



a charity at the centre of caring

Praxis
care group

ANNUAL REPORT 2005

Chair & Executive Director

Praxis Care Group enjoys a justifiable reputation as one of Northern Ireland's leading charities. Reflecting on the previous year we have been very impressed by the dedication, commitment and professionalism of all the staff, board members and volunteers. We would also wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supports us, whether through fundraising, volunteering or corporate support.

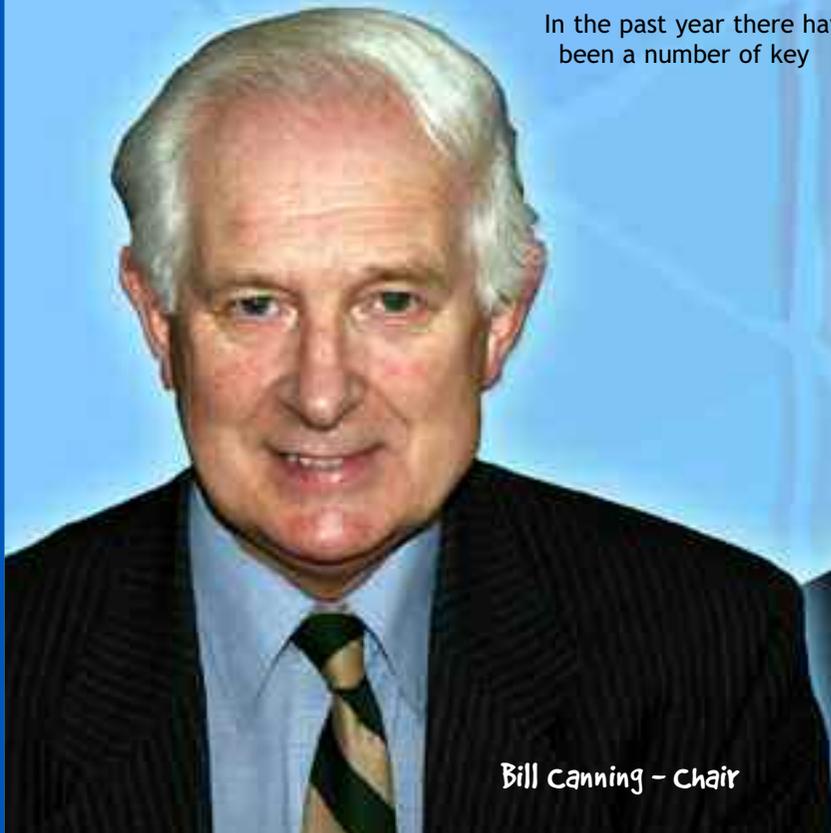
The past year has witnessed significant and exciting advances in the nature and range of services that Praxis Care Group has been able to offer to individuals with learning disabilities, brain injury, mental ill health and older people (including those with dementia). The organisation continues to provide services, undertake research projects and conduct its day-to-day business based on the Charity's commitment to individual dignity and self-choice for people who use its services.

In the past year there have been a number of key

achievements in the organisation. Central to our strategy has been increasing the services we provide geographically to reach more individuals requiring our support. At the end of the year under review Praxis Care Group has supported over 1000 individuals in schemes in Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and England. Currently the organisation is expanding its services into the Republic of Ireland.

During the course of the year we said farewell to the valuable Board Committee member, John Shields and we would like to thank him for his dedication and commitment to the organisation over the years.

At the end of another year, the organisation reinforces its commitment to providing excellent services to meet measured outcomes, National Care Standards, user expectations and contractual obligations. Praxis Care Group continues to aim to be the best in its chosen field within a culture where staff and service users are enabled to maximise their potential building on personal strengths and providing opportunities for development.



Bill Canning - Chair



Nevin Ringland - Executive Director

Caring About Children

In the last year the Challenge programme of care has continued to provide a range of services to children and adults with brain injury and learning disabilities, including individuals with behavioural difficulties and physical disabilities.

