



Strategic Plan
2008-2011



OUR VISION

GRCC's vision is of a just and equal society where everyone has the right to live free from sexual violence and abuse.

OUR MISSION

GRCC is dedicated to providing a professional, caring and confidential counselling and support service for those in our community affected by sexual abuse and sexual violence. We also work towards ending cultural and societal tolerance of sexual violence through advocacy, awareness raising and education programmes.

The half-circles in our logo symbolise a listening ear, we are always here to listen and support in a safe environment. They also symbolise the ripples of healing that we hope reach throughout society each time a woman is given the opportunity to break the barrier of silence. We also incorporated the cornflower into our logo which has its basis in Greek mythology. The story goes that one of the centaurs, Chiron, is said to have used the flower to heal wounds, including his own, after battle. It signifies the Centres approach to healing, encouraging survivors to reclaim their lives. Finally, we have chosen blue to reflect our work with survivors, a universal colour which symbolises trust, wisdom and understanding.

Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine.



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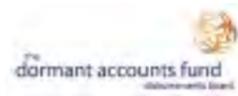


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Section 1 Introduction to GRCC

The Galway Rape Crisis Centre was founded in 1984 by a group of women concerned by the lack of services for survivors of sexual abuse. Since then it has grown to become the second largest centre in Ireland and currently employs 13 part time staff, has 12 volunteer counsellors as well as numerous fund-raising and support volunteers. The centre now provides a service for both male and female survivors of sexual abuse and sexual violence. Its extensive range of services includes crisis counselling, long-term counselling, a telephone helpline, advocacy and service accompaniment, an emergency call-out service and support groups as well as a legal information clinic. In addition it provides extensive education programmes and works in the area of awareness raising and advocacy in relation to these issues. In the last number of years, the organisation has also moved from a collective organisation to a Board of Directors system in order to meet professional criteria of transparency and accountability as well as to provide the best possible service to clients.

The organisation is an active member of the Rape Crisis Network Ireland (RCNI) and abides by the Networks code of ethics and practice. The RCNI supports and promotes the work of other Rape Crisis Centres and provides a voice for survivors of sexual violence. Along with other non-governmental organisations, the GRCC is an active member of the Regional Planning Committee working on the Taskforce on Violence against Women to improve services in this area.

Section 2 Situational Analysis & Strategic Objectives

2.1 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

GRCC has successfully established itself as providing a vital and much-needed service within the community. In order to continue providing client-focused services, the centre has recognised the importance of focused strategic planning in order to be in a position to face the challenges provided by an ever increasing demand for its services as well as changes in the diversity of its service users. There are a number of issues that have led to the necessity of developing a comprehensive Strategic Plan:

- Increasing societal change in Galway city and its environs means the organisation needs to adapt its' services to meet the extra requirements of current and potential clients.
- The addition of extra services needs to be implemented in a planned manner to ensure there are no unrealistic expectations placed on staff, physical resources and financial requirements.
- Structural changes within the organisation in the last number of years need to be further clarified with roles and responsibilities clearly defined.
- Funding is an on-going issue for the centre – financial constraints and uncertainty regarding funding from year to year needs to be addressed from a strategic view-point.

2.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

With these issues in mind, the following broad strategic objectives are outlined here to address organisational concerns and assist in developing a long-term strategy that will provide GRCC with a clear plan for 2008 – 2011:

1. Organisational Development, Structures & Governance

- Continue to operate clear and transparent corporate governance procedures
- Clearly define the organisational structure and clarify lines of communication
- Identify and fill new role requirements within the organisation.

2. Service Development

- Continue to provide a professional, caring, confidential counselling service for clients
- Assess how current services are provided and make necessary changes as appropriate
- Expand on current services offered to cater for increasing demand and diversity of service users
- Assist in the successful establishment of additional external local and regional services.



3. Data Management, Processes & Procedures

- Ensure compliance with all legal requirements & maintain accurate and compliant data management systems and procedures for key tasks at all times
- Identify relevant client trends and their implications for the effective management of the centre
- Maintain a work environment which is safe, healthy and supportive of staff and their well-being
- Review the availability of service provision and identify key internal skills currently available to the organisation.

4. Advocacy, Communications, Networking & Partnerships

- Continue to work with key partners in influencing change, both locally and nationally, amongst various target groups in relation to the issues of sexual violence and abuse
- Strengthen the sector within the region and identify potential key partners and stakeholders that will assist in this aim
- Identify gaps in current service provision to which GRCC can provide a solution
- Develop an integrated internal and external communications policy.

