

niacro



2016 - 2017

NIACRO | **ANNUAL REPORT**

Working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities

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“Engages MLAs from all parties with credible and informed reasoning on many complex justice issues.”
(Fitzpatrick & Walker 2016)

Introduction

Following on from last year, 2016-17 was another 12 months of consolidation for NIACRO, after the loss of several significant areas of service delivery in March 2015. Our key focus for the year was a dual emphasis on the development of services for 'children and families' and 'adults in prison and in the community'. A number of new services were established following the securing of resources, whilst several of our ongoing programmes were reviewed to ensure that they continued to be fit for purpose. Our new service delivery areas included;

- **Positive Outcomes for Short Term Prisoners (POST):** a service for those serving a short term in prison;
- **Families and Money Matters (FAMM):** a service for families providing debt advice and money management;
- **Disclosure Hub:** a volunteer supported call centre providing direction and advice concerning how to disclose a criminal record; and
- **Supporting Children of Prisoners (SCOPE):** a service to engage the children of those in prison.

As well as developing these new services, we continued to attract and sustain resources for a menu of services offering early intervention for children and families, employment progression and post-prison mentoring for adults. We also supported people facing the threat of losing their tenancy and the resulting potential homelessness. In order to maintain our high standards of service delivery, we continued to invest in the training and development of our staff and volunteers. This was recognised in Autumn 2016, in the reconfirmation of our Investors In People Silver Award.

From all of this activity, we articulated our policy asks and met with policymakers and members of the Northern Ireland Assembly to explain our various positions on the issues affecting our service users. Nathan Dick, Head of Policy and Communications at Clinks¹, addressing our AGM in November 2016, reflected on the contribution that ordinary people had made in realising the progress milestones that have changed the criminal justice system over time. From Elizabeth Fry's reforming spirit in the late 18th century; the impact of John Howard's reformatory and preventative approach; and Fredrick Rainer's donation of five shillings, which established the probation service in 1876.

¹ Clinks is an umbrella organisation in England and Wales for voluntary sector organisations working with offenders and their families.

It has been the extraordinary impact that ordinary people have made which resulted in real change to a system that has had such a profound effect on those it touches. Nathan's address helped us to reflect on the contribution that both individuals and organisations can make in what can be viewed as a difficult environment. Whilst not wanting to compare our recent challenges to those who went before us, it was useful to reflect on how we too have moved forward and reconfirmed our mission and how we deliver on it.

In May 2016 we published a report entitled *NIACRO: Adding Value to Northern Ireland's Criminal Justice Sector* (Fitzpatrick & Walker, 2016)².

The reports key findings highlighted that NIACRO:

- Is driven by its mission statement, *to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities* and its work is aligned with strategies focused on the needs of people affected by the criminal justice system.
- Works in collaboration with partners to design models and deliver services.

- Embodies the Department of Justice (DoJ) priority of supporting people to desist from (re)offending.
- Has procedures for measuring and reporting on outcomes, and as a result is well positioned to respond to, and work within, the Outcomes Based Accountability Framework.
- Has attracted resources from other government departments/agencies which can be deployed to support the DoJ *Strategic Framework for Reducing Offending*.
- Maintains a focus on legacy issues.
- Advocates and provides leadership on policy that engages politicians, policy makers and the public.

We would like to thank all our staff, service users, volunteers, members and Executive Committee for the support and dedication they have shown the organisation throughout the year. We are entering 2017-18 feeling stronger, more confident and ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

Olwen Lyner
Chair

Sid McDowell
Chief Executive

² You can read '*NIACRO: Adding Value to Northern Ireland's Criminal Justice Sector*' (Fitzpatrick & Walker, 2016) in full at www.niacro.co.uk/publications.

Children and Young People

We believe: children and young people can be diverted from the criminal justice system through support designed to meet their needs and the needs of their families.

We aim: to reduce anti-social and offending behaviour among those perceived to be vulnerable to offending, through our work with children, young people and their families.

Our Early Intervention (EISS) and Child and Parent Support (CAPS) services both performed well. Throughout the year we continued to foster strong connectivity with our delivery partners - Action for Children, Extern and Barnardo's - in both programmes. Following from this, there was an agreement use Outcomes Star®³ to support and measure change when working with children and young people.

We were delighted to be a part of the Community Hubs roll-out process and to have the opportunity to play a role in this much welcomed and significant development.

Over the last year, we have seen a number of staff changes across our volunteer projects. This was coupled with lower referral rates and difficulties in recruitment of volunteers, particularly in more rural areas.

