists and to our support workers who accompany them to court.

In Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, we know what the system looks like first-hand for victims of rape and sexual violence, and the re-traumatising effect of the system they must endure to seek justice through our courts.

Our data helps us to advocate for the improvement of victims' rights, whether it be legislative, judicial or societal. We will do whatever it takes to heal the harm but also to improve the system, not least the reporting process from what can be a very challenging and retraumatising experience for victims of violence.

Our dedicated team at We Consent conducted quantitative and qualitative research to help us understand the explosion in toxic masculinity on the internet which we believe is feeding into the massive increase of violence against women including use of ligatures being seen in our SATU units on a daily basis.

We are delighted to announce that in 2025, we were given the Human Rights Award from the Bar Council of Ireland for our advocacy work and our support for victims.

Our board and staff have been at the forefront of survivor-centred policy-making and we bring our 46 years of experience of working with survivors to inform stakeholders' work, law-making and strategies. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre believes that there is a long way to go before we can truly say our legal, political, social and cultural pillars have survivors' experiences embedded in their work.

On behalf of the Board, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our incredible staff and volunteers, each and every one of whom is a first responder, and to our dedicated and victim centred CEO Rachel Morrogh. Thank you all for your professionalism, compassion and unwavering commitment to your roles.

We stand on the shoulders of the dedicated founders of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, the staff, volunteers and board members who have gone before us. In particular, we recognise and warmly thank those who concluded their tenure during the year, including our former Chairperson, Ann Marie Gill, whose vision and leadership for her stewardship was so important in growing and developing our organisation.

As we look ahead, we remain firmly focused on strengthening our services, deepening our advocacy, and working toward a society where sexual violence is not only responded to effectively but prevented entirely.

Finally but most importantly, I would like to acknowledge and pay heartfelt tribute to all the survivors with whom the organisation has had the privilege to work over the course of 2024. We witnessed survivors speak of their own deeply personal stories with a view to preventing the harm to others, to improving society as a whole, and to exposing extraordinary injustices through their own deeply personal experiences and for that I am in awe of their courage.

Courage builds courage and their bravery has certainly inspired many more victims to stand up and speak out. Silence, as we know, is the enemy of recovery.

To the very many of you who have never shared your story, please know that we see you, we believe you and we will continue to advocate for you.

Anne Marie James

Chairperson, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre



Message from Chief Executive Officer



Over the course of 2024, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre supported more people than it has ever done before.

More disclosures of rape and sexual violence were made to staff and volunteers than in any of the 46 years for which the organisation has existed.

We listened, counselled, advised, informed and supported all those who turned to us for help, yet we know that this is only a small proportion of the true number of people who need and deserve to heal.

It is troubling that for many different reasons, there remain thousands and thousands of people in Ireland who have never even told another person about what happened to them, never mind received professional support. We desperately want this to change.

Throughout the year we sought to increase awareness of the supports, services and information that is available to people who have experienced sexual violence in the hope this would encourage people who were facing trauma alone to reach out for the first time. The efforts we made to connect with this silent majority were effective and we saw significantly increased demand for all our support services. Our staff and volunteers speak of the privilege it is to be the first person to whom a survivor discloses what happened to them.



At the heart of everything we do is a simple but powerful principle: **we believe victims and survivors**. Increasingly, it feels that standing firm in that belief is one of our most vital responsibilities, given an emerging narrative, particularly internationally, that trivialises and normalises sexual violence.

During 2024, we put this fundamental belief into action every day of the year, every hour of the day. We take pride in being the organisation our clients could count on to listen, to support, and most importantly, to believe. And we remain committed to being that same trusted support for everyone who needs us in the days, years and decades to come.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has operated the National Rape Crisis Helpline since 1979 and each year since then has witnessed a growth in caller numbers. However, in 2024 we witnessed an exceptional additional demand of 22%, with 22,700 contacts. The significant majority of these callers were making contact for the first time, but we remain a constant and reliable support for repeat callers too, who make up about 1 in 3 of our contacts. Most callers to the National Rape Crisis Helpline are seeking support for an adult rape (37%) with the next most frequent incident/s being child sex abuse (29%), followed by sexual assault as an adult (16%).

In our Annual Report for 2023, we identified an increase in the acute mental health needs expressed by some of our callers. We outlined our concern at the increase in suicidal ideation being referenced to our staff and volunteers and that understandably such deep trauma requires additional, specialised support. Over the course of 2024, this trend continued with more than 10% of helpline callers – 2,337 people – referring to mental health issues, and 527 calls directly referencing suicidal ideation.

The year was also marked by high profile legal cases and these are reflected in caller numbers to the National Helpline – there are spikes in contacts when survivors of sexual violence speak out. This was the premise on which we developed our “Signs of Hope” campaign which we launched in October.

We asked a group of courageous and selfless survivors to each write a message to other survivors who had not yet sought support after experiencing sexual violence. They urged people to call the National Rape Crisis Helpline and as a result, we witnessed a surge in calls from first-time callers. Some callers had carried their experience alone for decades and had never told another soul – until now. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is hugely grateful to the survivors who participated in this campaign and because of its success in driving never-time callers to the Helpline means that we will continue it into 2025 in our effort to reach and support more victims of sexual violence.

The National Rape Crisis Helpline is often the first point of contact someone will have with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, but many callers go on to receive counselling and therapy with us. In 2024, there was a huge increase in the number of people our therapists counselled, growing from 497 in 2023 to 637 people last year – an increase of 28%.

The increase in client numbers is reflected in the phenomenal growth in the number of appointments we offered during the year, which rose by 57% compared to 2023. In 2024, we delivered close to 6,000 sessions across our locations at Leeson Street, Coolock, Balbriggan, Dochas Women’s Prison and Tallaght, compared to just under 3,800 in 2023. We were only able to achieve this kind of growth because of the endless commitment of our therapists, intake coordinators, administrative staff and HR colleagues, whose dedication meant that we could provide counselling to more survivors of sexual violence than we have ever been able to before.

More than 1 in 3 of people receiving therapy with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre in 2024 had been raped or sexually assaulted in the last 6 months, while others had experienced sexual violence more than 6 months ago or as a child. Five of our clients told us that they had become pregnant as a result of rape.

The gender of our therapy clients remains mostly female and although women are more likely to experience sexual violence than men, they are over-represented amongst our client numbers at 87%. We sought to connect directly with males in our “Signs of Hope” awareness-raising campaign in 2024 and although this led to an increase in callers to the National Rape Crisis Helpline, we didn’t observe corresponding increases in the number of men availing of counselling with our service. This is something that the organisation will remain focused on in 2025.

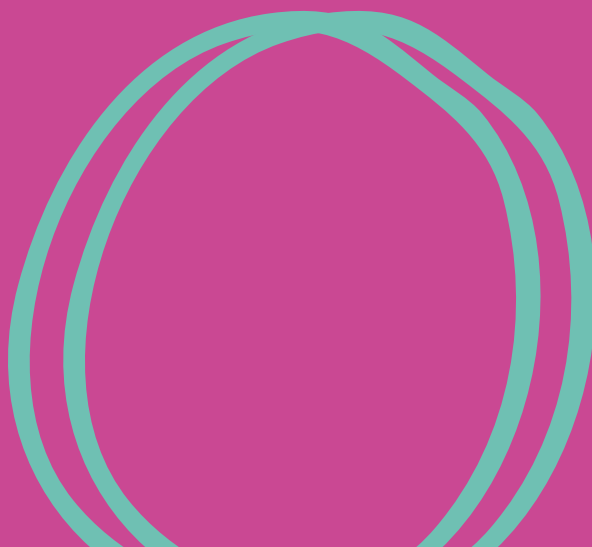
Over recent years, we have observed a concerning trend amongst our new therapy clients regarding additional physical or psychological violence inflicted upon them, on top of the sexual violence they have experienced. This additional violence may have occurred to facilitate a once-off sexual attack or may be part of longer term pattern of abuse our client has been subjected to. More than half of our new therapy clients (55%) had suffered other forms of violence in addition to sexual violence, from physical and psychological abuse to coercive control, spiking, trafficking, stalking and threats to kill. We have also been troubled and upset to hear anecdotally of a growing number of clients who reference physical restraints being used by perpetrators as part of a sexual assault.

The medical teams working in the Sexual Assault Treatment Units have made similar observations; it was reported in the SATU Annual Report for 2023 that physical restraints were used in 38% of the incidents they recorded – an increase of 6% compared with 2022. Restraint by the throat was recorded in 77 (7%) of attendances. This level of violence speaks not only to the immediate medical care required, but also the profound shock, loss and grief that someone who has just experienced sexual violence can feel. For many people, the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit is where they will first encounter Dublin Rape Crisis Centre’s Accompaniment Service, and our staff and volunteers support victims as well as their family and friends at a time of unimaginable distress.

In 2024, we supported 255 victims and survivors of sexual violence when they attend the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit at the Rotunda Hospital for a forensic examination or health check. We also supported those who attended a follow-up clinic 4 weeks after their initial presentation. The presence of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre at the follow-up clinic was established as an Action Research Project in 2024. This arose from a concern that some survivors are, understandably, not able to process information about support services when they first present at the Unit; this may mean they never access the support they need and deserve. In collaboration with the team at the Rotunda Hospital Dublin SATU, we set up an opportunistic brief-intervention model of care at the SATU’s follow-up clinic. The success of this pilot meant that we supported 130 survivors who without this pilot would have risked falling through the net and not accessed a support service. We presented the findings of the pilot at the SATU Study Day and it is our hope that this model can be mainstreamed across the country.

As well as providing support to the survivors of sexual violence themselves, we gave psychological and emotional support to 145 friends, family members and other supporters who were accompanying a loved one to the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit.

Our Accompaniment Service also supports survivors to make a report of sexual violence to relevant authorities. Ahead of making the decision to report, survivors of sexual violence have many questions, doubts and concerns. Our Accompaniment team is skilled and experienced in providing information that will assist survivors in making the decision that is best for them.



In 2024, our accompaniment team provided support, information and accompaniment at the reporting stage to 226 victims and survivors. These numbers marked an increase of 21.5% from the 186 supported in 2023. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is proud that our team is so trusted by survivors and that being supported by them makes such a difference when compared to the small proportion of victims of sexual violence nationally who will report a crime.

While most of our Accompaniment work is in Garda Stations and the Criminal Courts of Justice, we also worked in the Family Courts, Civil Courts, the International Protection Office and the International Protection Appeal Tribunal. In 2024, our team provided support, information and accompaniment to 98 survivors who wanted to know more about court, trials and other hearings, roughly the same number as in 2023 when the figure was 100. Of these, we went on to provide accompaniment to court for 75 victims and survivors, spending a total of 287 days in court settings.

However, it is important to reflect that although Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is reporting significant increases in those using our Accompaniment Service, there are very small numbers of people who report a sexual offence. The national Sexual Violence Survey from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) showed less than half of those who have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime have disclosed to any other person. Of the victims of sexual violence as adults who have disclosed to someone else, just 4% of women and 6% of men report to Gardaí. This is a very small fraction of the overall number of victims and survivors and it underlines other CSO survey findings that survivors feel they will not be believed, or that they feel too ashamed or embarrassed to tell anyone about what happened to them. Amongst the new clients who came to Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for therapy in 2024, the reporting rate to Gardai was 27%.

Other notable work throughout the year included the training of 759 people working in frontline services, up from 650 people in 2023. Our staff and volunteers covered topics such as the impact of trauma, managing disclosures and working with victims of childhood sexual abuse.

Ahead of the local and European elections, and with the General Election upcoming, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre offered a 4-part training module to all Oireachtas and constituency staff in association with the Parliamentary Women's Caucus. We wanted to make this training available because we know sexual violence is an issue politicians and their staff come across either as victims themselves or in their frontline work with constituents. Elected representatives also have a role to legislate against sexual offences and this training gave them a broad context from which to fulfil all these different roles.

Our national campaign We-Consent went from strength to strength in 2024 and we hosted consent workshops and discussion sessions nationwide, with 650 participants attending across 11 counties. We conducted extensive research about sexual violence and consent to gain further insights into the differences in men's and women's understanding of consent and raised awareness of the findings through the media. We were gratified to be viewed as thought leaders on the issue of consent when We-Consent was asked to contribute to chapters on sex, consent and relationships in three Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) books for senior and junior cycle curricula.

Advocacy remains at the heart of our work and in 2023 we engaged with policy makers, collaborated with partner organisations and amplified the voices of survivors to drive legislative change. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre was pleased that the issues we raised ahead of the General Election were reflected in many political parties' manifestos and, later, in the Programme for Government. Our focus now is to ensure that these commitments become reality, such as amending the law on counselling notes, developing a Fourth National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence and fully resourcing the State agency Cuan so that it can drive the change we all want to see.

Our achievements would not have been possible without the leadership of former Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Chairperson Ann Marie Gill, and our current Chairperson, Anne Marie James. I am also enormously grateful for the guidance and support of every member of the Board of Directors I had the pleasure of working with in 2024.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is wholly dependent on the kindness, empathy, solidarity and commitment of our staff and volunteers to deliver our services with the compassion and care that our clients deserve. It is the human dimension that makes the organisation the sanctuary that it has become for so many people and I am humbled to work alongside such dedicated and selfless colleagues.

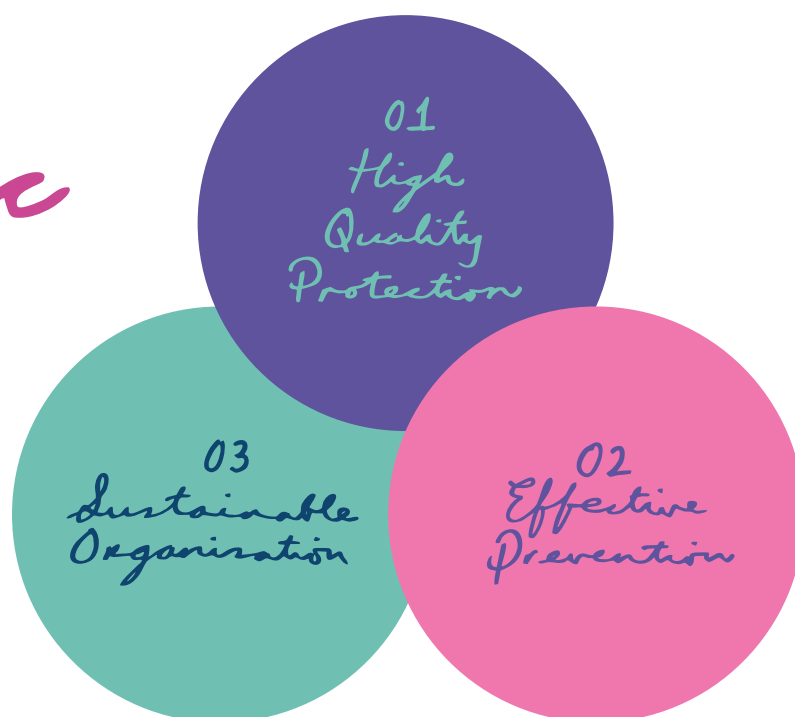
The organisation couldn't do what it does without funding. We are enormously grateful to our statutory funders who have believed in our mission for many years and backed us so that we can be there for people who need our support. We also rely on private donations, corporate giving and generous philanthropy to supplement the funding we receive from the State, and we owe huge thanks to those who support each of these income streams. A diversified funding base is essential for our organisation so that we can be flexible and agile when we identify unmet need.