5. Education, Training & Awareness-raising

- Identify key target groups with whom the centre will work in relation to education, training and awareness-raising
- Investigate new ways of communicating prevention and awareness messages to target groups
- Identify the most appropriate means of managing the education, training and awareness-raising programmes
- Introduce a system to effectively assess the impact of these programmes.

6. Funding & Finance

- Continue to produce and maintain annual budgets and audited accounts in a timely manner in compliance with legal requirements
- Effectively manage the funding mix
- Maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with current funders
- Identify new and additional sources of statutory funding for the organisation
- Identify additional revenue streams from potential corporate, individual, donor and philanthropic sponsorship programmes.

Section 3 Organisational Development, Structures & Governance

3.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES ARISING

The Board

The roles and responsibilities of the GRCC Board of Directors have been previously identified. The role of the Board is to determine the organisation's mission and purpose, select and support the Executive Director, review the Executive Director's performance, plan for the future, approve and monitor the organisations programmes and services, provide sound financial management, enlist financial resources, advance the organisation's public image and strengthen its own effectiveness through regular review and evaluation procedures. The Board holds the ultimate responsibility for the strategic planning and policies of the organisation and works closely with the Executive Director and staff to ensure compliance with legal requirements and set policies and procedures.

There are usually eight Board members, four external and four staff and volunteers. It meets regularly and holds the organisations AGM as legally required. The Board will continue to undertake these tasks and responsibilities. It is the view of GRCC that the Board will benefit from the 3-year strategic planning process that will help provide it with a clear vision for the future. Future objectives include having an active board with skills such as finance and human resources. The Board should also seek to have an active role with key bodies such as the HSE and generate a higher profile within the community. The organisation also strives to have a gender-balanced Board at all times, be reflective of the community and work closely with the Executive Director and staff of the centre. The full potential of the Board has yet to be utilised to its optimum but it is developing in the required direction.

Organisational Structure

The centre is currently structured having a Executive Director, staff with varying roles and five sub-committees as follows:

- Executive Director – provides a vital link between those that approve policy and those that carry out policy, has a responsibility to the Board to ensure it is fully informed of the issues facing the organisation while also representing the view of staff and volunteers. It also involves an external advocacy role.
- Counselling – addresses clinical, practical and planning issues in relation to the counselling service and oversees supervision in the direct delivery of the service as well as working on developing the services offered, writing policies and delivering training.
- Campaigning, Lobbying & Education – directs education and prevention programmes in schools and third level institutions as well as public awareness campaigns, also co-ordinates the advocacy and lobbying activities of the centre.
- Employment – deals with issues of staff selection and evaluation and

develops and upholds formal Human Resources policies on a variety of issues such as equality, diversity and Health and Safety.

- Finance – works with the Treasurer, Executive Director and administrative staff to ensure sound financial management of the organisation and deals with areas such as fund-raising and financial monitoring.
- Volunteers Support - vehicle by which to support and develop the pool of valuable volunteers available to the organisation, trains volunteers and assesses training needs of the centre as a whole.

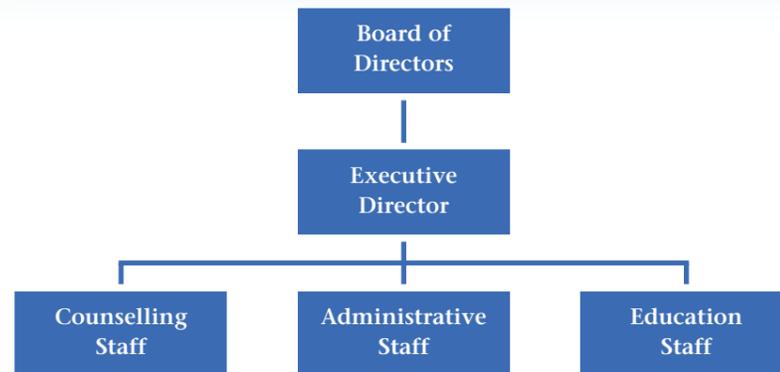


Figure 1 – Current Organisational Structure

Major changes have been made to the organisation structure over the last number of years. It has changed from an all staff management, committee-led organisation to a Board of Directors with a centre Executive Director.

Clear guidelines are required to delineate responsibilities of staff and committees and to ensure that there is an effective communications procedure between all groups and individuals involved. The roles and responsibilities of each sub-committee need to be reviewed in order to assess their number and nature required to provide an efficient service to clients as well as providing a supportive working environment for staff.

Role of Executive Director

Previously, this job role was called ‘co-ordinator’, but recently the title has changed to ‘Executive Director’. This post is currently a part-time position with a job description that has developed in recent times into a much wider role than originally designated. The scope of the position has expanded significantly.