In addition to this, many of our existing group of young people have now reached the age of 18. Despite some changes in this area, we ended the year close to our targets and looking forward to the year ahead.

The establishment of a Peer Mentor post within the Maximising Opportunity for Voluntary Engagement (MOVE) project has been invaluable in reaching out to young people in challenging circumstances; supporting them to develop individual plans and matching them with a volunteer. We also expanded MOVE into the Southern Trust with a dedicated a Project Worker working within this area.

Our work as independent advocates representing young people through the Independent Representation (IR) Scheme in Lakewood Regional Secure Care Centre was consolidated this year with our IR Project Worker undertaking a more formal role in oversight of the centre's use of Consequences & Rewards and the handling of complaints (both Problem Solving & Safeguarding).

Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on an early intervention approach to support families when difficulties arise, before they need involvement with statutory services. We hope that a commitment to early intervention will continue to be a Programme for Government priority going forward.

³ The Outcomes Star® is an evidence-based tool for both supporting and measuring change. More information on Outcomes Star® can be accessed at www.outcomesstar.org.uk

OVERVIEW

Service	Key Result	Primary funder
CAPS		
Intensive support services to families whose children aged 8-13 are at risk of engaging in anti-social/offending behaviour.		
Southern Trust	67 families engaged with.	HSCB/SHSCT
Belfast Trust	76 families engaged with.	HSCB
EISS		
New service in 2015-16 which supports families when difficulties arise, before they need involvement with statutory services.		
Southern Trust	154 families supported.	PHA
Belfast Trust	147 families supported.	PHA
Family Support Hub		
NIACRO chairs a group of voluntary, community and statutory bodies in the SHSCT area who provide family support.	248 referrals; 12 hub meetings held.	SHSCT
Independent Representation		
Advocacy and support for young people in Lakewood Secure Care Centre.	56 visits to centre.	SEHSCT
Independent Visitor		
Volunteers befriend and support "looked after" young people.	26 young people engaged; 1473 hours' worth of events and workshops.	BHSCT/SEHSCT
MOVE		
Volunteers give one-to-one mentoring for young people at risk of offending/ experiencing significant difficulties.	36 young people engaged; 56 took part in 19 Youth Forums; 35 people volunteered for the project; expanded to include 11/12-year-olds.	Big Lottery

Families

We believe: people in prison and their families have the right to maintain relationships in prison and in the community. By helping families to access services, their ability to cope and to support effective resettlement is strengthened.

We aim: to reduce offending and its impact through services which provide effective support for families and children affected by imprisonment.

Referrals to our Family Links project have remained consistent and we continued to work with a range of agencies to seek new and appropriate ways to be able to offer services and support families. This included an initiative to build an early intervention approach which we hope to gain approval for in 2017, providing those families with children an opportunity for onward referrals to a range of early intervention support services.

Following a review, our transport service was reconfigured and continues to be valued by those who use it. We met with the Justice Minister, Claire Sugden MLA, who was supportive of our services which help to maintain family contact and reduce isolation during imprisonment; particularly pertinent given the commitment to the ongoing presence of a prison establishment at Magilligan.

We established the FAMM project which delivers debt and money management advice to those in prison and their families. The project also researches the reasons why people, who find themselves in debt, do not engage with mainstream debt support services.

Another addition to our range of family services was SCOPE, supporting children and young people who have a parent or sibling in prison. SCOPE supports children to achieve the three key outcomes of improving family relationships, reducing social isolation, and supporting children to feel better able cope with difficulties they may face.



"Effective at channelling its independent status to the advantage of service users and the public. Not bearing the statutory burden of mistrust of 'the system'."
(NIACRO Partner Organisation)

OVERVIEW

Service	Key Result	Primary funder
Family Links		
Emotional and practical support for families affected by imprisonment.	1243 referrals to the project; 89% sent information packs sent to families; 89% received a phone call within 48 hours.	NIPS, HSCB, WHSCT
Transport Service		
Affordable and accessible transport to all three NI prisons to support family contact.	206 Journeys made.	NIPS
FAMM-Family and Money Matters		
Providing debt advice to families and those in the community.	Received 236 referrals - over target and awarded extra funding.	Money Advice Service

"Committed and expert staff members, who care about the service users, particularly within the context of working with marginalised families."
(NIACRO Partner Organisation)

Adults

We believe: supporting people who have offended or who are at risk of offending to make positive choices contributes to reducing offending and anti-social behaviour.

We aim: to contribute to a reduction in offending and re-offending through appropriate and effective support for adults in the community and those leaving prison.

