



Offaly Traveller Movement

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



An Roinn Leanaí agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs



Message from the Chairperson

I am delighted to present the Offaly Traveller Movement's Annual Report for 2019. Once again, it has been a very eventful and demanding year. Throughout this report you will read a lot more detail about the work of OTM, the services and programmes we deliver and the interactions between the staff and the Traveller community in Offaly. Despite the many challenges, obstacles and constraints of limited funding, we have continued to work towards our mission: to empower Travellers and build partnerships with the wider community and services and to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers, both locally and nationally.

I welcome Sandra McDonagh who took over the role of Managing Director and also the new staff members who joined our team; Martin, Community Development Men's Health Worker, Karen, Mental Health Coordinator and Joanne our Counsellor/Psychotherapist. I wish you all the best. Also, in 2019, OTM gained Charity Status, developed a new website and moved to a new, larger office space in the centre of town. We also secured a new building to expand our youth programme and to set up a Men's Shed for Traveller men in Co. Offaly.

In 2019 OTM were invited to make a written submission on the topic of Mental Health to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Key Issues affecting the Traveller Community. This was followed up with a request to attend a meeting of the Joint Committee to discuss issues relating to mental health and the impact on the Traveller community. This afforded Sandra, our MD, who is a social worker by profession and a very proud Traveller with a keen interest in the area of mental health, with an important opportunity to shine a light on the very significant issue of mental health within the Traveller community and the need for improvements in the mental health services and supports for Travellers in Offaly. Our submission and presentation identified the many challenges Travellers experience and made a number of key recommendations for policy change. Throughout the year, Offaly Traveller Movement continued to address and seek solutions to the many challenges and issues that Travellers face in their daily lives, at local and national level. Over 15,000 interventions were recorded by staff, which demonstrates the commitment and success of the team. Despite the ongoing challenges, staff work tirelessly on a range of projects consistent with our strategic plan 2015-2020 and consistently achieve much success in terms of interventions, progress and outcomes. I want to acknowledge the significant work of our loyal staff team, who are highly skilled and dedicated to their work. I would also like to sincerely thank our voluntary board of management for their continued dedication, time and effort in collectively directing the organisation's businesses, ensuring high standards of governance, transparency and accountability.

Lilly Ward
Chairperson



OTM Staff attend National Homeless protest in Dublin, 2019



Offaly Traveller Movement



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Introduction

“Irish Travellers have been part of Irish society for centuries and have a value system, language, customs and traditions which make them an identifiable group both to themselves and others. Their distinct lifestyle and culture, based on a nomadic tradition, sets them apart from the general population.”

Offaly Traveller Movement (OTM) evolved from Tullamore Traveller Movement Ltd, established in 1991 and officially launched in June 1995 as a grassroots response to the needs of Travellers living in Tullamore and the surrounding area. We are a Traveller led community development organisation working to achieve full equality and social justice for our Traveller community in partnership with the wider community. OTM offers programmes and services in health promotion, mental health, accommodation, youth and education to advance the health and welfare of Travellers and to encourage active participation in society. We provide opportunities for Travellers to develop their skills and knowledge whilst working in partnership to build the community's and service providers capacity to meet the needs of and improve outcomes for Travellers. We support Travellers to reach their full potential and develop initiatives to tackle poverty, social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination and contribute to the development of local and national policy for positive outcomes in the lives of Travellers. It is well documented that Travellers experience high levels of discrimination in Irish society, which has catastrophic effects on their daily lives. The work of Offaly Traveller Movement encompasses an absolute anti-discrimination ethos. We are deeply committed to challenging discriminatory attitudes and practices of individuals, institutions and society which is necessary to bring about positive change for Travellers.

Our Vision

OTM's vision is full equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly.

Our Mission

OTM's mission is to empower Travellers, and to work as a partnership between Travellers and settled people to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly

The following areas form the basis of both the previous and current Strategic Plan, a number of OTM studies are used as well as policy statements relating to Traveller health & wellbeing.

Key areas of work

Cultural and ethnic identity

Health and Mental Health

Accommodation

Education & youth

Enterprise and work

The OTM Annual report provides a snapshot of our work throughout the year, and highlights some key work carried out by our various departments in 2019. For more information about Offaly Traveller Movement, please visit our website on

www.otm.ie

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/OffalyTravellerMovement/>



Traveller Accommodation

Strategic priority 1.1: To achieve culturally appropriate accommodation for Travellers in County Offaly

Offaly Traveller Movement employ two part time accommodation workers who continued to work with a high volume of referrals for support regarding various housing issues in 2019. The team liaised with relevant statutory and voluntary bodies and provided support and advice to Traveller individuals and families.

The OTM Accommodation team recognised the existence of a significant gap between Traveller accommodation needs and the available supply of Traveller specific accommodation and mainstream accommodation.

2019 has once again proven to be a very challenging year due to the ongoing housing crisis and the growing number of Travellers who experience homelessness both locally and nationally. We are witnessing an increase in the number of children and adults living on the side of the road without access to basic services. Indeed the number of Travellers living without access to water, electricity and sanitation has been steadily rising for the past 3 years.

The OTM accommodation team strive to assist and support the Traveller Community in relation to ongoing issues, challenges and barriers that they encounter as one of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in Irish society. The accommodation workers advocate, support and offer advice to individuals and families on a range of accommodation and tenancy issues with the support of many statutory and voluntary agencies.

ITM AWG Visit to Offaly

In July 2019 Offaly Traveller Movement and the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) Accommodation Working Group (AWG) visited families throughout the county to witness the appalling conditions that some Travellers were living in.

Following this the ITM AWG hosted a group discussion in OTM with housing officials from Offaly County Council and a local County Councillor. Subsequently a report was submitted to the Oireachtas on their findings and evaluation of sites visits. Also individual submissions were made by OTM and the ITM AWG calling for drinking water to be supplied to an unofficial camp that was in situ for the past 20 years.