1. Board Administration and Support

Supports operations and administration of Board by

- advising and informing Board members,
- interfacing between Board and staff,
- supporting Board's evaluation of chief executive.
- assists in the selection, evaluation of board members

2. Vision, Program/ Strategic Plan and Service Delivery

Oversees direction, design, marketing, promotion, delivery and quality of programs and services

3. Financial, Tax, Risk and Facilities Management

Recommends yearly budget for Board approval and prudently manages organization's resources within those budget guidelines according to current laws and regulations

4. Human Resource Management, Recruitment / Building teams and work culture

Effectively manages the human resources of the organization according to authorized personnel policies and procedures that fully conform to current laws and regulations

5. Community and Public Relations

Assures GRCC and its mission, programs, reporting and services are consistently presented in strong, positive image to key relevant stakeholders. To ensure that good working relationships are maintained with all external agencies, including relevant statutory bodies, funders, national and local community and voluntary organisation.

6. Managing financial and physical resources /Capital allocation

Oversees fundraising/financial planning and implementation, including

- identifying resource requirements,
- researching funding sources,
- establishing strategies to approach funders,
- submitting proposals
- and administrating fundraising records and documentation

Additional Roles/Work-time

It is recognised that the organisation is currently under-staffed and that there are a number of key areas that need to be resourced more fully if the organisation is to meet the future developments it is setting out for itself by means of the strategic planning process. Priority needs to be given to a number of key areas such as Office Management, Counselling, Fund-raising, Education, Lobbying & Advocacy and Communications.

As the second largest centre in Ireland after Dublin, GRCC has a crucial role in promoting prevention and education in schools, with professionals, agencies and services as well the community at large. A clearly defined education worker role is required to undertake this work. In addition, a lobbying post, to improve and strengthen the prevention and advocacy work of the centre is also required. This would help in achieving the second part of the organisation's Mission Statement to work towards ending cultural and societal tolerance of sexual violence through advocacy, awareness raising and education programmes.

Counsellors are directly responsible for working with clients at the centre. They also undertake additional project work such as regular training and supervision of new and volunteer counsellors. With further expansion of services planned,

GRCC is expecting to have to increase available counselling hours by 15% over the next two years. As of yet, there is no work time available for formally co-ordinating the work of volunteers.

The administrative roles in the centre continue to hold two major functions – that of support worker and administrator to the organisation. These two roles are very different and require dissimilar skills and ways of working. It is vital for the development of the organisation that the role of administrator be separated into two independent roles. This will allow for improved management of the main administration/financial role as well as enhancing crisis client support.

GRCC is highly dependent on fund-raising for survival and fund-raising requirements increase on an annual basis. Two part time fundraisers are currently employed but there is an urgent need to evaluate the fundraising efforts and increase fund-raising hours.

Suggested initial proposals for some of the additional roles/work-time within the centre are as follows:

ROLE	ADDITIONAL WORK-TIME REQUIRED
Clinical (Counselling/Supervision/Training/ Continuous Professional Development/ Volunteer co-ordination)	5 days per week
Education	3 days per week
Lobbying & Advocacy	2 days per week
Administration	7 days per week
Communications	1.5 days per week
Fundraising	2 days per week
Executive Director	1 day per week

Identification of new roles should be based on the gaps arising from currently and be carried out in conjunction with the relevant sub-committees. All additional positions outlined above are subject to additional funding.

Furthermore, a big factor restricting development of the organisation at present is lack of space. GRCC have outgrown their premises at Claddagh Quay. There is not enough office space, not enough counselling space, and no training space. Any substantial further growth of the organisation would be subject to new premises becoming available for GRCC.

3.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY TASKS

3.2.1 Continue to operate clear and transparent corporate governance procedures

- The Board needs to keep up-to-date with changes in legislation to ensure good corporate governance
- The Board is to meet regularly, take account of, listen to and implement sub-committee expert recommendations and keep comprehensive minutes of meetings
- The Board is to establish a clear two-way communication line with staff via the centre Executive Director
- Review and implement recommendations regarding the roles and responsibilities of the centre Executive Director and make-up of sub-committees
- Re-visit and make strategic recommendations for change, when appropriate, at a minimum of one more time during the time-line of the current strategic plan
- Communicate all decisions and relevant information to the relevant parties in a timely and effective manner.