The past year has seen some major changes at Rainbow Lodge. Rainbow Lodge is an eight place Children's Respite Home in Ballymena. The service is continually being developed to meet the needs of the young people and families with whom we work with. In partnership with Business in the Community, who have recently organised volunteers from Lindsay Motors to do additional artwork, we have transformed the "newness" of the unit into a very child friendly environment.

Beechfield Respite Home has witnessed some exciting changes throughout the year under review.

A large local business adopted Beechfield as their nominated charity for the year and it benefited from many social events to raise money for restructuring of the garden. The scheme has also received its new multisensory equipment, which will be very beneficial to the children, and young people who use the service. A new extension has been completed to the scheme, which offers a bright and vibrant environment in which the children and young people can play and relax.

"Staff are very supportive and caring, this is the only facility where I am confident my child's needs are being met." - Parent of child receiving care



Caring About Young People

"Planet B" is a drop-in centre with a refreshing approach to day activity services for young people with mental ill-health. It currently serves 45 young people aged between 16-35 from the Ballymena and Antrim area. On average 12 young people attend the centre each day. The project aims to address the stigma that surrounds mental illness, especially with young adults, and the subsequent social isolation that it invariably brings with it.

With this as the focus, Planet B has taken 15 members on their annual residential to Lusty Beg to encourage team building, increase motivation and build self-confidence among the young people. During the year the project offered the participants a European Computer Driving License (ECDL) course designed at personal development. A number of other courses such as a Life skills development programme and Food Hygiene courses are to be implemented in the forth-coming year. Planet B also secured funding from YESIP to facilitate a conference in October 2005.

The Young People Leaving Care befriending project in the Northern Health board area has continued to develop over the past year.

This project focuses on social activities aimed at encouraging the young person to become involved in their local community. The primary goal is to build self-confidence and raise their self-esteem. The service has developed in many ways as the young people want one to one time with their befriender. The activities are very individualised and tailored to what that young person needs. Many of the young people have little or no family support and befrienders often find themselves being the only adult contact the young person would have apart from professional carers and social workers. Befrienders act as positive role models offering support, guidance and practical help. Twenty-four friendships are now established that hopefully will last long after the young person has left the care system.



A FRIEND FROM ABOVE

I prayed for you before we met
Not knowing who you'd be
I asked the Lord to send a friend
One chosen just for me
I asked that they'd be godly
With wisdom of his ways
A friend to help and guide me
Through the troubles of these days
So often in life we need someone
To listen while we talk
Someone who will not condemn or judge
But encourage us as we walk
The narrow road we choose to follow
May sometimes make us stumble
But to have a friend to catch our fall
Teaches us to be humble
When I asked the Lord to send a friend
Though many came and went
He gave much more than I ever asked for
You are the friend he sent

Poem composed by a young person for their Befriender

Caring About Adults

The past year has witnessed some significant and exciting advances in the services Praxis Care Group provide and there continues to be an increase geographically in reaching more adults requiring our support.

ISLE OF MAN

At the end of 2004, Praxis purchased a second block of six flats in Douglas, Isle of Man increasing the extent of our services on the island. In addition, in January 2005, four of our existing clients on the island moved on to a more independent style of living, enabling four new clients to move into our staffed accommodation. Home Support continues to provide a service to approx 60 clients a week in their own homes.

A new and innovative Day Activity Centre started in January 2005 called The Star Club (Steps To Aid Recovery). Praxis care group in partnership with the Service User Network(SUN) group on the Island took over the running of a statutory day care centre after treatment services were relocated. It is a 2-year pilot and based on a Clubhouse Model of service. All decisions are jointly made by service users and staff and there are no staff-only areas. Participation is entirely voluntary and the Clubhouse is non-medical in its approach, focusing on each individual's strengths and abilities rather than their illness. A



snack bar was started and members were encouraged to complete their Food Hygiene Certificate to be able to work in the kitchen area. The members produce a Newsletter every 2 months and a social committee ensures there are a wide variety of activities available for members to attend. The number of members now stands at 46 and continues to increase every month. Members recently enjoyed a trip to the North of the Island to the Wildlife Park and one of the members stated "it was the best day I've spent in the last two years."