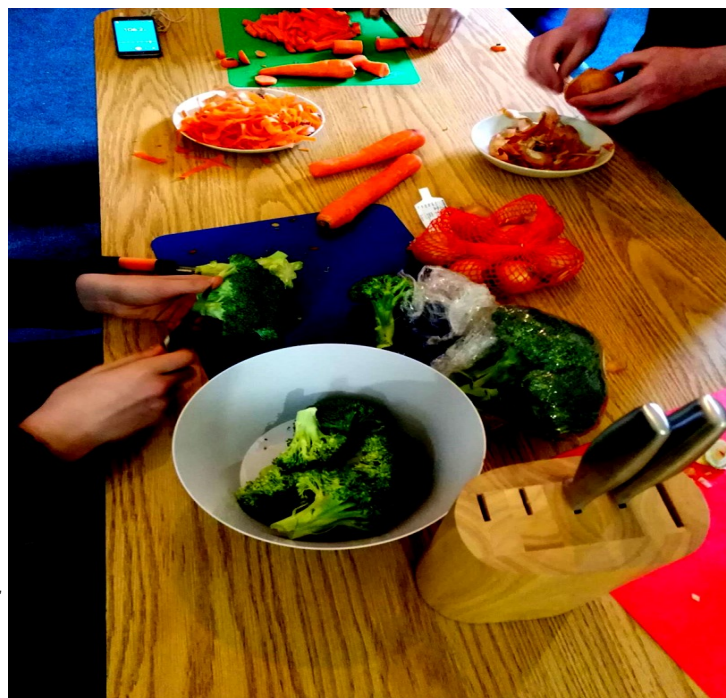
Clonamore House Residents Coffee Morning

This group met together weekly in OTM with the OTM accommodation team, Primary Healthcare staff, members of the Concerned Citizens (a group of local clergy and social activists) and residents of the Clonamore House Hotel who were in temporary emergency accommodation.

The group provided a forum for those who were homeless to chat and discuss the issues and the challenges of being homeless and the difficulty that they encountered daily. Ongoing support, advice and advocacy were offered to these Travellers.

People Cooking for People

The People Cooking for People Programme was set up by the OTM accommodation team with support from Offaly Local Development Company. The aim of this project was to provide kitchen facilities to facilitate the preparation of healthy family meals for those living in emergency accommodation who did not have access to such facilities. The participants made a small financial contribution towards the purchase of ingredients that enabled them cook their own meals. After each session the group would sit together to enjoy some of the cooked dishes and have a chat. The remaining meals were placed in containers for families to bring back to their accommodation and enjoy later in the day. This programme provided an opportunity for many Travellers living in homeless accommodation to cook nutritious meals at a low cost. It was an opportunity for families to come together, share ideas and to cook meals with their children who also participated in baking which was kindly overseen by Reverend William Hayes. The programme was a community led project and was funded by OTM and OLDC and the kitchen facilities were generously provided by the Presbyterian Church.



People Cooking for People Programme 2019

Traveller Accommodation

Strategic priority 1.1: To achieve culturally appropriate accommodation for Travellers in County Offaly

Traveller Accommodation Plan 2020 to 2024

OTM continues to advocate and make recommendations for culturally appropriate housing for Travellers in County Offaly through their input into the Traveller Accommodation Plan. The most recent plan currently being developed is the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2020 - 2025.

OTM has worked tirelessly on their submission to Offaly County Council and a number of recommendations were made some of which include the following:

- Full needs assessment of the Traveller families on the side of the road and provision to accommodate them in suitable and appropriate accommodation
- Safety Zones: 3 serviced safety zones set up; one in Birr and two in Tullamore
- Families in emergency homeless accommodation to be prioritised for suitable accommodation as a matter of urgency.
- Traveller Group Housing Schemes for Birr, Kilcormac and Tullamore.

OTM Accommodation team li-
aise with a number of agencies
such as :

Offaly County Council

RTB

Mercy Law

Threshold

MABS

**Approved Voluntary Housing Bod-
ies**

TUSLA

H.S.E

ODVSS

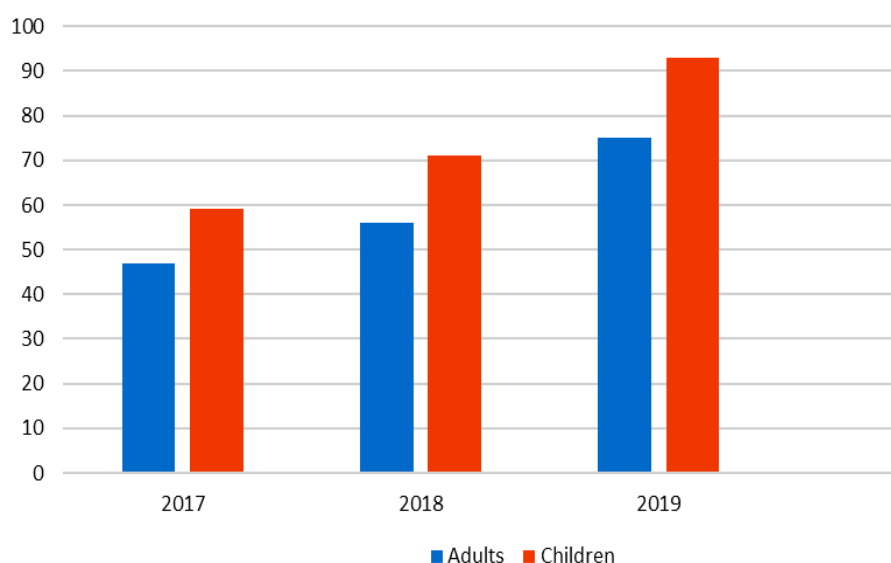
ITM

OLDC

Social Activists

Elected Representative

Annual count of Families living in Offaly without basic services i.e., running water, electricity, toilets



OTM Accommodation workers Sarah & Sorcha

Traveller Primary Health Care programme (PHCP)

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly

The Traveller Primary Health Care programme (PHCP) is a partnership between OTM and the HSE. Following an initial training period (1998) the programme was set up in 2003. It is a community development health promotion model which promotes participation and collective ownership by Travellers in matters affecting the health and well-being of their community. There are 7 peer Community Health Workers (CHWs) employed on the programme and they provide health promotion information in a culturally sensitive way to Travellers living in Co. Offaly.

The heart of the CHWs work is outreaching to local Traveller families. Throughout the year the CHWs delivered health information on a wide range of subjects including: mental health, cardiovascular, diabetes, asthma, dental care, HPV and Flu vaccine, child safety and development, cancer prevention and substance misuse.

During the year the CHWs worked with over 350 families and delivered 6163 health interventions. The peer workers were also involved in developing Traveller specific materials, representing Traveller issues on a variety of forums including local and national decision making structures and in organising health trainings and cultural events for the Traveller community.

In 2019 the CHWs participated in a number of trainings, workshops and events. These included Mabs, budgeting and money advice training, health and wellbeing training, community development training, an information morning on fostering for Travellers and a presentation by TJ Hogan, Accommodation worker, ITM. The CHWs also attended a number of events, these include a talk on the history and genetics of Travellers in Ireland, a seminar on responding to racism, the launch of the Traveller Mental Health Network strategic plan at NUI, Galway and the AGM of the Irish Traveller Movement in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. They visited the new Tusla offices in Tullamore and got an overview of work carried out in Tusla by the various social work departments. The peer workers were also involved in helping to develop Traveller specific fostering resources with Tusla and updating child safety materials with the HSE.

