

Crime Victims Helpline.ie



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Annual Report 2014

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Message from the Patron

The year 2014 saw our founder, Maeve Ryan retire. We owe her a great debt of gratitude for her foresight and the caring way she brought Crime Victims Helpline to so many victims who feel isolated, frustrated and many other negative emotions when they have been the victim of a crime or indeed, a member of an extended family who has experienced a crime.

While it is most appropriate that Maeve is acknowledged for all the excellent work she did, it is with a certain degree of positivity that I am welcoming the new EU Directive relating to victims of crime that is to come into force on November 16th next in all European countries. This Directive is set to put the victim more centre stage in the criminal justice system. At present if the victim, or in the case of homicide, a relative or someone on their behalf, does not make a complaint to the Gardaí there is no prosecution. Equally if the victim is unprepared to attend Court to give evidence, the trial does not go ahead and the alleged offender is acquitted.

The Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime was adopted on October 25th 2012, entered into force on November 15th, 2012. The EU Member States have to implement the provisions into their national laws by November 16th, 2015. A copy of the Directive can be found on the website of Crime Victims Helpline and I hope that victims will take the opportunity to look at it and that it will give them a more positive feeling towards their place in the criminal justice system.

Work is being done over the last few years in putting in place necessary procedures to bring the very many parts of the criminal justice system up to speed on implementing the EU directive, each part of the system having its own individual updating of skills to negotiate.

In 2014 on Maeve's retirement we welcomed our new Coordinator, Michele, who took over the reins. We have been so lucky to have a band of volunteers, older and young, who are the backbone of the organisation and without whom we would be unable to provide the service we do. It is wonderful to see their generosity of spirit and commitment to helping those needing support and a kindly word or two.

Of course, we are indebted to the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime for their continued funding. I would also like to express my admiration and thanks to those younger volunteers and friends who ran the marathon as fundraising for us.

Do take a look at our website, www.crimevictimshelpline.ie, where I hope you will find some useful information.

Gillian Hussey, Retired Judge of the District Court
Director & Co-Chairperson

Message from the Coordinator

2014 was a time of change for the Crime Victims Helpline. In March we said goodbye to founder and long-time leader, Maeve Ryan, at which time I took the helm. Stepping into the Coordinator's role was a daunting task following someone who brought such a wealth of expertise, experience and kindness to the role. I'm very grateful for the warm welcome I received from volunteers and the Board of Directors.

Times of change also present opportunities and in 2014 we undertook a project to increase awareness of CVH and make our public face match the professionalism of the service we provide. We were very pleased to unveil a new logo and website in December. The new logo, two people coming together to form a bridge, aptly illustrates the work done by CVH. Our volunteers and staff provide time and space for victims to talk; support them through their journey and connect them with others who can help them move from hurt to healing; confusion to knowledge; and from fear to peace.

The Crime Victims Helpline website, www.crimevictimshelpline.ie, is one of the most comprehensive information sites for victims of crime in Ireland. Our redesigned website is easier to navigate, has an alternate view for people accessing it from a mobile device, and has expanded information for victims. We have also increased our presence on social media and have connected with a broader audience on Twitter at @CrimeVictimLine and on Facebook. I would invite everyone to follow us on both to keep up with important events and news pertaining to victims, as well as to remain informed of the work of the Crime Victims Helpline.

2014 saw the appointment of a new Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, and a new Garda Commissioner, Noirín O'Sullivan. Both have come out in support of greater attention to victims' needs and rights. This significant support, coupled with the EU Victims' Rights Directive that is to be transposed into law in November 2015, makes me optimistic that things are going to improve for victims of crime in Ireland.

One thing that did not change in 2014 was the Crime Victims Helpline commitment to informing, supporting, and empowering people whose lives have been affected by crime. We will continue to be a one-stop-shop for victims seeking emotional support; information about the criminal justice system; and assistance in coping with the effects of crime. Our amazing volunteers respond to every person contacting our service with compassion and respect. I want to extend my deepest thanks to each and every one of our volunteers for giving so much of their time and of themselves to help victims of crime.