3.2.2 Define the structure of the organisation and clarify lines of communication

- Further clarify the role and responsibilities of the Centre Executive Director moving toward a Centre Manager position
- Outline the specific reporting structure to the Board as well as with staff
- Outline the specific issues to be covered in the new job descriptions and time-frame by which to fulfil these responsibilities
- Review of number and composition of the required sub-committees
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various sub-committees
- Clearly identify the head of each sub-committee who will be responsible for the work involved
- Determine how often each sub-committee needs to meet
- Identify the method by which the relevant information will be transmitted to the appropriate parties by the various sub-committees.

3.2.3 Identify new role requirements within the organisation.

- Identify human resources gaps in service, finance, administration and communications provision within the organisation
- Prioritise new requirements and identify the roles and responsibilities of each of the new roles
- Draw up detailed job descriptions for each role including whether full-time or part-time, whether the position can to be filled internally or externally
- Secure appropriate funding for the new roles
- Implement recruitment procedures and induction training and procedure documents for new role
- Decide on a time-frame by which to have recruited personnel for each role.



Section 4 Centre & Service Development

4.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES ARISING

Counselling Services

Through counselling, the centre offers support to survivors and helps them examine their feelings around the abuse they have experienced as well as how they are coping with their day-to-day lives. Counselling is about sharing, about being heard and accepted and about being listened to in a non-judgemental, confidential environment.

Survivors often make the first contact with GRCC by means of the telephone help-line which is there to support regular clients, supporters of survivors, people who require information on the services or those who wish to talk about issues relating to sexual violence or sexual abuse. Alternatively, there is a drop-in service which is available to survivors calling to the centre for the first time as well as those who are waiting to be assigned a counsellor.

Counselling takes the form of either 'Crisis Counselling' or the provision of 'Long-term Counselling'. A 'crisis' is a time when coping mechanisms don't work and the client experiences being overwhelmed. Survivors of sexual abuse and sexual violence often experience crisis at some point in their lives and the Centre provides on-going support for these issues. With long-term counselling, survivors look in detail at how sexual abuse or sexual violence has affected their lives. In either case client and counsellor establish the counselling needs together and they work on this basis to deal with the issues they are facing as they live their lives. These services are now provided to both women and men. There is now an increasing demand for the Centre's services as well as an increase in the diversity of clients that seek the service. One issue currently not addressed is an increased need for evening and weekend counselling times. The need to provide an increased number of support groups is also recognised by the Centre in order to break down feelings of isolation felt by survivors. The coverage provided by the help-line also needs to be increased as this is often the first contact point with clients. It is proposed to resource the help-line initially with volunteers and investigate the possibility of providing the service on a 24-hour basis making the service more accessible at times that may be more convenient for clients and potential clients. In addition, as discussed in the previous section, there needs to be further separation of the roles of administration and crisis counselling working towards the concept of full-time crisis counselling roles.

Counselling Approach

The centre's services have expanded and counsellors are now dealing with a large diversity of groups as well as working with male survivors. In the long-term, it is envisaged that the centre's core approach to counselling be reviewed and refined in order to ensure the successful future development of the centre and its ability to adapt to social change.

We envisage thorough evaluation leading to CPD training for counselling staff covering the needs identified as part of this process.

Advocacy & Service Accompaniment

In addition to face-to-face counselling, many of the Centre's clients request support in the form of advocacy and accompaniment to services such as doctors, solicitors, the Courts or the Gardaí. Accompaniment or contacting an agency on the clients behalf is provided as a regular part of the centre's services. The centre also facilitates reporting to Gardaí in its premises and counsellors write Victim Impact Reports on behalf of clients. It is now recommended that the accompaniment service be linked to the role of full-time crisis counsellor during the day. It is also recommended to expand the role of volunteers to provide these services, examples of which include accompaniment to the SATU or to court with Asylum Seekers and other clients. The advocacy role also needs to be examined in greater detail primarily in relation to the issue of confidentiality.

Legal Clinic

GRCC offer a regular clinic for survivors of sexual violence and/ or abuse who are seeking information relating to the legal process. This clinic is provided by a legal professional on a voluntary basis.

Marginalised Client Groups

GRCC has spent some time in the past year working on how best to target marginalised client groups in the community. Examples of these groups include travellers, the elderly, asylum seekers, refugees, wheelchair users, people with disabilities, women involved in prostitution and the homeless to name a few. These groups represent a significant portion of the population, yet over the years the centre has had very little contact from people who fall into these categories. The main conclusion of the report presented by our team is the need to introduce a community out-reach programme to promote the work of GRCC, train groups of professionals and other organisations in sexual violence issues and provide outreach counselling services. The purpose would be two-fold – firstly to secure appropriate referrals and be as accessible as possible to these groups and to secondly educate the public as well as relevant professionals in regular contact with these groups about issues surrounding sexual violence and abuse. Staff training and sourcing funding would be the key factors in the success of this programme.

