

## SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL (KNOWN AS CROSSREACH BOARD) MAY 2021

### Proposed Deliverance

#### The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the dedication, commitment and exceptional effort of all CrossReach staff who have worked throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and have continued to deliver high quality services, in Christ's name, to the people who rely on them for support; expressing particular appreciation and thanks to all of those who have worked on the front line. (*Section 1*)
3. Express alarm at the high rate of drugs deaths in Scotland and instruct CrossReach to work in collaboration with the Faith Impact Forum to hold the Scottish Government to account on its promise to reduce drug deaths and to ensure that the appropriate resources are put in place. (*Section 1*)
4. Celebrate the completion of the Care and Education restructure and commend those involved for working through the significant challenges it has posed. (*Section 1*)
5. Endorse the efforts being made by CrossReach to keep 'The Promise' which has been made to children who have experience of the care system; infants, children, young people, adults and their families - 'that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, and able to realise their full potential'; encourage Presbyteries congregations and individuals in joining with CrossReach to commend this initiative and to do all they can to combat the discrimination and stigma which exists within the current children's care system. (*Section 1*)
6. Note the significant financial challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the additional strain this has caused to CrossReach; celebrate the generous response to the Emergency Coronavirus Appeal from local and international partners without which the organisation would have struggled to offer all that it has to the people it cares for; and encourage Presbyteries, congregations and individual members to continue to offer support through proactive and tangible means. (*Section 3*)
7. Recognise The Guild for their outstanding support of their Project Partners and commend them for working alongside CrossReach to tackle loneliness and isolation over the past three years. (*Section 3*)
8. Note the satisfactory position of the closed Church of Scotland pension scheme in regard to CrossReach and commend the Pension Trustees for their efforts. (*Section 5*)
9. Welcome the findings of the Scottish Parliament commissioned Independent Review into Adult Social Care and those of the Parliament's Health and Sport Committee; note the recommendations made which are needed to improve the current situation for supported people, the social care workforce and unpaid carers; urge Presbyteries, congregations and individuals to get involved in raising awareness of the inequalities in the current system by all possible means and to call for the necessary resources which will begin to address these. (*Section 6*)
10. (a) Note the human and financial impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on CrossReach and the steps being taken to recover;  
(b) note too, the likely future impact of the recommendations of the recent reviews into the structure and funding of the adult social care sector in Scotland; and

- (c) Instruct the Council to report to the General Assembly of 2022 outlining a way forward which takes account of both of these factors and which puts CrossReach on a sustainable footing. (*Section 8*)

## Report

### 1. COVID -19

*The emergence of COVID-19 has been significant and all-encompassing, and I am conscious that words alone cannot describe the true impact this has had on everyone, but perhaps more acutely, across our Health and Social Care services and those who work in them. The challenges that have been faced in our emergency response have been substantial and Health and Social Care staff as always have demonstrated what a valuable contribution they make in delivering good patient/client care and quality services.*

*Jeanne Freeman (Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport)  
(Health and Social Care - Everyone Matters pulse survey: 2020)*

**1.1** CrossReach, as one of the largest and most diverse voluntary sector Social Care organisations in Scotland, has been on the frontline of Covid-19 response since the end of February 2020. Throughout that time the Board, Corporate Management Team and 1600+ strong workforce have worked to three main aims:

**1.1.1 Protecting** service users and staff from a virus which has proved to be most lethal to the very frail and those with complex health problems.

**1.1.2 Connecting** service users of all ages with the people who matter to them so that in both care homes and communities they were able to combat the worst effects of loneliness and isolation.

**1.1.3 Continuing to offer quality services** to those who were most in need. Shutting down services, was, in most cases, simply not an option due to the nature of the support offered.

**1.1.4** The response to Covid-19 has tested the organisation in a number of ways and has had both personal and financial consequences which will continue to be felt for some time. It has required a significant, sustained and concentrated effort for all involved, but has demanded extraordinary dedication from those working on the front line. They have offered face to face support in residential care homes and supported living settings where there has also been most risk to their own health and wellbeing, and to that of their families. They are due our admiration, thanks and a huge debt of gratitude.

### 1.2 Protection:

**1.2.1** In the very first weeks of the pandemic those working in social care, along with colleagues in health, were faced with a situation for which there was no precedence. As guidance came out it was superseded within days, sometimes hours, of issue and differed for each type of service area. It became clear that access to supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and hand sanitiser would be critical to personal protection. It was also clear that workforce planning would be equally critical to ensure that there were enough staff in services to care for service users and in corporate support roles to allow the organisation to cope. CrossReach needed to target its response and resources to 52 geographical locations from Shetland to Ayrshire, and to people of all ages from the youngest to the oldest in society; all of whom were in vulnerable situations.

**1.2.2** In March 2020 the Corporate Management Team set up a contingency planning group of key operational and support staff to oversee the pandemic response. That group have worked tirelessly to interpret guidance from Scottish Government and Health Protection Services or from any other statutory partners who required them to work differently. The group were tasked to pick up on any implementation challenges the guidance posed, to agree safe systems of work across the organisation and to communicate all necessary information to staff. They were also tasked with ensuring that the appropriate resources were in place to help staff deal with the situations in which

they found themselves and that these resources were readily available when most needed.

**1.2.3** The organisation was required to run two parallel processes; business as usual and a specific Covid-19 response, although, the two were, necessarily intertwined. Staff in the central support and regional offices were required to work from home wherever possible; some in support offices were redeployed to Covid-19 response specific roles.

**1.2.4** Calls for hand-sanitiser and PPE were hugely successful, generously supported by a number of individuals and organisations, including the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan. Thanks to the efforts of staff and volunteers they were also able to be distributed across the country without delay. Supply became less of an issue once Scottish Government provision was organised and normal supply chains were re-stocked. Volunteer drivers also helped deliver staff to and from shifts to allow them to avoid travelling on public transport, therefore providing another level of protection.

**1.2.5** Over 70 bulletins pointing staff to the most up to date guidance, resources and advice have been issued and a number of e-learning modules designed to support staff in areas like infection prevention control, donning and doffing PPE and in order to support wellbeing. As understanding of the nature of the virus emerged the infection control guidance changed and this had a positive impact to help services keep the virus at bay.

**1.2.6** Recruitment, always a challenge within social care, went online as did induction training and mandatory training in areas like infection prevention control, safeguarding and lifting and handling. The new systems and processes worked well, and, by the end of the year, CrossReach reported a net gain in staff overall.

**1.2.7** Inspections carried out by the Care Inspectorate and Health and Social Care Partnerships were largely focussed on Infection Prevention Control, and all of the care homes had to adapt to a much more clinical regime with particular pressure on care homes for older people. This has been hard for staff and residents alike as homely settings were suddenly required to work to the same clinical standards as health settings and social distancing became a requirement for all, disrupting the normal daily routines and causing additional distress to some of the residents. However, wherever change has been called for it has been swiftly and sensitively implemented.