Our work in ACCESS, which supports people to develop their employability skills, closed in April 2016 with an event organised to review a 'lessons learned' report. After a re-tendering process, ACCESS operated again from October 2016 to March 2017. The NIACRO Executive agreed to make some of the organisation's own resources available to continue the project in 2017-18, ensuring the service remained available for NIACRO and PBNl's shared client group.

On the advice front, we continued our Welfare Rights Advice which was supported by the Northern Ireland Prison Service. As previously mentioned, we secured funding from the Money Advice Service to provide debt and money management advice to those in prison and their families.

We have seen an increase in housing association referrals to our Assisting People and Communities (APAC)

project with regard to anti-social behaviour – the increasing complexity of cases has resulted in a slight decrease in positive results. Linked to this is our work to help individuals sustain their tenancies – our Supporting Tenants from Ethnic Minorities (STEM) project and weekly drop-in service has been consistently busy throughout the year.

This year we experienced a high number of referrals of those under threat of violence or exclusion from their communities. This work should be viewed as part of the backdrop to the Fresh Start Panel Report in Spring 2016. We consolidated our links with the Victims Commission and engaged in policy discussions regarding the recommendations in the Fresh Start Panel Report. We launched POST providing focused help to short-term prisoners serving less than 12 months.

Our Reset programme was initially funded in 2015-16 on a short-term basis but subsequently rolled over into the new financial year and, following a fresh tendering exercise, we are moving forward with a level of certainty. In August 2016, a report was published which provided the findings from a full evaluation of the Reset mentoring scheme.

The report determined that the recall rates for both those serving Determinate Custodial Sentences and Extended Custodial Sentences were approximately 60% lower than the respective rates for recall prior to the introduction of the Reset programme.⁴

Through our work with women we have had the opportunity to re-establish connections with organisations that contribute to various elements of support for female service users. On a policy level, we hosted a roundtable event in November 2016, providing an opportunity to feed into the Department for Communities consultation on the Fresh Start recommendation to enable women's organisations to continue to carry out transformative community development work.

Our Criminal Records Disclosure Hub provided phone advice through a dedicated helpline operated by volunteers. We also provided training to Further Education Colleges and confirmed evidence of the barriers to banking and insurance which can often occur from having a record, as highlighted in the Fresh Start Panel Report.

"Maintains an expert balance between the adult's need and wider public safety considerations, something very few other voluntary organisations are in a position to be able to take on with the skill and competency of NIACRO"
(Criminal Justice Statutory Agency)

"The heart of NIACRO lies with supporting people who have offended, complementing PBNi's role. This is where it is at its best."
(Criminal Justice Statutory Agency)

⁴ You can read the 'Reset Final Evaluation Report' in full at www.niacro.co.uk/publications

OVERVIEW

Service	Key Result	Primary funder
ACCESS		
Short-term employment support and signposting.	312 referrals received; 91% of leavers put in touch with training and employment providers.	PBNI
Welfare Rights		
Accurate, up-to-date and relevant advice for people in prison and their families.	594 prisoners prior to release and 108 individuals in the community received support and benefit checks.	SSA
APAC Floating support		
Support for people to keep their tenancy and prevent homelessness as a result of anti-social behaviour.	Dealt with 156 cases, 87% of whom retained their right to tenancy; became Chair of Belfast Floating Support Hub.	Supporting People
APAC Banbridge		
	4 referrals received.	Banbridge PCSP
APAC STEM		
Support for people whose tenancy may be at risk due to harassment or intimidation because of ethnicity.	Dealt with 75 cases; 92% retained their tenancy.	Supporting People
Base 2		
Crisis response.	Dealt with 1253 cases, above target. Took part in 17 meetings including with DoJ re Fresh Start.	NIHE

Service	Key Result	Primary funder
POST		
Positive Outcomes for Short Term Prisoners	Established a programme in each establishment offering support to 475 individuals through 1532 interventions.	NIPS
Reset		
Intensive 16-week mentoring for people leaving prison in partnership with PBNi and with support from Housing Rights.	Received 352 referrals; 223 participants undertaking 10131 interventions.	PBNi
Women's Project		
Support PBNi management of women in the community who have previously offended.	37 Group sessions held with 27 individuals participating.	PBNi
Disclosure Hub		
Providing training and support to employers and individuals.	14 training sessions provided; website update; Volunteers recruited to support help line.	DoJ Assets Recovery

"A pioneer for early intervention."
(NIACRO Partner Organisation)

Influencing Others

We believe: the knowledge and experience we gain from our work gives us the obligation, the authority and the responsibility to seek to influence policy makers, service providers and the wider public.

