

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2025

The final motion (1) was circulated to all members and was available to download from the IASW website.

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Miriam Mooney **Seconded by:** Karima Abbes

That IASW uses its influence with IFSW to request that IFSW speaks and acts in solidarity with Palestinian Social Workers and Health Care Workers who are being abducted, imprisoned and killed by Israel.

**Explanation:** Ample evidence from UN; WHO and independent Media reports that Israel is targeting Social Workers, Health care workers as well as children and civilians in Palestine. The IFSW has a moral obligation to support Social Workers when their rights are being so eroded and violated. The IASW also has this obligation thus the IASW should press IFSW to act.

**Poll Results:** motion 1 was passed with:

- 56 votes in favor
- 0 against
- 4 abstention

### AGM MOTIONS 2024

The final motions (1-5) were circulated to all members and were available to download from the IASW website.

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Dearbhla Ní Chúláin **Seconded by:** Oliver Brockmann

That the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW) calls upon both the Minister of the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science and Directors of Social Work Programmes at universities across Ireland, along with their associated staff, to ensure and advocate for the implementation of a significant reduction in tuition fees for social work courses.

**Explanation:** Social work is fundamentally committed to promoting social justice,

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human rights, and equity. Central to the profession are the principles of diversity and inclusivity, and the goal to dismantle systemic and institutional barriers. However, the rising tuition fees for social work programmes across Irish universities starkly contradict these values, imposing significant barriers to entry, particularly for those from marginalised communities whom the profession seeks to support and represent. This motion outlines urgent reasons why a substantial reduction in these fees is essential:

1. **Critical Shortage of Social Workers:** Social work as a profession is currently facing significant challenges in terms of recruitment and retention. As of September 2023, there were 340 vacant roles in Tusla alone, highlighting a severe shortage of qualified social workers across Ireland. This shortage compromises the quality and reach of essential social services across Ireland.
2. **Urgent Equity Concerns:** Over the past three years, tuition fees for social work programmes have risen sharply, with increases of up to 23% exacerbating financial barriers. This rise is particularly impactful for students from underrepresented and marginalised communities, including Black and ethnic minority groups like Irish Travellers. For instance, MSW fees at the University of Galway have escalated from €7,016 in 2021 to €8,640 in 2024. Such steep increases directly challenge the social work profession's commitment to inclusivity and anti-racism, making it increasingly difficult for diverse communities to access the education necessary to serve their own populations effectively.
3. **Economic Barriers Deter Entry:** Despite initiatives and calls to expand social work course capacities and introduce alternative pathways such as apprenticeships, a decline in applicant numbers suggests that these efforts are being undercut by the high costs of education. Comprehensive reports from Mooney, Wilson, and Kelleher (2023) and O'Meara and Kelleher (2022) confirm that the prohibitive expense of social work education is a major deterrent for prospective students. In a detailed survey by Mooney et al. (2023), an overwhelming majority of respondents (47 out of 49) identified 'financial burden' as their primary obstacle to pursuing a career in social work, highlighting the urgent need for tuition fee reductions.
4. **Disparity in Tuition Fees Across Institutions:** There is also a significant variation in tuition fees for social work programmes across Irish universities, with amounts ranging from €16,000 to €20,000 for a two-year MA, excluding the additional significant and often hidden costs for mandatory placements. In contrast, Atlantic Technological University offers a more affordable option at €9,500. This substantial disparity raises critical questions about the equity and

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transparency in how these fees are calculated and the implications for access to education.