Asylum Seeker & Refugee Clinic

The centre has run a very successful Asylum Seeker and Refugee Clinic for the last two years which was funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund. Funding the clinic has now reverted back to the remit of GRCC and additional financial resources are required in order to provide this vital service in the future. The future focus of the clinic is to expand the service by reaching out to new and marginalised immigrants, to provide the service for male asylum seekers and refugees, work in an integrated manner with relevant agencies and professionals and undertake research into the concept of working in such as



specialised area e.g. dealing with victims of systematic sexual abuse and torture from different cultures. Implementation of these plans is pending funding.

Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU)

GRCC has been involved in extensive lobbying for the establishment of a Sexual Assault Treatment Unit in Galway. Research has shown that reporting levels and levels of survivors of sexual violence accessing services will increase when dedicated services are available. Galway has been recognised as a priority area for this service and the establishment of this unit will provide more accessible specialised medical care and forensic expertise for victims of rape and sexual assault. It will also provide a cohesive service whereby victims can be interviewed and examined with dignity by a team of available experts. A SATU was approved for Galway in 2006 but the necessary funding has not yet been released for its establishment. GRCC, working with an inter-agency committee, will continue to play a key role in its speedy establishment as well as providing key support roles when it is operational.

Client Feedback System

A client feedback system currently exists within GRCC but it is recommended that this procedure be reviewed. It is proposed to implement a revised client feedback system to ensure timely and relevant information is collected at regular intervals. This would again help in providing a quality, client-focused service at all times.

Roscommon Rape Crisis Centre

GRCC has been involved in helping to establish a dedicated Rape Crisis Centre in Roscommon. This work will continue in conjunction with the Regional Planning Committee working on the Taskforce on Violence against Women as well as the HSE.

4.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY TASKS

4.2.1 Continue to provide a professional, caring, confidential counselling service for clients

- Ensure the agreed Vision and Mission Statement is communicated to everyone within the organisation
- Ensure that there is a sense of belonging among everyone working in the organisation, adequate pay and conditions, that there is adequate space in which to provide the services as well as adequate support in doing so
- Clarify staff roles, provide clear direction and regular feedback
- Implement a revised client feedback system to ensure timely and relevant information is collected at regular intervals.

4.2.2 Assess how current services are provided and make necessary changes as appropriate

- Review available counselling times with a view to making the service available at evenings and weekends

- Expand the service to include more group work, skill building for clients and groups working on specific themes or issues
- Explore the possibility of expanding the help-line coverage with the ultimate aim of providing the service on a 24-hour basis
- In light of internal service additions and external societal changes, examine and review the centre's core approach to counselling in order to provide a very clear analysis around the issues and ensure the successful future development of the centre.

4.2.3 Expand on current services offered to cater for increasing demand and diversity of service users

- Explore how best to link the role of service accompaniment with that of full-time crisis counsellor during the day
- Expand the role of volunteers to provide support services such as accompaniment to SATU or to court with Asylum Seekers and other clients, ensure that work time is made available to co-ordinate volunteers
- With regard to the Legal Clinic, identify what exactly is required by clients, what service is appropriate for the centre to provide in the future and ensure a smooth transition to service provision by the new person coming on board
- Re-evaluate advocacy services and identify how to best provide those in the future
- Secure the necessary funding for the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Clinic
- Implement the recommendations of the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Clinic 2006 Report as far as is feasible
- Identify additional alternative health therapies that can be recommended to clients as appropriate.

4.2.4 Assist in the successful establishment of additional external local and regional services

- GRCC, working with an inter-agency committee, is to continue to play a key role in the speedy establishment of a SATU in Galway as well as providing key support roles when it is operational
- Establish a team to implement the findings of the report on the Marginalised/Vulnerable Groups outreach programme
- Continue to work on the establishment of a Roscommon Rape Crisis Centre in conjunction with RPC and the HSE.



Section 5 Data Management, Processes & Procedures

5.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES ARISING

Data Management Systems & Required Statistics

Internal statistics are currently compiled on a regular basis using the RCNI database. Statistics are also generated for reporting to HSE and RPC as well as statistics required for media information and the production of the Annual Report. This data has been collected in an historical manner and now requires further analysis. The centre needs to identify the most useful data being collected for each purpose such as Annual Report, reporting to HSE, for strategic planning and so on.