In 2025, there will be further change for the organisation when we move from Leeson Street to Ormond Quay. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has needed a new home for many years and the new location will unlock a visionary, holistic model of support that reflects the continuum of care a survivor of sexual violence needs throughout their whole life. Over the coming years, we will be trialling new services and supports, carrying out exciting research and growing our offering to clients so that we are there for them whenever and however they need us.

Finally, to each of the clients who is represented by a number or percentage in this document, I want you to know how much more you are to each of us who works in Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. You are seen and you are special. Everything we do is with you in mind and I want to thank you for trusting us to help you heal.

Rachel Morrogh
Chief Executive Officer

Strategic Goals



01

High-quality protection, though timely services and supports focused on supporting recovery, building resilience and attaining justice for those harmed by rape and other forms of sexual violence

- Build on the provision of quality frontline services for victims/survivors of sexual violence
- Work to enhance the services provided, and
- Work to ensure services are accessible to all victims/survivors.

02

Effective prevention, informed by the lived experiences of victims/survivors of sexual violence (through advocacy, education, as well as legal, policy and research work)

- Record evidence of sexual violence in society
- Promote know-how by providing awareness, education and training for professionals and others, and
- Lead, inspire and influence.

03

A sustainable organisation, which effectively manages risk and proactively supports its people towards excellence in meeting the needs of victims/survivors

- Resourcing the work
- Minding our people, and
- Encouraging excellence in communications.



Goal 01

High-quality protection, through timely services and supports focused on supporting recovery, building resilience and attaining justice for those harmed by rape and other forms of sexual violence

01

Build on the provision of quality frontline services for victims/survivors of sexual violence

In its national Sexual Violence Survey, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) described sexual violence as any sexual act which takes place without freely given consent or where someone forces or manipulates someone else into unwanted sexual activity. The word “violence” is sometimes associated with the use of force, but it can also mean “having a marked or powerful effect” on someone, which includes actions or words that are intended to hurt people.

Sexual violence therefore refers to any kind of unwanted sexual activity or contact, whether physical or non-physical, including words or actions, that is done without consent.

Trauma is defined as an event or series of events that the individual perceives as life-threatening, leaving them overwhelmed, helpless and out of control. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre’s approach to counselling and therapy is grounded in the understanding that such trauma deeply impacts a person’s mental, emotional and physical well-being.

22,700
total Rape Crisis
Helpline contacts



Contacts:



10,727

first-time

5,277

repeat

6,696

unknown

6,164

outgoing
contacts



16,536

incoming
contacts



Freephone 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline

The freephone 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline 1800 77 88 88 offers free and confidential listening and support to adult victims/survivors of sexual violence. Trained telephone counsellors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to provide non-judgmental support to anyone affected by sexual violence. The line can also support families and friends of victims/survivors as well as those who work or volunteer with victims/survivors.

Other National Rape Crisis Helpline services

In addition to the freephone 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre provides some additional specialist services for those seeking crisis help (note that these services are not 24/7 and are closed on public holidays):

- a **text service** for those who are Deaf or hard of hearing, operating **Monday to Friday from 8am to 6.30pm, at 086-823 8443**;
- a **Webchat Support Service** on our website drcc.ie, open **Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm** and **Tuesday and Wednesday midnight to 3am**, offering a written mode of communication, which is particularly helpful to those who cannot verbally articulate their needs or who don't have a private space in which to speak; and
- a live **Helpline interpreting service** for those who do not speak English, operating **Monday to Friday from 8am to 6.30pm, and midnight to 8am daily**.

From a first-time male caller who had gone through a lot of abuse in a particular residential school setting and was frustrated by the lack of accountability and justice:

“Now I’ve said it out loud, it’s not all fixed, but it has lifted the anxiety a bit.”

National Rape Crisis Helpline contacts in 2024

Table 1: Contacts with National Rape Crisis Helpline, January–December 2024

Type of contacts	Number of contacts in 2024
Total Helpline contacts	22,700
Helpline counsellors responded to:	
Counselling calls	19,653
Emails	1,756
Webchat	1,013
Text messages	258
Social media	20
First-time contacts	10,727
Repeat contacts	5,277
Unknown	6,696

Table 2: Breakdown of contacts by type

Type of contacts	Number
Counselling/support	8,541
Therapy-related support	6,164
Information	3,886
Hang-up	3,153
Hoax	388
Silent	377
Abusive	191
Total	22,700

Table 3: Breakdown of contacts by type of abuse

Type of abuse	% of contacts
Adult rape	37%
Child sexual abuse	28.7%
Adult sexual assault	16.3%
Unspecified abuse	16%
Sexual harassment	2%

These figures are based on the 77% of contacts who disclosed type of abuse.

In 2024, there were **22,700** contacts with the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline (see Table 1), a stark increase of 22% from 2023, when there were 18,562 contacts. Most contacts were from first-time callers.

As in previous years, most contacts related to rape as an adult (37%), followed by child sexual abuse (28.7%) and sexual assault as an adult (16.3%) (see Table 3). Sexual harassment was cited by 2% of callers. Almost a sixth (16%) of callers did not disclose the type of sexual violence they had experienced.



Gender and age of contacts

Of the contacts calling the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline in 2024 who disclosed their gender, the majority (85%) were female, while 14% were male and 1% identified as other (see Table 4). The largest group of contacts by age was those aged 30–39 years (19.3%), closely followed by those aged 40–49 years (19%) (see Table 5). The third largest group was those aged 50–59 years (18.7%). A total of 35.8% of contacts were aged under 30 years, and 8.2% were aged over 60 years. These figures are broadly similar to those from 2023, with a slight increase in the number of older contacts, potentially due to campaigns run by Dublin Rape Crisis Centre during 2024 which may have led more older callers to contact the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline.

Table 4: Gender of contacts

Gender	% of contacts
Female	85%
Male	14%
Other	1%

These figures are based on the 85% of contacts who disclosed their gender.

Table 5: Breakdown of contacts by age

Age cohort	% of contacts
Aged under 16 years	1.2%
16–17 years	1.8%
18–23 years	15.8%
24–29 years	16%
30–39 years	19.3%
40–49 years	19%
50–59 years	18.7%
60–69 years	7.2%
Aged 70 years and over	1%

These figures are based on the 57% of callers who disclosed their age.

Some callers have told us that the National Rape Crisis Helpline is the only place they can openly talk about their trauma. During the many instances of media coverage of sexual violence that occurred in 2024, many callers rang to express their anger or sadness at the abuse described and/or a verdict. Most of these callers also conveyed their gratitude for the Helpline and the support they get from it.

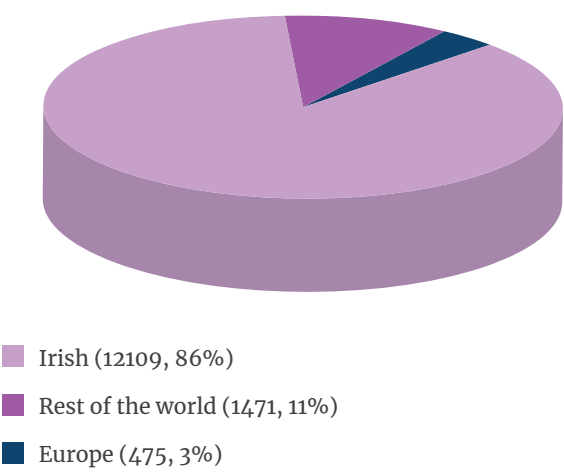
Location and origin of contacts

While almost 6 in 10 (57%) of those contacting the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline in 2024 were in Dublin, over 4 in 10 (42%) said they were calling from outside the capital (see Table 6). About 1% were located outside of Ireland. Where the contact indicated their country of origin, most (86%) were Irish, with 3% from wider Europe and 11% hailing from countries outside of Europe (see Figure 1).

Table 6: Breakdown of contacts by geographic location	
Location of contact	% of contacts
Dublin	57%
Elsewhere in Ireland	42%
Outside of Ireland	1%

These figures are based on the 65% of contacts who disclosed their location.

Figure 2: Breakdown of contacts by origin



These figures are based on the 62% of callers who disclosed their nationality.

“The [staff of the] Helpline are the only people that I can trust right now, and I always know there is someone on the line to support me.”

Contacts by month and onward referral

Our busiest month on the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline was November, with 1,133 contacts (see Figure 2). Surges in calls during this month were prompted by our national “Signs of Hope” campaign – which also resulted in a higher-than-average number of calls in October – as well as by coverage of the Nikita Hand court case result on 25 November 2024. There were also high levels of contacts in January 2024 (1,089) and July 2024 (1,023).

Some contacts sought or needed further information or support beyond Dublin Rape Crisis Centre services (see Table 7). Most were referred to general practitioners (GPs) (29%), another counselling service (14%), another rape crisis centre (13%) or An Garda Síochána or specialised Garda service (12%). About 1 in 14 referrals was to a Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) (7%). Some 4% of referrals were to suicide prevention services, and 3% each were to mental health services, other medical services and legal services. About 2% of referrals apiece were made to our sister organisations, One in Four, CARI (Children at Risk in Ireland) and Women’s Aid.



Figure 2: Number of contacts by month



Table 7: Referral of contacts to external agencies

Services and agencies	% of contacts
GP	29%
Other counselling services	14%
Other rape crisis centres	13%
Gardaí/Garda National Protection Services Bureau (GNPSU)/Garda Victim Service Office (GVSO)	12%
SATU	7%
Suicide prevention services	4%
Mental health services	3%
Other medical services	3%
Legal services	3%
One in Four	2%
CARI	2%
Women's Aid/Domestic violence services	2%

Services and agencies	% of contacts
Tusla/Child protection services	1%
Addiction services	1%
Children and youth services	1%
Medical Council of Ireland	1%
Crisis Pregnancy Agency	<1%
Migrant support agencies	<1%
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other (LGBTI+) services	<1%
Homeless services	<1%
Services for men	<1%
Ruhama	<1%

These figures are based on the 5,308 contacts who were referred to other agencies.



For support after rape,
sexual assault or any
form of sexual
violence
for anyone,
at any time



Freephone
24-hour
National Rape
Crisis Helpline
1800 77 8888



Interpreting service
in 200+ languages



Webchat & text
support at drcc.ie



Learn more



Call for free from this phone's
Emergency Numbers



National Helpline trends in 2024

As has been the case over the past few years, the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline continued to receive varied and complex calls. A sizeable minority – about one in ten – disclosed a range of mental health issues including anxiety, eating disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Many callers were experiencing distressing symptoms, including flashbacks, nightmares and panic attacks. Addiction was a serious issue that many survivors struggled with, either their own or that of the perpetrator.

Some of those who contacted the Helpline were in very severe distress, with 527 callers directly referencing suicidal ideation. The 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline team have had extensive training in suicide prevention to assist them in supporting callers.

Many contacts we received during 2024 mentioned the positive impact of survivors of sexual violence telling their own stories or speaking out about similar issues in media reports. Many callers on the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline said how they felt empowered after hearing these individual experiences, particularly where the reports provided a message of hope to others. In this vein, our “Signs of Hope” campaign led to an increase in callers in October and November who had been inspired to seek support by the stories and words of other survivors.

Throughout the year, these high-profile media reports and investigations into past abuses, whether by individual perpetrators or in settings like schools or medical facilities, led a lot of people to make contact with the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline for support. Callers ranged in age from younger people to those in their 80s. Older men in particular talked about abuse they had experienced as children in school. Most older callers were disclosing their abuse for the very first time and were overwhelmed with the emotions it brought up for them.

The justice system was also a topic brought up by callers. Some cited anxiety about approaching court dates, others were awaiting decisions from the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) while others called to express huge disappointment if a decision was made not to proceed. Some mentioned being treated with kindness and sensitivity by gardaí during the reporting process. Other callers wanted to express gratitude for the support they had received from the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre accompaniment team which helped them deal with pressure around their case and to process what was happening.

The issue of drinks being spiked came up regularly, with callers expressing confusion and anxiety at their lack of clear memory of the abuse. Some were assaulted while away on holiday, with some receiving medical attention and reporting to police abroad, and others returning home as quickly as possible and receiving treatment in a SATU in Ireland.

A small but noticeable number of callers cited experiencing difficulty when they have medical treatments, arising from the trauma of sexual violence. Some were anxious about having certain procedures like a colonoscopy or gynaecological examination, or they felt extremely vulnerable at having to lie flat for a dental procedure. This may result in their postponing or cancelling vital medical care, which is very concerning.

We also had calls from professionals such as teachers, doctors, care workers and those working with migrants seeking guidance on how to support those in their care. Parents contacted the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline asking for guidance on how to support a child who has experienced sexual violence.

24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline Support Worker – “Niamh”

I have been working with the National Rape Crisis Helpline for several years. I originally began my journey on the Helpline as a volunteer, where I received excellent training and support to develop the skills of active listening and holding a non-judgemental space for a caller to explore how they have been left feeling.

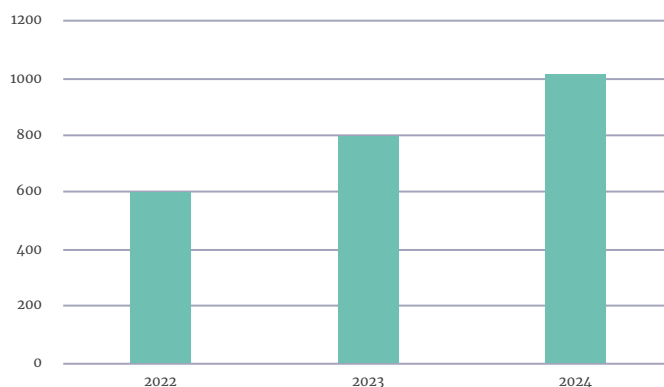
Our work can be varied and is often influenced by media reporting. In recent times, we have received so many calls from people frustrated with the slow pace of social change, particularly in relation to violence against women, court processes and sentencing. We have also spoken with callers who have been inspired to start their own journey to healing by witnessing the strength and courage of others.

It is a privilege to work with people as they bravely look at the hurt and pain they have experienced and begin to rebuild their lives. We appreciate how difficult it can be to take that first step and we strive to offer support to our callers throughout the process. We have taken many calls from supporters, family and friends of survivors. We are here for anyone who has been impacted by sexual violence. This has been a life-affirming experience for me. I know that sounds improbable, but the resilience, strength and humanity of our callers can be humbling.

Webchat Support Service

The Webchat Support Service continued to grow in 2024 (see Figure 3). We received 1,013 webchats, an increase of 25% from 805 in 2023.

Figure 3: Number of webchats



The service is useful for those who prefer to type rather than talk, or where it is difficult to have a telephone conversation due to privacy issues. Sometimes a webchat will lead to a Helpline call and can progress from there to a therapy engagement. Chats can vary in duration, with some lasting longer and involving multiple issues. Some contacts referenced how helpful the chat format was in documenting their struggles. The Webchat Support Service is available Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm, and also midnight to 3am on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

One caller expressed her gratitude for help she had received many years ago at the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit, where the kindness and support of the volunteer from Dublin Rape Crisis Centre had helped her hugely. She said that she wanted to give back by taking part in a fundraising event with her friends and family, saying, “I wish I was richer so I could give you a fortune.”



Another caller expressed her gratitude for her experience across a number of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre services. She had initially called the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline, was put on a therapy list, availed of the accompaniment service for support throughout the legal process, which she found invaluable, and ultimately progressed to attending therapy, while still calling the Helpline to get support whenever she needs.

Looking ahead

The 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline will be entering its third cycle of accreditation with the Helplines Partnership Quality Standard in 2025. This nationally recognised quality standard is awarded following a meticulous inspection of all aspects of our Helpline work. We have maintained this certification of best practice and quality assurance from the Helplines Partnership since 2018, and we will be completing our next application in early 2025.