I also want to extend a special note of gratitude to our Patron, Director and helpline volunteer, Gillian Hussey. CVH has benefited enormously from Gillian's generous contribution of her wisdom and time. And finally I want to thank the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime whose support makes our work possible.

Michele Puckhaber, MSW
Coordinator

About Crime Victims Helpline

Crime Victims Helpline is a national helpline established to listen, support and inform victims of crime.

We provide an independent and confidential service, which is delivered by trained volunteers who work hard to assist people who are victims of crime and others who have been affected by crime. These people share with us their feelings of fear, anxiety, vulnerability, isolation, anger, guilt and powerlessness.

We provide emotional support and tell them about organisations available locally and nationally to support victims of crime.

We also provide information on the criminal justice system, and liaise with Gardaí and other services on the caller's behalf, if the caller feels this would be helpful.

CONTACTING CVH TODAY...

**OPTION
1**



FREE PHONE 116006

**OPTION
2**



TEXT SERVICE 085 1337711

**OPTION
3**



EMAIL info@crimevictimshelpline.ie
WEBSITE www.crimevictimshelpine.ie

**CONTACT
US**



2014 Activities

The year was busy for Crime Victims Helpline and its' volunteers both in terms of work and a variety of activities undertaken. The board and volunteers in the Helpline were sorry to see Coordinator and founder, Maeve Ryan, retire after nine years in the position. Maeve had been such an integral part of the Helpline since its inception and a source of inspiration to many.

After a thorough recruitment process, the Helpline were pleased to welcome Michele Puckhaber as the new coordinator in March 2014. Michele has brought a wonderful new energy to the organisation and has proven to be a vital part of the team.

The Helpline is always busy networking and keeping in contact with members from various organisations. 2014 was no different, with the Helpline hosting speakers from the restorative justice group, Facing Forward in May and the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network in October. The Helpline also met with Restorative Justice Services, An Garda Síochána Victim Liaison Office, Probation Services, the LGBT Helpline, the Immigrant Council of Ireland and GSOC.