Legal Requirements

The organisation currently complies with all legal requirements regarding a wide range of legislation. Examples of such requirements include Memorandum & Articles of Association, Terms & Conditions of Employment, Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice, Confidentiality Policy, Complaints Policy, Recording of Client Notes & Record Keeping, Health & Safety Statement, Child First Policy and Policy on Dignity & Respect in the Workplace, Corporate Law. Policies and procedures need to be evaluated and up-dated on a regular basis for accuracy, relevance and consistency with relevant legislation. Responsibility for these issues needs to be designated to ensure this is completed on a regular basis and/or as required.

Procedures

All counsellors adhere to a high-level of professional standard practice with regard to client care. However, these procedures are not clearly documented and available for inspection should the need arise e.g. a new counsellor starting with the organisation. These need to be recorded, filed and made available as appropriate. A service feedback system also needs to be reviewed and implemented as discussed in the previous section of this report. Efficient communication is the key when developing client procedures to ensure all relevant personnel are made aware of what is available. It is also necessary to identify additional procedures that need to be documented such as Human Resources, Office Management and so on.

New Technologies

A new telephone system has been installed and it is imperative that full use of this system is incorporated in to the day-to-day operations to ensure staff benefit from the technology.

Our computer system is substandard and needs to be replaced with up-to-date technology urgently. Furthermore the proposed move to new premises raises a number of issues with regard to technology – including computers, office

systems and any other requirements that will require additional funding.

Our website has not been updated for some years and will require a full overhaul which will require additional funding.

5.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY TASKS

5.2.1 Ensure compliance with all legal requirements & maintain accurate and compliant data management systems and procedures for key tasks at all times

- Identify the policies and procedures that need to be evaluated and up-dated on a regular basis for accuracy, relevance and consistency with relevant legislation
- Responsibility for these issues needs to be designated to ensure this is completed on a regular basis and/or as required
- Identify the client procedures that need to be documented, compile procedures and communicate these procedures to the relevant staff members
- It is also necessary to identify additional procedures that need to be documented such as Human Resources, Office Management and so on.

5.2.2 Identify relevant client trends and their implications for the effective management of GRCC

- Identify the most relevant and required statistics, the person responsible for compiling the information, how it will be co-ordinated and what specific statistics will be needed
- Database technology also needs to be assessed to ensure the best possible system is being used, how the information is consolidated and how easy it is to extract the relevant information at any given time.

5.2.3 Maintain a work environment which is safe, healthy and supportive of all staff and their well-being

- Comply with all relevant legislation as appropriate and communicate efficiently.

5.2.4 Review the availability of service provision and identify key internal skills currently available to the organisation as well as future skills required

- Implement a skills identification analysis to identify the key skills of all staff in order to best utilise talents and avail of all available expertise in a manner beneficial for both staff and the organisation as a whole
- Undertake a training needs analysis to identify future skill requirements.



Section 6 Advocacy, Communications, Networking & Partnerships

6.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES ARISING

Advocacy, Networking & Key Partnerships

A number of external environmental issues will play their part in the future development of the centre. These include the establishment of COSC and how it will affect the RPC, additional funding allocated to the sector for key services but not yet distributed, the need for continued national representation in relation to the issues of sexual violence and sexual abuse and the trend toward increased professionalism and accountability for organisations such as GRCC. In addition, it needs to be recognised that local political support is not as strong as it could be.

The centre is a partner with several key organisations and with several key initiatives such as Regional Planning Committee, Roscommon Rape Crisis Centre, Rape Crisis Network Ireland and the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit. GRCC plans to continue to work with key partners and stakeholders toward implementing an increased national profile of the issues. As part of its future strategic development, the centre would also like to assist in strengthening the links between RCC's around the country and the RCNI with a view to having one national voice and a strong campaigning remit on social issues. The organisation also plans to retain its strong strategic link with RCNI.

In addition the organisation would like to expand its strategic focus and work with other relevant partners and stakeholders in a more formal manner. Examples of such groups would include COPE, the Refugee Support Group, Enable Ireland as well as local fore such as city partnership groups, RAPID and relevant community groups. The purpose of this would be two-fold – to identify lobbying and advocacy partners as well as identifying additional sources of funding for specific projects.

It is recommended that the best way to implement these objectives is through a three-tiered approach:

1. National Remit – undertaken by the Executive Director in conjunction with the RCNI and other relevant agencies
2. Regional Remit – initial contact primarily through the Executive Director, then direct to appropriate internal core group depending on the issue involved e.g. inter-agency development work, RPC, community groups, Asylum Seeker & Refugee Clinic, Mayo services and so on, and
3. Direct Client Support Advocacy – client/counsellor work based on individual client cases working on issues such as accompaniment.