**1.2.8** Despite all efforts, and mirroring what was happening over the whole of the UK, CrossReach Care Homes for Older People bore the brunt of infection spread in the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic between March and the end June 2020. It was with immense sadness that the board members heard the news of a number of deaths amongst residents in residential care homes at that time and reported this on to Assembly Trustees, as part of the governance procedures. The second wave, from October onwards, brought far fewer deaths of residents but saw infection rates rise amongst the community and housing support services.

**1.2.9** Although many staff members also became ill, some critically, it was with deep sadness that we learned of the death of one member of staff from Threshold Edinburgh who tragically lost his life to Covid-19 in February 2021 having been admitted to hospital in December 2020. Some staff members, however, are still struggling with the effects of long Covid-19 and many with the effect on their mental health and wellbeing.

The Board extend their deepest sympathies to all in the CrossReach family who have experienced serious illness or lost a loved one at this time.

### 1.3 Connection:

**1.3.1** Coronavirus provided a number of challenges in terms of keeping people connected to those who mattered

to them, whether family, friends or support workers. Many of the initial solutions were IT based and involved a variety of social media platforms. The change required took an immense and co-ordinated effort between the IT team and operational staff but the investment in the IT strategy and infrastructure, over the year before, paid off and allowed the shift to happen in a very short period of time.

**1.3.2** A few services were initially stood down, while alternative ways of delivering them could be developed others had to react more immediately. Residents in care homes and supported living accommodation connected to loved ones by Zoom, Skype or Facetime, with huge success, despite the obvious limitations. Staff working in residential services were provided with ipads or tablets to help them in this task. Grants from overseas Church Partners in Taiwan and Westphalia, as well as from within Scotland, helped to finance these. The Board would wish to record appreciation for the support of Church partners at home and overseas, and thank the Faith Impact Forum for the part in played in supporting these relationships.

**1.3.3** Three of our care homes for Older People were recognised for their particular efforts in respect of keeping people connected by the Social Services Council as part of their 'Inspiring Care Stories' series. Whinnieknowe in Nairn and St Margaret's in Polmont were recognised under the 'communication, sharing learning and ideas' category, and Cameron House in Inverness under the 'communities, connections and networks' category.

<https://www.sssc.uk.com/careers-and-education/inspiring-care-stories/#comms>

**1.3.4** Day services, such as Morven Day Service which supports people with severe and enduring mental health issues to live at home, and community services, such as Heart for Art which offers support to those affected by dementia, migrated online. Additional support as needed was offered by telephone. Tayside Support Services, which runs community based projects in Dundee for people affected by drug and alcohol issues, provided two weekly online recovery groups, individual recovery support sessions and groups for women affected by addiction issues. A grant from Connecting Scotland allowed for the purchase of 21 tablets and data for those in recovery. This made a huge difference for people, enabling them to continue receiving support but also helping them in many other ways.

**1.3.5** Thanks to a Scottish Government Wellbeing grant of £90K the whole counselling service migrated onto the NHS hosted platform Attend Anywhere. Over 80 counsellors were trained in cyber counselling and adapted to a new way of working. With the help of Scotland's Tech Army a new referral app was developed allowing people to manage their counselling appointments in a different way.

**1.3.6** In the first wave of the pandemic the education campus at Erskine Waterfront Campus became a food assembly and distribution centre for families known to our services which were funded and delivered in partnership with the Peter Vardy Foundation. Pupils, who all have additional learning needs, adapted well to online lessons. The success of the move to online schooling was recognised by the Education Scotland National Improvement Hub as part of their sharing good practice initiative.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/scotland-learns/what-scotland-learned/our-school-and-community/erskine-waterfront-campus/>

**1.3.7** Daisy Chain, a family support service in Govanhill, and Sunflower Garden, which supports children affected by parental substance use, developed a series of educational videos and story-telling initiatives to help children come to terms with what was happening and connect them with support workers during the initial lockdown.

**1.3.8** A successful application to the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland fund resulted in

CrossReach being awarded 40 devices along with data packages to give to families who were unable to connect to the internet. CrossReach Glasgow Children's Services were able to distribute these to families who were without internet connection or relying on very old technology. The manager from Polmont Visitor Centre distributed a number of these devices to families affected by a loved one's imprisonment including to a kinship carer in Glasgow who was looking after two young children whose mother was in prison. They had not been able to visit their Mum or do a virtual visit for nearly a year and the new device provided allowed them to take up that opportunity. It was an emotional reunion for all.

**1.3.9** In the housing support services staff continued to visit those who needed help to manage essential tasks for their daily living while finding other ways of connecting them to the people and activities which kept them independent and active. In Threshold Support Services supporting people with a learning disability to live independently, they were able to offer people and families alternative services, including one to one walks from home, and later developed outside Groups and an online Programme. Weekly well-being calls were offered. As community groups like ten pin bowling or gym sessions were closed a completely different programme was put together with the Drama, Creative Writing and Dance Group going online from the Day Centre, which people could access from home and which allowed this particularly vulnerable group to access support while shielding.

**1.3.10** While the Covid-19 pandemic has certainly brought about many difficulties, the quick adoption of IT solutions has allowed some significant and potentially long term changes to take place, both in the way that we support people who use our services, and in the way that we conduct our business. CrossReach will continue to build on the beneficial use of IT and invest in innovative ways of working, in line with the recently approved IT strategy.

#### **1.4 Continuing to provide quality services**

**1.4.1** Due to the frontline nature of the work CrossReach staff were recognised as key workers and, similar to the NHS, very few were furloughed. Staff members were required to be at their place of work or redeployed elsewhere. Emergency terms and conditions were negotiated to allow the organisation to respond to the guidance coming out from Scottish Government and staff were given access to the additional training and support needed to allow them to continue to care for others.

**1.4.2** Local Authorities continued to commission services, although there was a welcome halt to competitive tendering, and services continued to be subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate. Despite the competing pressures and challenges faced CrossReach continued to provide as many services and as much support as possible.

#### **1.5 Older People Services**

**1.5.1** There has been intense and prolonged scrutiny of care homes for older people throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. They have been subject to a different inspection regime which has concentrated on onerous clinical guidance well beyond the standards usually expected of them. They have also had to adjust their routines for residents in order to support guidance around social distancing, are being subject to Covid-19 testing three times a week and have worn full PPE for many months. In the absence of family they have also provided much needed comfort and support to residents. Media interest on the running of care homes has been unprecedented and often vitriolic. The First Minister has been asked to run an Inquiry into the handling of the guidance and support to care homes in the early stages of the pandemic which she has now committed to doing at the most appropriate point. It has been a hugely difficult and anxiety provoking time for managers and staff alike.

**1.5.2** However, despite the limitations and additional constraints imposed staff have continued the job of quietly looking after residents and giving them the best quality of life possible with many of the usual activities taking place, even if in a slightly different way.