Throughout the year the CHWs also organised a number of programs and events for the local Traveller community. They worked with the Mental Health Coordinator to organise stool making classes in Banagher and Tullamore which ran for 6 weeks in each location. They helped to organise the float and walked in the parade on St. Patrick's Day. They also organised 2 x flower arranging classes, a wreath making class and a shopping trip for Christmas. They worked with the Horse Project Coordinator to set up a Mother and Toddler group for families living on the official site in Tulla-

more and hosted a Porridge Party to raise funds for charity.

They brought out information to the community and helped to organise a five day pilgrimage to Medjugorje for the Traveller community. Some of the CHWs travelled to Medjugorje and had responsibility for working with their clients during the trip. The CHWs were also involved in organising the hugely successful Traveller Pride event in Charleville Castle, which was attended by over 300 people. They hosted a visit from Cavan Traveller organisation to OTM, organised a social club outing to St. Oliver Plunkett's Shrine and attended a staff development educational trip to the Botanical gardens and Glasnevin cemetery



Trip to St. Oliver Plunkett Shrine in Drogheda 2019



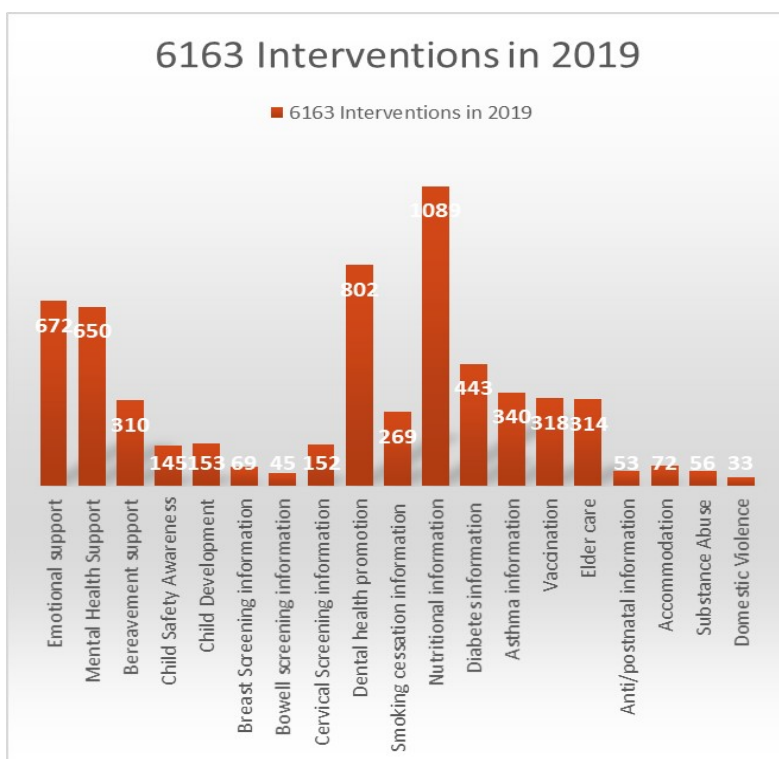
OTM visit to TUSLA Offices in Tullamore 2019

Traveller Primary Health Care programme (PHCP)

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly

Also in 2019 the CHWs continued to deliver a number of Cultural Awareness trainings, these included 2 x groups of visiting American students, staff and young people at Youth Work Ireland, to staff at the Bannon Centre Tullamore and to a group of fostering social workers as well as Tulsa professionals.

At a national level the CHWs delivered 2 x Cultural Awareness sessions to the Home School Liaison Officers, one at the Hudson Bay Athlone and the other at City West Hotel in Dublin.



2019 Interventions

- 672 Emotional support
- 650 Mental Health Support
- 310 Bereavement support
- 145 Child Safety Awareness
- 153 Child Development
- 69 Breast Screening information
- 45 Bowel screening information
- 152 Cervical Screening information
- 802 Dental health promotion
- 269 Smoking cessation information
- 1089 Nutritional information
- 443 Diabetes information
- 340 Asthma information
- 318 Vaccination
- 314 Elder care
- 53 Anti/postnatal information
- 72 Accommodation
- 56 Substance Abuse
- 33 Domestic Violence



Shopping trip Christmas 2019

Traveller Public Health Nurse

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly

Role of the Public Health Nurse for Travellers

Nuala Hogan, Public Health Nurse in Offaly Traveller Movement seen a continued increase in the demand for the nursing service from Travellers which is a positive result of our service delivery. The cultural understanding and partnership are vital within Nuala's professional practice which helps her to predict the client's needs accurately and find the best ways to enhance their engagement with health services. The principal aims when working with Traveller clients is to tackle health inequalities and to ensure inclusivity. Health issues facing Travellers differ to those of the settled community - it is about building and maintaining trust, which is essential for our outcomes to be successfully achieved. If one defines health in a holistic way, the determinants of Travellers' poor health status needs to be addressed, and as a health professional, Nuala takes on an advocacy role to challenge these determinants.

The public health nursing (PHN) role in partnership with OTM has many diverse components to it. A large part of it is working as a Health Co-Coordinator in the Primary Health Care Programme along sides the 7 Peer Community Health Workers (CHW). Nuala devises and rolls-out Traveller specific health education programmes with them. The need for Traveller specific programmes as outlined in the All Ireland Traveller Health Status Study (2007-2010). The CHWs then deliver them to the broader Traveller community in a culturally appropriate manner. Some programmes in 2019 covered varying topics, such as Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), flu vaccination, diabetes and retinal screening, child safety awareness, asthma/cardiovascular health promotion, mental health and wellbeing. All of these programmes are pre and post-evaluated and all of the data collected was reported to the Traveller Health Unit.



PHN Nuala Hogan with attendees at the OTM Traveller Pride Festival, 2019

2019 Initiatives and Programmes

- ◇ Participated in the Local Crisis Response Plan and delivered a presentation in the Tullamore Court Hotel to almost 100 people which included both voluntary and statutory agencies. A consultation process and feedback cycle took place after at this event. As a member of the Local Crisis Response Team, both the OTM Social Worker and PHN visited clients one-to-one and set up services on behalf of the families involved.
- ◇ The PHN completed extensive Sexual Health training which allowed for delivery of the HPV vaccination programme with the Peer CHWs in OTM which they rolled out in the community.
- ◇ Engaged with HSE Communications Officer and representatives regarding the new Traveller Specific Child Safety Awareness Programme materials. The PHN was involved in the discussions and input into the new Child Safety Awareness Program (CSAP) materials.
- ◇ Cultural Awareness Training delivered to American students alongside the team at OTM. Further Cultural Awareness Training was delivered to the Community Mental Health Services at The Bannon Centre in Tullamore with two of our Peer CHWs. The overall aim was to create awareness around Traveller culture and ethnicity.
- ◇ In May 2019 the PHN delivered a presentation on Domestic Violence to Offaly Domestic Violence Service (OVDSS) and other voluntary and statutory agencies with two of the CHWs at the Bridge House Hotel in Tullamore.
- ◇ One of the main highlights in 2019 was the OTM trip to Medjugorje with OTM staff and clients from the wider Traveller community, which a notably memorable trip a memorable trip

Traveller Public Health Nurse

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly



PHN Nuala and CHW Pinkie presenting at the ODVSS seminar on Domestic Violence and Ethnic Women, 2019

In 2019, the Public Health Nurse in OTM continued to take both social and clinical referrals.