In order to ensure the identification of appropriate groups and the implementation of this strategy, the establishment of an internal team is necessary to brain-storm ideas, develop strategies and implement plans in relation to these important issues. The key to success will be to clearly identify each potential group, outline the reasons for key partnership building, what the measurable outcomes would be, prioritise groups in order of importance, identify the message that needs to be communicated to each group and who is the best person(s) to do this.

Communications

With the expansion of services, new developments in organisational structures, roles and responsibilities, the development of further key partnerships and the importance of retaining good relationships with funders and supporters, it is of the utmost importance that the organisation takes care to effectively communicate on all issues both internally and externally. Internally, clear communication lines need to be identified between the Board and the Executive Director, between the sub-committees and how they communicate with the Executive Director and the Board and between all staff members.

It is also becoming increasingly important to develop an integrated external communications policy that will ensure that a clear and consistent message is delivered to each target audience. It is recommended that the organisation develop a communications and media plan that will be reviewed on an annual basis – this will ensure that the all messages are identified, communicated to the appropriate groups and followed up as appropriate. A media policy will work on identifying the key issues and events the organisation needs to communicate externally and implement as appropriate. Key communication tools that need attention are the finalisation of the web-site and the development of a cohesive approach to the design and print of all materials.

6.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY TASKS

6.2.1 Continue to work with key partners in influencing change, both locally and nationally, amongst various target groups in relation to the issues of sexual violence and abuse

- Continue to maintain strong relationships with key partners and stakeholders
- Assist in strengthening the links between RCC's around the country
- Retain strong links with RCNI, HSE, RPC.

6.2.2 Strengthen the sector within the region and identify potential key partners and stakeholders

- Identify a core internal group to develop and implement a plan to target new key partners and stakeholders
- Identify each potential group, outline the reasons for key partnership building, what the measurable outcomes would be, prioritise groups in order of importance, identify the message that needs to be communicated to each group and who is the best person(s) to do this
- Share expertise through events such as Co-ordinators forum, conferences, training and education and establish a calendar of events for potential collaboration with key groups.

6.2.3 Develop an integrated internal and external communications policy

- Identify and implement clear internal communication channels
- Identify the various messages the organisation needs to communicate externally
- Develop and implement a communications and media strategy.



Section 7 Education, Training & Awareness-raising

7.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES ARISING

GRCC continues to provide an essential education and training service to various groups. On request the centre offers talks and/or training workshops on its services, on issues surrounding sexual violence and abuse as well as on prevention work. This service is provided to community groups, schools, colleges and to professionals. It has been highlighted that the issue of quantity versus quality needs to be examined in relation to training and education and awareness-raising. Questions such as should we maximise the target audience and what is the real impact of the programmes provided in the target groups need to be carefully considered when agreeing the aims for this work over the period of the next three years.

Four groups have been identified as key target groups under the umbrella of Education, Training & Awareness-raising – these are secondary schools, third-level institutions, community groups and professionals. It is recommended that each target group be carefully considered and specific aims and goals set out for each separately. Further different ways of working with each target group also need to be considered as well as the financial feasibility of providing this expanded service. The result would be an education strategy and specific programme for a wide variety of groups such as those outlined above. There is also currently some duplication of effort amongst the education and training aspects of the organisation and this will need to be identified and streamlined. It is agreed that secondary schools and third level institutions remain an integral part of the education work of the centre and that an assessment of how best to continue this work should be undertaken. Innovative approaches are particularly important for this group and new technology should be explored as a means to effectively communicate the message. Examples would include utilising the web-site and mobile communications options. Work around community groups would include contacting NGO's and statutory bodies coming into contact with survivors as well as groups working with the more marginalised and vulnerable in our society. Key professional groups are also a training requirement in this area as is the need for a male education worker. Another concept for potential implementation is the creation of an education department within the GRCC to include all aspects of training work. This would widen and expand the scope of the work and enable the centre to reach many more target groups. The bigger department would enable a quicker response to requests for talk and lead to providing increased access for all groups. In order to develop the scope and effectiveness of the service, the department would also be required to regularly up-date leaflets, posters and video and other training material which would be done in conjunction with the communications strategy.

7.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY TASKS

7.2.1 Identify key target groups with whom the centre will work in relation to education, training and awareness-raising

- Agree on the four key groups to target – secondary schools, third-level institutions, community groups and professionals
- Undertake a review of the current programmes
- Identify the aims of the various programmes in relation to each of the target groups
- Review and evaluate target groups on a regular basis.

7.2.2 Identify new ways of communicating prevention and awareness messages to target groups

- Identify the specific messages to be targeted at each group and new ways of doing so.

