



Men's Aid
Ireland

Annual Report
2021

Foreword from our Chair, Seamus Scott.



Dear Reader,

Welcome to our Men's Aid Annual Report for 2021. Despite the Covid virus continuing from 2020 into 2021 our dedicated team responded diligently to the increase in demand from victims to our domestic abuse service. The demand on our service grew from 5,500 contacts in 2020 to 7,561 in 2021, a significant 37% increase.

The team again, responded to the victims coming forward from every county and utilised online options or meetings in open spaces such as car parks for sensitive and urgent situations. The vulnerable victim remained our focus and priority.

We were delighted that our funding from all our funders including Tusla and the Department of Justice continued along with donations from the public. We also secured two new grants, one from the Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integrations and Youth to pilot an LGBT+ Domestic Violence initiative and a second grant from The Community Foundation for Ireland, to open a community response hub in the Waterford, Southeast area.

The thousands of men experiencing domestic abuse came from villages, towns, and cities across Ireland. They continue to be aged from 18 years to 88 years of age, from all working backgrounds, bankers to builders, train drivers to TD's, unemployed to high-net-worth individuals, many different religions, many with a disability, many with

hearing / sight challenges, members of the Travelling / Roma community and a significant increase in contacts to our service from members of the LGBT+ community. All walks of life seeking help and to be safe as we know domestic abuse does not discriminate.

The team supported 25 different nationalities, some survivors with little or no English language using online tools to communicate and tell their story of abuse. Regardless of any additional barriers placed before our team, they did everything in their power to help support the vulnerable victim to assist them in their time of need.

*Men's Aid was proud to lead on the **Cross Country Alliance**. Forming a new collaboration with our colleagues in **Northern Ireland, Scotland and the UK**. This relationship continues to grow stronger with the sharing of evidence based scientific academic works in order to help our organisations respond to the needs of the victims journey.*

Governmental Meetings in 2021 included our CEO, Kathrina Bentley appearing before the Oireachtas Committee on Justice on two occasions, delivering witness submissions on:

- "Victims testimony in cases of rape & sexual assault"
- "Women's refuge / domestic abuse refuges".

As Minister Helen McEntee was leading the National Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence (National DSGBV) 5 Year strategy our CEO & team attended many meetings with Government officials and Consultants drafting the new strategy, each time submitting representations for the voice of male victims throughout the consultation period.

The effective impact of our team is driven by our CEO and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kathrina for her commitment, passion and unwavering tenacity representing the voice of our dads, brothers, sons and grandsons. Kathrina is supported by myself, our fellow directors and an incredible frontline team. I would also like to thank each member of the team Without whose work and commitment the service would not be the gold standard that it is. Together they are changing and saving lives and working towards a safe community now and for future generations.

I look forward to seeing the team continue the positive awareness and ground swell into 2022 along with our many colleagues, funders, and community partners.



Seamus Scott
Chairperson

We acknowledge and thank our funders without whose support our life saving work could not be done. Tusla, Department of Justice, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and The Community Foundation for Ireland.

 **The Community
Foundation for Ireland**



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

TUSLA

**An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach**
Child and Family Agency



**An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

Report from the CEO, Kathrina Bentley.



Dear Reader,

Thank you for being curious and reading our Annual Report.

In 2021 we welcomed three new members to our team. Donna Kelly and Poppy Douglas joined us as support workers, and Karl Heller joined us to work from our office in Dolphin House, Dublin Family Law courts as court support worker. The new team members were much needed given the increase in demand on our service. I thank Tusla and the Department of Justice for funding these vital roles.

The media kicked off 2021 with an a ground-breaking article written in the The Kerryman newspaper by Stephen Fernane, in January titled "Shining a spotlight on domestic abuse suffered by Men" followed by a significant article in The Irish Examiner, written by Fergus Finlay titled "Time to listen to men who suffer domestic abuse".

Calls to our helplines increased, the conversation about women's violence against men was being talked about in kitchens, coffee stations and across communities.

During the year we also had increased media support from John Mooney of The Sunday Times, the Meath Chronicle, The Irish Times, Pat Kenny, Cork C103 radio, KFM, Northern Sound, Highland radio, Newstalk, The Journal, The Examiner.