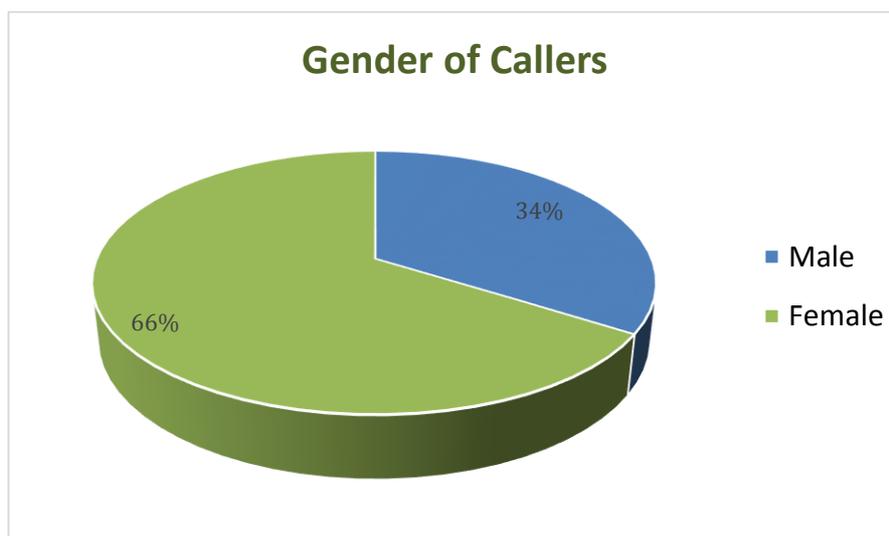
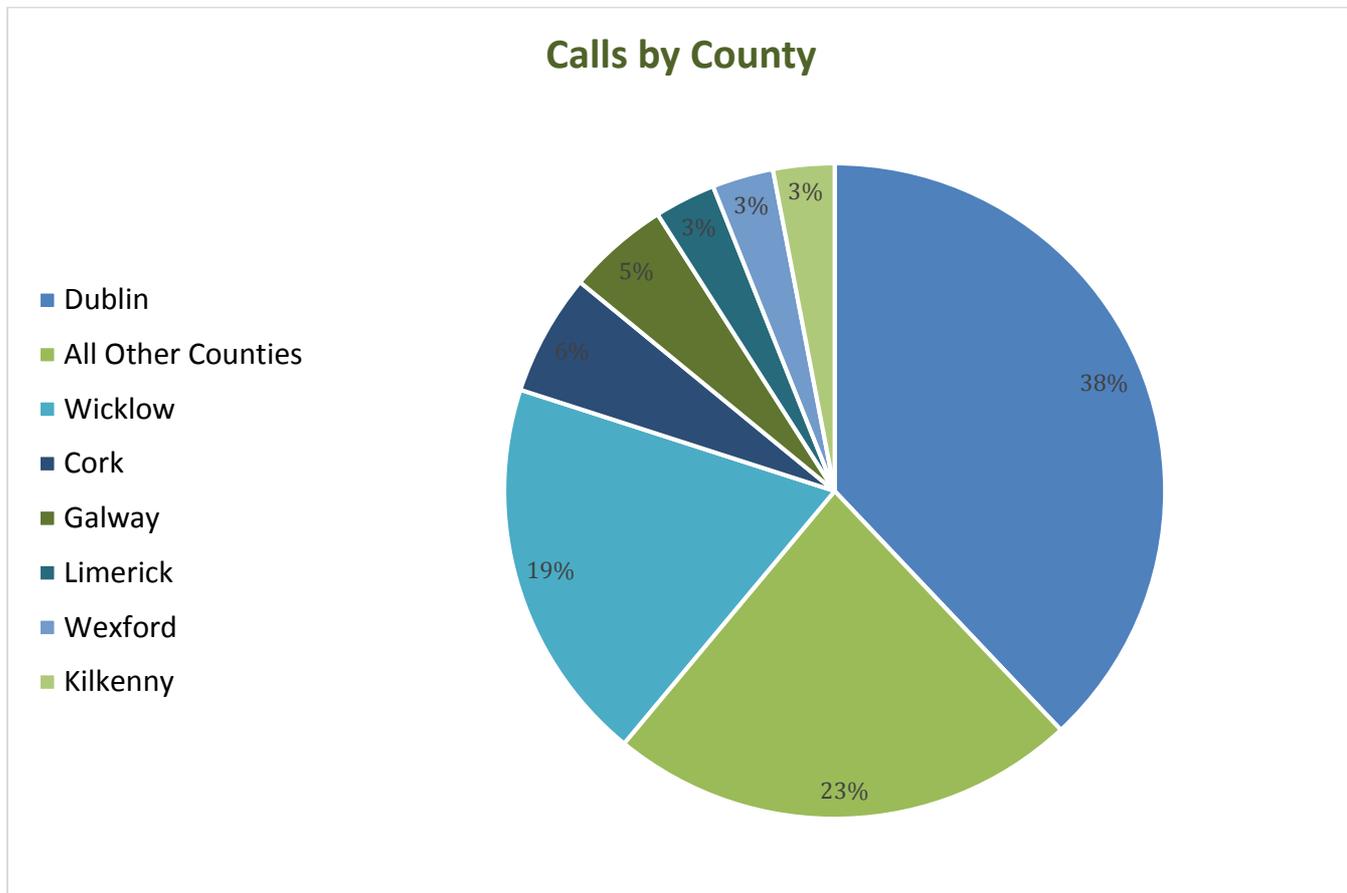
A number of volunteers of the Helpline were kind enough to give their time in running the Flora Women's Mini Marathon in June 2014 to help raise awareness of the services of the Helpline.