**1.5.3** One of the most challenging situations was facilitating family contact with the possibility of meeting indoors being severely curtailed. Essential visits were offered inside the homes throughout the pandemic and window visits or online visits had a good take up when indoor visiting was not possible. Every care home had moved to indoor visiting just prior to Christmas 2020 but had to curtail activity again with the National lockdown on 26<sup>th</sup> December. Recognising the detrimental effects for residents of being separated from their loved ones, and their right to a family life, CrossReach were pleased to contribute to and support implementation of the new visiting guidance, 'Open with Care' from 1<sup>st</sup> March.

**1.5.4** Over the year residents were encouraged to take part in many different activities including indoor bowling, playlists for life, dancing, and pamper days. Birthdays and anniversaries were given particular attention with one 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration making the local press in Nairn.

**1.5.5** *Mrs Mackay, was treated to some birthday pampering, her favourite tea of scampi and chips and best of all, a socially distant celebration with her family in the garden. Commenting on the day, Sandy Wregg (son) said, "We didn't think we would be able to see mum, except for a Skype given the Covid-19 restrictions. The staff, however, pulled out all the stops to mark the occasion and, following the latest social distancing guidelines, arranged a rota to allow not one but three separate birthdays to be celebrated over the course of the day. It was so good to be able to see mum albeit from a safe distance with appropriate masks supplied by staff, and also to catch up with the staff themselves who have become an extended family since mum moved there."*

**1.5.6** In November Heart for Art provided the exhibition for 'Elcho Artspace' a digital picture gallery hosted by Longniddry Parish Church. 30 beautiful and diverse pictures were exhibited. The Moderator, as part of his scheduled CrossReach time, previewed the exhibition and admitted to being "lost for words" at the quality of the work and the impact this service is having on the lives of the people who attend the classes and for their family members. The Moderator was introduced to artist Carol and her husband, Malcolm who shared something of their journey with dementia, and the huge benefits they have experienced through Heart for Art.

**1.5.7** CrossReach was pleased also to work in collaboration with Capital Theatres on a series of short stories adapted for film for anyone who might enjoy a calming and relaxing story. The stories, written by and for people living with dementia, were delivered in a calming environment with a gentle pace and soothing tone. Three residents from the Elms, specialist dementia care home, Edinburgh were delighted to take part.

**1.5.8** The aim of the project was to provide an opportunity to relax through listening to the spoken word for those suffering from anxiety / distress that can come if experiencing the phenomenon of sundowning, as the day changes to night.

**<https://www.capitaltheatres.com/raise-the-curtain/sundown-stories>**

## **1.6 Adult Care**

**1.6.1** It has been recognised that the pandemic posed additional challenges to those who were homeless. CrossReach supported the emergency response in a number of ways, working in partnership with other organisations to do so, while continuing to offer its regular supported accommodation and services. At Cunningham House, a supported living hostel in Edinburgh, one of the residents

spoke movingly of his journey off the streets after 14 years to a place where he could be ready to take on his own tenancy, paying particular tribute to his support worker.

**<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/news/the-skys-the-limit>**

**1.6.2** In another first, the recovery volunteers' programme went online with a virtual graduation being held in February 2020. The programme helps those recovering from addiction or a mental health breakdown by offering bespoke advice, training and support so that they can help others going through volunteering or paid employment opportunities. This was the 11<sup>th</sup> successful year of the training programme, with 12 volunteers graduating, and a previous graduate being recognised for gaining an SVQ 2 in Social Care.

**1.6.3** Among the graduates was William who now volunteers at Allerton, a residential service for adults experiencing mental health issues.

**1.6.4** *"I was in addiction with alcohol for nearly two years and went through the CrossReach 12 week programme at the CrossReach Residential Recovery Service (CRRS). I went into Move On accommodation with CrossReach and am now in a flat of my own. "I heard about the programme from staff and other volunteers and asked about them how they became volunteers. They told me that I'd get a chance at the end of the 12 week programme and so when staff approached me about it I thought I'd give it a try. "I'd done social care before but I wanted to give a wee bit back as I know how much the service relied on volunteers for taking people to appointments. "There's so much about the training that stands out but the group work was really good, seeing how other people would deal with different scenarios and being with people who saw things differently. It also helped to build the confidence that I lacked. "The people I'm helping now know I've been through the programme. They know I've 'been there' and that I can relate to them - that's a good working relationship there. It also gives them encouragement as well, that there's light at the end of the tunnel."*

**1.6.5** The stories of those in recovery were particularly poignant in the light of the drug death statistics published just a few weeks earlier which highlighted just how serious this issue remains for Scotland, and the importance of residential rehabilitation to recovery. CrossReach has welcomed the renewed focus on addictions services and would call on the Faith Impact Forum to collaborate with them in continuing to call for the necessary resources so that further deaths can be prevented.

**<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-55184961>**

**1.6.6** A new Advocacy and Support service, covering Lewis and Harris, started in summer 2020; this provides a vital link to people with a range of support needs and augments the health and social care services in the islands. To begin such work during a period of social restrictions has been difficult but the staff have been creative and resilient enough to maintain support during the pandemic.

**1.6.7** Allerton, previously a residential service for those with severe and enduring mental health issues, has also successfully implemented a new model; that of housing support to individuals in their own tenancies, in a purpose-built block of flats. A first for Mental Health services in Glasgow, Allerton has been described by commissioners as a 'flagship' service.

## **1.7 Children and Family Services**

**1.7.1** Several years of careful planning concluded in January when the move out of Ballintraid residential school was completed and the children moved into the final two houses in Strathblane and Port Glasgow. CrossReach now provides care and education to around 30 children and young people in seven small community houses with the education campus at Erskine acting as a central hub. This restructure has taken a number of years but the aim remains the same and will lead to a greater sense of belonging and community for the children and young people entrusted to CrossReach's

care. It will allow the relational and attachment models of care, on which the service is built, to achieve better longer term outcomes for the young people by providing something more akin to a normal family life.

**1.7.2** This is an important step for the Residential Care and Education services, particularly in the light of the review of the children's care system which reported in 2020 and called for the types of change which CrossReach had already been making. At the point of concluding, the Care Review has listened to over 5,500 experiences. Over half of the voices were children and young people with experience of the 'care system', adults who had lived in care, and lots of different types of families. The remaining voices came from the paid and unpaid workforce. It was their stories that guided the Care Review and it is their experiences that have shaped everything the Care Review has concluded. The Board have committed to keeping 'The Promise', which is based on the recommendations coming out of a review of the care system to which a number of care experienced children from CrossReach, contributed. The Board would call on the wider Church to think of ways that they can support children who are in the care system by signing up to 'The Promise'.

<https://thepromise.scot/>

**1.7.3** Families with a loved one in prison have had a particularly challenging time throughout the Covid-19 pandemic with visits severely restricted and arrangements changing frequently. Staff at the Prison Visitors' Centres have continued to support families over this time. In only a 3 month period from September to December HMP Polmont Visitor Centre staff supported nearly 1000 families who were struggling. The introduction of virtual visits has helped families to stay in touch but it is a tricky system to navigate for families and Visitor Centre staff have been key in making sure families are able to access it.

**1.7.4** HMP Polmont Visitor Centre staff accessed books from a charity called Give A Book, to enable those in custody to read the same book with their child at home over the video calls.