A landmark day in terms of radio support, we were hosted by Jennifer Zamparelli, 2FM in RTE studio's for our first RTE radio interview.

A key highlight for me looking back on 2021 was our International Men's Day seminar, which was opened by Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee. The Minister's support was much appreciated and gave lots of hope. We were honoured to welcome our keynote speaker: Dr. Garrett O'Connor, Clinical Psychologist with the HSE, who delivered key findings from his PhD. research "Human Stories of men experiencing intimate partner violence".

Minding our own mental and physical well being is imperative. All our team are supervised and attend monthly appointments to ensure our wellbeing is monitored and supported. The team also completed "Mental Health First Aid" training with St. John of God's mental health practitioners.

We know most men who suffer domestic violence and abuse from women may never reach out to a support organisation, research shows a huge under reporting issue amongst men, however we are hoping with all our efforts and ambitious strategy that we are giving men confidence and encouragement to call us for help and support.

Thank you to our funders, Tusla, Department of Justice, Department of Equality, The Community Foundation for their support throughout 2021 and a special thanks to everyone who donated to support our work.

My sincere thanks go to our team of 2021, of which only two are full time! Andrea, Joyce, Sandra, Donna, Poppy, Karl, Amanda and Miriam, who without their commitment, passion, professionalism and high standards

we would not be changing and saving the lives of men, their children and family. Acknowledging the difficult space, we work in, it is my privilege to work alongside you all.

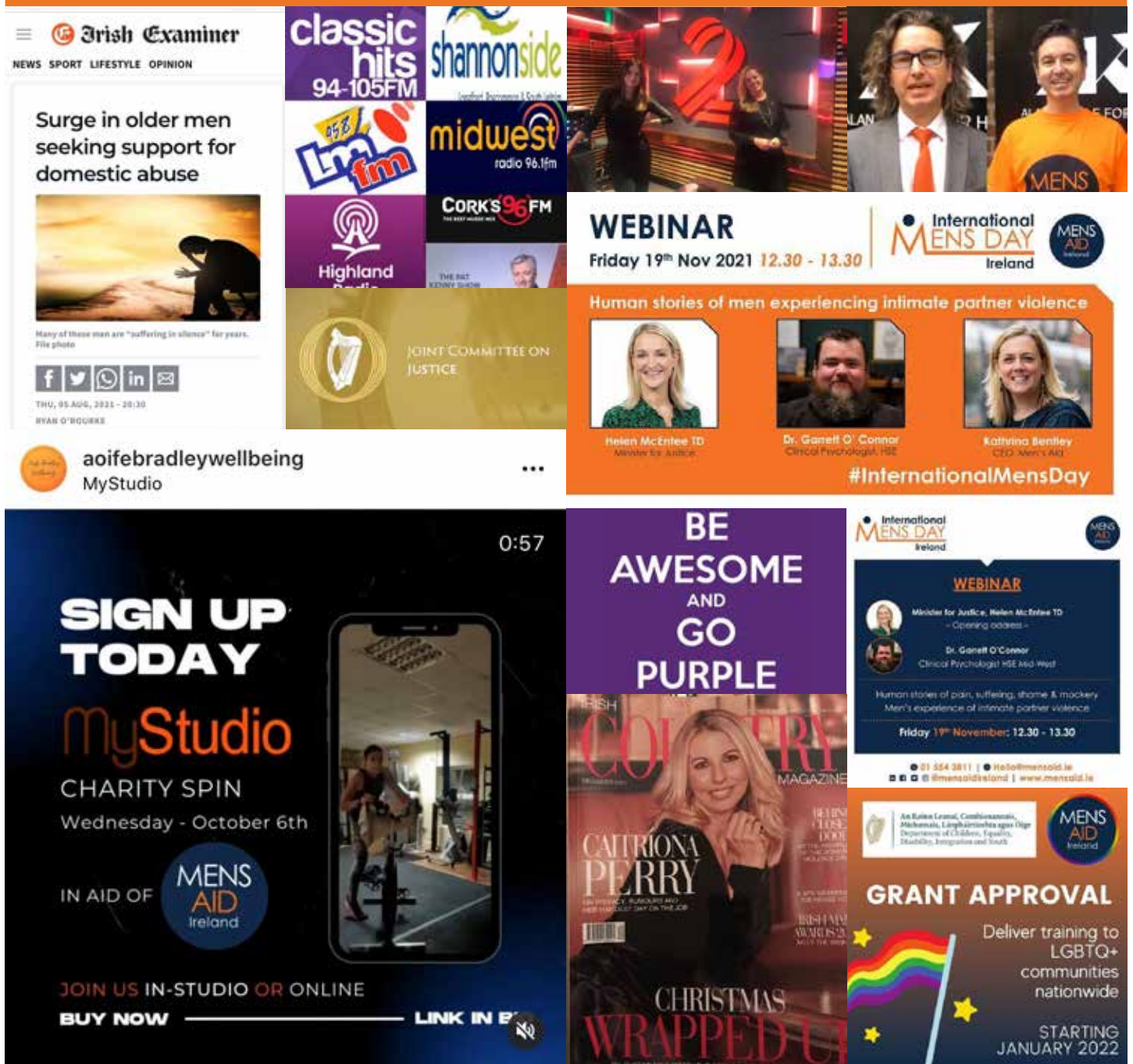
I look forward to challenging attitudes and working with this amazing team in 2022, alongside all stakeholders delivering the next National Strategy to tackle Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence.