Therapy and counselling

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre provides counselling and psychotherapy for adult survivors of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment and childhood sexual abuse. We also offer a counselling and therapy service for 16- and 17-year-olds, with the consent of their parent(s) or guardian(s), strictly by consultation.

By the end of 2024, the therapy team was operating with a full cohort of 20 therapists, including 3 individuals in dual roles who also worked as therapy intake coordinators. This increase in team members was the result of a productive recruitment drive which allowed us to expand our capacity and enhance service delivery.

This expansion has contributed to a considerable reduction in the number of clients on our waiting list. With more therapists and intake coordinators, we have been able to not only offer additional therapy appointments but also to reduce wait times for both therapy and intake services, offering a more diverse choice of appointment options to those seeking therapy.

“Please be informed that I am so glad I have attended therapy, I used to grieve and keep everything inside me, being able to talk [about] how I feel was a huge relief, I have noticed a positive change in me and I know that my therapist has been a big factor in that change, I have been able to pick up my life and keep moving forward. Thank you for your wonderful service.”

Overview of therapy services in 2024

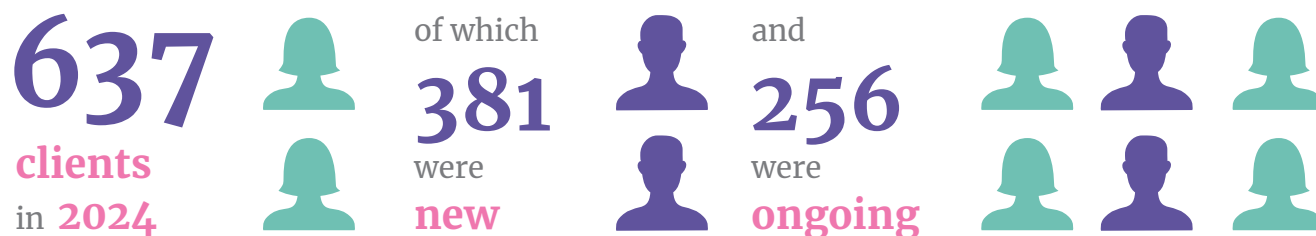
Note that the statistics in this section are divided between sexual violence experienced as adults and as children, and the percentages are of the total client cohort.

In 2024, we **provided therapy to 637 clients**, an increase of 28% from the 497 clients seen in 2023. The growth in the number of clients is thanks to the extremely hard work of our therapy team and a successful recruitment drive over 2023 and 2024. Of our overall client cohort, 381 were new to the service in 2024, or just under 60% percent of total clients.

We **delivered 5,916 therapy appointments to clients** in 2024, up 57.3% from 2023 when 3,761 appointments were given. In total, we offered clients 7,711 appointments during 2024, which translates to an uptake rate of 77%, allowing for cancellations and no-shows. This is the same rate as in 2023. Of the appointments delivered, 36% were for people who had experienced a rape or sexual assault within the previous 6 months, and 64% were for clients who had experienced past sexual violence as an adult or childhood sexual abuse.

Some 72.6% of clients had experienced sexual violence as adults, with 27.4% abused as children, similar to in 2023. Among our clients in 2024, 25 disclosed that they had a disability.

“The therapy sessions have been like an anchor for me, and now I am ready to set sail.”



5,916 appointments delivered at a take up rate of **77%**

36% of appointments for recent rape or assault

72.6% of therapy clients experienced sexual violence as adults

and

27.4% of therapy clients experienced sexual violence as children

Table 8: Gender of therapy clients

Gender	%
Female	87%
Male	12%
Other	1%

Most clients were female (87%) with 12% male and 1% identified as other (see Table 8).

Table 9: Age of therapy clients

Age cohort	%
16–17 years	1%
18–23 years	20%
24–29 years	24%
30–39 years	22%
40–49 years	17%
50–59 years	11%
Aged 60 years and over	5%

People of all ages come to Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for counselling and therapy (see Table 9). In 2024, the largest age cohort was those aged 24–29 years (24%), followed by those aged 30–39 years (22%), while 1 in 5 clients was aged 18–23 years. About 45% of clients in 2024 were aged under 30 years. Only 5% of therapy clients were aged 60 years and over.

Types of sexual violence

As in other years, the largest cohort of clients reported being raped as an adult (42.2% of incidents) (see Table 10). Some 2.7% of incidents involved rape by an intimate partner/spouse and a further 2.7% rape facilitated by use of drugs – totalling nearly half (47.6%) of incidents disclosed by our therapy clients. Almost 1 in 5 incidents were of sexual assault (19%) and 2.3% included aggravated sexual assault where additional violence, humiliation or degradation was involved. About 2.3% of incidents disclosed by therapy clients were about sexual harassment, and 1.4% online abuse. More than a quarter of incidents reported by clients (27.4%) in 2024 were of abuse as children (see Table 11).

Table 10: Abuse experienced by clients as adults	
Type of abuse	% of incidents
Rape	42.2%
Sexual assault	19%
Marital rape	2.7%
Suspected drug-facilitated rape	2.7%
Aggravated sexual assault	2.3%
Sexual harassment	2.3%
Online abuse	1.4%
Total	72.6%

Table 11: Abuse experienced by clients as children	
Type of abuse	% of incidents
Child sexual abuse	27.4%
Total	27.4%

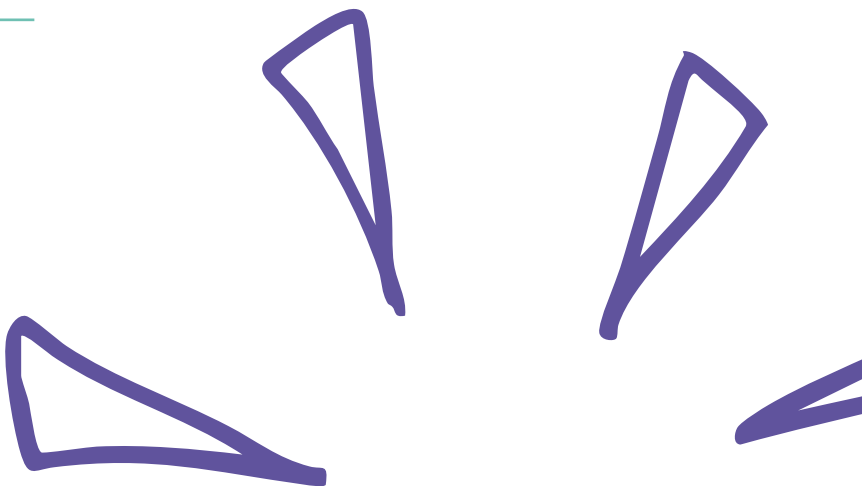
New clients in 2024

New clients: Incidents of sexual and other forms of violence

Among the 381 clients who began therapy with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre in 2024, some 416 incidents of abuse were disclosed. In addition to sexual violence, 200 of these new clients experienced other forms of violence, amounting to 229 incidents, meaning that 55% of new clients were subjected to other forms of violence in addition to the primary experience of abuse (see Table 12).

Table 12: Percentage of new clients in 2024 affected by other forms of violence	
Primary incident category	% with additional violence
Adult Rape/ Sexual Assault	41%
Child Sexual Abuse	14%
Total	55%

For victims of sexual violence as adults, most additional incidents of violence involved physical abuse at 46.2% of incidents, followed by psychological abuse at 25.7% and coercive control at 11.7% (see Table 13). Spiking was carried out in 5.9% of such incidents and trafficking in 4.1%. For clients abused as children who had suffered other forms of violence, the vast majority of incidents involved psychological abuse (77.6%) and about a fifth (20.7%) physical abuse (see Table 14).



**Table 13: Adult victims – other forms of violence**

Types of violence experienced as adults	% of incidents
Physical abuse	46.2%
Psychological abuse	25.7%
Coercive control	11.7%
Spiking	5.9%
Trafficking	4.1%
Threat or attempt to kill	2.9%
Abduction	2.9%
Stalking	0.6%

Table 14: Childhood abuse victims – other forms of violence

Types of violence experienced as children	%
Psychological Abuse	77.6%
Physical Abuse	20.7%
Threat to Kill	1.7%

New clients: Relationship between victim and offender

In 2024 as in other years, the vast majority of our clients knew the person who had raped or assaulted them. More than 96% of childhood abuse incidents and 89% of sexual violence incidents during adulthood were perpetrated by a person or persons known to the victim or survivor. Of those subjected to sexual violence as adults, a quarter (25.1%) reported intimate partner abuse, while for those abused as children it was almost 1 in 20 (5.1%) (see Table 15).

Table 15: Relationship between victim and offender by adult and child abuse incidence

Relationship between victim and offender	Child sexual violence	Adult sexual violence
Parent	10.2%	2%
Sibling	10.2%	1%
Partner/spouse	5.1%	25.1%
Other relative	2.4%	4.7%
Other known person	44.5%	53.5%
Person in authority	2.6%	2.3%
Stranger	3.4%	11.4%

New clients: Pregnancy

In 2024, new female clients disclosed five pregnancies as a result of rape, with outcomes including parenting, adoption and miscarriage.

New clients: Reporting to gardaí

Of our 381 new clients in 2024, 104 reported the crimes against them to An Garda Síochána (either in 2024 or previously), a reporting rate of 27%.

Outcome information was known for 49 of the 104 cases reported (47%) (see Table 16).

Table 16: Case outcomes among new clients who reported to An Garda Síochána

Outcome of case	Number of cases
Under Garda investigation	38
Dropped by DPP or client	7
Went to trial	4
Not disclosed	55

Of the 4 cases that went to trial, 1 resulted in an acquittal and 3 resulted in convictions.



“I would like to thank you for giving me a chance to attend therapy and connect me with my therapist at Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the outstanding support and dedication shown by my therapist, for her exceptional care and support, for being there for me, for being a pillar of strength and comfort during my most vulnerable moments, her presence, support and advice not only brought peace and positivity, but also gave strength and emotional well-being.”

Updates and trends in therapy services

Current affairs and events throughout 2024 had an impact on clients, who expressed feeling distress and being triggered by what they were hearing and seeing online and through the media.

In 2024, there was a slight increase in male clients accessing therapy and counselling services and attending intake assessments. This is a very welcome development, as men can find it very difficult to disclose experiences of sexual violence for a variety of reasons, and they may believe that rape crisis centres do not provide supports for them.

Our therapists have observed an increase in the number of clients who report being subjected to physical violence, including the use of restraints, in their assaults. Therapists have also noted a rise in coercive control, involving financial, emotional and psychological (such as “silent treatment”) abuse. More clients are applying for or getting safety orders against their aggressors and experiencing intimidation or death threats. Marital rape or sexual violence at the hands of a long-term intimate partner has also risen, and we are seeing more clients who are availing of other services, particularly domestic violence support bodies such as Women’s Aid.

Looking ahead

As we continue to grow and evolve, our focus remains on providing high-quality, compassionate care for survivors of sexual violence. In 2025, we plan to:

- expand our outreach services to additional locations
- continue our recruitment drive to ensure we can meet the increasing demand for services, and
- enhance our customer relationship management (CRM) system to improve service delivery further.

Our goal is to continue to reduce wait times while increasing access to therapy and support services, ensuring that every client who reaches out to us for help receives the care and attention they deserve.

Accompaniment support

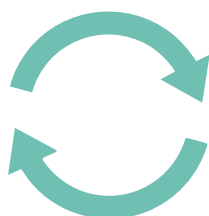
Victims and survivors of sexual violence must be able to seek justice for the crimes committed against them, if that is what they choose to do. It can be daunting to engage with the justice system alone, without knowing how the system works or where to find assistance. Someone who has just experienced sexual violence may be reluctant or not know how to seek appropriate medical attention, which may have serious long-term health implications.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre provides a specialised support service to assist people as they access and navigate these systems. Our Accompaniment Support Workers are there 24/7 for victims and survivors of rape and sexual assault who attend the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) at the Rotunda Hospital Dublin, who report sexual violence to An Garda Síochána or another authority, and/or who attend court or other proceedings in relation to sexual violence. The accompaniment service is also available to survivors' friends and family members who may attend SATU with them.

255 victims
and survivors supported
at forensic medical
treatment in SATU

and

130
at follow up clinic



145
friends and
family offered
emotional support

SATU accompaniment:

The Sexual Assault Treatment Unit at the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin is available to anyone needing medical/forensic care after experiencing sexual assault or rape. This and five other SATUs around Ireland offer a free service, available day and night, with a seventh unit in Limerick available through local gardaí.

The accompaniment team from Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is on hand to offer emotional and psychological support to those who attend the SATU at the Rotunda Hospital Dublin, whether they are alone, with supporters or with garda assistance.

In 2024, we provided support to 385 victims and survivors at the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit. This headline figure represents the number of victims supported in the immediate aftermath of a sexual assault, plus the number of people supported at the follow-up clinic that takes place 4 weeks later. We supported 255 victims and survivors at their first visit, which compares to 308 in 2023. The decrease reflects the overall reduction in numbers presenting to SATU Rotunda in 2024, which fell from 451 in 2023 to 394 in 2024. Reassuringly, however, the proportion of people who accessed accompaniment support increased in 2024 compared with 2023, up to 76% compared to 71%, according to Rotunda metrics.

During the year, we established a presence at the SATU follow-up clinic in an effort to offer support to people who didn't or weren't able to engage with us at their first visit, which led to our engaging with 130 victims and survivors at this later opportunity.

In addition, we provided psychological and emotional support to 145 friends, family members and other supporters of victims and survivors at the unit, who generally find this information and guidance very helpful.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is part of a liaison committee of the Rotunda Hospital which advises on and monitors services there. We are also represented on the national SATU Implementation Project Team.

Justice system accompaniment

Many victims and survivors who are thinking about reporting a past or recent sexual offence – or who have already taken that step – will have questions and concerns about it. Talking it through with or voicing these worries to someone who has knowledge and experience of these processes can be a very empowering first step or a welcome move forward.

For those attending a trial or hearing, our accompaniment service can offer support, information and accompaniment. They can answer specific questions, explain unfamiliar language and structures and help navigate what can be a complex criminal legal process. The service can also include a visit to the court ahead of the trial to become familiar with the layout and process.

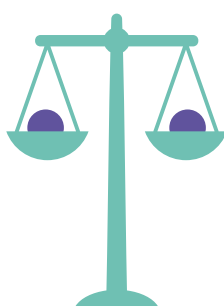
We regularly offer a court familiarisation service to those with impending court dates, where we bring them to the Criminal Courts of Justice to see the courtroom and the victim support unit. Victims and survivors who may never have been inside a courtroom before find this a highly valuable service which gives them a chance to see where everyone sits and to ask questions about the legal process.

We provide support to victims and survivors who are writing their Victim Impact Statements or considering waiving their anonymity. We also support victims of workplace sexual harassment to access information around their legal options.

For a long time, but especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been extensive delays in cases moving through the court process. Cases can often take 4–6 years from reporting to trial, and sometimes even longer. While awaiting their day in court, they must keep the details of the incident or incidents of sexual violence fresh in their minds in order to be able to testify, often with last-minute and repeated delays and deferrals. This has a drastic impact on the wellbeing of victims and survivors.

A total of **324**  **people supported in justice system**

226 **people supported with information and/or accompaniment to report in Garda stations & other settings**



98 **people supported with information and/or accompaniment in trials, hearings & other court processes**

51  **287**
days of support in Garda stations **days in court & other hearings**

Reporting accompaniment: Our accompaniment team provided support and information about reporting sexual violence in Garda stations and other settings where sexual violence may be notified to 226 victims and survivors in 2024. This was an increase of 21.5% on the 186 victims and survivors supported in 2023. About 9% were men and under 2% identified as other, with the remaining 88% women. Of those 226 victims and survivors, some 43 were accompanied by our support workers while they made their statements, totalling 51 days in 2024, up 16% from 44 days in 2023.