We aim: to have an impact on policy and practice by communicating our key messages and engaging with the relevant publics.

We have been working consistently at the heart of public policy, providing commentary and expertise in the areas in which we work. This has been manifested through our on-going Justice Series events which have been running since 2010. This year the first of these was hosted by Junior Minister, Alastair Ross MLA, looking at the topic of 'Children First; Offenders Second' with Stephen Case, Professor of Criminology at Loughborough University. This was followed by a practitioner session linking the theme with our work on our 'Off the Record' campaign which was recognised in 2015.

Our second Justice Series event, hosted by Chris Lyttle MLA, addressed the theme of 'Hate Crime; Civil Courage' by Paul Iganski, Professor of Criminology

at Lancaster University. Professor Iganski had the opportunity to meet with a number of our STEM clients and engaged with local media on the wider issue of hate crime. This prepared the foundations for an application for a regional programme to be funded by PEACE IV on the issue of hate crime.

We have worked closely with Extern in our response to the Department of Justice's consultation process on the voluntary community and social enterprise sector funding model, meeting with the Justice Committee and later the Justice Minister, Claire Sugden MLA, to raise our shared concerns.

Through our membership of Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) we met with Education Minister, Peter Weir MLA where we were able to outline our education work in CAPS. Moreover, we continually engage MLA's and policy makers in a wide range of issues including – women who have offended, mental health concerns, hate crime and responses to those who have committed sexual offences to note but a few.

In the summer of 2016, NIACRO hosted a Queen's University QStep research student on a 6-week research placement. It was an opportunity for

us to compile all of the services which are delivered by voluntary and community organisations to people in prison (or immediately upon release). After surveying all relevant organisations about their services, the information was then compiled and produced as a leaflet on behalf of Accessing Services for Offenders (ASFO)⁵, distributed to the Prison Services and voluntary agencies. Copies of the leaflet are available from NIACRO.

OVERVIEW

Service	Key Activities
Public Affairs	Met with parties and discussed Manifesto of key policy asks for the new NI Assembly; held 2 Justice Series events at Stormont on the topics Children First/Offenders Second and Dealing with Hate Crime; meeting with Education Minister (through CiNI).
Communications	Combined following on social media 3500+; 2 NIACRO News published (public newsletter); 9 NIACRON published (internal newsletter); internal communications review completed with recommendations.
Policy development	Submitted eleven consultation responses; wrote to Minister re: our concerns around deaths in custody.
Reporting and research	Produced annual report; streamlined and integrated reports to funders; published research report on NIACRO's approach, impact, image and future.

⁵ Accessing Services for Offenders (ASFO) is an umbrella group of voluntary organisations working with people who are or have been in custody.

Applying Resources Effectively

We believe: we must use our resources efficiently and effectively to bring maximum benefit to our service users.

We aim: to achieve our goals through support for our staff and volunteers and through securing and managing the necessary resources.

NIACRO's 2017-18 Training Plan reflected the growing areas of activity and resultant requirements that staff need to be equipped for their roles. Training in particular approaches to working with service users and collecting information which evidences our impact became 'core' training for all project staff. This helped ensure a consistent approach across the organisation towards meeting service users' needs and collecting the right information to evidence our impact. Evidencing impact is becoming increasingly important as Government departments (and other funders) move towards Outcome Based Accountability reporting formats.

Our new Human Resources software package has enabled us to quality assure many functions including recording training which has been undertaken and summary evaluations of each training event.

Achieving Silver in Investors in People demonstrates NIACRO's long-term commitment to invest in our staff so that they are, in turn, best equipped to invest in our service users.

The decision to dedicate resources to Business Development at the start of the year has seen positive results; by the year end we were in a position to create two new managerial posts with responsibility for 'Families and Children' and 'Adults'.



"People here respect each other and genuinely care about each other and our clients. We all want the best."
(NIACRO Staff)

OVERVIEW

Service	Key Activities
Staff support and training	Training plan prepared, approved and delivered; new software package supports the evaluation of events. New supervision and appraisal guidance issued.
Volunteers	Pool of 71 volunteers maintained and utilised.
Financial Management	Financial Procedures manual reviewed; all accounts produced as per business plan; positive cash flow maintained.
Securing resources	See financial results.
Quality standards and controls	Investors in People award achieved at Silver; Investors in Volunteers review planned for 2017/18.