**1.7.5** One mum in prison said "*I absolutely love reading with him on the Video Call, it's something different to do*".

**1.7.5** HMP Perth Visitor Centre were pleased to receive a donation at Christmas of over 200 presents from Houston Parish Church which were distributed by centre staff to children before Christmas. The Board greatly appreciate the continuing support from churches across Scotland, without their help CrossReach would struggle to maintain the services provided by these centres.

## 2. STAFF WELLBEING

**2.1** As the months progressed the toll on staff throughout the organisation became evident due to the relentless and critical nature of what they were being required to take on over a protracted period of time. For those working in face to face services, particularly where there had been high levels of infection amongst staff and service users, there were reports of whole staff groups experiencing trauma and exhaustion.

**2.1.1** There were a number of internal and external support systems already in place, including an occupational health scheme, an employee assistance programme which offers access to counselling, and a Government led helpline where staff could be signposted to wellbeing resources. However senior staff realised that more was going to be needed to continue to be able to support staff well. The Moderator remotely joined a group of staff recounting their experiences as part of his scheduled time with CrossReach, and recognised the mental health and wellbeing issues faced by the workforce, paying tribute to their efforts.

**2.1.2** A small group of staff came together to work on a wellbeing initiative which has seen the introduction of volunteer wellbeing champions in every service to be a first

port of call when people find themselves struggling. The wellbeing champions are trained and equipped with the tools and resources they need to help others. This initiative is still in its infancy but has been well received.

**2.1.3** The introduction of vaccines and Covid-19 testing has introduced additional levels of protection for supported people and staff and has helped reduce anxiety. By 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 all residents in care homes for adults had been offered the Covid-19 vaccine and the roll out into community and housing support services had begun. By the end of Feb 2021, 1033 members of staff had received their first dose of a vaccine with some having received a second.

**2.1.4** The CrossReach Board welcomed the Scottish Government prioritisation of frontline social care workers, care home residents and people with Covid-19 related vulnerabilities when it came to the roll out of the vaccine programme and would commend the relative ease with which the vaccination programme has been rolled out in care home settings in particular.

**2.1.5** As an additional support a new devotional resource has recently been issued by CrossReach to all services and to the senior management team. It was commissioned following a request from staff for an up to date daily devotional book as part of the 150 years anniversary project in 2019. It pulls on individual contributions from staff and Board members as well as Sanctuary First. This has been well received and the Chair of the staff representative body recently thanked the Board for supporting this initiative.

**2.1.6** The Board would like to express appreciation to the Moderator for finding creative ways to link with CrossReach this year, for supporting the recent prayer share, and for his continued focus on mental health and wellbeing.

## 3. SUPPORTERS

**3.1** The Emergency Coronavirus Appeal was given exceptional support by congregations and individuals across Scotland and from overseas. People were both generous in their giving and in the time they dedicated to various events including the 2.6 challenge, grey cake bakes, soup lunches and virtual kiltwalks.

**3.1.1** The Guild pledged their support and agreed to change the focus of the Partnership Project to support the emergency appeal, realising that by doing so they were continuing to support the original aims of Join Up The Dots, by helping CrossReach to combat loneliness and isolation. An incredible total of over £57,000 has been raised over the three year period for this project and CrossReach have enjoyed all of the many benefits of being Guild Partners over that time.

**3.1.2** Volunteers supported in many ways. People prayed, sewed scrubs and washing bags, delivered gifts to services, and acted as volunteer drivers to show they cared about CrossReach and its people.

**3.1.3** The Assembly Trustees have been and continue to be supportive throughout, fully recognising the efforts being taken by staff in all roles throughout the organisation and offering guidance, resources and a much appreciated pandemic payment.

**3.1.4** The Board wish to thank all who have come alongside CrossReach at this time and who, with generosity of spirit have done so much to ensure the work of the organisation was recognised and resourced in so many different ways.

## 4. COVID-19 PANDEMIC: RECOVERY AND SUSTAINABILITY

**4.1** Recovery from Covid-19 will take some time. Increased insurance costs, enhanced sickness benefit arrangements and requirements for clinical waste and additional PPE and cleaning have all added to the costs of

continuing to run services, while reduced occupancy in some areas has significantly reduced income.

**4.1.1** Recognising that the social care sector would experience financial difficulty during the pandemic, but that the services were going to be much needed, the Scottish Government released a number of different funding streams to support the sector as a whole. CrossReach has been able to access some of these funds.

**4.1.2** This financial support has been both necessary and welcome. However, it has been slow to come in and insufficient to fully meet costs, leading to a significant financial deficit being reported at year end.

**4.1.3** Prior to February 2020, when the pandemic first hit, the senior management team had set out a path to sustainability, as reported to the General Assembly in 2019.

**4.1.4** The actions which were identified have been followed through in all operational service areas. The Board were pleased to note the progress made on a number of fronts, with significant improvements being reported in recruitment, a welcome corresponding decrease in agency use and the potential for increased income following a review of pricing structures. The action taken has also seen a remodelling of the fundraising department in order to diversify voluntary income streams.

## 5. PENSION

**5.1** One of the areas which had been of long term concern to sustainability was the deficit carried in the CrossReach part of the closed Church of Scotland Pension Scheme, and the level of contributions required by CrossReach to bring that to a point where it was fully funded. The Pension Trustees have worked with CrossReach over the past couple of years to explore options for their part of the scheme and in January 2021 reported that the scheme was fully funded. This has allowed contributions to cease as long as the fund remains in that position. The Board would like to thank the Pension Trustees for their collaborative approach to this issue over the past couple of years and note their satisfaction at the current funding position some four years earlier than anticipated.

**5.1.1** It now remains to be seen whether these actions together with assumptions being made about recovery from the additional impacts of Covid -19 will be enough to ensure longer term sustainability or whether further action will be necessary.

**5.1.2** The Board will continue to work with Senior Managers to assess progress, identify risks to recovery and take any additional steps necessary.

## 6. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF SOCIAL CARE

**6.1** One of the factors which will impact the future strategy and funding of CrossReach is the recently published report of the Scottish Parliament commissioned Independent Review of Adult Social Care. The review was set up in September 2020 and was chaired by Derek Feeley, a former Scottish Government Director General for Health and Social Care and Chief Executive of NHS Scotland. Mr Feeley was supported by an Advisory Panel of Scottish and international experts.

**6.1.1** The principal aim of the review was to recommend improvements to adult social care in Scotland, primarily in terms of the outcomes achieved by people who use services, their carers and families, and the experience of people who work in adult social care.

**6.1.2** CrossReach put forward a submission to the Inquiry in November 2020 and also supported the submissions for Scottish Care and the Coalition of Care Providers Scotland, and the social care provider representative bodies, who have lobbied hard for change and who have also been crucial in

their role as champions for the social care sector, both throughout the pandemic and over many years before.

**6.1.3** While recognising that there is much to be positive about the Review, it makes 53 recommendations in total and sets out the need for the narrative about social care to be fundamentally changed.