Court & hearing accompaniment: Most of our accompaniment work in the justice system is at the Courts of Criminal Justice. However, in 2024 our team was also with victims and survivors at the family courts, civil courts, the International Protection Office and the International Protection Appeals Tribunal, as well as accompanying victims and survivors to college disciplinary hearings.

Our team gave support and information around court, trials and other hearing processes to 98 victims and survivors in 2024, down 2% on the 100 people supported in 2023. Of these, about 5% were male and the remaining 95% were women. We provided accompaniment to 75 of those who contacted the service, spending 287 days in court settings over the year, an increase of 36% over 211 days in 2023.

Training: Over the year, we ran accompaniment training for our staff, Board and volunteers, including visits to the courts for familiarisation and also advanced training in the Criminal Courts of Justice for our court accompaniment support workers.

“Without DRCC I actually wouldn’t be alive today. My children wouldn’t have a Mammy anymore.” – Paula Doyle, accompaniment support client

Case study

“I had the privilege of supporting a close friend through the criminal justice system after she experienced sexual violence, and I can honestly say that Dublin Rape Crisis Centre’s accompaniment support at the Criminal Courts of Justice provided exceptional care and assistance. From the moment we stepped into the victims’ suite, we were met with warmth and understanding, which immediately put us at ease in an otherwise intimidating environment. The secure support rooms were private and peaceful, offering a space where we could have sensitive conversations without the fear of being overheard or interrupted.

Our Accompaniment Support Worker immediately made my friend feel safe, understood, and valued. Throughout the process, her calm demeanour and deep empathy helped guide us through a system that felt overwhelmingly complex and intimidating. She took the time to explain everything in detail, ensuring that my friend was fully informed and empowered to make decisions at every stage.

Accompaniment Support created a safe and supportive environment where my friend could express her feelings, share her fears, and ask questions without judgment. This support gave us all a sense of agency. While the legal proceedings were daunting, she helped us understand each step, which gave my friend confidence and control in a situation where it often felt like everything was happening to her rather than with her. This consistent support helped my friend feel less alone in a system that can often feel isolating.

I truly believe that this service is vital for anyone going through such a harrowing experience, and I am deeply grateful for everything they did to help and support my friend. The unit creates a space where victims can feel empowered, heard and supported every step of the way.”

Trauma-sensitive and survivor-centred information

Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence

Our online resource, *Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence*, is very useful for those seeking to know more about the forensic, reporting and legal processes that someone may encounter in the aftermath of sexual violence. Written in a trauma-informed way, the guide presents the options available to someone who has experienced sexual violence with a focus on personal testimonies, how to support yourself and others, and practical tips and information. Using animations, audio clips and personal accounts, it covers how to access medical treatment after rape or sexual assault, report to An Garda Síochána and navigate the courts process. Each module features a section for people who want to support a friend or loved one who has experienced sexual violence. There are stories from victims and survivors as well as staff and volunteers in the health and justice systems explaining how these processes work.. The guide is accessible online at www.drcc.ie/fyw.



In 2024, *Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence* was viewed 7,000 times and reached 4,300 people. In April, we marked the first anniversary of its launch with a wave of articles in specialist frontline publications such as the *Garda Review*, *World of Irish Nursing* and *Irish Hospital Review*. In the autumn, the guide was shortlisted for a Learning Technologies Award for Excellence in the design of learning content – public and non-profit sector. Towards the end of 2024, the guide was being translated into Polish, French and Brazilian Portuguese, to launch in 2025.

Feedback

“I am very impressed with the guide. There is so much to commend. I like the bite-sized chunks, the short videos and the glossary. I can see that a huge amount of work went into deciding, structuring and writing clear information.” – Staff member, National Adult Literacy Agency

“I found it very easy to navigate despite me being all over the place emotionally. I was able to read it and understand what to do next. No negatives from me. Thank you – it helped me a lot.” – User feedback

We-Consent Resource Hub

Our flagship We-Consent project grew its online hub of resources throughout 2024. It covers an array of consent-related topics, from advice for parents and caregivers to masculinity to neurodivergence and consent, as well as resources for survivors of sexual violence. On its YouTube channel, We-Consent has collated some lively, informative videos explaining key concepts around consent, including a series created with therapist and content creator The Mind Geek and a set of thought-provoking animations.

Looking ahead

In 2025, we will create new resources for survivors and the general public that facilitate self-care and greater awareness of the impact of sexual violence, in particular, a new online self-guided training module.

We-Consent
all people, all situations, all relationships

Home About us Resource Hub Get Involved Supports We-Speak Shop

We-Consent is a new long-term national programme to inform, educate and engage with all members of our society about consent.

- We want to work together to strengthen understanding of consent.
- To learn more about each other's experiences.
- To support everyone to have important conversations and to play their part in building a society where everybody values consent.

Work to enhance the services provided

Regular and relevant staff training

The work we carry out is challenging and diverse, so our staff and volunteers are given information and support in upskilling on a range of issues as needed.

- Given the sensitive nature of our work, staff underwent Children First Training, Safeguarding Adults Designated Officer Training and Mandatory Reporting Training.
- Throughout the year, we organised regular in-house Lunch & Learn sessions, open to staff and volunteers, with invited speakers covering topics such as the work of An Garda Síochána Divisional Protective Services Units, working with gender and sexual diversity, and the work of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.
- All staff and volunteers are offered data protection education, and we were lucky to have a half-day of data protection training hosted by Arthur Cox Solicitors.
- Using funding provided by the Community Foundation of Ireland, at the end of 2024 we enhanced our intercultural competency by hosting awareness workshops for all staff on intercultural competency and anti-racism.
- We began to develop our online learning capacity via our in-house Learning Management System (LMS), which includes recordings of in-person trainings and a number of online learning modules.
- Also during 2024 we had training across a number of teams from Helplines Partnership around how to sensitively and responsively manage challenging contacts.
- We have noted an increase in therapy clients identifying as neurodivergent, and as such we organised a special refresher training for our therapy team with regard to working with neurodivergent clients.

- We offered training on working with interpreters to our therapy and National Rape Crisis Helpline teams, and organised visits to the courts and the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit for staff and volunteers.



We offered training on sexual violence to all staff in the Oireachtas and were delighted to deliver it in partnership with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus in May 2024.

Volunteer mentoring

Our volunteers benefit from one-on-one mentoring from our 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline team, which volunteers find highly useful in developing their support skills. One volunteer commented that they “found the process very beneficial, [Helpline team member] gave great advice and I was able to put this into practice on the next shift ... thank you.”

Monitoring and evaluation of service quality and effectiveness

Throughout 2024, we collected information from across our teams providing services, reviewing regularly for any gaps in order to maintain high standards.

Work to ensure services are accessible to all victims/survivors

Outreach in Dóchas Centre

For many years, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has provided a counselling service to women prisoners in Dublin's Dóchas Centre. Research indicates that an above average number of women in prison have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence, often as children. Being incarcerated can cause past experiences to resurface, and it can intensify trauma symptoms. Our dedicated therapist offers weekly sessions to clients in Dóchas as part of a holistic healthcare service provided to prisoners. This is often the first time the women in Dóchas may have experienced this kind of therapeutic support, and it can equip them with coping skills, support them in processing their traumatic experiences and encourage them to continue their therapy post-release.

Working with less-heard groups

We organise outreach events and meetings with a range of vulnerable and minority groups who may not see or encounter our general offering. In 2024, we held events and talks in refugee/asylum centres, with Traveller groups, in homeless shelters and in youth residential settings. In these sessions, we were able to learn about the specific barriers facing the groups present and pass on information and strategies for dealing with trauma. We have also created specific print resources in a variety of languages which signpost further supports and services.

In addition, thanks to funding grants our training and education team is able to offer a limited number of courses free of charge to those working to support people in homelessness and addiction.

Satellite therapy services

The growth of our therapy team has led to a significant expansion of our outreach services. We now offer additional services in Tallaght and Coolock and have resumed our satellite service in Balbriggan.



We were grateful to Tesco Ireland for two generous donations of clothing during the year for use by clients in SATU – our Chief Executive Rachel Morrogh is pictured here accepting the donation from Lisa McEvoy of Tesco.

Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) outreach

In March, we commenced a new outreach clinic in the SATU at the Rotunda Hospital. For very understandable reasons, when victims and survivors first attend the SATU following an incident of sexual violence, sometimes they are not able to engage with our crisis supports. This new clinic offers a way to engage with them on an invitational basis on their return health-check visit. They can discuss any concerns they may have and learn about wider rape crisis supports and services such as psychotherapy, the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline and justice system accompaniment. The feedback from those availing of this service has been that it's really useful to get more information at this point in their recovery, as they may not have been able to take in anything meaningful during their initial visit. Later in 2024, we expanded the clinic's opening hours to 3 days a week as its positive impact was evident.

National Rape Crisis Helpline interpreting service

DRCC operates the 24-hour freephone National Rape Crisis Helpline 1800 77 88 88 in English, but where someone prefers to engage in another language, the Helpline interpreting service can help. It runs Monday to Friday, 8am to 6.30pm except on public holidays. It also operates midnight to 8am, 7 days a week. The service is free, non-judgemental and confidential. For more information, visit [our website](#).

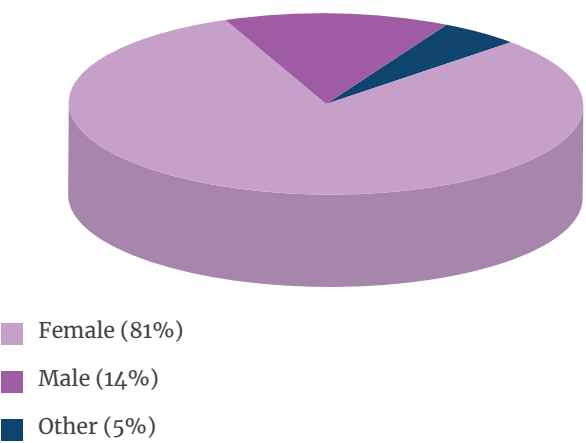
Client Support and Welfare Service (CSWS)

This is a much-needed service to ensure that our clients can remain focused on healing from the trauma they have endured while being supported to access their rights and entitlements, find relevant information and seek referral to other services as appropriate. The service works alongside the therapy and accompaniment teams, who can refer their clients.

In 2024, the service only operated between January and May due to a change in personnel. Nonetheless, it assisted **37 people with 130 interventions**. Interventions may address a singular issue or may cover multiple issues in the one meeting. Where an intervention covers multiple issues, one intervention is recorded, detailing all the issues involved. In 2024, issues that commonly arose included housing and housing assistance payment (HAP), homelessness and access to emergency accommodation, welfare applications, the International Protection process, accessing mental health supports, education, and employment.

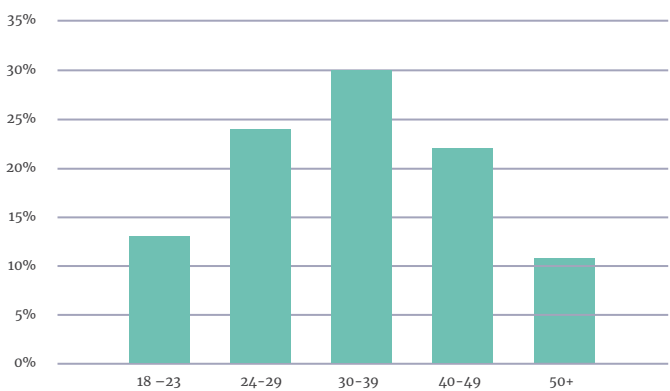
Most clients supported by the service were female (81%), with 14% male and 5% identifying as other (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Gender of CSWS clients



The largest cohort of clients using the service were aged 30–39 but those supported ranged from their teens to over 50 (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Age of CSWS clients





Education and training for external bodies

Our Education and Training Team is a well-established source of expertise and support for organisations and structures that seek to better support the victims and survivors of sexual violence who use their services. We offer regular training on supporting victims and survivors of sexual violence and on prevention, but we can also create bespoke training courses for individual teams. In 2024, we provided training to staff in a wide range of fields, including colleges, addiction services, women's refuges, men's mental health services, adolescent residential units, prisons, community groups and emergency services (see next section for more information).

Consular contacts

In 2024, we contacted a group of foreign embassies and organised an information session with ambassadors representing Luxembourg, Bulgaria, Estonia, Norway and Canada. In addition to describing the supports and services we provide more generally, we also focused on how these intersect with the ambassadors' consular work.



Education and Training Manager Caitriona Freir presenting to Women's Wellness Symposium at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in March

Tech outreach

In June, we decamped to the enormous Google campus in Dublin 4 for an outreach day with the thousands of people employed there. In addition to engaging with some people who were interested in volunteering with us, we talked to staff about our work and ran two workshops discussing consent, sexual violence and supporting survivors.

International outreach

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is part of the National Observatory on Violence against Women (VAW), which is convened by the National Women's Council of Ireland and meets on a quarterly basis to monitor progress on VAW in Ireland. In 2024, the Observatory hosted a delegation from Greece seeking to better understand how the Observatory works in Ireland and what are best practices and challenges, to which Dublin Rape Crisis Centre gave inputs. The Greek delegation aims to set up a regional observatory in Crete initially and then scale up throughout the country to collect data on VAW nationally and create a coordinated response.

Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence

A guide to options and supports after rape, sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence in Ireland

Scan QR code
or visit
www.drcc.ie/fyw



drcc.ie/finding-your-way

Information stand on our *Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence* guide during the 10th Irish Criminal Justice Agencies (ICJA) Conference at the Printworks, Dublin Castle in October

Goal 02

Effective prevention informed
by the lived experiences of
victims/survivors of sexual
violence (through advocacy,
education, as well as legal,
research, communications
and policy analysis work)

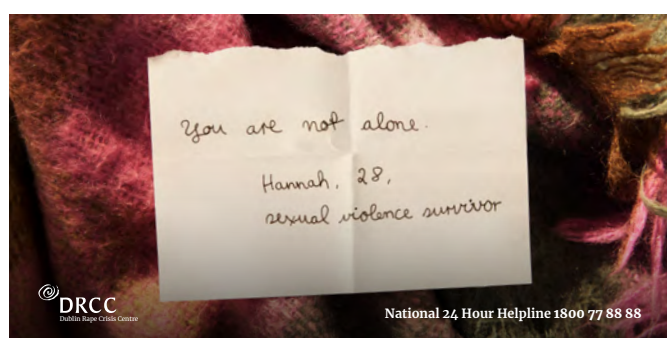


Record evidence of sexual violence in society

Highlighting survivor voices

It is essential that survivors – as the experts by experience on issues of sexual violence – are invited to give their views and insights on issues that affect them and give input where it will make policies and measures more effective, more feasible and more trauma-sensitive. Centring and amplifying the voices and needs of victims and survivors has always been a key priority for DRCC.

Over the course of 2024, we sought to give a platform to survivors wherever possible and appropriate by ensuring that survivors were at the heart of our campaigning, communications and policy work, as well as that of partner organisations. The survivors we support have told us that it gives them hope and encouragement to hear relatable and authentic voices and stories, and that it helps to normalise their experiences so that they can access support and participate more fully in society.