MANCHESTER

In Manchester the organisation is establishing a twenty-place adult mental health scheme using the recovery approach to community living. Fourteen places will be offered in a core unit for individuals who require housing support and domiciliary care. Six places are offered currently in two outlying properties for individuals who require housing support only.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Dunmisk Manor is a new facility in Belfast to accommodate individuals who require very intensive support in an environment which offers a range of accommodation options.

At Larne work has commenced on a twelve-place adult mental health unit, which will offer shared living for eight people who require housing support and care. The project will also offer four separate flats for individuals who can live more independently. The local planning group is up and running and its expected that the scheme will be operational by Spring 2006.

Praxis Care Group has extensive experience in work skills projects. During the year, the organisation opened Sarah Jane's Coffee Shop and Bakery in Kesh. Our service users have been trained to help run this project, enabling them to take a full and active part in contributing to the economy and integrating them into

the local community.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Another significant development has been securing funding from Co-Operation Ireland in support of the partnership between Praxis Care Group and the Irish Wheelchair Association, in providing Brain Injury Services - BIS. The aim of BIS is to work in partnership with individuals, families, carers and the full range of care networks to develop a continuum of services that will best suit the needs and rights of adults and children with a brain injury. The aim is to allow them to participate in their treatment in a full and active way that is reflective of their wishes and abilities.

EUROPE

During the year under review links have been created within Europe. We were lead partners in Submobil, a project funded under the Leonardo da Vinci programme of the EU. Sixteen other organisations from a total of seven EU countries also participated. Local participants included Craigavon & Banbridge Community & Social Services Trust, and the Ulster Community Hospitals Trust. The aims of the project were to analyse the opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities to travel abroad and produce practical guidelines to facilitate this.

The work culminated in a three-day meeting and conference, hosted by Praxis Care Group at the Hilton Hotel, Belfast in February 2005. Speakers included specialists and experts in the field of disability throughout Europe, including Professor Jim Mansell and Professor Eric Emerson. The conference also saw the launch of a CD ROM and Handbook, which provide a practical model for visiting and host institutions in organising educational or workskill opportunities abroad for individuals with disabilities. The weekend included a Gala Ball, which was attended and greatly enjoyed by service users and staff alike.