The end of last year saw the Helpline rebrand with a launch held in the National Concert Hall on 3 December 2014. To help present this event Ian O'Donnell, Professor of Criminology in UCD, was kind enough to give the audience a speech on the current status and some thoughts on the future for victims of crime.

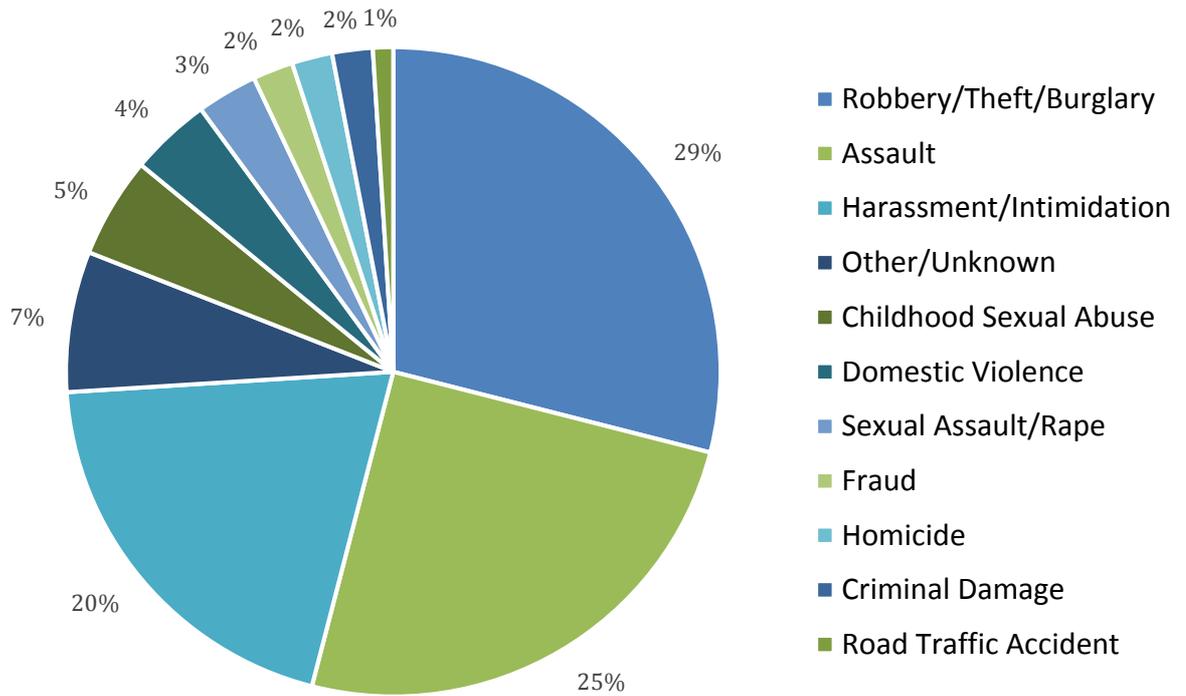
The board of the Helpline were delighted to welcome two new Directors in 2014, Naoise Kelly in June and Michael Tyndall in December. Naoise is a long-time volunteer on the Helpline and his presence has been a welcome addition to the board. Michael brings a wealth of understanding and practice in corporate governance and financial control and has proved to be a valuable addition to the organisation.

Our Services

The Helpline provides support to people from all areas of Ireland who have been victims of a wide variety of crimes. More women than men contacted us in 2014 and the majority of calls came from County Dublin.



Types of Crimes



2014 Board of Directors

Eileen Brady

Áine Ferguson Brown

Claire Carroll

Gillian Hussey

Naoise Kelly

Joe McKeown

Ruby Morrow

Simon Treanor

Michael Tyndall

Staff

Michele Puckhaber – Coordinator

Marie Murray – Helpline Support Worker

The Crime Victims Helpline is funded by the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime as well as by individual donations.

Company Number 409235 ♦ Registered Charity Number 16894