Some of the ways we sought to centre survivor voices in 2024 included:

- Our “**Signs of Hope**” campaign in autumn aimed to encourage those who have not sought support before to reach out to the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline by promoting messages of reassurance, inspiration and hope from nine fantastic survivors via billboards, radio advertisements and social media.
- Throughout 2024, we supported **survivors wishing to share their stories** via media and other platforms to raise awareness of issues impacting them.
- The We-Consent campaign continues to be supported by a strong and diverse group of survivors – the **We-Consent Survivor Council** – who contribute their expertise, passion and careful insights to the campaign in order to ensure lived experience remains at the core of the work.
- The **We-Speak** online story-sharing website, part of the We-Consent campaign programme, is a secure, anonymous place for survivors of sexual violence to safely tell their own stories, in their own time, in their own words. It aims to provide a platform for these stories, in all of their diversity, thereby enabling victims and survivors to reclaim their voice. Throughout 2024, 29 stories were submitted, and the site was visited 27,000 times.
- During 2024, we sought feedback from victims and survivors of sexual violence for policy submissions and research.
- We assisted Cuan, the national domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (DSGBV) agency, in seeking valuable feedback from survivors on a number of its campaigns on issues of sexual and gender-based violence.

We-Speak
Every story matters

ABOUT US ▾ STORIES RESOURCES

UPDATE STORY SHARE YOUR STORY

Stories

100,546 360 103 121 646

Welcome to We-Speak.

On this page are stories shared by survivors that highlight hope but can also be hard to read. A grounding activity can help you to feel calm and make it easier to read these stories. Do you want to try one of our grounding activities?

We-Speak quotes

“Healing is possible. Take a deep breath for me. As cliché as it is, know that you are not alone. Your story is yours to share when you are ready, but I promise you that when you take that leap, so many people will be there to catch you. You are so loved. Take up space. Be loud. Be you. Take back the power. You are so deserving. I’m proud of you.”

“Reading these stories reminds me I’m not alone and that I won’t be judged by others and people willing to help. I hope one day I can feel ‘normal’ again and live the rest of my life as any young woman should.”

“I find this very healing ... Posting this today is a brick in the wall I’m building up to distance myself from people who breached my sexual boundaries in the past. I love the fact that there’s a ‘safety exit’ [on the website] as a lot of people who use this may be living with people who would not understand or are their abusers (in which case, they need to escape as soon as they can). Just knowing that there are people who came up with this idea is very empowering. Thank you so much.”

“There is always light at the end of the tunnel. There is always hope as ‘hope is a thing with feathers’. There is help out there and there is always someone willing to listen. Things always get better in the end, there is so much more to look forward to. You are not your past trauma. There is a future out there, waiting. Healing means accepting what has happened but learning that it is not your fault and it was never your fault.”

“Now, nearly 10 years later, I have found my voice. I am not a victim but I’m a survivor. I speak for women whose voices are lost too, so one day they will have the courage to find them and speak up too. You are never alone and anytime you use your voice I promise you, you’ll be heard. We are women, we are powerful!”

“Healing has been strong in yourself and believing every day that you did not do anything wrong. It was all on the Perpetrator. I have healed and so can anyone. I will never forget. It does leave pivotal marks and indelible scars, but you have to live your life and be happy every day and know that you are a Survivor.”

Putting a spotlight on data and research

In April, we added a sexual violence information section to our website, offering definitions, data and research in this area as well as drawing on the eminent work of bodies such as the Central Statistics Office, SATUs and the Courts Service. We plan to maintain, grow and update this section as a resource for media, survivors and the general public.



Marking European Victims of Crime Day at the University of Limerick in February were Policy Manager Shirley Scott and Professor Susan Leahy, Director of the Centre for Crime, Justice and Victim Studies.

Working with third-level education bodies

DRCC is represented on the Consent, Sexual Violence, Harassment and Equality in Higher Education (COSHARE) network. Staff members sit on consent committees for higher education institutions as they tackle the issue of sexual violence and harassment on campus, and our Education and Training Team gave guidance and support on policies and resources to various third-level education groups in 2024.

Research and academic partnerships

Over the course of 2024, we were involved in two research projects, and we made one academic and one non-academic research contribution. We also investigated one potential research collaboration for 2025. We supported three PhD researchers with their work during the year.

Reproductive coercion and intimate partner violence:

DRCC is the civil society partner for qualitative research into understanding the relationship between reproductive coercion and intimate partner violence (IPV) in the Irish context, which is being conducted by Dr Meg Ryan from the Trinity Centre for Global Health, Trinity College Dublin, as part of the Irish Research Council New Foundations Awards 2023. The research began in early 2024 with a mapping exercise to identify key stakeholders for a project advisory group which included colleague organisation working in the areas of DSGBV and reproductive health. In November, Dr Ryan published her findings for the project: Reproductive coercion and intimate partner violence in the Irish context: A stakeholder-informed qualitative analysis, which included that:

- Reproductive coercion is a commonly occurring form of abuse and often co-occurs with IPV. While IPV may exist in the absence of reproductive coercion, in the context of intimate partner relationships, reproductive coercion can be understood as a form of IPV.
- There is a lack of awareness of reproductive coercion, which is largely due to the lack of a legal definition as well as education and information on the topic. As a result, people often don't recognise their experience of reduced reproductive autonomy as reproductive coercion.

Criminal justice Open Research Dialogue

Partnership: Dr Ian Marder from the School of Law and Criminology, Maynooth University, successfully applied for funding through the National Open Research Forum to set about creating a culture of interdisciplinary open research in Ireland's criminal justice sector through a partnership between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is one of the 135 partners representing 59 organisations working across research, criminal justice policy, agencies and oversight, non-state justice services, civil society, and research infrastructure. The CORD partnership aims to embed a culture of interdisciplinary open research within Ireland's criminal justice system. With this objective in mind 58 CORD partners representing 32 organisations published an article in the Irish Probation Journal (Vol. 21). Drawing on the insights from workshops hosted in 2024 and a literature review of international criminal justice research partnerships, a working agenda for the coming year will be developed.

Other research: Earlier in 2024, we encouraged the public to avail of an extension of deadlines for those seeking compensation via the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. We also contributed to research on sexual experience evidence in rape trials being undertaken by Dr Sinéad Ring of the Maynooth University School of Law and Criminology to better understand the functioning of the law on the admission as evidence in trials of a victim's previous sexual history. We also engaged with Deloitte as part of their work on the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill by sharing insights on how Dublin Rape Crisis Centre's work intersects with An Garda Síochána in supporting vulnerable and at-risk people.

Processing of sexual offences: In June, the Department of Justice published two pieces of research to which we had contributed. Rapid Review of Evidence on Delays in Processing Criminal Adult Sexual Cases and A Review of the Processing of Sexual Offences in Ireland: Stakeholder Experiences are both available on the Department of Justice website. Among the recommendations made in the reports were increased investment across the criminal justice system, a streamlining of the disclosure process in sexual offence cases (which is regarded as a significant delay factor) and a review of the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme, as well as a 3-year pilot of a specialist sexual offences court.

The role of pornography in the pandemic of violence against women and girls:

In 2024, DRCC was part of an advisory group convened by Women's Aid to examine this issue, following a survey of the Irish public on concerns that exposure to and consumption of pornography is negatively impacting children and young people. A report, Facing Reality: addressing the role of pornography in the pandemic of violence against women and girls, draws on Irish and international research to find that much of what features in mainstream pornography constitutes sexual violence. The report highlights the very negative impact pornography has on young people and society more generally. Pornography is shaping young people's sexual expectations to normalise harmful, coercive and abusive behaviours; in so doing, it undermines educational work on consent and safe, healthy and respectful relationships. At the report launch, our Board member and secondary school teacher, Eoghan Cleary, shared his experience teaching a transition-year module dealing with this topic and the challenging discussions that have emerged.



At our training on sexual violence to Oireachtas staff in May, delivered in partnership with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, pictured L-R: Education Officer Ciara Lynch, Chief Executive Rachel Morrogh, Chair of Women's Parliamentary Caucus Senator Fiona O Loughlin, and Education & Training Manager Caitriona Freir.

Promote know-how by providing awareness, education and training for professionals and others

Training courses

With sexual violence at epidemic levels in Ireland, many frontline staff are meeting disclosures from or need to support victims and survivors in their daily work. It is imperative that this is done in a way that is sensitive to victims' and survivors' circumstances and does not cause further trauma. We aim to help frontline services and professionals become more trauma aware and better able to understand and support victims and survivors and their needs.

Over the course of 2024, we provided 54 training sessions of varying duration to 903 participants, an increase of 40% over 643 in 2023. Topics discussed in the sessions included working with victims of childhood sexual abuse, safeguarding older people, awareness and disclosure of sexual violence, supporting refugees and asylum seekers who have been impacted by sexual violence and awareness and prevention courses for young people.

Our courses were attended by a wide range of frontline workers, including from such sectors as second and third-level education, disability rights, refugee/asylum seeker support, mental health services, addiction support, consular, government departments, homelessness support, community outreach and primary healthcare. In May, the team also delivered four 1-hour talks to members of the Oireachtas on the invitation of the Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus.

Evaluation of our courses delivered throughout 2024 indicate that they are meeting the need for training in this specific area: 100% of attendees said they found our training courses extremely useful and relevant to their work, and that they felt our courses helped them develop high levels of awareness and understanding of sexual violence and its impact, confidence in sensitively supporting someone who has been assaulted, and knowledge of how to resource themselves when working with individuals who have undergone trauma like sexual violence.



Attendees and trainers at a session on supporting refugees and asylum seekers who have been impacted by sexual violence, held at the Fumbally Stables in April.

Feedback

“The facilitators were very knowledgeable and approachable – it was a safe space to discuss such sensitive topics. I feel more confident in my ability/confidence to know what to do should someone make a disclosure of sexual violence to me. I really appreciated the time taken to discuss self-care and vicarious trauma.”

“A truly brilliant training and one which was skilfully delivered. I found the learning to be practical and applicable and the chance to discuss in our groups helped me learn more about my colleagues’ roles in the organisation. Furthermore, the training was delivered and handled in a way which always felt accessible which is a difficult thing to achieve given the subject matter.”

“I really enjoyed the training and I felt it gave me a different perspective on something I deal with daily as part of my job. It also made me think about the impact it may have on me dealing with it and how to resource myself to better deal with it.”

“I found this training to be deeply enriching to my therapy practice. I will read over the resources and use them going forward to support myself and clients. The facilitating was top class, the containing of the group was empathetic and boundaried.”



Our Education & Training team was delighted to engage with staff from European embassies to raise awareness around issues of sexual violence and how to sensitively deal with disclosures, hosted by the Embassy of Luxembourg in September.

Learning Management System

In 2024, the team introduced a Learning Management System (LMS). This has helped to enhance and expand our course offering, particularly for those who attend multiple training sessions, such as our own volunteers and staff, youth workers, teachers and community consent ambassadors. The LMS is an excellent platform which enriches the learning experience for participants, as it provides learners the ability to work through modules in their own time, review materials as needed and consult online resources like videos and recorded role-play. Feedback regarding the LMS included that it is “a wonderful way to share heavy material for pre-reading, with space on the next training session to discuss the topics and clarify anything. The LMS made the training very valuable indeed” and that “the case studies discussing consent and the videos we watched are excellent resources and they will be very useful in class”.



Youth-focused training

Given the widespread prevalence of sexual violence in our society, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre prioritises equipping those who work with and educate young people to understand key issues around sexual violence, healthy relationships and consent.

In 2024, **144 of the overall training** participants took part in **11** sessions of the youth education programmes BodyRight and #LetsGetReal, as well as other associated youth-focused training programmes. We also ran an online self-directed course on preparation for delivering youth programmes and general education on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in schools and youth work settings for 60 alumni of our youth programmes, which means we had **204** attendees in total in this area for 2024.

Those who take part in our youth-focused programmes gain access to an information portal with relevant online resources where they can share best practice with other alumni.



Education Officer Sinead Molony delivering training at Dundalk Institute of Technology in March

BodyRight: This flagship training course is a 4-day programme designed to equip those working with young people with the skills to raise awareness of respect and healthy relationships, consent and online safety, and to prevent sexual violence. It is a highly popular course and generally fills up within a few days of advertising. In 2024, we delivered 7 BodyRight facilitator training sessions to a total of 99 participants, including teachers, guidance counsellors, youth workers, therapists and other youth professionals.

BODYRIGHT

A Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention Programme for Young People



We delivered awareness training on sexual violence and consent and ran information stands on the Google campus in Dublin 4 in June

#LetsGetReal: This educational resource for youth workers and school staff has become increasingly popular as more educational and youth facilities become aware of the need to educate young people to become more critical in their consumption of advertising, popular culture and pornography. This programme was updated in 2024 in line with the growing needs of young people in this area and the new programme was piloted in 2024 and it was attended by 15 participants.

We were able to provide this important instruction to participants free of charge thanks to a funding grant.

During 2024, we completed and launched the update of both flagship youth programmes to support curriculum and trend changes while improving resources for those delivering the programmes to young people.

Feedback on our youth-focused programmes

“I really enjoyed the training. I feel it has given me the added confidence to discuss such topics with my students and deal with any disclosures that may be made. Furthermore, I feel I will use some of the resources to educate parents.” – BodyRight, October/November 2024 ”

“I know the course is for young people, but I think that society as a whole would benefit [from it], as someone in the course mentioned. In particular, I think parents should be educated especially around the dangers for children online. I think these sorts of things should be spoken about openly on public broadcasting platforms. All in all, great training, it was mindful, informative and really well delivered.” – BodyRight, September 2024

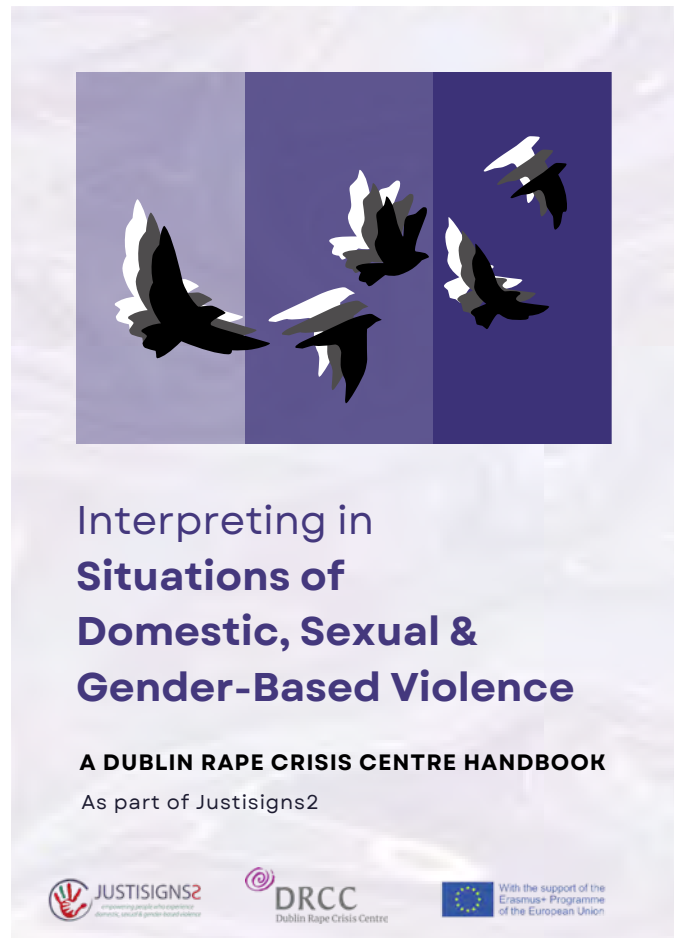
“I have recommended this training to everyone in my service, it is a valuable resource to help combat and hopefully decrease sexual violence and its impact on survivors.” – BodyRight, September 2024

“Found the training to be excellent both in content and in delivery. Concept of being trauma informed was maintained throughout training by facilitators which was really positive to witness.” – BodyRight, February 2024

Handbook for interpreters

In November, we launched a new publication, *Interpreting in Situations of Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence*, developed as part of [the JUSTISIGNS 2 project](#). It is imperative that, as frontline professionals, interpreters are able to do their work in a safe, sensitive and informed way so that they can ensure the communities relying on their expertise can access vital support. Support services like one-to-one therapy are premised on confidentiality and privacy, so the presence of a third person like an interpreter can impact a session unless done in a way that inspires confidence in the client. The handbook also seeks to improve the accessibility of specialised support services like counselling and therapy for migrants, refugees and Deaf people who as well as being survivors of sexual violence may also face multiple forms of discrimination. The handbook also provides resources for sign and spoken language interpreters who work in situations of DSGBV, which can be extremely difficult work and may cause secondary trauma. We also carried out training for interpreters and our own therapy team on best practice in conducting therapy sessions involving interpretation.