Caring About older People

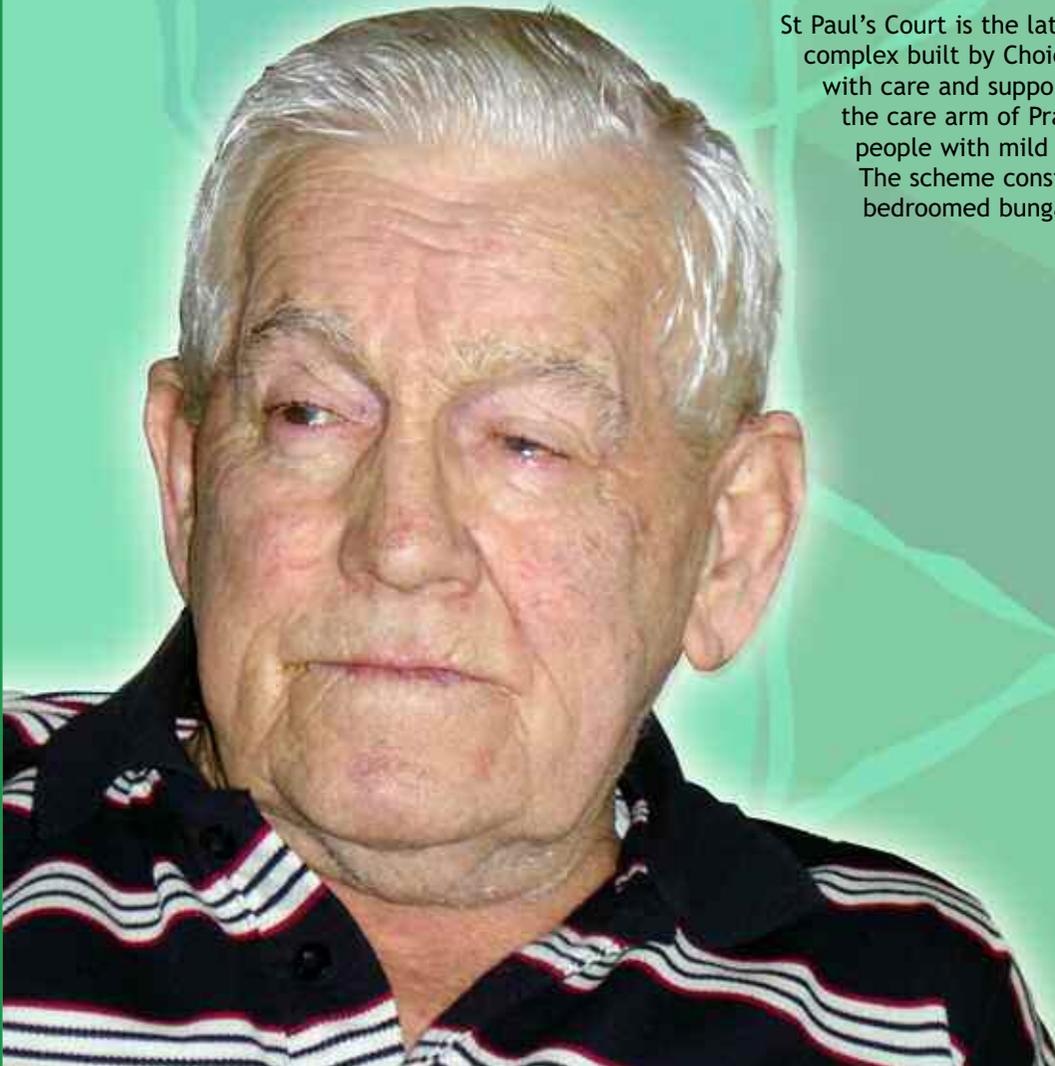
Praxis Care Group provide services to support older people with severe and enduring mental and dementia related illness and in making use of assistive technologies to promote a safe and independent living environment. This area of the organisation's work with older people is continuing to increase.

St Paul's Court is the latest supported living complex built by Choice Housing Association with care and support provided by Respond the care arm of Praxis Care Group for people with mild to moderate dementia. The scheme consists of 15, 2-bedroomed bungalow's with a separate

resource centre for staff accommodation and communal activities. The scheme aims to provide an environment that can be adapted to the physical and social well being of the residents and provide tailor-made care and support packages dependent on needs. The bungalow's are 2-bedroomed to allow family carers to stay as and when required or on a permanent basis. Couples, where one partner has extensive complex needs, can therefore live out their lives together.

The second phase of the scheme is ongoing and it will be built on a site next to the original scheme. St Paul's Court II will be an 8-place accommodation and support scheme for older people living with dementia.

"The accommodation allows family members to stay, which means a lot to us" - Service User at St. Paul's court



Caring About Volunteering & Partnerships

Praxis Care Group heavily depends on volunteers for the befriending service we provide. The Praxis Care Group befriending service provides support for people who are socially isolated as a result of mental ill health or a learning disability. These individuals are excluded from normal social networks and educational and vocational opportunities. The befriending schemes try to readdress such deficits in opportunities. Our volunteers provide a baseline of support to five schemes in Northern Ireland with 110 befriending matches. In the past year the Befriending service has established a scheme in the Isle of Man, which provides volunteers to 10 clients each week.

In Northern Ireland the Praxis Care Group Annual Befriending Awards ceremony was hosted by UTV Broadcaster Lynda Bryans. Lynda shared movingly about her own personal experiences and the part that friendship and understanding played in her regaining good mental health.