The PHN also acted as a conduit between mainstream services and Traveller health to encourage and promote health and social gain for Travellers. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to increase service up-take.

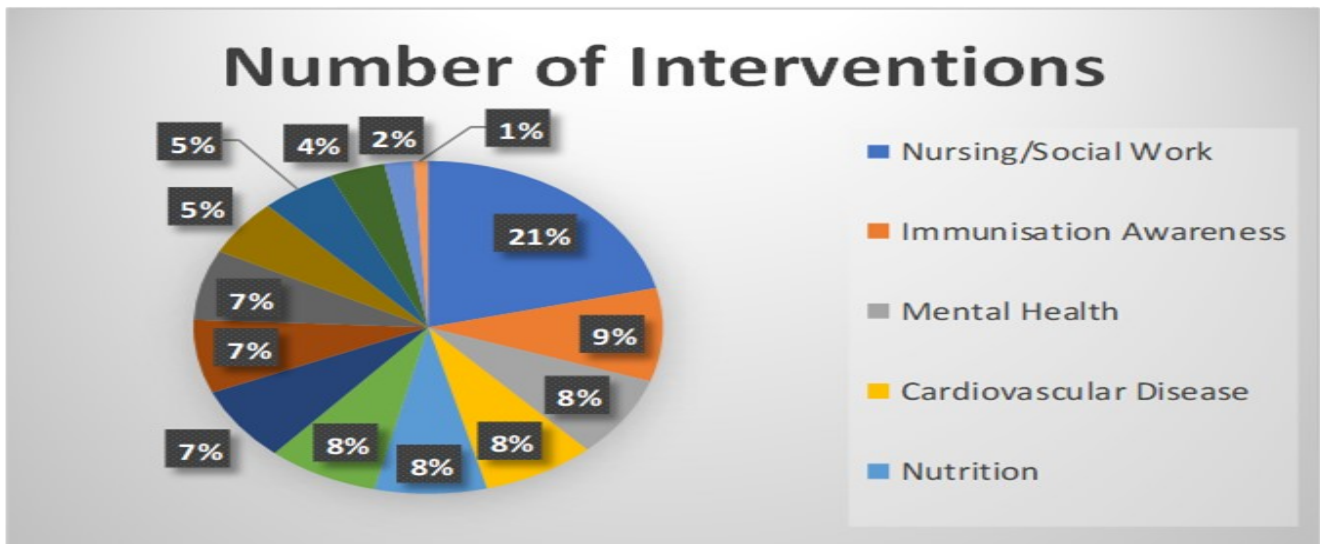
OTM Model

An inter-professional model of practice was set up in OTM seven years ago around the nursing/social model of care continued in 2019. It encompasses a complete holistic nursing approach with social assessments that are linked to poor accommodation, poor access to health, social care and for clients in crisis. Our work is successful and most importantly provides excellent outcomes for our clients.

2019 Initiatives and Programmes

- ◇ OTM PHN carried out several health screening clinics which are part of the clinical role. Health screening and promotion was provided to a large group of Traveller men in June 2019 in partnership with the Men's worker at OTM. Blood pressures/pulse taking and blood sugars were completed, and health consultations were also provided.
- ◇ The PHN delivered workshops and health education talks to the Women's Group in both Birr and Banagher on Cardiovascular disease and diabetes and carried out blood pressure screening at both events.
- ◇ The PHN also presented with the CHWs at the Public Participation Meeting for County Offaly in the Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore. There were 80 attendees on the night with a questions and answers session after all the speakers/services had delivered. An event like this creates awareness for all participants on the night and for health workers it helps raise the profile of Travellers, breaks down barriers and associated discrimination.

PHN Interventions 2019



Traveller Men's Health

Martin Houlihan took up the post as the Traveller Men's Health worker at the end of March 2019. Martin worked to raise awareness of the poor health status of Traveller men and to create opportunities for these men to participate fully in the project. During the year Martin carried out a survey to gather information on the needs of Traveller men in the community and to develop suitable projects to address any identified needs. He worked with Lesley Jones and Frank Kavanagh in relation to the Horse Project and the possibility of setting up a Travellers Men's Shed.

Men's Social Groups

Knowing the alarming high rates of suicide and poor mental health of Traveller Men it was important to consult with the men and work towards finding opportunities that focused on empowerment and increased self-esteem. With this in mind we looked at the Horse project and also at establishing a Traveller Men's Shed in Co Offaly. This was done with the idea of providing Traveller Men with a safe place to come and learn from each other and also to provide a space where the men could just come in for a cup of tea and a chat. In 2019 Offaly Traveller Movement, with support from the HSE, secured a premises and began the groundwork for setting up this project. There was a great deal of interest in the Traveller Men's Shed and work on this project brought more ideas and insight into the needs of local Traveller Men.

Martin was also very involved in continuing the work of the Men's Health Networks which consist of the four Counties Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Longford. Traveller men from each county were represented at these meetings and this was a good way to communicate issues and concerns as well as to share information on what was happening in each county. The Network Meetings usually invited a guest speaker and promoted Traveller health and wellbeing.

Physical Health

Martin linked in with Offaly Sports Partnership to explore opportunities to improve Traveller Men's Health and it was agreed to host two events one in Tullamore and one in Birr. These events were open to all Traveller men from ages of 18 years upwards and the activities that were organised were suitable to all ages. These included Walking, Soccer, Volleyball, Badminton and Botcha. This was done with the intention to run these events throughout 2020 and make them successful and fun while getting all the benefits of a healthy mind and body. We also carried out Health checks for Traveller men during Men's health week in 2019 and organised the mobile Irish Heart Foundation health clinic to come to our Traveller pride event at Charleville Castle.



OTM Mens Health Worker Martin Houlihan



The late Davey Ward, father and grandfather and great friend of OTM who sadly passed in 2019

Traveller Horse Project

Horse Project

Lesley Jones works part time on OTM's Horse Project. Travellers in Offaly have a long and rich history of keeping horses. The programme targets Traveller men who have an interest and passion for horses but who are other-wise disengaged with health services. The focus of the Horse Project in 2019 was intergenerational work and on projects that fostered father and son interactions and knowledge sharing. The overall aim is to provide a culturally responsive method of improving health out-comes for Traveller men.