The launch was chaired by our Chairperson, Anne Marie James, and featured a panel discussion with experts in the field of interpreting and the provision of support to migrant, refugee and Deaf communities. The panel included Professor Lorraine Leeson (Trinity College Dublin), Dr Hassina Kiboua (Irish Refugee Council), Ravind Jeawon (Talk Therapy Dublin) and Margaret O'Reilly-Carroll (psychotherapist and supervisor). You can [download the handbook from our website](#).



54 training sessions



903 people trained



144 participants in youth programmes over 11 sessions

Case study on bespoke training

In 2024, we received a request from a domestic violence organisation working with women and children. We set up an initial meeting with them to better understand their needs and issues. The staff explained that many of the women they work with have experienced sexual violence not only in their intimate partner relationship, but also as children. While they were often able to describe the emotional, physical and financial abuse they had experienced from their partners, it could be very difficult for them to name the sexual abuse they had also experienced. Some women might feel a lot of shame about their experience; others might not recognise that what they had experienced was abuse; while others might not be sure whether rape can really happen in relationships.

It was agreed that Dublin Rape Crisis Centre would facilitate 2 half-days of training to cover the very broad and complex needs of this group. The core content of this training included:

- the different forms sexual violence can take
- laws relating to sexual violence
- core internalised beliefs and the impact of childhood sexual abuse
- myths and attitudes about sexual violence
- medical and legal processes relating to sexual violence
- the impact of trauma such as sexual violence
- facilitating a disclosure of sexual violence, and
- secondary trauma and self-care for the staff themselves, to help them deal with the impact of their work.

However, we also wanted to include opportunities in the training for participants to talk about these issues in the context of domestic and intimate partner violence, and to make it very practical and applicable to their work.

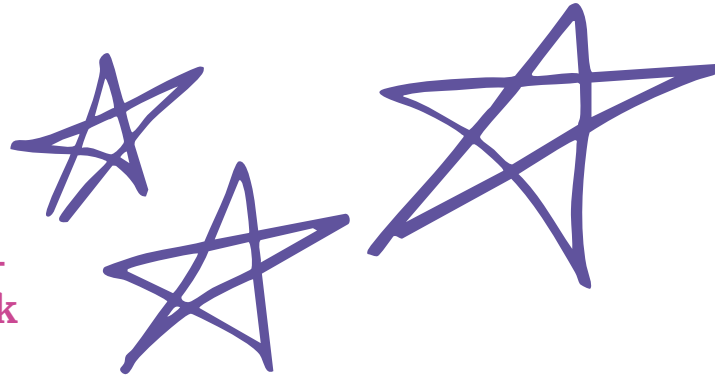
We developed some additional content, including pieces around:

- consent within the context of domestic violence situations
- facilitating consent conversations and exploring what challenges might arise when discussing consent with victims/survivors
- sexual violence within the context of intimate partner violence, and
- sexual violence as a form of coercive control.

We encourage discussion in such groups, but we also invite people to participate at the level they are comfortable with. Sexual violence is a challenging topic, and we always aim to create a mindful and safe environment for trainees. Over the 2 days, we had many rich and thought-provoking discussions.

In both the final check-out and the follow-up evaluation survey, participants said that, while the content was very heavy, the training was very relevant and extremely useful. One participant said that in services like theirs, the impact of working with trauma can be normalised and minimised, so the training was a helpful counterpoint to this. Others emphasised the practical information around medical and legal processes. They said becoming aware of the availability of the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline as a support was most beneficial, while others mentioned they had enjoyed the conversations around consent.

Our facilitators were so impressed by the thoughtfulness and compassion of the participants. We too were impacted by the experiences the participants shared, and we also learnt a lot from them.



Lead, inspire and influence – campaigning and policy work

We-Consent campaign

Following its launch in March 2023, this multi-annual campaign began its first full year with ambition and purpose. During 2024, the We-Consent team hosted four large-scale events, including an event for Culture Night and a Kumar Klub fundraiser, and collaborated on 10 other events such as the Waterford Walls Festival – which now features a prominent consent mural – and the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Festival, where we handed out thousands of badges and provided information stickers for local bars and restaurants.

We have hosted We-Consent Conversation Workshops and discussion sessions nationwide, with 650 participants attending across 11 counties. We have upskilled 30 We-Consent Ambassadors from across Ireland. We have also collated a huge online resource hub, jam-packed with information and videos for all audiences, which can be viewed anywhere, at we-consent.ie.

We have shared the We-Consent message through social media, radio, newspapers, podcasts, digital pedestals and posters. We secured 61 pieces of media coverage during 2024 and an engagement rate on social media of 9.53%. We-Speak, our survivor story-sharing platform, grew its reach over the year, with 29 stories submitted and 27,000 visits to the website.

We conducted extensive research about sexual violence and consent to gain further insights into the differences in men's and women's understanding of consent. The campaign contributed to chapters on sex, consent and relationships in three Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) books for senior and junior cycle curricula.

We continued collaborations with Pavee Point, Macra na Feirme, HIV Ireland, AsIAM, Men's Sheds and Age Action in order to produce materials and resources tailored to those communities. We also collaborated with dating apps such as Tinder and Grindr to make it easier to spread the We-Consent message while you swipe.

In June we won the Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA) award for best issues-led campaign with PR agency Drury which was a wonderful vindication of the hard work we put in to building this campaign.

Over the year, we gave presentations on our work at home and abroad – including at the South African Conference of Gender Practitioners against DGBSV and the All-Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research (AINSVR). Finally, we launched our own merchandise line – available at we-consent.ie – so that our supporters can play a role in spreading the message while looking good doing it.

Feedback from We-Consent Conversation Workshops

“I really enjoyed the workshop as a whole... both presenters were very knowledgeable in the subject area, and I felt as though I learned more about consent and interpersonal relationships. It was refreshing to be in a space where boundaries were put in place to ensure all participants were made feel safe and heard.”
– Workshop participant

“Thank you all so much for a great day! Really changed my perspective and I learned so much on how I thought I viewed/ knew what consent is/ was. I feel more confident having these conversations now.” – Workshop participant





Pictured at the launch in February of Cuan, the statutory agency dedicated to tackling and reducing domestic, sexual and gender-based violence: Newly appointed Cuan Chief Executive Dr Stephanie O'Keefe and DRCC's Rachel Morrogh

Working with State partners

In January 2024, a new agency, **Cuan** – meaning “harbour” in Irish – was established with responsibility for coordinating government actions to tackle domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, which includes delivering services to victims and increasing the availability of emergency accommodation. With others in the sector, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre contributed to the legislation that established this agency, the Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Agency Act 2023. Cuan was officially launched in February and took over coordinating and driving the implementation of *Zero Tolerance: Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence 2022–2026*.

Reforming use of character references in sexual offence trials

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Act 2024, which was enacted on 17 July 2024, strengthens protections for victims of sexual offences during the legal process. One of the key reforms introduced by the Act is a change to how character references are used in sexual offence trials. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre worked in collaboration with Senators Lisa Chambers, Regina Doherty and Pauline O'Reilly when they initially introduced their Bill. Under the new legislation, any character reference submitted on behalf of a person convicted of a sexual offence must now be made under oath or by sworn affidavit.



In January, we welcomed Barry Andrews MEP on a visit to discuss the proposed European Union directive on Violence against Women

New EU directive on Violence Against Women (VAW)

Early in 2024, we learned about Directive (EU) 2024/1385, a new European Union (EU) Directive on combating VAW and domestic violence. This Directive aims to impose minimum standards in EU law for criminalising certain forms of gender-based violence, and to improve access to justice, protection and support for victims across the 27 EU Member States. This new law also proposed to establish a common definition of rape in the EU based on lack of consent, which would make rape a crime under EU law and harmonise criminal penalties between Member States. However, in January Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Frances Fitzgerald raised concerns in Irish media that Ireland was among a number of countries in Europe which had not yet agreed on a definition of rape to be included in the Directive.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre wrote to the Minister for Justice and highlighted this issue in the media. Ultimately, a definition of rape based on lack of consent was not included in the Directive. We described this as a missed opportunity to combat sexual violence across the EU in the first comprehensive legal instrument at EU level to tackle violence against women. However, the Directive does criminalise physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence against women in the EU, and female genital mutilation and forced marriage are now stand-alone crimes. Cyberviolence has been criminalised under the new rules, including the non-consensual sharing of intimate images, cyberstalking, cyber-harassment, and misogynous hate speech. The new law contains a revision clause which we hope to revisit at a later date to strengthen pan-European protections against and prevention of sexual violence.



During our annual report 2023 launch in June, we showed a video with powerful testimony from three survivors. Pictured is Paula Doyle speaking as part of 'Our Time to Heal'

Reforming use of counselling notes in Irish trials

One issue that has a grave impact on survivors who have reported crimes in Ireland is that, if they also seek to avail of therapy, the legal team acting for the defence is permitted to seek access to their counselling notes – while any similar notes for the alleged perpetrator would not be available. This provision can cause some people to reconsider whether to seek healing through counselling, effectively forcing them to choose between healing and justice. At our Annual Report launch in June, solicitor, author and survivor Sarah Grace spoke about this flawed and unjust rationale, and attendees watched a powerful video, "Our Time to Heal", which highlighted the impact of this issue. One of the survivors featured, Paula Doyle, asked how this could be allowed to continue when perpetrators have taken so much from victims and survivors already.

The Zero Tolerance implementation plan provides for the examination and review of the rationale for disclosing counselling notes, and DRCC has been invited to join the advisory group.



Solicitor, author and survivor Sarah Grace spoke at the annual report launch in June about her own experiences and insights, particularly her retraumatisation in the legal process and the use of her private counselling notes during the trial.

Policy submissions

Over the course of 2024, we made five individual and one joint submission, covering a range of issues including relationship and sexuality education and the Online Safety Code for video-sharing platforms, the draft Autism Innovation Strategy and the National Strategy on Women and Girls.



To mark International Women's Day, Rachel took part in a discussion organised by the Institute of International and European Affairs on 'A European Approach to Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence'

Coalition-building

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre believes that we gain in knowledge and impact when we collaborate with colleagues across the community and voluntary sector and beyond. We are part of a number of strategic and sectoral groups whose purpose is to advance victims' and survivors' rights and contribute to prevention of sexual violence at national and local levels:

- **Rape Crisis Centres Forum**, a collective group of 10 of the country's 16 rape crisis centres.
- **National Women's Council (NWC) of Ireland:** As a member of the National Women's Council of Ireland, we contributed to its research exploring the extent of sexual exploitation and sexual harassment in the rental market, which resulted in the publication of a new report, '*Sex for Rent*'. The findings include that such exploitation affects primarily people renting a room, as opposed to those renting own-door accommodation, and is compounded by the fact that these renters do not enjoy the same protections as other tenants. The report recommends that landlords engaging in sex-for-rent exploitation should be criminalised.
- **Children's Rights Alliance:** Dublin Rape Crisis Centre provided feedback and other inputs to the Children's Rights Alliance's Annual Report Card which evaluates the State's performance in upholding children's rights in Ireland.
- **Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management (SORAM) group**, of which Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is a member of the National Advisory Committee.
- **The Wheel**, which represents and engages with community and voluntary organisations around Ireland.
- **Charities Institute Ireland** aims to promote greater transparency and impact for our sector through best practice in governance, fundraising, and financial standards
- **Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD):** We are a member of this group which fosters cross-sectoral dialogue, research and policy development among those working in or connected to the criminal justice system.



Consent Project Manager Sarah Monaghan presents on the We-Consent campaign as part of the All Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research event in Belfast in August


- **Victims' Rights Alliance** of victim support and human rights organisations in Ireland.
- **Victims' Forum** which facilitates dialogue between civic society organisations working with victims of crime, the Department of Justice and other stakeholders to help ensure appropriate responses to the reporting of a crime, enhance outcomes in the justice system and support the healing of victims.
- **All Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research:** In August, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre took part in the All Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research's first conference, which took place at Queen's University Belfast. We presented the We-Consent campaign's work to date and discussed the need to recognise the burdens carried by victims and survivors as a significant challenge for the sector, whether emotional/psychological, financial, practical (in terms of accessing services or navigating the criminal justice system) or personal, such as a victim/survivor waiving their anonymity.



Frances Fitzgerald MEP visited the Centre in February to discuss concerns over the forthcoming EU Directive on Violence against Women – pictured here with Shirley Scott and Rachel Morrogh



Goal 03



A sustainable organisation
which effectively manages
risk and proactively supports
its people towards excellence
in meeting the needs of
victims/survivors



Resourcing the work

Fundraising

As an independent non-governmental charity that provides vital support and resources to victims and survivors across Ireland, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre depends on raising funds from a range of sources – public, State and philanthropic.

Our first major event of 2024 was the Annual Corporate Quiz Challenge in February. It was a great evening, as always, with the brilliant Pat Kenny quizzing 40+ teams on our behalf. Most importantly, the evening raised a fantastic €48,000 for Dublin Rape Crisis Centre.



Quizmaster and broadcaster Pat Kenny hosting the annual Corporate Quiz in February

We participated in the Vhi Women's Mini Marathon in June, with over 40 runners hitting the streets in their signature purple T-shirts to support survivors of sexual violence. People took part in numerous community fundraising events throughout 2024, from skydives, yoga sessions, coffee mornings, head shaves, sea swims, marathons and many more challenges. Together, these fundraisers raised an incredible €97,000 to support survivors.



The WomanKind Fashion show and lunch in September, organised by Cathy Donohue of Pluto and compered by broadcaster Claire Byrne, with clothes showcased by Arnotts.

In addition to these fundraising efforts, the public continued to stand with survivors by directly donating to our work; in particular, we saw a surge in donations towards the end of 2024 from people who wanted to show their solidarity to Nikita Hand. Thank you to everyone who organised events, raised money or donated to Dublin Rape Crisis Centre in 2024. Donations can be made directly on our website: www.drcc.ie/donate.

The wonderful team at Pluto arranged another WomanKind event in September. This superb afternoon was emceed by Claire Byrne and attended by over 300 guests for lunch and a fashion show; the event promoted a powerful message of solidarity with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for a safer, more just society. This event was closely followed by the Annual Golf Classic, which saw 20 teams come together at Castle Golf Club in Rathfarnham for golf, dining and celebrations, with Newstalk's "Off The Ball" team providing commentary. The four-ball teams competed for the J.B. Carr Diamond Trophy, and although competition was fierce, the fun was fiercer.