The Praxis Care Group Millennium Volunteer Programme started in July 2004. It is a national initiative (3-year programme) funded by the Department for Education and Skills, which works with young people who are interested in committing regular time to volunteering. The programme has identified quality volunteer roles for people aged 18-24 years throughout Praxis Care Group, within the programme, relevant staff worked on the recruitment, training, and management of volunteers. The volunteer roles include volunteer opportunities in art, information technology, sports, literacy & numeracy, horticulture, service user support, office-based work, and music. Schemes and departments involved in the programme include Conlig Work skills, Kimberley House, the Secret Garden, Forest Lodge, Bocombra, Foyle, West Belfast, St. Paul's Court, NIAAS, Central Research Department, Antrim, Lurgan, and Magherafelt.

The organisation actively supports working in partnership with relevant stakeholders to ensure the organisation's aims and objectives are met and resources are used most effectively in meeting service users' needs.

"It is amazing how much I get back from this friendship." - Befriender

Lynda Bryans with Befrienders at The Befriending Awards

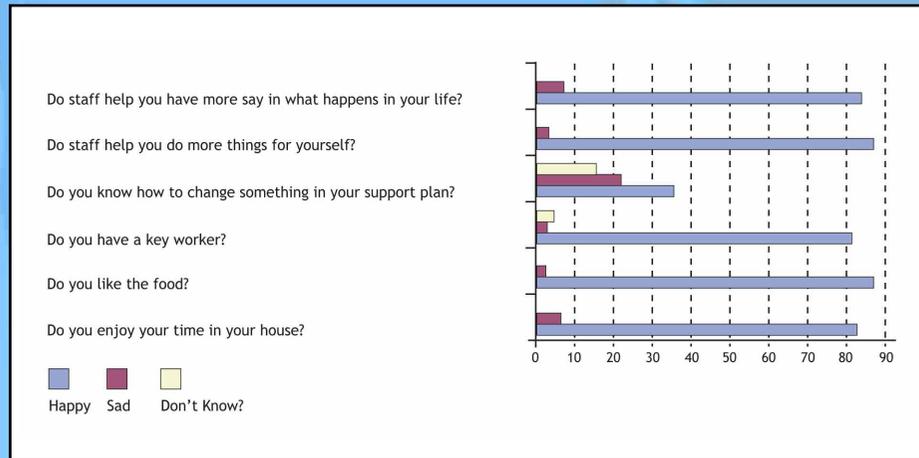
PCG are involved in Partnerships with;

- Service Users and Service User Groups
- Carers & families
- Health & Social Services Trusts
- Housing Associations
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Health Service Executive, Republic of Ireland
- English Councils and Primary Care Trusts
- Irish Wheelchair Association

The above partnerships are all fundamental to how we deliver our services.



Caring About Quality & Training



During 2004/2005 PCG conducted an organisation wide survey of service users' views. Almost 400-service user took part. The information obtained provided vital information on areas of service provision, which worked well and highlighted areas for further improvements and developments.

The graph shows how 80 people who live in Challenge accommodation schemes answered the survey.

The wide range of training opportunities offered in the past year clearly

reflects Praxis Care Group's commitment to ensuring that all staff members are appropriately trained and qualified for the tasks it undertakes, both in delivering direct care to service users and in delivering support services to front line staff to enable this to happen.

The training strategy is based on principles of continuing professional development, and the establishment of a learning culture within the organisation. Shown below is a list of new courses, which started in April 2004:

- Alcohol Abuse Awareness
- Brain Injury Awareness
- Counselling Skills
- Life Story Work
- Mental Health Recovery
- Schizophrenia and Depression
- Impact of Sexual Abuse
- Vulnerable Adults Refresher Course
- Behavioural Analysis and Management
- The Client Centred Worker: Interventions
- Work Life Balance Policies

The last year saw a number of staff successfully obtaining new qualifications, including twelve NVQ Level 2 Awards, four Level 4 Management, seven NVQ Assessor Awards and four Diplomas in Social Work.