Yours sincerely,



Kathrina Bentley
CEO

Highlights of 2021



Irish Examiner
NEWS SPORT LIFESTYLE OPINION
Surge in older men seeking support for domestic abuse
Many of these men are "suffering in silence" for years.
THU, 05 AUG, 2021 - 20:30
RYAN O'BRIEN

classic hits 94-105FM
shannonside
95.8 Lm fm
midwest radio 96.1fm
CORKS 96FM
Highland
JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

WEBINAR
Friday 19th Nov 2021 12.30 - 13.30
International MENS DAY Ireland
Human stories of men experiencing intimate partner violence
Helen McEntee TD, Minister for Justice
Dr. Garrett O'Connor, Clinical Psychologist, HSE
Kathrina Bentley, CEO, Men's Aid
#InternationalMensDay

aoifebradleywellbeing MyStudio

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CHARITY SPIN
Wednesday - October 6th
IN AID OF **MENS AID Ireland**
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BE AWESOME AND GO PURPLE
IRISH COUNTRY MAGAZINE
CATRIONA PERRY
CHRISTMAS WRAPPED UP

International MENS DAY Ireland
WEBINAR
Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD - Opening address -
Dr. Garrett O'Connor, Clinical Psychologist HSE Mid West
Human stories of pain, suffering, shame & mockery
Men's experience of intimate partner violence
Friday 19th November: 12.30 - 13.30
01 554 3811 | #ItsMensDayIreland | @mensaidireland | www.mensaid.ie

GRANT APPROVAL
Deliver training to LGBTQ+ communities nationwide
STARTING JANUARY 2022

Mission & Vision

"Is to promote increased awareness; understanding among the wider public of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and to collaborate with statutory and non-statutory bodies to advance our aims and the needs of our clients".

Mission

Empowering and supporting men, their children and families experiencing domestic violence, to be safe.

Vision

- To provide a Domestic Violence service underpinned by a victim centric and human rights proofed approach aimed at ensuring all victims of Domestic Violence / Coercive Control (DV/CC) receive the required support to be safe. Our service is specific to support male victims and their families.
- To be the leading victim centric organization supporting men to report crimes of domestic violence to An Garda Síochána.
- To be the leading national authoritative voice advocating and lobbying for services and safety mechanisms for men experiencing DV / IPV including coercive control in Ireland. Building networks of support that go beyond the signposting of services and include holistic social supports.
- Men's Aid regard the Child as of paramount importance in all our interactions with victims of Domestic Violence/Coercive Control. Accordingly, we are fully committed to meeting our responsibilities under The Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.
- To continue and grow our educational support systems, creating awareness in the broader community and society of the prevalence and damaging impact of Domestic Violence , understanding of the criminal nature of such acts of violence and to break taboos as grassroots level.