**6.1.4** *We need to start by challenging some of the prevailing narrative about social care support. It has its fair share of challenges, as this report will recognise and tackle, but it need not be unsustainable, or in crisis, or confined to the margins of society. Strong and effective social care support is foundational to the flourishing of everyone in Scotland. It is a good investment in our economy and in our citizens. (Independent Review of Adult Social Care)*

**6.1.5** In particular there is a focus on moving from crisis intervention to crisis prevention and support for wellbeing. It also suggests that social care should be seen as a vehicle for independent living, so that people can live in the place they would wish to and surrounded by the people who matter to them. It recommends that a human rights based approach underpin social care for the future.

**6.1.6** There is a recognition that there should be funding for grass roots initiatives in local communities, and that people who use support should be more fully involved in the design and delivery of services. It makes sweeping recommendations about how services should be commissioned by arguing against competitive tendering which is highly disruptive to supported people and staff alike, and asks for much more collaborative models of commissioning services. It also underlines the need to ensure that self-directed support, where people can hold their own budget and make their own support arrangements, is properly understood by people so that they can have more control over their own lives.

**6.1.7** The Review Team called for an overhaul of the National Care Home contract which is the funding mechanism for care homes for older people, and asks some significant questions around the future care models to support older people so that they can continue to stay at home for as long as they want to or are able to.

**6.1.8** Importantly the review recognised the need to value the social care workforce for the skills and expertise the staff working in it bring to supported people. Recruitment and retention of staff are key issues for CrossReach and although headway has been made over the past year there remain a significant number of vacancies. Turnover in the sector is high at nearly 30% each year, and although CrossReach has a turnover of around 12% it often means recruitment effort is expended in replacement for staff, rather than gaining ground. The Review puts this down to the way in which the workforce is valued by society and remunerated.

**6.1.9** *The social care workforce in Scotland is so notably disadvantaged because it is highly gendered. The sector is about 83% female. Were it 83% male, it simply would not be marginalised and undervalued as it is. (Independent Review of Adult Social Care)*

**6.1.10** It recommends that change is made by ensuring that the workforce are given better access to training, given opportunities to develop and that they are better paid. It also recommends that the findings of the Fair Work in Scotland's Social Care report, highlighted to the General Assembly in 2019, are fully implemented.

**6.1.11** One of the changes recommended is around future structure and accountability for social care support. The Review team recommend that this should move from local government to Scottish Ministers, and a Minister should be appointed with specific responsibility for Social Care.

**6.1.12** *A National Care Service for Scotland should be established in statute along with, on an equal footing,*

**NHS Scotland, with both bodies reporting to Scottish Ministers. The National Care Service should oversee local commissioning and procurement of social care and support by reformed Integration Joint Boards, with services procured from Local Authorities and third and independent sector providers. (Independent Review of Adult Social Care)**

**6.1.13** The National Care Service would also oversee the conditions under which the workforce carry out their tasks and the way in which they are remunerated.

**6.1.14** The report was debated by Scottish Parliament in February 2021 and was given broad support. It is too early to assess what impact it will have, particularly as the issue of how to finance the changes needed have not been settled.

**6.1.15** The Board have welcomed the report and the commitments it makes to both supported people and to the workforce but recognises that there is a lot of work yet to do before change comes. In addition, while the report makes some very helpful recommendations it does not directly address the tie up with Children and Family Services, nor does it talk to homelessness or criminal justice directly, and further detail on each of these areas is being sought.

**6.1.16** A compelling short film has been made outlining the need for change, which features one of our former service users now in recovery.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_bEt9NwtXpE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bEt9NwtXpE)

**6.1.17** The full report can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/independent-review-of-adult-social-care/>

**6.1.18** The Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport Committee also published their report on Adult Social Care in February. The Chief Executive has given direct evidence twice to that committee twice and care home managers have contributed through a written submission.

**6.1.19** The Health and Sport Committee report makes broadly similar recommendations to the Independent Review of Adult Social Care and calls for a national conversation about the future of social care and support in Scotland.

**6.1.20 We need to increase public understanding of the role of social care and support, to increase society's value of the sector and the recruitment and retention of staff. We need to improve the status of carers and the way they are treated.**

[https://www.parliament.scot/S5\\_HealthandSportCommittee/Reports/The\\_Future\\_of\\_Social\\_Care\\_and\\_Support\\_in\\_Scotland.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/S5_HealthandSportCommittee/Reports/The_Future_of_Social_Care_and_Support_in_Scotland.pdf)

## **7. CHILD ABUSE INQUIRY AND REDRESS SCHEME**

**7.1** The Chief Executive Officer of CrossReach was called to give evidence to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry in October 2021. The evidence called for concerned the Church of Scotland's participation in Child Migrant Schemes between 1948 and 1961. Over that time a small number of children between the ages of 7 and 16 were migrated from Church of Scotland homes directly to Dhurringile Farm in Australia. The Church of Scotland Social Services Council also acted as a member of the Council of Voluntary Organisations for Child Emigration between 1951 and 1959 and as such oversaw the migration of around 100 children from other voluntary organisations to Dhurriingile.

**7.1.1** In the late 1950s Dhurringile was identified as a place which ran a harsh and abusive regime and many years later was examined by the Australian Child Abuse Inquiry based on reports of both physical and sexual abuse it had received from former residents. While the Church of Scotland did not play a large part in child migration overall the part it did play had a significant and mainly detrimental effect on the lives of those migrated. It is now recognised

that the whole policy of child migration was flawed as it did not build in enough safeguards for young children, and many went on to be abused rather than given the opportunities which had been hoped for.

**7.1.2** The Convenor of the Board offered apology to all children who had been migrated either directly from homes run by the Social Services Council or through the auspices of the Church of Scotland.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-54387212>

**7.1.3** The Board wish to record appreciation to the Procurator to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and to the Law Department for their significant support to the Chief Executive both prior to and during the hearing.

**7.1.4** There is now a call for organisations to contribute to the redress scheme currently being set up by the Scottish Government through the Redress for Survivors (Historical Child Abuse in Care) (Scotland) Bill which will pass through Parliament by March 2021. The Bill seeks to establish a financial redress scheme for survivors of historical child abuse, and, where eligible, their next of kin. The purpose of the scheme is to acknowledge and provide tangible recognition of harm as a result of historical child abuse in relevant care settings in Scotland. The scheme will also provide access to some non-financial redress elements - such as acknowledgement, apology and support.

**7.1.5** The scheme provides an opportunity for those bodies and organisations involved who have recognised that abuse occurred within their own settings to meaningfully participate in the national, collective endeavour to recognise the harms of the past.

**7.1.6** While CrossReach fully supports the intent behind the Bill in making appropriate redress to survivors, and would wish the Church of Scotland to participate, it was recognised that there were some significant barriers to participation including that of affordability.

**7.1.7** CrossReach, Aberlour and Quarriers have been working together to engage with Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee to try to resolve challenges and to find a way to meaningfully participate, without affecting overall sustainability. They have been supported in this by The Church of Scotland Law Department and the lead officer for Parliamentary engagement within the Faith Impact Forum.