The Northern Ireland Agoraphobia and Anxiety Society (NIAAS) continues to receive management and support services from Praxis Care Group in order to provide help for people with anxiety problems. The Big Lottery Fund, Trusts and Boards and The John Moore's Foundation support the society's work which now has four main strands: telephone counselling, helpline, counselling and self-help groups.

Caring About People with Phobias

NIAAS offers a twelve-week course of one hour telephone counselling sessions to address individual needs and the society has introduced an expanded helpline service open from 10 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday. One-to-one counselling continues to be offered in our Belfast office and there are currently 7 self-help groups at various locations in Northern Ireland.

Caring About Research

In January 2004, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform commissioned an 18-month evaluation of Harristown House. Harristown House is a residential treatment facility for men who have come into contact with the Criminal Justice System as a result of their misuse of alcohol and/or drugs. Praxis Care Group Research Department was successful in securing this evaluation tender. The primary aims of the evaluation were to examine whether the service was effective in reducing or eliminating alcohol/drug use and offending behaviour in its client group.

Craigavon and Banbridge HSS Trust has commissioned Praxis Care Group Research Department to conduct an audit into 'The Effectiveness of Alcohol Services in meeting the needs of Mothers.' The research involves conducting

face-to-face interviews with mothers who present with alcohol problems and eliciting their views on the kind of service that would best meet their needs. In addition, professional's views are obtained on what constitutes 'family friendly' alcohol services.

Each year, PCG Research Dept conducts a number of in-house evaluations, aimed at assessing quality within services and making recommendations for improved service provision. Within 2004-2005, the following internal evaluations have been initiated:

Connaught House:

The evaluation aims to explore the effectiveness of this specialised Korsakoff unit by evaluating it as an existing model of good practice.

Planet B:

The evaluation aims to assess the impact of clubhouse model on the mental health, personal development and employability of its members.

Carer Evaluation:

The views of carers using the Advocacy Service have been obtained to assess levels of satisfaction within the service and determine areas in which the service has helped them cope with being a carer.

NIAAS:

Assessing the impact of the support groups on member's experiences of anxiety and agoraphobia and obtaining their views on the impact of the service on their personal well-being.

Caring About Communication & Fundraising

The organisation improved our external and internal communications by launching our Praxis Care Group DVD, which allows staff and visitors the opportunity to discover more about the range of services provided by the organisation.

Praxis Care Group Calendar was created as part of the Celebrating Diversity Project aimed at reducing the social exclusion of people with disabilities from many activities, such as the arts, which the rest of society enjoys. Service users from twelve different Praxis Care Group schemes were given the opportunity to participate in art sessions with qualified tutors to enable self-expression, have fun and to capture some of the artwork.

The completed artwork was brought together at Head Office, where a panel judged it including famous artist Neil Shawcross. Selected pieces were chosen to represent a month in the calendar. The end product of the workshops was a full colour calendar for 2005, which was distributed to 8,000 businesses in Northern Ireland. Business Eye Magazine, Nicholson & Bass, D'Oyly Charitable Trust and

EMD Media kindly sponsored the project.

In February 2005 Praxis Care Group held a Charity Ball at the Hilton Hotel Belfast hosted by BBC Presenter Christine Bleakley. Over 200 people attended including the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Mr and Mrs Tom Ekin and guests from different parts of Europe (Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Finland, Belgium and the South of Ireland). This was a successful fundraising event, which raised funds for the provision of services.

Barclays Bank adopted Praxis on the Isle of Man as their nominated charity and Thales Air Defence adopted Beechfield Challenge Children's scheme for the year 2005.

The trek to South Africa 'On Foot in the Cape' led by Belfast Telegraph Business Editor Nigel Tilson generated thousands of pounds. The participants and their sponsors deserve a special word of thanks.



Caring About Staff & The Future

Praxis Care Group recognise that staff are the key factor in the provision of high quality services. The organisation enables staff to contribute to service development and delivery issues and creates a culture in which staff are valued and their achievements recognised.