Our Services

• Helpline

Our confidential helpline is the first point of contact for our clients, their family, and friends. We received calls from all 26 counties across Ireland in 2021. Our helpline provides the listening ear, emotional support, practical information, validation and sign posting where needed. It is also the pathway to our other services such as one to one appointments, counselling, and court support. Our Helpline support team are highly experienced at supporting men in difficult situations with their girlfriends, wives, and partners. The support team have a unique understanding of how men experience abuse and violence, how men respond and the needs of male victims.

We also offer a confidential email for those who may not be able to make a phone call due to the abusive behaviours of their partners. We are always alert to the possible risks a victim may be in and we respond appropriately and when safe to do so.



• Outreach / One to one appointments

In the case of victims needing assistance with care plans, safety planning, court paperwork, domestic violence legal orders, the team continued to offer our One to One outreach appointments through Covid pivoting to online and in certain circumstances met in person, abiding by Covid guidelines. As mentioned above in our Chairperson's report, we met with 105 men in person through 2021, whilst using telephone and zoom for the majority of appointments. Always risk assessing each individual's situation.

• Court Support

Our court support service was available in Dolphin House, Dublin Family Law courts, Dundalk and Cavan courts in 2021. This service provides information to those pursuing legal options under family law, domestic violence law, sometimes criminal law. Our court team can advise on safety planning whereby a court order is in place, mindful that Ireland had no accommodation / refuge option for male victims/their children in 2021.

• Counselling

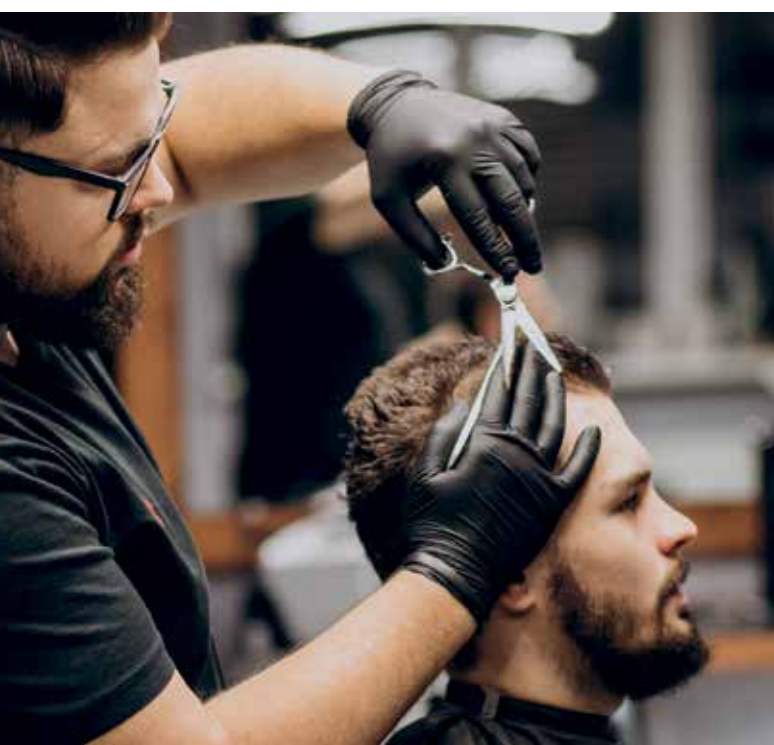
Many clients, with no prior knowledge of counselling, believe that the counsellor will sort their problems out for them. A person-centred counsellor will help you to explore your own issues, feelings, beliefs, behaviour, and worldview, so you can become more self-aware and achieve greater independence.

Our team of counsellors are qualified and fully trained psychotherapists. They have additional years of experience and specialist training in supporting male victim survivors of domestic violence, coercive control, men's mental health, suicide ideation and addiction.

Men's Aid provided in person counselling and during Covid via phone/zoom support for victim survivors of domestic violence, partner violence, familial abuse.



• Training / Educational workshops



As in person training / education workshops were hampered by Covid, thanks to a grant from The Community Foundation for Ireland we designed and created an online training video. Whilst in person workshops are our preference given the complex dynamics of domestic abuse and coercive control, the video version was a tool to share with workplaces, colleges, and stakeholders.