7.2.3 Identify the most appropriate means of managing the education, training and awareness-raising programmes

- Identify the most appropriate means and time-frame by which to deliver the programmes on a regular basis
- Identify the financial and human resources required to implement this strategy

7.2.4 Introduce a system to effectively promote & assess the impact of these programmes

- Design and implement an impact assessment for each of the programmes
- Design and produce the appropriate promotional material required to achieve the education, training and awareness-raising objectives.



Section 8 Funding & Finance

8.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES ARISING

Statutory Funding

The Department of Health provides approximately 45-50% of the annual funding required to run the GRCC and the funding is administered by the HSE. The centre has a service agreement with the HSE which is re-negotiated every three years. There have not, however, been any major increases in this funding for the last number of years and this puts added pressure on GRCC to fundraise. A further 10-15% of total funding comes from various government departments and through grant aid. The main problem with this type of funding is that it is generally a one-off or non-renewal grant for a specific project. While these types of funding are obviously essential, they do not help with the effective long-range strategic and operational plans of the organisation. By the end of 2011, the organisation would like to see the elimination of the annual deficit that has been a regular feature of the centre, a good working relationship maintained between the HSE and GRCC, no over-dependence on any one funding source and internal clarity around responsibility regarding funding applications. In addition, a key project is the essential move to a new premises and a project group needs to be established in order to effectively manage the move.

Fundraising

Fund-raising is a key requirement of the organisation by which to make up the deficit for much-needed funds. This section is currently under-resourced in the centre. While the GRCC continues to foster mutually beneficial funding relationship with donors and sponsors, there is increasing competition for funds in the charity market-place and not necessarily a larger pool from which to obtain these funds. This places further pressure on the organisation and provides numerous constraints to future development. The main aim of the organisation is to be in a stable funding position in the long-term in order to provide the much-needed services required by clients and provided professionally by staff. Additional funding will be required in order to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in this plan.

8.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY TASKS

8.2.1 Continue to produce and maintain annual budgets and audited accounts in a timely manner in compliance with legal requirements

- Keep financial records on all GRCC financial transactions
- Pass financial records at the end of the financial year to the centre's accountant for approval and audit
- Identify who will undertake this work following the structural review of roles and responsibilities
- Identify who will be responsible for keeping up-to-date with changes in legislation regarding financial report and company/charity law
- Compile projected funding and revenue requirements as well as costs on an annual bases – the projected budget should accompany the strategic plan and be monitored on a quarterly basis

- Establish a project group and plan for the financial implications of a move to a new premises.

8.2.2 Effectively manage the funding mix

- Ensure corporate sponsorship targets are identified and met on an annual basis
- Engage with external employee contributions through pay-roll schemes as a new method of fund-raising
- Secure an annual major corporate sponsor for employee-driven fundraising events to yield up to €30,000 per annum
- Increase the fundraising paid resources to four days a week
- Secure a team of volunteer fundraisers to lead regular/annual projects
- Retain annual fundraising events (Churchgate collection, Flag Day, Mini Marathon & Streets of Galway) to yield up to €40,000 per annum
- Clarify the most appropriate, responsible and effective way to assure that financial planning and needs analyses are undertaken and implemented by the organisation
- Approve the recommendation that the finance sub-committee is responsible for the financial planning of the organisation and that the individual responsibilities will be clarified as part of the organisational structure review
- Identify who is responsible for funding applications
- The ideal future funding mix needs to be examined and identified by the finance sub-committee with a view to making recommendations to the Board in order to manage the centre's finances from a long-term perspective
- Identify the key funding stakeholders and manage the relationships effectively and as appropriate.

8.2.3 Maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with current funders

- Continue to develop a healthy relationship with current funders, corporate sponsors, donors and individual supporters

8.2.4 Identify new and additional sources of statutory funding for the organisation

- Research on relevant statutory bodies that are potential funding sources should be undertaken on an on-going basis – examples include Department of Justice, Dormant Accounts Fund and the Department of Education – identify the relevant individual/group to undertake this research
- Identify specific projects that will require additional funding throughout the duration of this Strategic Plan.

8.2.5 Identify additional revenue streams from potential corporate, individual, donor and philanthropic sponsorship programmes

- Outline annual sponsorship funding requirements for the next three years based on assessment by the finance sub-committee after statutory funding is determined or if specific new projects arise
- Fundraising plan needs to be outlined and agreed at the beginning of each financial year and monitored quarterly by the fundraiser, Executive Director and finance sub-committee
- Identify responsibility for specific fund-raising activities on an annual basis
- Research and identify new corporate sponsors as well as funding potential from philanthropy organisation for specific projects.



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