The impact of the Horse Project

- ❑ Increased engagement of Traveller men in relation to the social determinants of their health
- ❑ Increased awareness of and access to existing health services and health professionals in Offaly
- ❑ Increased access to and interaction with the OTM's Men's Health Programmes, Primary Healthcare Team and other specialist services
- ❑ Capacity building and leadership roles for Traveller men
- ❑ Improvement of men's physical and mental health through the interaction with the horse.



OTM Horse Project worker Lesley Jones with the late Davey Ward, St Patricks day 2019



Traveller Mental Health

Strategic priority 2.2: To improve Traveller mental health and wellbeing

Travelling to Wellbeing

Travelling to Wellbeing (T2WB) continues to offer a dedicated culturally appropriate, clinical, therapeutic, recovery focused mental health service for Travellers in Offaly. This service is provided by way of individual and group support, family support, crisis intervention, mental health recovery programs, advocacy and referral pathways to other services for Travellers throughout the County.

Travelling to Wellbeing continues to work in partnership and co-production with a range of services, promoting and developing mental health training and local community mental health initiatives, while utilizing the departments in OTM, Men's Health, Accommodation, Community Development, Public Health Nursing and Primary Healthcare to address the needs of Travellers who engage with the service.

This year saw the addition of the Travelling to Wellbeing Mental Health Coordinator, Karen Boylan. Karen joined the team in April 2019. Karen has been working in the area of mental health for several years. Her work and experience entails working in all aspects of wellbeing, mental health and recovery within a whole community infrastructure. Karen is committed to human rights and social justice through her work. We are delighted to welcome Karen to the Travelling to Wellbeing Service and Offaly Traveller Movement.

2019 again saw an increase in Travellers engaging with the Travelling to Wellbeing Service. Community and partnership work were also prioritised this year. The weekly peer support groups continued in Birr, Tullamore and Banagher and in each of these groups a combination of mental health, physical health, suicide awareness educational supports and wellbeing activities were offered. We would like to thank the Laois Offaly Education and Training Board and Offaly Local Development Company for supporting our groups.

Travelling to Wellbeing, in partnership with a range of local organisations, organised and supported a varied programme of talks and activities to promote a positive understanding of mental health and reduce the stigma associated with it. One such example in 2019; to mark World Suicide Prevention Day, T2WB organised an event in the Tullamore Court Hotel to remember those you have died by suicide and their families. People were invited to bring a token, memory or photograph of their loved one and then invited to light a candle as we remembered them. In partnership with the Bereavement Liaison Service Pieta House, this event was welcomed and well attended by the Traveller Community in Offaly



Peer support group activities at OTM, including stool weaving and wreath making

Traveller Mental Health

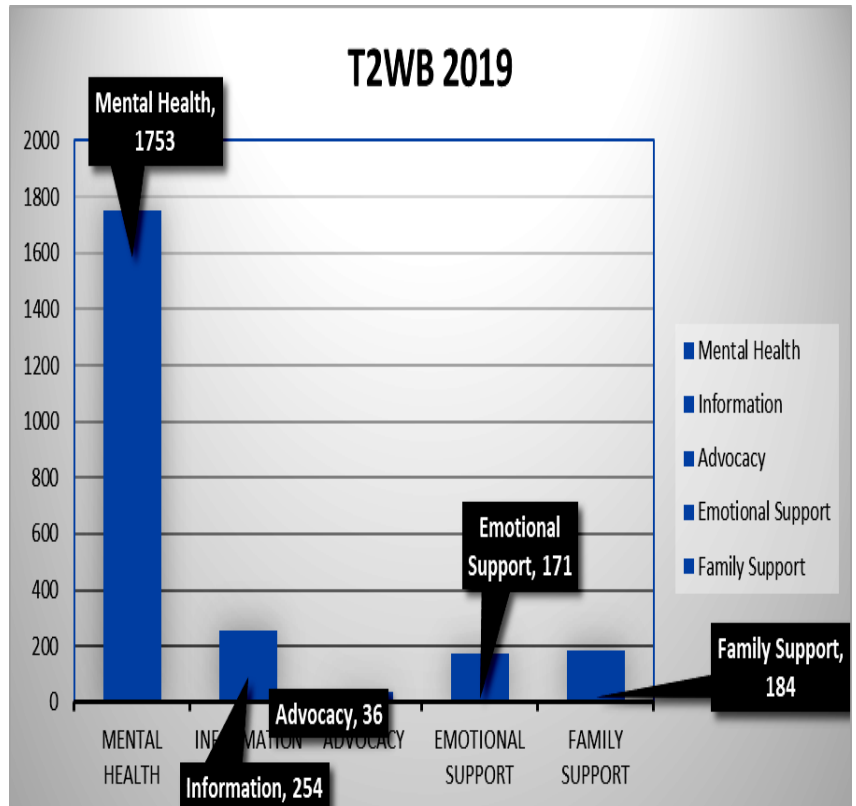
Strategic priority 2.2: To improve Traveller mental health and wellbeing

Travelling to Wellbeing

In 2019 we were delighted to be invited to exhibit the T2WB service at the Exhibition of Recovery Initiatives Learning Set.

Learning Sets encourage a creative approach to learning by offering opportunities for people who attend mental health services, their family members/ carers/ supporters and those who provide services to come together to share experiences and learn from each other so we can make our services better for everyone.

Offaly Travellers continue to be represented by Travelling to Wellbeing at the Irish Association of Social Workers, Women’s Mental Health Network, National Traveller Mental Health Network, Concerned Citizens Steering Group, National Travellers Women’s Forum, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and the Offaly Minding Our Mental Health Working Group.



Travelling to Wellbeing Interventions 2019

T2WB is dedicated to working in Partnership with like-minded organisations to participate and deliver mental health activities. These include See Change and the Green Ribbon Campaign, a Mental Health and Wellbeing Pilgrimage and events to mark World Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health Day.



Flower arranging classes OTM, December 2019

Traveller Youth & Education

Strategic Goal 4: To support Traveller youth and education

OTM Youth Project

Offaly Traveller Movement youth project provides young Travellers with informal, social and educational support, and a platform for youth development. OTM youth aim to respond to the needs of young Travellers in Offaly through the imperative provision of culturally appropriate social outlet, and a safe space, for those from the ages of 10 and over. OTM youth programmes engage in a process with young Travellers which empowers and builds their capacity to actively participate in community decision making, providing a social and leisure outlet for Traveller youth. Our work encompasses raising awareness and developing understanding of the issues affecting young Travellers and increasing young people’s self-esteem and confidence. OTM developed their Youth Strategy in 2018 which continued to inform our work in 2019, in conjunction with the outcome areas of the National Youth Strategy 2015-2020.