In May 2021, we launched our free training for Barbers and Hairdressers on how to spot signs of domestic abuse and coercive control and how to respond if their customer discloses an abusive partner or they see signs of physical violence whilst cutting their customer's hair. >>>

In September 2021 we commenced the roll out of training workshops to the Citizen's Information Bureaus across the country. Again, learning how to recognise, respond and refer a male victim experiencing domestic abuse.

Other training included members and retired members of the Irish Defence Forces, Focus Ireland and members of An Garda Síochána.

Our clinical manager, Andrea McDermott, continues to deliver Ireland's only module representing women's violence against men, to students of Dundalk Institute of Technology. All students are practitioners working in the field of Domestic Violence. This is a level 8 course, students range from members of An Garda Síochána, social workers, mental health professionals, nurses, legal professionals and a wide scope of professional backgrounds. It is an excellent course for frontline workers to complete, we highly recommend it.

• **Advocacy & Policy Development**

As mentioned in our chairperson's report earlier, Men's Aid proudly represented the experiences and voices of thousands of men who are victims of abuse and violence at the hands of their partner, at two Oireachtas Committee meetings.

Men's Aid attended and submitted to all meetings involved in the consultation process for the new strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Ireland providing the only voice for male victims of domestic violence. This process was overseen by the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD in preparation for the new 5 year strategy which is due for release next year.

Of the 7,561 contacts in 2021, 94% of disclosures were related to female violence against men. While this is a significant statistic, recent data from the Office of National Statistics in the UK (2020) reported 1 in 3 victims of domestic abuse are male. We therefore predict that the demand on our support services growing significantly in the years ahead which will increase the need for advocacy in this area in the years ahead.

• **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

We offer advice to workplaces on staff training, awareness, policy development, integration.

Recommending all employee's regardless of their gender, whether full-time or part-time and Casual workers are all included in any Domestic Violence workplace initiative.



Communications

Digital and social media platforms have become more important and widely used given the Covid pandemic.

Engagement via social media resulted in a further reach into homes.

Website 🌐	Mensaid.ie saw a large increase (>30,000) in visits; where information, resources and sign posting details are available to victims, survivors, their family, friends and work colleagues.
Twitter 🐦	99%+ increase
Instagram 📷	105%+ increase
Facebook 📘	85%+ increase



Who calls us?:

- 18 years – 88 years old: Builders, Bankers, Bus Drivers, IT Managers
- LGBT+ community
- Older men 65+
- Traveller men
- Homeless men
- Men with addictions
- Men with mental health challenges
- Parents with abusive adult children
- Roma men
- Men in uniform (Garda, Army, Emergency Response)
- Men from ethnic minority groups
- Men with disabilities
- Isolated farmers
- Prisoners

Demand and Response 2021

- **7,561 contacts to our service**



522 Appointments:
Counselling Appointment = 50 minutes per appointment, provided by our qualified psychotherapy team



244 Appointments:
Dublin Family Law Court / Dolphin House



105 men:
One to One meetings



Clinics in:
Dundalk court, Cavan, Monaghan and Navan recommenced in line with Covid guidelines

*Child Protection Referrals:
Sadly we dealt with over **100%+** increase in welfare referrals to our colleagues in Tusla in 2021.*

Perpetrator Gender:

94%
female abuser

6%
same-sex / family member

Top Reasons for contacting us

- **Emotional support:** Our helpline is a confidential, safe space to talk. Our listening ear, validation about what happened to the man at the end of the phone as he talks about his female partner abusive behaviours. "Is this abuse? Am I describing coercive control"?
- **Practical Information:** Practical guidance on legal orders, family law, what to do, who to talk to, how to respond to an abusive wife/girlfriend.
- **Safety Planning:** As Ireland has no accommodation/refuge options for victims of domestic abuse who are male, the men have few options but to stay in the home in the abusive environment requiring safety planning for themselves and children if present.
- **Substance misuse:** Disclosures that his wife/girlfriend/partner is misusing alcohol/ substances in the home and the dangers with those.
- **Parental Alienation:** Access, custody, guardianship issues.
- **Breaches of legal orders.**



Human Stories of men experiencing abuse and violence

John's story

John has experienced violence from his wife on a regular basis for many years. He has been bitten, scratched, kicked, slapped and attacked. On one occasion John's wife stabbed him. John sought help from Men's Aid when he had to flee the home after an attack and his neighbours called the Gardai.