"The natural 'go to' organisation for helpful and informed responses to consultations on any matter concerning the impact of criminal justice developments."
(Fitzpatrick & Walker 2016)

Governance

We are registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and make a full Directors' Return which includes a statement of governance related policies. These are:

- Conflicts of Interest
- Fraud Prevention and Reporting
- Insurance for Directors
- Investment Policy
- Reporting
- Reserves Policy
- Risk Management
- Whistleblowing

NIACRO Executive

Directors during the year ending 31 March 2017 were as follows:

- Sid McDowell (Chairman)
- Brendan Fulton (Vice Chairman)
- Paddy Farry (Treasurer)
- Nicola Carr*
- Christine McLaughlin
- James McClean
- Ricky Rowledge
- Majella McCloskey
- Frank Mulhern
- Gillian McNaul

NIACRO Senior Leadership Team

- Olwen Lyner, Chief Executive
- Donnie Sweeney, Deputy Chief Executive
- Ruth Walker, Business Development Manager
- Gareth Eannetta, Programme Manager (Adult Services)
- Rachel Long, Programme Manager (Children and Families Services)

Key Information

Company Registration
Number NI 018121

Charity Registration
Number NIC101599

Registered Office:
Amelia House, 4 Amelia Street,
Belfast BT2 7GS.

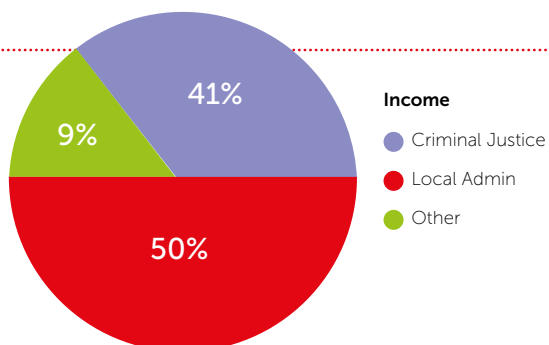
Company Secretary:
Olwen Lyner

You can request a copy of the full Financial Statements by emailing us at niacro@niacro.co.uk or write to us at: Amelia House, 4 Amelia Street, Belfast, BT2 7GS.

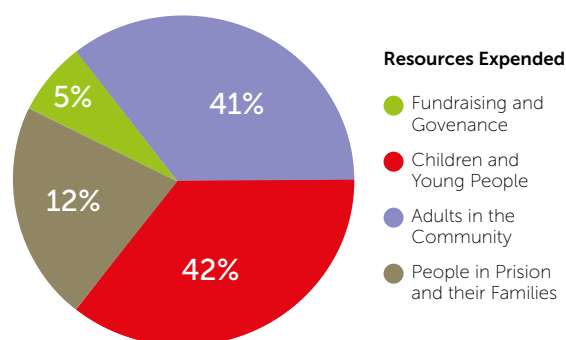
* Resigned 17th November 2016

Financial Overview

Income	
Criminal Justice	£1,076,058
Local Admin	£1,315,874
Other	£243,936
Total	£2,635,868



Resources Expended	
Fundraising and Governance	£119,046
Children and Young People	£1,099,204
Adults in the Community	£1,085,797
People in Prison and their Families	£313,221



Our Funders		2017
		£
Name	Classification	Value
Department of Justice	Criminal Justice	322,169
Northern Ireland Prison Service	Criminal Justice	262,770
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	Criminal Justice	491,119
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council	Local Admin	7,000
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	Local Admin	77,966
Health and Social Care Board	Local Admin	446,528
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Local Admin	373,774
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	Local Admin	7,463

Our Funders		2017
		£
Name	Classification	Value
Public Health Agency	Local Admin	305,040
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	Local Admin	21,636
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	Local Admin	66,572
Western Health & Social Care Trust	Local Admin	9,895
Big Lottery Fund	Other	117,449
Children in Need	Other	5,014
Money Advice Service	Other	66,110
Pilgrim Trust	Other	2,797
Voluntary Agencies	Other	33,353
Services Income	Other	12,297
Investment Income	Other	6,916
Total		2,635,868

Service Locations

Belfast

Amelia House
4 Amelia Street
Belfast
BT2 7GS
☎ 028 9032 0157

Portadown

26 Carleton Street
Portadown
Craigavon
BT62 3EP
☎ 028 3833 1168

Derry/ Londonderry

9 Queen Street
Derry/L'derry,
BT48 7EG
(until Sept 2017)

Now operating from:

Embassy Building
2nd Floor
3 Strand Road
Derry/L'derry,
BT48 7BH
☎ 028 7127 1459

We also deliver services in Probation Board offices and all custodial institutions in Northern Ireland.



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028 9032 0157



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"The staff are so
passionate about
their work. Coming
here to volunteer has
been like a breath of
fresh air for me."

(NIACRO
Volunteer)