In 2019, OTM Youth continued to provide a culturally appropriate youth service to young Travellers in Offaly, which included the provision of weekly drop in clubs and peer support. programmes and projects, summer camp and seasonal events. Throughout the year, we recorded a total of 729 youth interventions with activities including capacity building, well-being, team building, creativity, drama, film, health etc. Drop in clubs included the provision of homework support and recreational activities.

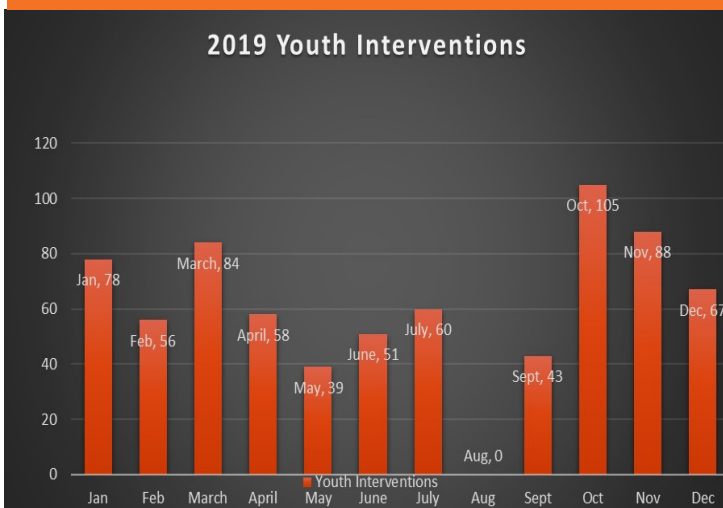
We maintained links with relevant youth services, schools, educational institutions, and provided one to one support and advice to young people. OTM Youth engaged with national youth initiatives including SpunOut and Youth Work Ireland. Members of OTM Youth joined the Irish Traveller Movements Youth Forum, advocating, and highlighting the issues that affect young Travellers lives, and seeking opportunities to influence policy levels.

2019 proved to be an exciting year for OTM Youth, who engaged in a range of programmes and projects, challenged attitudes, and empowered themselves to successfully push Traveller youth issues out into the public arena. In March, OTM Youth developed, produced and shot their own short film “Take Two” on smoking prevention and awareness, for the Irish Cancer Society’s national film competition. Throughout April, they participated on the XHALE Smoking Prevention training, and successfully completed the programme. In May, they subsequently won this overall national award, and received much publicity in national media.



OTM Youth project receiving their prize for first place junior category in the National XHALE Youth film competition at the Helix, Dublin

Youth Interventions for 2019 month by month analysis



Traveller Youth & Education

Strategic Goal 4: To support Traveller youth and education

In September, the group began working on an original song project, launched in October to mark the annual International day for the Eradication of Poverty. The group “Little Minceirs” was formed, and their song, “Labels” was recorded in studio, with an accompanying music video produced. The song, which challenged prejudice and highlighted issues affecting Travellers, was released on Spotify, You Tube and Apple Music in November, and was well received locally and nationally. Post song release, in November and December, Little Minceirs engaged in a host of appearances and performances, in their quest to challenge discrimination in society. They were interviewed, and performed on Midlands Radio 3, and Athlone Community Radio and featured in local and national newspapers. They performed at Maynooth Universitys “Turn to Teaching” graduation ceremony, and engaged with the College Connect programme. They performed in TU University at the launch of the governments “ Travellers Action Plan to Promote Traveller Participation in Higher Education” with Minister for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O Connor. Some key activities of OTM youth for the year included:

Highlights of 2019

Feb: Art and drama activities in drop in clubs.

March: OTM Youth participated in the St Patricks day Parade.

April: Trained in XHALE Smoking Prevention programme.

May: Announced as the overall junior category winners of the XHALE National Short Film Competition with the Irish Cancer Society.

June: Traveller Pride Family Fun day at Charleville Castle

July: OTM Youth Summer Camp, including trips to Baysports Water Park in Athlone and a orienteering course and zip lining at Castle Comber Discovery Park.

Sept: Joined the ITM Traveller Youth Forum

October: Official Launch of song “Labels” by the Little Minceirs in the Central Hotel Tullamore

Exchange House National Education Awards: Eight young people received awards for Junior and Leaving cert attainment at the annual awards ceremony at Exchange House, Dublin.

Consultation workshop with SpunOut.ie on designing Traveller specific youth content.

November: Trip to Athlone, through College Connect, which included visit to the Traveller Voice Magazine and Athlone Community Radio. Performances at Turn to Teaching graduation and launch of new Travellers in Education Strategy in TUI, Blanchardstown.

December: Youth trip to Mullingar ice Skating rink, with Birr and Tullamore groups.



The “Little Minceirs” interview at Athlone Community Radio on the release of their song “Labels”



OTM Youth pictured at TU, Dublin with Minister Mary Mitchell O Connor where they performed at the launch of the government Action plan for Travellers in Higher Education, 2019