John arrived at a meeting with the Men's Aid support worker with bruising and scratches on his body. John said his wife controls him and their young children. John obtained an Interim Barring order with the help of Men's Aid. John is completely devastated and worried and continues to use the service of Men's Aid for support.

Tom's story

Tom is a foreign national whose wife has abused him physically, mentally, verbally and threatened to kill him. Tom was sleeping on a 'make-up' bed behind the sitting room door for a number of years in the family home. Tom obtained a Safety Order but had to leave the family home due to fear of his wife's continued abuse.

Tom's wife continues to reside in the family home with their children while Tom has been living in hostel accommodation for the past 10 months. Tom's mental and physical health has suffered, and he is finding it difficult to move out of hostel accommodation or find a home where he can take his children. Tom feels that he is a burden to society.

Jack's story

Jack is a retired farmer who called Men's Aid because his wife would not permit him to use the cooker, washing machine or TV. Jack said he spent his working life on the farm working 12 hours plus a day. Jack said his wife was always abusive and controlling but this has escalated since he retired. Jack said he spends most of his day in his room. They have not shared a bedroom for many years.

Jack said his wife tells him constantly he is useless and throws plates and objects at him. Jack said he has no friends and is isolated. He is not permitted to use the car. Jack continues to call Men's Aid to talk. Jack feels nothing can be done as he and his wife are in their 70s and the courts will not remove her from the home.

Financial Information

Detailed Profit and Loss Account - Financial year ended 31 December 2021

INCOMING RESOURCES	€ 2021	€ 2020
H.S.E. - Tusla	356,690	240,385
Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime	40,000	20,000
Generated income	250	1,350
Donations - restricted income	-	20,000
Donations - unrestricted income	39,648	85,479
The Community Foundation Funds	25,000	-
Department of Children	31,450	-
Gross profit	493,038	362,314
Gross profit percentage	100%	100%
Overheads - Administrative expenses	€ 2021	€ 2020
Wages and salaries	(215,003}	(105,066)
Employer's PRSI contributions	(22,121)	(11,161)
Staff training	-	(2,204}
Counselling costs	(19,545)	(77,050)
Staffing costs	(3,663)	-
Client activities	(30,420)	(464)
Marketing, PR and advocacy	(12,898)	(7,108)
Rent payable	(12,180)	(12,726)
Insurance	(6,298)	(6,197)
Canteen & cleaning	(1,804)	(1,478)
Repairs and maintenance	(610)	-
Printing, postage and stationery	(9,444)	(3,678)
Telephone	(7,515}	(6,171)
Computer costs	(18,001)	(8,611)
Covid costs	(735)	-
Motor expenses	(1,692)	(5,652)
Consultancy fees	(12,359)	(9,055)
Auditors remuneration	(4,305)	(4,235)
Bank charges	(261)	(123}
Stripe/iDonate charges	(567)	(94)
General expenses	(1,090}	(1,132)
Supervision	(3,890)	(1,330)
Subscriptions	(1,025)	-
Depreciation of tangible assets	(1,291)	(579)
	(386,717)	(264,114)
Operating profit	106,321	98,200
Operating profit percentage	21.%	27.1%
Profit before taxation	106,321	98,200

Organisation Information: 2021

Name	Amen Support Services T/A Men's Aid Ireland
Registered Address	St. Anne's Resource Centre, Railway Street, Navan, Co. Meath
Chairperson	Seamus Scott
Treasurer	Tomas Hyland
Secretary	Liam Carroll BL
Directors	Tomas Hyland / David Foot Kate Liston / Peter Glynne
Auditors	Paul Hehir, FDC Group, Cork.
Bankers	AIB, Navan, Co. Meath.
Phone	01 554 3811
Email	Hello@mensaid.ie & office@mensaid.ie
Website	www.mensaid.ie



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