**7.1.8** The Board would wish to find an appropriate way forward so that a fair and meaningful voluntary contribution can be made and appropriate apology continue to be given. They are working with the Assembly Trustees in that regard.

## **8. THE CROSSREACH BOARD**

**8.1** In June 2020 the CrossReach governing body was reconstituted as a board of 12 members, in line with the decision of the General Assembly in October 2019. CrossReach has been fortunate in retaining and attracting board members with significant relevant expertise, to support the management team and provide the standard of governance appropriate to a major charity with annual turnover of £40 million and employing 1700 staff across 70 services. The Board operates under extensive delegated authority from the Assembly Trustees. The relative responsibilities continue to be refined but there are close and productive working relationships in place with the Trustees and the Chief Officer.

**8.1.1** CrossReach operates in a difficult commercial environment which has been accentuated during the pandemic. As that crisis recedes the key task of the Board is to work with the Chief Executive and her colleagues in developing longer term strategies for the organisation to prosper in the post pandemic environment. These strategies will have to be developed to respond to an environment that

is now subject to rapid change, potentially positive as well as negative. On the downside, a changing pattern of demand for residential care for older people is just one of the challenges faced in assuring sustainability. On the positive side there is a welcome recognition in the report of the Independent Inquiry that social care has been undervalued by society for many years, which raises the hope of improvements in both commissioning and funding to the benefit of the sector as a whole. As these trends play out the Church as a whole should have confidence that there is the necessary quality of both management and governance to support the "Care you can put your faith in".

## 9. FINANCE

**9.1** CrossReach sustained a deficit of £2.4m, before historical pension costs, in 2020. This outturn was significantly affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and was £1.1m worse than budget, though better than initial projections at the outset of the pandemic had indicated.

**9.1.1** The total income received was £44,018m against expenditure of £46,536m excluding gain/loss from property sale, pension deficit payment, and investment unrealised gains/losses.

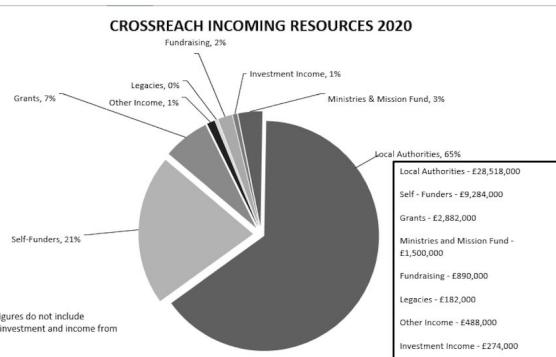
**9.1.2** In Older People Services occupancy, and consequently income, was severely reduced. While there were some supports from Government in this regard, they were not sufficient to bridge the gap, and delays in payment put pressure on cashflow.

**9.1.3** In addition, the pandemic led to increased costs in relation to PPE, cleaning and infection control materials, and staffing. The latter related to cover for increased sickness absence arising from required isolation or positive tests. Again, promised support from Government was difficult to access, and was slow to arrive.

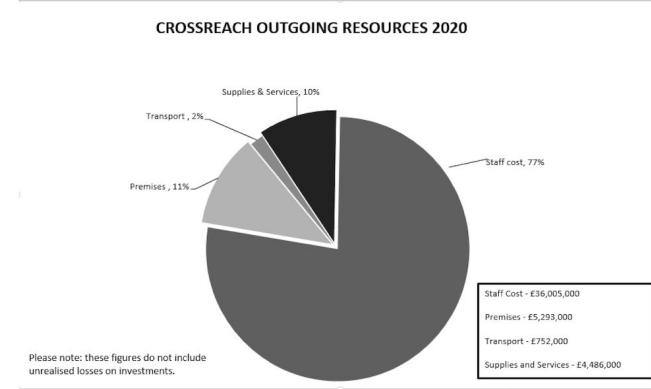
**9.1.4** By the end of 2020 Older People Services, which was worst hit financially, had sustained an increased deficit. The other operational areas were broadly in line with budget, although the late exit from Ballikinrain, which was not Covid-19 related, did have an adverse effect on Children and Family Services.

**9.1.5** The graphs below show the profile of income and expenditure in 2020, with income showing a reduction in reliance on self-funders and an increase in grant income which compensates for a fall in legacies. The expenditure graph shows an increase in the level of staff costs from 74% of expenditure in 2019 to 77% in 2020.

### 9.1.6 CrossReach Incoming Resources



### 9.1.7 CrossReach Outgoing Resources



## 10. QUALITY

### 10.1 Care Inspectorate

**10.1.1** CrossReach has 56 services which are inspected by the Care Inspectorate.

**10.1.2** As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, initially some inspections were suspended but subsequently some services were inspected on the following new theme:-

### 10.1.3 How Good is our Care and Support during Covid-19 Pandemic

**10.1.4** A total of 5 services were inspected on this theme and one service was graded Good, 3 services were graded adequate and one service was graded weak

### 10.1.5 Existing framework

**10.1.6** The new inspection methodology which reflects the new Health and Social Care Standards still continues to be rolled out on a phased basis. It commenced with Older People's Services and continues to be rolled out to Adult Care and now Children & Family Services. Currently, 26 of our services have been inspected under the new methodology. The remaining services will continue to be inspected under the current framework until inspected under the new methodology.

**10.1.7** Grades are awarded for each inspection theme and range from 1 – unsatisfactory through to 6 – Excellent.

**10.1.8** The Care Inspectorate grades have again been split between the new methodology and not new methodology. To simplify the results, for the purposes of this report and on a transitional basis only please find below the themes which have been covered in inspections across both methodology - these are set out below as at 31 January 2021:-

### 10.1.9 Not new Inspection Methodology

#### 10.1.10 Quality of Care and Support

100% of our registered services inspected on this theme achieved a grade of at least 4 = Good, with 65% receiving Very Good (5) or Excellent (6).

#### 10.1.11 Quality of Management and Leadership

91% of our registered services inspected on this theme achieved a grade of at least 4 – Good, with 61% achieving Very Good (5).