Birr Youth ice skating in Mullingar, ice rink , Christmas 2019

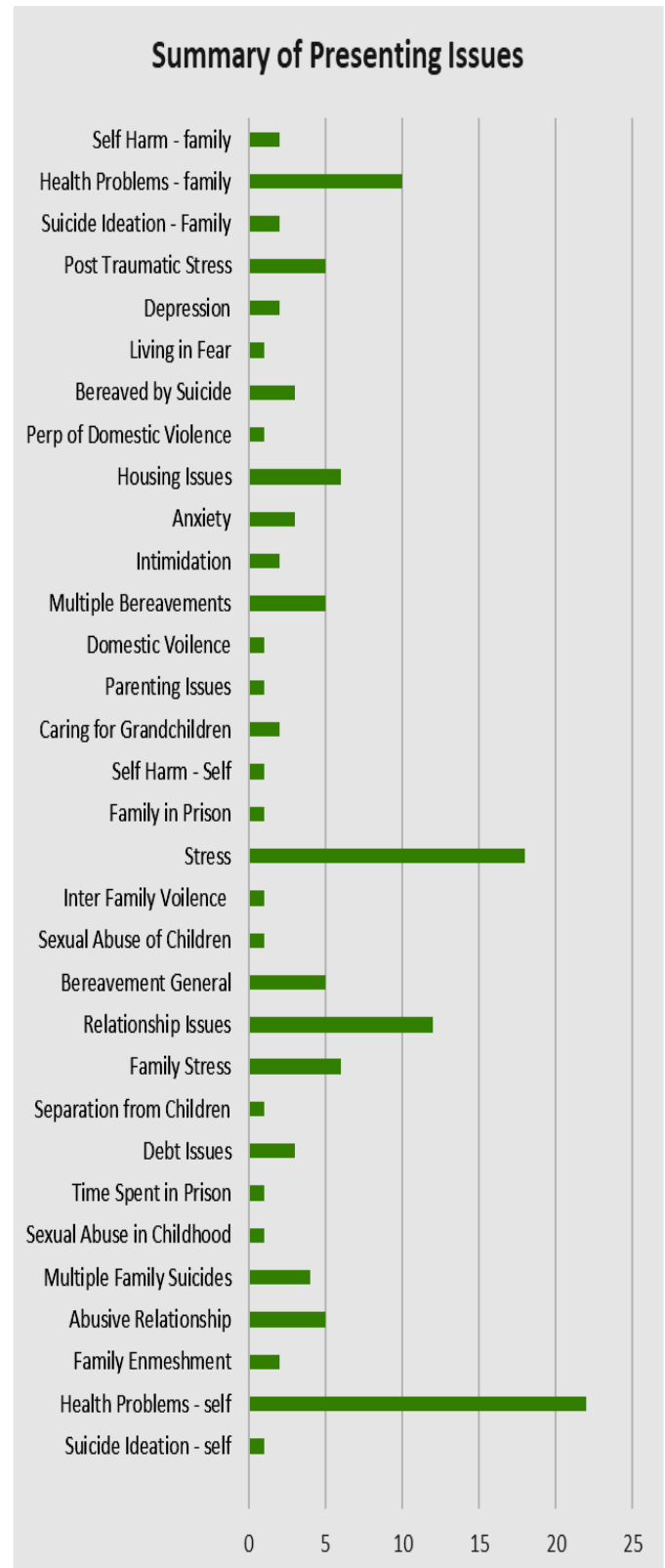
Traveller Counselling Service

2019 has been a very busy year for the Offaly Traveller Movement Counselling service. As we work with the most marginalized and disadvantaged community in the county, we ensure that our services and programmes are culturally appropriate, innovative and creative and fully engaged with by the local Traveller community. When a Traveller presents to our service it is not just with one issue, it's a multitude of complex issues that have escalated over many years due to a lack of engagement with services.

The issues that people present with include: suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, self-harm, issues relating to abuse, housing issues, relationship breakdown, family issues, bereavement and anxiety to name a few. Offaly Traveller Movement with limited funding from TUSLA continue to offer a culturally inclusive counselling service to individuals, families and children who are in crisis and require an immediate response to ensure that they are supported without delay and therefore continue to engage in order to improve their mental health and wellbeing. We have entered a partnership with the National Traveller Counselling Service to ensure that our counselling service in Offaly is culturally appropriate and in accordance to best practice.

In 2019, 15 individuals, 1 couple and 1 family engaged in counselling support and 2 in Therapeutic Play.

Our counsellor has an understanding of Traveller lifestyle, culture, norms and traditions. This ensures that service users' culture is taken into account, respected and understood. It is now recognised internationally that it is crucial to take culture into account when providing a counselling service to members of a minority or other ethnic group, as the norms, values and traditions of that group will not be the same as the majority community and their experience will be very different. Not to acknowledge this difference could reinforce the discrimination, inequality and lack of respect which the members of that group have experienced in wider society. The counselling service is available to all members of the Traveller community and is available in two locations in the county on a bi-weekly basis (Tullamore and Birr) for 3 hours. This is to ensure that Travellers in both areas have access to the service.



Culture and Ethnicity

Strategic priority: 6.1 To promote Traveller culture in County Offaly.



OTM Traveller Pride Festival & Family Fun day 2019

The OTM Traveller Pride Festival, provided yet another year of festivities in 2019, which highlighted an array of positive aspects of Traveller culture and celebrated unity amongst both the settled and Traveller communities. Entertainment included cultural history displays, live concert, games, quaits, bbq and ghost tours of Charleville castle. For children there was face painting, games, and races. The festival was one of many Traveller Pride events held throughout the country on National Traveller Pride week. and each year OTM hosts a vibrant celebration of Traveller culture. The 2019 event also proved to be a wonderful, celebratory of cultural expression, pride and sharing our heritage within our wider communities.

St. Patricks day Parade 2019

OTM participates in the St Patrick's Day parade in Tullamore each year and this year was no exception. This years parade theme was "The Future", with OTM staff and students on placement putting together a vibrant float to illustrate our overall mission and vision for a future inclusive and equal society. Dressed as graduates, solicitors, nurses and teachers, OTM illustrated a vision of more Travellers in valued careers and industries, Young people carried giant sized postcards addressed to a "Future Ireland" recognising positive outcomes for Travellers in a future context in terms of education, health, mental health and equality. The focal point of our float was "Lady Justice" who carried her scales of justice, blindfolded, to represent the need for "blind justice" and a fairer society.



Staff Team of 2019

Name	Position	Profile
Sandra McDonagh	Managing Director/ Mental Health Social Worker	Full Time/Part time
Karen Guilfoyle	Financial Administrator	Part Time
Pascal Delaney	Administrator	Part Time
Bridget McInerney	Administration Support	Part Time
Margaret Lovett	Health Co-ordinator	Part Time
Nuala Hogan	Health Co-ordinator/ Public Health Nurse	Part Time
Mary McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Brigid McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Pinkie McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Sarah McDonagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Geraldine Ward	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Lily Kavanagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Celine McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Karen Boylan	Mental Health Co-ordinator	Full Time
Joanne Saunders	Counsellor/Psychotherapist	Part Time
Sorcha Lewis	C.D Accommodation Worker	Part Time
Sarah O' Brien	Accommodation Worker	Part Time
Saranne Lovett	Youth Worker	Part Time
Elizabeth Doyle	Youth Worker	Part Time
Frank Kavanagh/ Martin Houlihan	C.D Men's Health Worker	Part Time
Lesley Jones	Horse Project Facilitator	Part Time
Chantelle Ward	CE Placement: Receptionist	Part Time
Rebecca Gavigan	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Full Time (April-June)
Elizabeth Walsh	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Full Time (April- June)
Emma Hughes	Student Placement NUI Maynooth	Full Time (Sept - Dec)
Alannah Buckley	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Part Time (Oct- Dec)

Board of Management

BOM MEMBERS 2019

Chairperson: Lilly Ward

Vice Chairperson: Mary Rose Kerrigan

Secretary: Marianne O'Shea

Treasurer: Liam Rodger

William McDonagh

Thomas McDonagh

Susan Fay

Chris McDonagh

Anne Phyllida White Clarke (Resigned October 2019)