At the end of the year under review Praxis Care Group's employee numbers

increased from 600 to 670. In that time we recruited for new schemes in Crumlin, West Belfast Dunmisk and Isle of Man Star Club. The organisation also increased our professionally qualified staff by conducting recruitment campaigns in Germany and bringing a number of new staff to Northern Ireland.

Caring About Carers

Praxis, in association with North & West Belfast Health & Social Services Trust provides an Advocacy Service for Carers and friends of those suffering from Mental Ill Health.

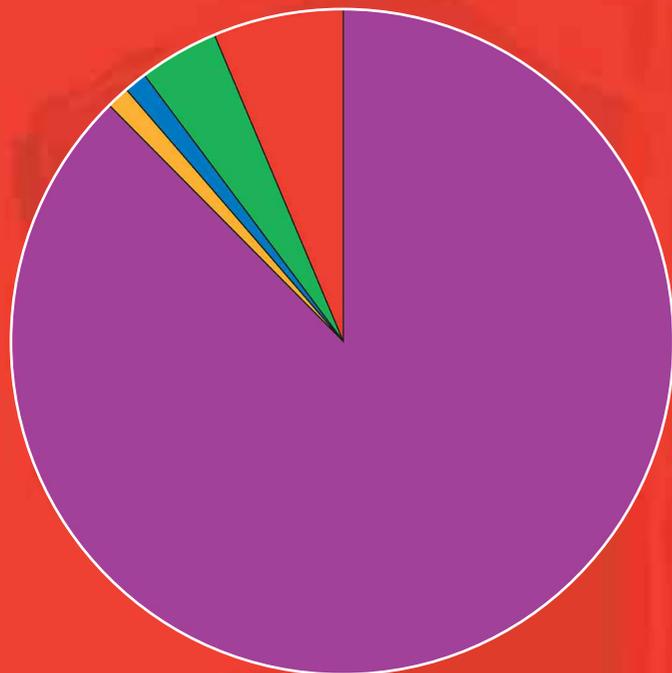
The Carers Advocacy project in North and West Belfast is now in its fifth year, with over 70 people receiving advice and guidance from our Carer Advocacy Project Worker.

The service aims to provide for the needs of the carers home visits, support groups, advice, guidance, information, enabling skills to advocate on behalf of the carer and to help carers influence mental health service planning area. In the last year the service has developed as follows:

- Weekly support group set up in Crumlin
- Two respite residentials (25 carers at each) were held
- Six-weekly alternative therapy programme.

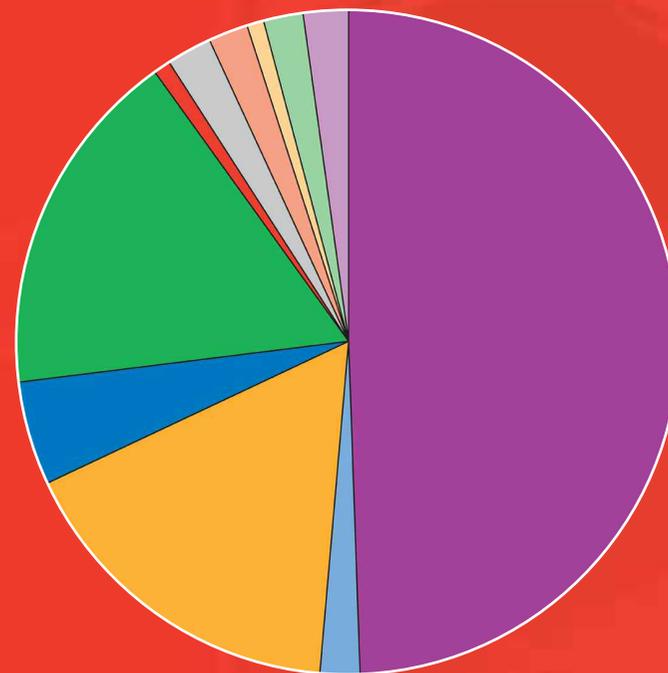


Expenditure Year Ended 31 March 2005



- 86% Service Delivery
- 1% Fundraising & Marketing
- 1% Research & Service Quality Assessment
- 4% Training of Staff, Volunteers & Vocational training of Service users
- 8% Management & Administration