#### 10.1.12 New Inspection Methodology

#### 10.1.13 How well do we support people's wellbeing

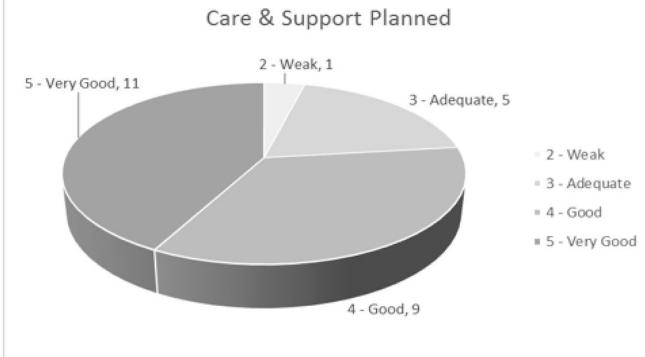
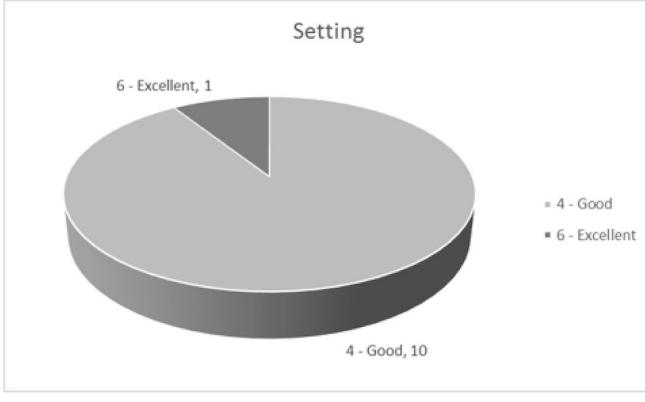
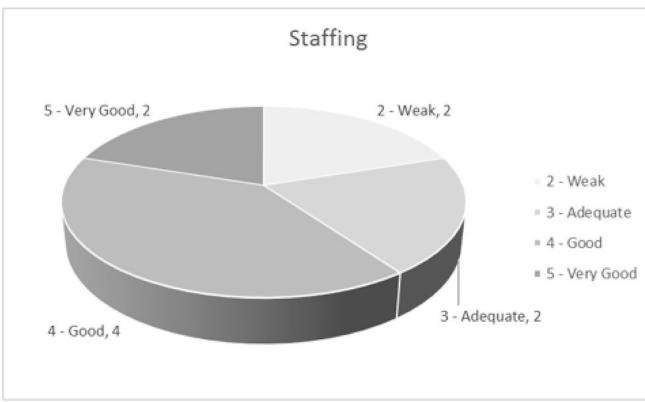
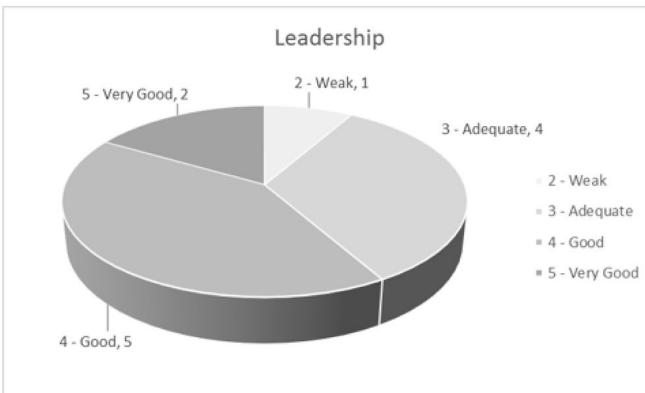
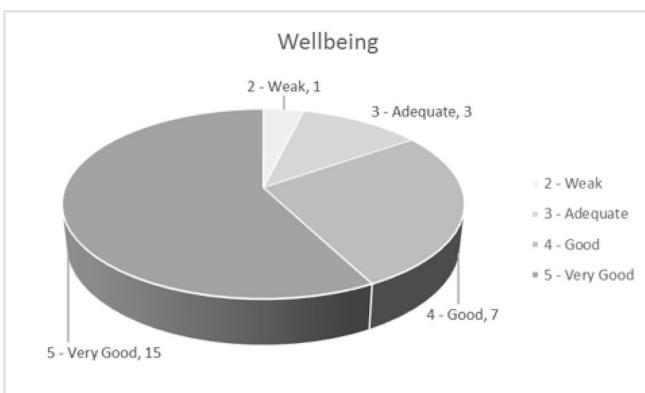
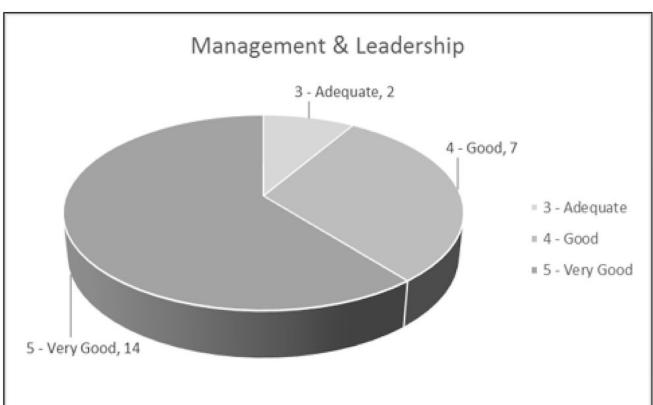
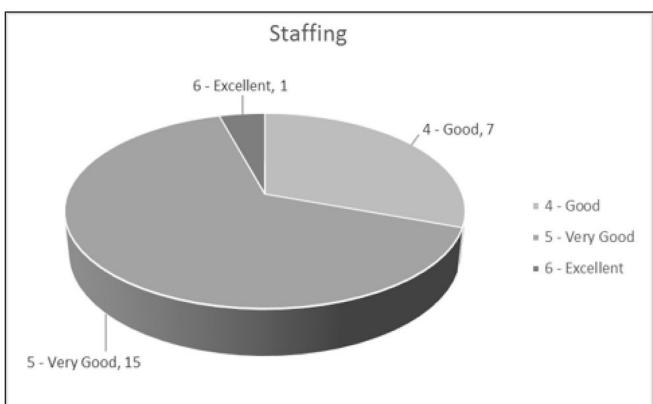
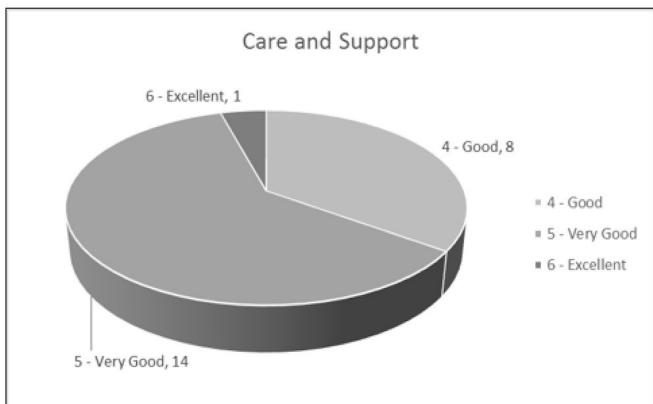
85% of our registered services inspected on this key question achieved a grade of at least 4 – Good, with 58% achieving Very Good (5).

#### 10.1.14 How well is our care and support planned

77% of our registered services inspected on this key question achieved a grade of at least 4 – Good, with 42% achieving Very Good (5).

**10.1.15** There are a very small number of services where the Care Inspectorate have reviewed against all inspection themes however for the most part this is not deemed necessary.