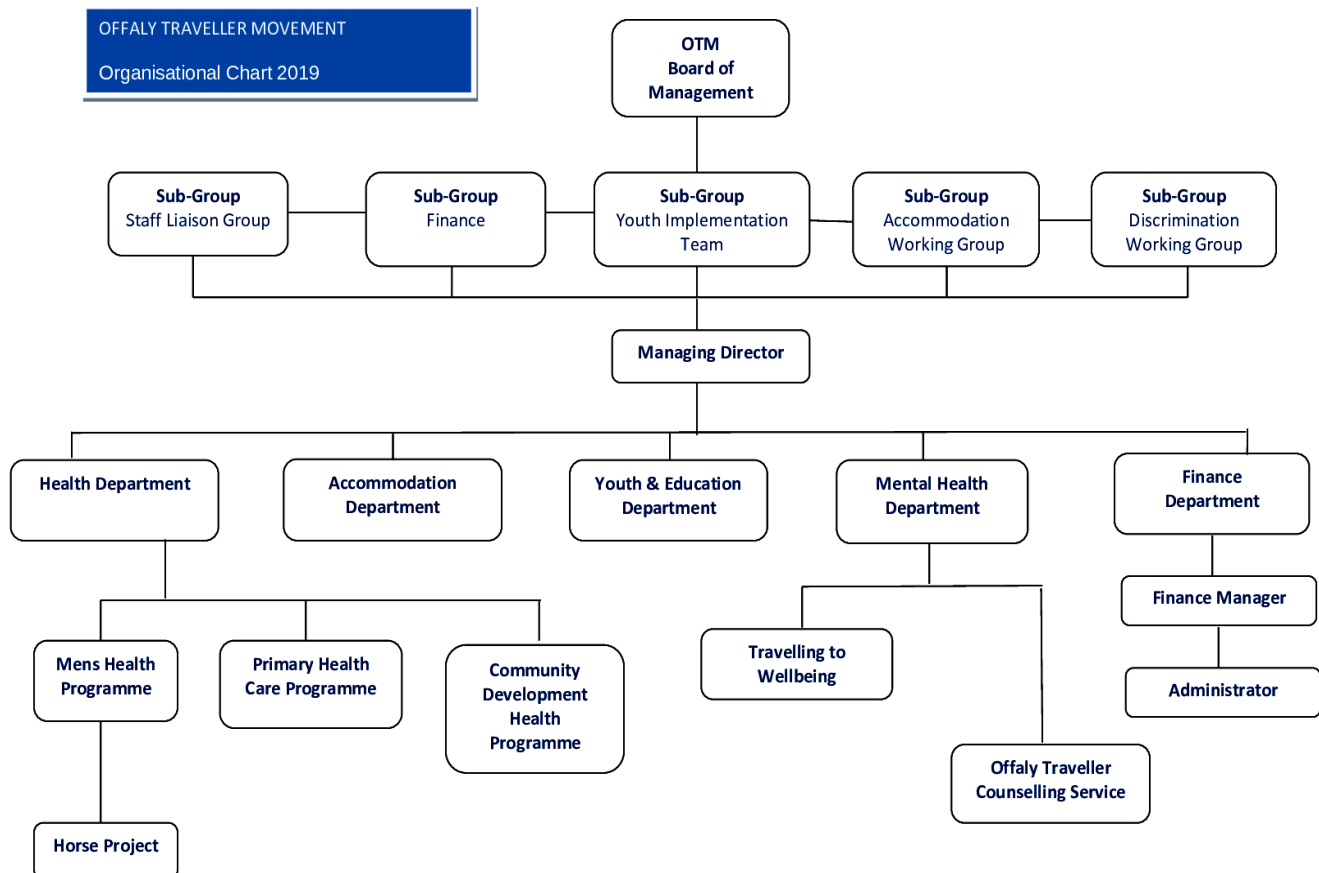
OTM Staff Representative Sarah O'Brien



Offaly Traveller Movement

Offaly Traveller Movement Board of Management
 oversees the strategic direction, financial management and staff development of the organisation

Organisational Chart



Representing and Networking

During 2019 OTM was represented on the following external bodies

Birr Travellers & Settled People Group

Committee for the International Eradication of Poverty

European Anti Poverty Network

European Network Against Racism (ENAR)

Irish Traveller Movement Accommodation Sub Group

Irish Traveller Movement Central Group

Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC)

Midlands Regional Mens Network

Midlands Region Health Network (MHN)

Midlands Regional Drugs Task Force Education and Prevention Sub Committee

National Traveller Health Network

National Traveller Health Network (NTHN)

National Traveller Partnership, both as a Board member and on operations committee (NTP)

National Traveller Suicide Awareness Project Steering Group

National Traveller Women's Forum Board

Offaly County Council

Offaly Domestic Violence Support Services (ODVSS)

Offaly Mental Health Talk Week Committee

Offaly Traveller Interagency Group (TIG)

Public Participation Network

Regional Traveller Health Unit and finance sub-committee (THU)

Travelling to Wellbeing Steering Group

Tullamore School Completion Programme Board of Management

University College Dublin

OTM are members of:

Community Workers Cooperative

European Anti Poverty Network

European Network Against Racism

Irish Traveller Movement

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

National Traveller Partnership

The Wheel



OTM attending St Marys Youth Centre Cultural Information day 2019

Financial Report 2019

Tullamore Travellers Movement Company Limited by Guarantee

Schedule of Income and Expenditure for the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€	€
Note 1: Income		
NTP	100,124	100,125
Department of Children and Youth Affairs - SPY	47,290	47,290
Health Service Executive	264,011	252,240
HSE Mental Health-T2WB	71,539	47,731
Exchange House - T2WB	-	6,500
TUSLA	7,779	7,779
Traveller Pride Week	2,000	2,000
OLDC	350	-
UN Poverty Grant	3,000	2,999
General Income	25,602	23,781
Credit Union	650	400
Offaly Homeless Event Offaly Co Co	-	2,054
Irish Heritage School	-	1,000
Learn International	-	300
Mens Health Network	-	-
Lotto Grants	3,300	-
Miscellaneous Grants	1,000	-
NUI Maynooth Grant	6,575	-
	<u>533,220</u>	<u>494,199</u>

Tullamore Travellers Movement Company Limited by Guarantee

**Income and Expenditure Account
for the financial year ended 31 December 2019**

	Notes	31 December 2019		31 December 2018	
		€	€	€	€
Income	1		533,220		494,199
 Expenditure					
NTP	2	100,124		100,125	
Department of Children and Youth Affairs - SPY	3	47,288		47,290	
Health Service Executive	4	226,079		232,033	
T2WB	5	61,197		53,161	
TUSLA	6	7,431		6,216	
Traveller Pride Week	7	2,051		2,000	
OLDC Grant	8	350		-	
UN Poverty Grant	9	3,026		2,999	
General Expenses	10	38,612		19,431	
Credit Union	11	600		400	
Offaly Homeless Event Offaly Co Co	12	-		2,054	
Other Grants	13	810		-	
Maynooth Research	14	6,575		-	
National Lottery Grant	15	1,300		-	
			<u>495,443</u>		<u>465,709</u>
Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year			<u><u>37,777</u></u>		<u><u>28,490</u></u>