Income Year Ended 31 March 2005



- 50% Health Trusts
- 2% Health Boards
- 17% Supporting People Funding
- 5% Housing Benefit
- 17% Regional Councils
- 1% Dept of Health & Social Services
- 2% Service Users Funding
- 1% Client Benefits
- 1% Fundraising & Charitable Activities
- 2% EU Grants
- 2% Other Grants

Summary accounts

The Directors approved the full statutory accounts on 17th November 2005. They, together with this annual report, will be sent to the Registrar of Companies. The accounts have been audited by BDO Stoy Hayward, Registered Auditors, and received an unqualified opinion. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. They are extracted from the annual accounts and these, including the auditor's report and the Directors annual report, are available from Praxis Care Group central offices.

MARCH 2005

PRAXIS SCHEMES

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	NO OF PLACES
North Down & Ards	Home Response	180 hrs
	Supported Accommodation	13
West Belfast	Supported Accommodation	16
Lisnaskea	Supported Accommodation	11
Banbridge	Supported Accommodation	16
Portadown	Home Response	100 hrs
	Supported Accommodation	16
Lurgan	Supported Accommodation	21
Newry	Home Response	100 hrs
	Supported Accommodation	18
Antrim	Supported Accommodation	16
Ballyclare	Supported Accommodation	16
Magherafelt	Supported Accommodation	16
Larne	Supported Accommodation	6
	Home Response	30 hrs
Coleraine	Flat Cluster	15
	Home Response	120 hrs
Derry City	Supported Accommodation	12
No 12	Education/Social Drop-In Centre	Varies
Befriending Service	Provincewide	110 matches
Carers' Advocacy Project	Support service for carers	70
Isle of Man	Home Response	150 hrs
	Supported Accommodation	9
NHSSB Young People		
Befriending Service	Focusing on Young People Leaving Care	24 Matches
Manchester	Supported accommodation	20

RESPOND SCHEMES

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	NO OF PLACES
Clements Court, Derry	Supported Living	13

CHALLENGE SCHEMES

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	NO OF PLACES
Kimberley House, Newtownards	Residential Care	13
80 Upper Movilla Road, Newtownards	Residential Care	3
15 Main Street, Conlig	Residential Care	3
42 Forest Hill, Conlig	Supported Living	3
Kimberley Mews, Newtownards	Supported Living	4
Kimberley House		
Workskills, Newtownards	Workskills Training Project	26
Newtownards Domiciliary	Home Response	60 hrs
Forest Lodge, Portadown	Residential Care	6
Little Forest, Portadown	Residential Care	3
Forest Lodge Workskills, Portadown	Workskills Training Project	18
Beechfield Respite Unit	Respite Care	34
Beechfield Domiciliary	Home Response	145 hrs
Derry Cookie Company	Workskills Training Project	10
Le Bistro Project, Derry	Workskills Training Project	10
Derry Age Appropriate Day Centre	Day Care	18
Foyle Befriending, Derry	Befriending Service	20 matches
Glenfield Project	Respite Care	25
Melton Project	Respite Care	25
Mantlin Court, Kesh	Residential Care	17
Mantlin Cottage, Kesh	Residential Care	9
Creamery House, Kesh	Residential Care	11
Galliagh/Stepside	Residential/ Respite Care	24
Hugomont House, Ballymena	Respite Care	30
Glenroyd House, Isle of Man	Residential Care	5

PRAXIS CARE GROUP

25 - 31 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 7AA, Northern Ireland Tel: 028 9023 4555 Fax: 028 9024 5535 www.praxiscaregroup.org.uk