#### **10.1.16 CARE INSPECTORATE GRADES – NOT NEW METHODOLOGY**



#### **10.1.17 CARE INSPECTORATE GRADES - NEW METHODOLOGY**

## 10.2 Comparison of Employee numbers between 2019 and 2020

	Comparison of Employee Numbers between 2019 and February 2020							
	Full Time		Part Time		Total		Full Time Equivalent	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Operations Staff	397	408	765	755	1162	1163	897.34	904.7
Relief Staff			435	439	435	439	100.32*	98.60*
Executive, Office Support Staff	65	63	33	31	98	94	84.13	81.49
Total	462	471	1233	1225	1695	1696	1081.79	1084.78

\* Figure calculated as average FTE per month

## 10.3 People Development Training

**10.3.1** Personal and Professional development is one of the key pillars of the quality assurance at CrossReach and previous investment in on line training was hugely beneficial during the pandemic. The online learning platform very successfully supported remote learning in facilitated groups to take place. A very successful online induction process means that new recruits now join services having met the standard required in areas of infection control, safeguarding and data protection. Throughout 2020 247 staff were inducted and this has become our preferred way of delivering this training, welcomed by new employees and managers alike.

**10.3.2** A wide range of training opportunities are available from induction, moving and handling to the administration of medicines. We currently offer 43 different e-learning courses.

## 10.4 Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Statistics

**10.4.1** Of the current workforce 98% of those who require to be registered are. 78% of those registered are fully qualified with the remaining 22% working towards achieving their relevant qualification.

## 10.5 Staff Qualifications achieved

Award	Title	Total
PDA	Administration of Medication	13
PDA	Health and Social Care Supervision	5
Diploma	Business Studies	1
HNC	Childcare	1
SVQ	Social Services and Health Care L2	7
SVQ	Social Services and Health Care L3	15
SVQ	Health and Social Care L4	1
BA	Education and Social Services	1
SVQ	Management	1
SVQ	Social Care	2
Total		47

**10.5.1** In 2019, a total of 59 qualifications were achieved. In 2020 the pandemic has considerably affected the organisation's ability to assess and internally verify qualifications. However the 47 gained is a significant achievement given that many other organisations simply stopped assessing.

**10.5.2** Regrettably, the pandemic meant that CrossReach were unable to recognise our staff achievements at our annual awards ceremony. A revised format is being explored for 2021 to recognise staff achievements over this year and last year.

## 10.6. Narrative

**10.6.1** Human Resources and Organisational Development staff quickly responded to different ways of working and revised systems and processes in order to maximise support to operational services during these difficult times. Some of the changes implemented in late 2019 assisted in the

transition to remote working such as the introduction of staff email accounts and the move to issuing contracts of employment electronically.

**10.6.2** In March with the unknown impact on staff absence by Covid-19, urgent steps were taken to expand the workforce through the advertisement of relief and voluntary workers through social media campaigns. Communications were issued to:

- staff who had recently retired,
- additional hours offered to current part time and relief staff
- direct contact with industries impacted by the pandemic e.g. hospitality
- colleges and universities with nursing, health care and social work students
- congregations who had people who could help in a voluntary capacity.

**10.6.3** HR provided additional support to operational services in the screening and shortlisting of candidates. Interviews were held virtually or in outdoor locations to avoid unnecessary visitors in services.

**10.6.4** HR and Organisational Development staff have assisted the operational services by minimising operational input and supporting them to bring staff and volunteers on board quickly and safely. Central processes were streamlined while still maintaining standards and ensuring safer recruitment as well as well trained and informed staff.

**10.6.5** Many of the changes which were implemented in response to the needs of the pandemic have been well received and will be embedded into systems and processes in the longer term.

*In the name of the CrossReach Board*

THOM RIDDELL, Convener  
SARAH WOOD, Vice Convener  
VIV DICKENSON, Chief Executive Officer

## Appendix 1

### CrossReach Services

#### Adult Services

##### **Criminal Justice**

- Dick Stewart Service (Glasgow)

##### **Homeless People**

- Cale House (Inverness)
- Cunningham House (Edinburgh)
- Kirkhaven Project (Glasgow)
- Lewis Street (Stornoway)

##### **Learning Disabilities**

- Eskmills (Edinburgh)
- The Bungalow (Stonehaven)
- Threshold Edinburgh
- Threshold Glasgow
- Threshold Support Services (Larkhall)

##### **Mental Health**

- Allerton (Glasgow)
- Gaberston House (Alloa)
- Morven Day Services (Kilmarnock)

##### **Substance Misuse**

- Beechwood House (Inverness)
- Dochas Housing Support (Stornoway)
- CrossReach Abstinence Recovery Service (Glasgow)
- Rankeillor Initiative (Edinburgh)
- Tayside Support Service (Dundee)
- Whiteinch Move on Service (Glasgow)

##### **Children and Family Services**

###### **Looked After Children (7 small residential houses)**

- Carraig View (Port Glasgow)
- Dumbrock House (Strathblane)
- Finniescroft Farm (Lennoxtown)
- Mill Muir Farm House (Gargunnock)
- Mount Pleasant (Dalry)
- Rockwood House (Beith)
- The Old Lodge (Stirlingshire)
- After Care and Housing Support Service
- Erskine School Campus

##### **Children with Disabilities**

- The Mallard, The Garratt & GO2 (Glasgow)

##### **Community Services / Early Intervention**

- Daisy Chain Early Years Project (Glasgow)
- Perth Prison Visitors Support and Advice Centre
- HMYOI Polmont
- Sunflower Garden (Edinburgh)

##### **Counselling, Support & Training**

- Bluebell Perinatal Counselling Services (Glasgow)
- Edinburgh (Lothians)
- Burnside Court (Moray & Inverness)

- COSCA Counselling Training (Glasgow)
- Employee Assistance Programme (Glasgow, Edinburgh)
- Aldhammer House (Prestonpans)
- Simpson House (Edinburgh)
- Palmerston Place (Edinburgh)
- Tom Allan Centre (Glasgow)

##### Services to Older People

- Adams House (Elderslie) – *Dementia*
- Balmedie House (Balmedie)
- Bellfield (Banchory)
- Budhmor House (Portree)
- Cameron House (Inverness) – *Dementia*
- Clashfarquhar House (Stonehaven)
- Cumnor Hall (Ayr) – *Dementia*
- Glasgow Day Opportunities
- Heart for Heart, Bankfoot
- Heart for Art, Broughty Ferry
- Heart for Art, Carlisle
- Heart for Art, Edinburgh
- Heart for Art, Galashiels
- Heart for Art, Garelochhead
- Heart for Art, Glasgow (Stamperland and Broomhill)
- Heart for Art, Kirkcudbright
- Heart for Art, Musselburgh
- Heart for Art, Stonehaven
- Morlich House (Edinburgh)
- Oversteps (Dornoch)
- Queen's Bay Lodge (Edinburgh)
- South Beach House (Ardrossan)
- St Margaret's House (Polmont) – *Dementia*
- The Elms Care Home (Edinburgh) – *Dementia*
- The Oasis Bankfoot Day Service
- The Oasis Garelochhead Day Service
- The Oasis The Tryst Day Service (Pitlochry)
- Walter & Joan Gray Care Home (Shetland)
- Well Hall (Hamilton)
- Whinnieknowe (Nairn)
- Williamwood House (Glasgow) – *Dementia*

Further information on our services can be found on our website [www.Crossreach.org.uk](http://www.Crossreach.org.uk)