Our fundraising events for 2024 went out on a high with the festive Countdown to Christmas lunch in late November. Some 200 guests joined us for the afternoon to celebrate the bravery of survivors of sexual violence, with an exceptional performance given by Mary Byrne.

In 2024, we saw the continued generosity of a number of corporate partners and philanthropic donors, including Wolfgang Digital, Greencoat Renewables, St Stephen's Green Trust, Community Foundation Ireland, ESB Energy for Generations Fund, Fidelis Partnership and other anonymous partners. We also gratefully received three legacy donations.

Donations

Each year, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre is reliant on donations and financial support from the public, companies, trusts and philanthropists. While our work tackling sexual violence is funded in part by the Government, we need to raise a further €1.2 million per year to make sure our work towards healing from and prevention of sexual violence can continue. Donations from both the public and the private sector allow us to be flexible, agile and responsive in responding to the emerging issues facing survivors, preventing sexual violence and creating a greater societal awareness of consent.

If you would like to donate or find out more about a partnership with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, please contact us at fundraising@rcc.ie.



Excellence in communications

Internal communications: To ensure that our people are up-to-date on news and actions across the organisation, we have internal communications mechanisms, including a regular staff bulletin and a volunteer update, as well as weekly team and management meetings and wider staff and volunteer gatherings.

External communications: In 2024, we worked to build awareness of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre as a trusted national source of support and host of the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline by means of media engagement, public campaigns and digital outreach. We used communications tools and channels to broaden understanding of sexual violence and its impacts, to promote our services and supports to victims and survivors, and to campaign for a society that has zero tolerance for sexual violence and that understands and values sexual consent. The voices and views of victims and survivors are at the heart of our communications work, and we sought to support and amplify them wherever possible.

In June, we published our annual report and statistics for 2023. It was launched by Minister for Justice Helen McEntee at the Royal Irish Academy. We showcased a powerful video, *Our Time to Heal*, which featured three incredible survivors – Karen Stanley, Chris Rooke and Paula Doyle – speaking about their experiences and hopes for the future. Our outgoing Chairperson Ann Marie Gill, our Chief Executive Rachel Morrogh and Cuan Chief Executive Dr Stephanie O’Keeffe all spoke at the launch. Lawyer, author and survivor Sarah Grace closed the event with a powerful description of some issues that need to change in the justice system, in particular an end to the use of victims’ and survivors’ counselling notes in rape cases.



Digital engagement

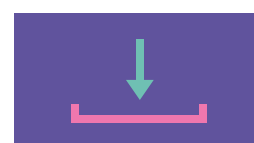
Websites: Dublin Rape Crisis Centre maintains a [website \(drcc.ie\)](https://drcc.ie) with information on its services and supports, including the online guide *Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence*. The website is the access point for our Webchat Support Service, which allows people to receive crisis support via online chat with a support worker. The site also houses downloadable resources which are focused on offering survivors information and tools to understand and manage the impacts of their trauma. In 2024, there were over 106,400 views on the site with over 40,000 unique users, as well as 3,860 downloads, 2,699 telephone calls and 837 emails sent from the site.

There is also a campaign-specific site for the We-Consent project, which contains a wealth of resources and toolkits on consent and other topics at we-consent.ie, and an online platform that enables survivors to safely share their stories at we-speak.ie.

over
106,400
views

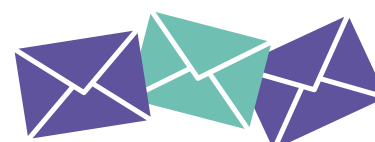
over
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unique users

3,860
downloads



2,699
telephone calls

almost
837
emails





As part of our *Signs of Hope* campaign in October, survivor and campaigner Ciara Mangan and our Chief Executive Rachel Morrogh appeared on Virgin Media's *Ireland AM* programme to discuss the campaign and the situation for survivors of sexual violence in Ireland today

Social media: We used our social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube to highlight our work, engage with followers and draw attention to issues of concern. We-Consent has a separate set of social channels focusing more closely on broadening awareness and practice of consent across communities.

Digital pedestals: Throughout 2024, we were grateful for the opportunity to promote our services and supports via street-level advertising in Dublin and other locations in Ireland. These digital pedestals, maintained by Clear Channel Communications in cooperation with eir and Dublin City Council as well as other local authorities, advertised the services and supports we as well as other frontline organisations offer. The pedestals also feature integrated telephone units with free access to emergency telephone numbers, including the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline 1800 77 88 88.

Media engagement

Throughout 2024, our communications team aimed to maintain the organisation's profile in the media and other channels as an expert voice with regard to issues of sexual violence and its prevention. The team shared insights and evidence, flagged issues of concern and provided comment on issues related to our work. We issued over 20 statements to media on a diverse range of topics, all of which are available on our website, and garnered more than 2,000 pieces of coverage and other engagements over the year, with a reach of 142.7 million.

More than **2,000**
media contacts
and **coverage**
with a reach of
142.7 million



Campaigns and awareness

Alongside our national We-Consent campaign, DRCC ran a number of targeted campaigns highlighting equality, safety and support for survivors, particularly noting International Women's Day, Pride and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. We also supported the campaigns of other bodies, including national campaigns launched by Cuan to raise awareness of domestic violence, consent and support services.



“Signs of Hope” campaign

In 2023, the national Sexual Violence Survey conducted by the CSO revealed that, although more than one-half of women and almost one-third of men have experienced sexual violence in their lifetimes, fewer than half of people ever disclosed it to anyone. Their reasons included that they felt their issue was not important enough, they were embarrassed or ashamed, they thought they were to blame in some way or they feared they would not be believed.

In addition, most did not seek support: fewer than 1 in 10 availed of counselling or psychological services. However, where they did seek support, the majority said they found it helpful.

We felt there was a strong need to reach out to those who might benefit from support but had not yet sought it. Furthermore, we believed that by platforming the words of people who had accessed and benefitted from supports, we could reach the silent majority of survivors who have experienced the trauma of sexual violence but never accessed support. Our insight was that survivors want to know more about the experiences of other survivors and are more likely to seek support if they can relate to a real story or message.

In autumn 2024, we launched an awareness campaign called “Signs of Hope”. This campaign centred the voices of survivors giving messages of hope and empowerment to other survivors, encouraging them to call the freephone 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline at 1800 77 88 88.

Campaign elements: With the pro bono help of creative agency Publicis Dublin, we collected handwritten personal messages from our survivor group and displayed them on billboards around Dublin city, as well as on social media. We created audio advertisements in which survivors voiced words of experience and encouragement that ran on daytime national radio.

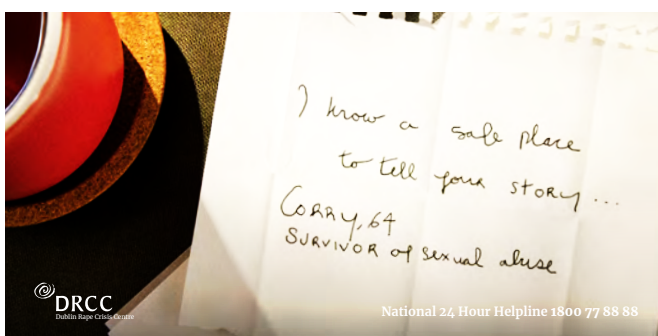
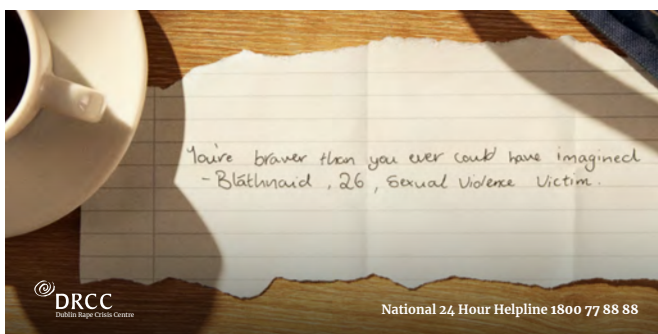
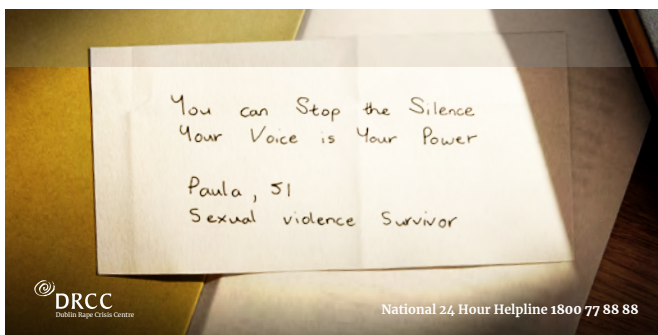
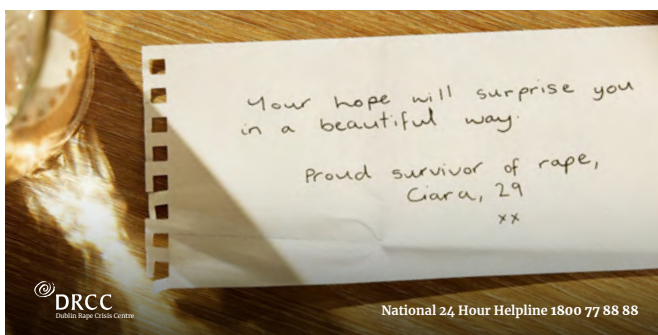
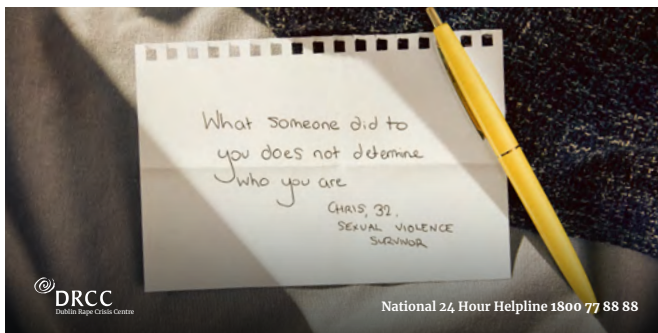
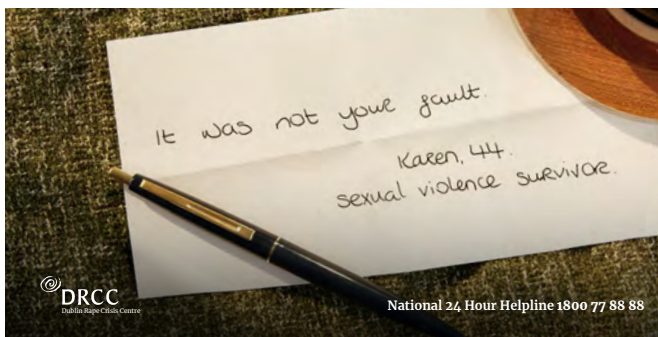
On our website at www.drcc.ie/signsofhope, we displayed longer letters from survivors to those who had not yet sought support, offering personal insights and encouragement. We created videos highlighting our survivors’ words which ran on YouTube and social media. Finally, we created a powerful video featuring our survivors and their messages for a second phase of the campaign in November.

Campaign performance: Earned media coverage of the campaign was strong, with 32 pieces of coverage including several radio, print and TV interviews with our wonderful group of survivors. The billboards were displayed in 9 locations around Dublin for 2 weeks, and each billboard had an estimated viewership of almost 100,000 per week. The radio advertisements had an unduplicated reach of 23% of all adults nationally (990,000) for the first phase (14 October–8 November) and 18% of adults (765,000) for the second (25 November–18 December). Digital reach of the campaign was substantial, with over 330,000 views of our videos on YouTube, 1.4 million on Meta and 1.3 million on TikTok. Digital audio advertisements reached over 280,000 people.

Impact: We are so delighted that the campaign's message of hope was clearly received by many people. During the campaign period, contacts with the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline rose by 20%, compared with the previous year, with certain weeks seeing spikes of over 30%. One first-time caller said: "It's just been a lot but reading the letters really helped me feel like I'm not alone anymore and I will get better."

We saw a distinct increase in visitors to our website during the period that the campaign ran, with a 50% rise in views compared with the same period in 2023, as well as sharp increases in telephone calls (up 13% from the previous year) and webchats (up 20%).

Our message to all those who have experienced the trauma of sexual violence remains: "When you are ready to talk, we are ready to listen."



Governance and structure

Staff

The day-to-day work of the organisation is carried out by our dedicated and professional staff, led by our Chief Executive Rachel Morrogh and management team, and overseen by our voluntary Board of Directors. The management team meets as a group on a weekly basis to provide updates on developments and operational matters, and on a monthly basis to monitor implementation of strategy and work plans.

Our Chief Executive reports directly to the Board, and members of the management team present on their individual areas of responsibility and work as required.

For the past 10 years, we have been extremely privileged to have been able, thanks to a generous bequest, to have a building in which to carry out our work. However, our current offices can no longer meet the demands of our growing workforce and clientele. In 2025, we will be focusing on finding a new location which is fully equipped and accessible for our clients and which offers the opportunity to further expand the services and supports they need to further their healing journey.



Dublin Rape Crisis Centre staff and board members

Volunteers

Over the course of 2024, volunteers continued to provide invaluable support to survivors of sexual violence over the 24-hour National Rape Crisis Helpline and in the SATU. Some 65 volunteers were engaged with the organisation in 2024.

Recruitment: Our Volunteer Services team recruited and trained two new cohorts of volunteers to maintain this vital level of support, with interested parties able to attend online information evenings for an overview of our services and the volunteer role. The two sessions of volunteer training both took place over four weekends, and the groups reported thoroughly enjoying the experience of being immersed in a training environment whose focus was to develop volunteers' skills while creating a safe space where they could learn together.

Support: Throughout their time with the organisation, our volunteers are well supported by our Volunteer Services team. Monthly supervision sessions play a key part in their work, as these allow volunteers to share their experiences with staff and peers. This is also an occasion where the volunteers get to connect with and support each other. All volunteers are also afforded ongoing learning and access to various Dublin Rape Crisis Centre events, such as our publication launches, educational Lunch & Learn sessions or suicide prevention training. Our Volunteer Services organised two recognition events to demonstrate how highly we value our volunteers' contributions, as well as a graduation ceremony for those who reached their milestone of 2 years' commitment.

During 2024, many volunteers shared with us how proud they are to be associated with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and to be part of the change they want to see in society.



Volunteer appreciation evening in December



L-R: Volunteer Service Team Lead Xénia Ferigoule, volunteer Clare Egan and Chief Executive Rachel Morrogh

Volunteer voices

Aash: “Volunteering training as a crisis counsellor with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has been a profoundly transformative experience for me. Engaging with people from all walks of life in Dublin, allowing myself to be vulnerable to learning, learning how to empathise and becoming an active listener have all been essential to my training experience. Ultimately, this role has taught me about the complexities of trauma and the importance of listening.

Through training at Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, I have developed a deeper understanding of trauma-informed care. This approach has taught me the importance of creating a safe, non-judgmental space for survivors to share their stories at their own pace. Not only this, I have learned that victims’ stories are their own and that they don’t have to tell anyone anything. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre offers a space to victims that they might not be able to find elsewhere. One of the most powerful statements I have learned through this training is to tell a silent caller that I can hear their silence.”

Joanne: “I honestly didn’t know what to expect when I volunteered for a role in Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, but I’m so glad I did it. It really opened up my eyes and gave me a deeper knowledge of how to help victims/survivors. I’ve learnt the difference between empathy and sympathy and feel I’ve a much greater understanding now ... I’ve also learned how we as a society might make unconscious judgements of people and I feel now I wouldn’t judge any victim regardless of circumstances. I’ve met some really wonderful women. The leaders are really lovely and the fellow volunteers are a great bunch who have helped and supported each other through our learning process.



Oversight and governance

Our work is immensely strengthened by the guidance of our voluntary Board. Our Board members are non-executive and receive no remuneration for their services, and they contribute a rich and wide range of skills and experience to Dublin Rape Crisis Centre's work. The Board has strategic oversight of our organisational risk, budget and financial management and compliance with governance requirements. It provides expert input around fundraising and strategic direction, as well as people management and resourcing.

Our Board met seven times in 2024, including one joint Board meeting and annual general meeting (AGM). There are three Board subcommittees – Audit, Finance and Risk; Human Resources and Remuneration; and Fundraising – which met regularly during the year.



DRCC Chairperson Anne Marie James speaking at We-Consent event to mark Culture Night 2024 at Royal Hospital Kilmainham in September

Board members in 2024



Anne Marie James, Chairperson

Start of term: As Chair – June 2024;
As board member – 2017

Experience, skills and knowledge: Anne Marie is a solicitor with nearly 40 years' experience, and is Managing Partner of Kirwan McKeown James Solicitors LLP, specialising in litigation, commercial and family law. She has campaigned on several national issues and fundraised for many causes, including Women's Aid, the Irish Hospice Foundation and DRCC. She is a member of the Institute of Directors and mentors young professional female lawyers under the auspices of the incorporated Law Society of Ireland.

Anne-Marie James



Ann Marie Gill, Chairperson

Start of term: 2011

Retired: June 2024

Experience, skills and knowledge: Ann Marie is Adjunct Professor at University College Cork (UCC) Business School and has over 30 years' experience in executive and non-executive positions in private and public sector organisations. She is deputy chair of Glór, the arts centre in Co Clare. Former Board memberships she has had include IDA Ireland, the interim Equality Authority and the National Centre for Quality Management. Ann Marie was former Vice-Chair of the Irish Chamber Orchestra and a Fellow of the Institute of Directors, UK.

Ann Marie Gill



Síona Cahill

Síona Cahill

Start of term: 2020

Experience, skills and knowledge: Síona is a public relations and communications professional from Co. Longford. She has advocacy experience from working across youth, education, arts and culture, social justice and LGBTI+ rights. She is a former President of the Union of Students in Ireland. Síona holds a Bachelor of Civil Law (BCL) in Civil Law and Sociology (International) from Maynooth University, and a Public Relations Institute of Ireland (PRII) Diploma in Public Relations, receiving the 2022 Gladys McNevin Award for excellence in public relations. She is a regular contributor on Irish current affairs radio and TV programmes.



Eoghan Cleary

Eoghan Cleary

Start of term: 2023

Experience, skills and knowledge: Eoghan is a secondary school teacher and assistant principal at Temple Carrig School in Co Wicklow. He has over a decade's experience as a youth worker, working in the most marginalised communities in the east inner cities of both Dublin and Galway. Eoghan holds master's degrees in Drama and Theatre Studies, International Human Rights Law, and Education. He is a regular contributor to newspapers and radio programmes and is the co-author of a series of textbooks for the new SPHE curriculum at both Junior and Senior Cycle levels. Eoghan is currently completing a master's degree in Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy, with the aim of specialising in the area of child and adolescent psychotherapy.



John Fanning

John Fanning

Start of term: 2017

Retired: March 2024

Experience, skills and knowledge: John lectures in Branding and Marketing Communications at the University College Dublin (UCD) Smurfit School of Business. He is the former Managing Director and Chairman of McConnells Advertising. He published *The Importance of Being Branded: An Irish Perspective* (Liffey Press) in 2006 and *The Mandarin, the Musician and the Mage* (Peter Lang) in 2022. John is a regular contributor on branding and marketing communications and is the Chairman of Bord Bia's Brand Forum.



Fergus Finlay

Fergus Finlay

Start of term: 2022

Experience, skills and knowledge: Fergus is the former Chief Executive Officer of Barnardos, Ireland's largest children's charity. Prior to that he was Senior Adviser to the Labour Party and was one of the drafters of the Downing Street Declaration, and he was centrally involved in the election of President Mary Robinson in 1990. He served as a Director of Wilson Hartnell Public Relations and is the author of four books. Fergus is a lifelong campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities. He broadcasts regularly on radio and television and contributes a weekly column to the *Irish Examiner*. He is a member of the Board of the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Christine Buckley Centre and the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, and was previously on the Charities Regulatory Authority. Fergus has been given a French Republic Human Rights Prize by the French Embassy in Dublin to recognise the work of Barnardos. He has also been honoured by UCC as an Outstanding Alumnus and been awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Galway.



Nikki Gallagher

Nikki Gallagher

Start of term: 2023

Experience, skills and knowledge: Nikki is Head of Public Affairs at Ibec. Prior to that, Nikki led teams at the Ombudsman for Children's Office, SOLAS and the National Lottery, and was previously a National Press Officer with Fine Gael. Nikki has for many years been a champion of human rights and equality through her professional and voluntary roles, specifically in the areas of LGBTI+ rights, children's rights, gender equality, prisoners' rights and reproductive healthcare rights. She has considerable experience of governance, having served on state and civil society boards, including as Chair of BeLong To, Ireland's largest LGBTI+ youth organisation, from 2015 to 2021, and on the advisory board of the Together for Yes campaign. Her qualifications include a professional certificate in Corporate Governance and a diploma in Law.



Carol Keane

Carol Keane, Secretary and Treasurer

Start of term: 2016

Experience, skills and knowledge: Carol is a qualified Chartered Accountant, having trained with PwC Ireland. She has over 15 years' experience leading private organisations through periods of high growth and change. She is passionate about contributing to society and has previously volunteered as a youth mentor in Foroige's Big Brother Big Sister programme and also as a visitor with Friends of the Elderly. Carol currently chairs the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Audit, Finance and Risk Committee.



Madeleine McCarthy

Madeleine McCarthy

Start of term: 2020

Experience, skills and knowledge: Dr Madeleine McCarthy is a specialist GP with over 30 years' experience in women's health and general practice. She set up her own practice in 1988 in Dún Laoghaire, which is now known as Harbour Health. Her work includes training both GP registrars and undergraduate medical students. She is also a family planning and contraception tutor. She developed a keen interest in menopause over her many years in general practice and has advanced clinical training in menopause care. She has multiple further qualifications in Occupational Health, Diabetes, Sexual Health, Family Planning, Therapeutics, Minor Surgery, Dermoscopy and Travel Health. Madeleine is a member of the Irish College of General Practitioners; the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Faculty of Occupational Health; the British Menopause Society; the Dún Laoghaire ICGP Faculty; the Travel Medicine Society of Ireland; and the Irish Association of Sexual and Reproductive Health Care Professionals.



Aibhlín McCrann

Aibhlín McCrann

Start of term: 2015

Experience, skills and knowledge: Aibhlín is a Director of leadership communications consultancy Communiqué International, and has extensive experience of strategy writing and facilitation of strategic planning. She specialises in stakeholder engagement and facilitation in the state, semi-state, and community and voluntary sectors. Her work includes coaching senior leaders to succeed at executive interview and facilitating the communication elements of change management and organisational restructuring. Aibhlín is a fluent Irish speaker with extensive experience as a performer, media spokesperson, freelance writer and organiser of national and international cultural events. She served on the Board of the Arts Council for more than 10 years. She is current Chair of the internationally renowned Irish Chamber Orchestra and founding Chair of Cruit Éireann (Harp Ireland). Aibhlín serves on the Board of the arts centre Glór in Co Clare and on the Governing Authority of the University of Limerick and its University Concert Hall.



Grace O'Malley

Grace O'Malley

Start of term: 2015

Experience, skills and knowledge: Grace is a Chartered Psychologist and Psychotherapist. She has over 20 years' experience working in the area of sexual and gender-based violence as a therapist, supervisor and activist. She has worked in the corporate, third-level education and non-governmental organisation (NGO) environments, specialising in organisational behaviour and organisational development. She feels strongly about empowering people from both individual and systemic perspectives and seeks to use her professional experience to advocate for change in the area of gender-based violence. Grace holds degrees from Trinity College Dublin and UCD in Psychology, as well as a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) from the UCD Smurfit School of Business. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).



Nóirín O'Sullivan

Nóirín O'Sullivan

Start of term: 2024

Experience, skills and knowledge: Nóirín was the first woman to lead An Garda Síochána as Garda Commissioner, and to head the Garda National Crime & Security Intelligence Service. Throughout her career, she has prioritised and promoted a rights-based service to victims of crime and established the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSU) to provide a professional and consistent approach to the investigation of sexual related crime. She now operates as non-executive director, independent advisor and consultant across a number of sectors. She recently served as Assistant Secretary General in the United Nations (UN) Department of Safety and Security, based in New York. Nóirín is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Executive Institute (NEI). She holds a Master's in Business Studies (MBS) from the UCD Smurfit School of Business. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including an Honorary Doctorate of Laws (LLD) for Distinguished Public Service from Ulster University.



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Finding Your Way after Sexual Violence

A guide to options and supports
after rape, sexual assault and
other forms of sexual violence in
Ireland



www.drcc.ie/fyw



24/7 National 24 Hour Helpline 1800 77 8888

Call for free from this phone's
Emergency Numbers



scan here

Board members attendance during 2024

Board member	Meetings attended (Total=7)
Ann Marie Gill (to June)	3
Anne Marie James	7
Síona Cahill	6
Eoghan Cleary	6
John Fanning (to March)	2
Fergus Finlay	7
Nikki Gallagher	5
Carol Keane (Secretary and Treasurer)	6
Madeleine McCarthy	7
Aibhlín McCrann	5
Grace O'Malley	5
Nóirín O'Sullivan (from June)	1

Note: Board members are not remunerated for their services to Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, nor are their expenses reimbursed for travelling to/from board meetings.

During the year, our Chairperson Ann Marie Gill stepped down from the role, having devoted 10 years to attentive leadership. She was succeeded by Deputy Chair Anne Marie James. Our long-standing Board member John Fanning also finished his term after many years of service, while former Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan joined the board in June.

In 2025, as part of our Board succession planning, we will recruit further Board members to ensure continued high-quality expertise and counsel for the organisation as it delivers on a new strategic plan.

Effective monitoring and evaluation strategies

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre tracks its processes across teams meticulously, and throughout 2024 we reported extensively on our work to funders and State bodies. We record and review progress against our strategic key performance indicators (KPIs) on a monthly basis, and collect all external feedback on our services and supports to improve our work. Our performance against these benchmarks is highlighted and discussed at monthly meetings of the management team.

Alongside our strategic goals and KPI framework, we also have in place a teams-based performance and development review process that unites our organisational targets with the personal development goals of individual staff members. This process allows us to reflect on progress, challenges and opportunities at regular intervals throughout the year.

Meeting legal and statutory obligations

Throughout the year, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre fulfilled its legal requirements to regulations including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Children First Guidance and Regulation, providing relevant training to staff and ensuring that all requirements were incorporated in organisational policies.

We made timely lobbying returns to the Standards in Public Office Commission and completed the annual Governance Code Compliance Record Form as well as submitting the standard annual report to the Charities Regulator to comply with *the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland*. Our Board and Staff abide by a conflict of interest policy.

Satisfying funder duties

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre met its targets and reporting obligations for all funders during 2024. The financial accounts below give a detailed picture of the income, expenditure and activities of the organisation over the course of the year.

Commitment to best practice

- We follow good practice standards, such as those in the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for annual reporting as well as the guidelines and recommendations for charities published by the Charities Regulator.
- Database: Having introduced a new CRM database across teams in 2021, we carried out a review of its functionality and processes in 2024, which included workshops with staff.
- Data security: The nature of our work means that our data is especially sensitive, so we take data security seriously. Our data is housed primarily on a cloud-based platform with robust access controls and security features. Data access is restricted based on role-specific permissions. We also use a separate external backup solution to maintain critical data and protect against potential data loss. Multi-factor authentication is enforced across all systems to enhance access security, while regular penetration testing by an external security partner helps identify and address vulnerabilities. All staff laptops are encrypted to prevent unauthorised access. Additionally, we maintain up-to-date antivirus software on all devices and conduct ongoing security awareness for employees to ensure comprehensive data security across all endpoints.
- Policy review: We reviewed our policy register over the year and updated policies as required, including our child protection policy.
- Risk register: We have an active risk register which is reviewed regularly by DRCC management and the Board.

Company and Charity Registration

DRCC is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, registered CRO 147318. DRCC holds charitable tax exemption from the Revenue Commissioners (CHY 8529) and is also registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority (Charities Regulator) (RCN 20021078).

Minding our people

As we are working in an area of immense sensitivity, maintaining a safe space year-round for our clients and callers who are coping with the impact of sexual violence, it is vital that we also look after ourselves. All staff and their immediate families can avail of the Health Assured employee assistance programme – which includes assessment, short-term counselling and referral services. In addition to this, frontline teams have access to regular supervision sessions with an external supervisor and in some cases to peer and group supervision as well. Our volunteers also benefit from facilitated peer support sessions.



PJ Kirby generously assisted with a number of We-Consent events throughout the year to help raise awareness

Financial Statements

Statement of financial activities – income and expenditure

		Unrestricted funds €	Restricted funds €	Total 2024 €	Total 2023 €
Income from:	5				
Donations and legacies	6	696,771	355,836	1,052,608	1,015,639
Charitable Activities		155,937	3,382,922	3,538,859	2,704,827
Total income		852,708	3,738,758	4,591,467	3,720,467
Expenditure	7				
Raising Funds		248,730	-	248,730	253,912
Charitable activities	6	327,596	3,738,758	4,066,355	3,436,341
Other		5,641	-	5,641	20,860
Total expenditure		581,967	3,738,758	4,320,726	3,711,113
Net income		270,741	-	270,741	9,354
Transfer to/between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		270,741	-	270,741	9,354
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		3,163,088	-	3,163,088	3,153,734
Total funds carried forward		3,433,829	-	3,433,829	3,163,088

There are no other recognised gains or losses for the financial year except for those listed above.
All income and expenditure are derived from continuing operations.

Statement of financial position

	2024		2023	
	€	€	€	€
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets		1,044,912		1,080,962
Current assets				
Debtors	51,450		30,455	
Cash at bank and in hand	3,707,183		3,446,417	
	3,758,632		3,476,872	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,165,261)		(1,164,917)	
Net current assets		2,593,371		2,311,955
Total assets less current liabilities		3,638,283		3,392,917
Creditors: amounts falling after more than one year		(204,454)		(229,829)
Net Assets		3,433,829		3,163,088
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted Funds - general		613,241		647,306
Unrestricted Funds - designated		2,820,588		2,515,782
Total		3,433,829		3,163,088

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 15th May 2025 and are signed on its behalf by:

Anne Marie James
Director

Carol Keane
Director

DRCC employee salary range

	2024	2023
€60,000 - €70,000	8	6
€70,001 - €80,000	2	2
€80,001 - €90,000	1	1
€100,001 - €110,000	-	-
€110,001 - €120,000	-	1
€120,001 - €130,000	1	

2024 salary bands are based on remuneration paid in 2024 and include payments to staff for WRC agreed phased salary increases of 8% backdated to April 2023.

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WELCOME TO
DUBLIN RAPE CRISIS CENTRE



McGonnell House
Dublin Rape Crisis Centre
 **RCC**
1800 77 8888





Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Annual Report 2024
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Photos thanks to Andres Poveda, Adam Victory,
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