5. **High Fees for Non-EU Students:** The tuition fees for non-EU students, on average approximately €40,000 for the two-year MA in Social Work or €110,400 for a four-year BSS in Trinity, are particularly exorbitant. This pricing structure is at odds with efforts to 'decolonise' the profession and create a more diverse and inclusive workforce.
6. **Economic Barriers for Working-Class Students:** The combination of high tuition fees and unpaid, extensive mandatory fieldwork placements severely limits access to social work education for working-class students. These financial barriers not only marginalise those from less affluent backgrounds but also actively undermine efforts to diversify the profession. Reports by Mooney et al. (2023) and O'Meara and Kelleher (2022) highlight how such economic obstacles impede the development of a socio-economically diverse workforce and discourage individuals who are unable to shoulder substantial debt. One respondent poignantly captures this issue in Mooney et al. (2023), stating, "they make it so difficult for people to actually do the course and what they're doing is they're actually putting off an awful lot of people who are from the very communities that they should have in the profession, because they're making it into very much a middle-class profession by making the fees prohibitive" (p.33). Additionally, the financial strain is vividly described by another participant: "The master's in social work is extremely expensive - especially since social workers are in demand. Placements are long – necessary, but students are essentially paying thousands of euros to work full-time hours for free. This creates work burdens and means students are often having to work weekends to financially cope. This can mean students are regularly working a 7-day week. Not sustainable" (p.37).
7. **Critical Diversity in Social Work Education:** As mentioned above, the prohibitive costs of social work education are a major obstacle in cultivating a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community- an essential factor for delivering effective social work services. Current fee structures disproportionately impact non-white and non-middle-class individuals, significantly limiting their entry into the field. A respondent from Mooney et al.'s (2023) study highlights this issue, stating, "Social work claims to reflect diverse groups, however academic fees within Ireland act as a barrier for including people from a low socioeconomic background into the profession" (p.23). This underscores how financial barriers prevent the profession from serving as a true reflection of the diverse populations it aims to support. Moreover, O'Meara and Kelleher's (2022) report

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highlights the necessity for educational application process reforms to effectively attract a wider array of asocial work students. Implementing such reforms is crucial not only for fostering cultural competency within the social work sector but also for ensuring that practitioners bring diverse lived experiences that are in tune with the multifaceted needs and challenges of the communities they serve.

8. Critical reforms needed: Although Mooney et al. (2023) and O'Meara and Kelleher (2022) recognise that many universities have launched initiatives to widen participation, they argue that these efforts are insufficient and that more needs to be done. Specifically in the field of social work, there is a significant need for more focused measures to increase access and enhance diversity within the profession. In response to these challenges, it is crucial for directors and staff of social work programmes to engage in concerted efforts with universities and educational policymakers. Reducing fees should be the immediate first step in this endeavor. However, this action should be part of a broader overhaul. This entails a comprehensive re-evaluation and restructuring of fee frameworks to ensure affordability, equity, and inclusivity in social work education. Only through such concerted efforts can we attract a diverse student body that authentically reflects and serves the communities it aims to empower.

This AGM is called upon to actively lead and encourage its members to participate in advocacy efforts aimed at reducing the costs of social work education. By doing so, the association will reaffirm its commitment to the core values of social work- social justice, human rights, equality, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice, and ensure that these values are reflected not only in professional practice but also in access to education.

**Poll Results:** motion 1 was passed with:

- 54 votes in favor
- 0 against
- 3 abstention

### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** Oliver Brockmann **Seconded by:** Dearbhla Ní Chúláin

That the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW) calls upon the Minister of the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science for the financial

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reimbursement of social work placements and support initiatives and measures working towards this aim.

**Explanation:** As the *signature pedagogy* of social work education, placements play a crucial role in forming competent practitioners who can effectively connect and apply theoretical knowledge in their practice (O'Meara, 2024). Despite their critical role, social work placements in Ireland remain unpaid, an exploitative practice that undermines their educational value and therefore purpose, while also undermining social work workforce recruitment efforts. Financial reimbursement for placements is paramount to ensure the diversity and competency of the future social work workforce, bolster the professional status of social work, and uphold the future sustainability of the social work profession.

Unpaid placements impose a disproportionate burden on economically marginalised students. Moreover, as race, gender, and dis/ability status disparities are inherently interlinked with economic inequalities, the financial burden of social work placements act as an entry barrier for those from marginalised communities, thus reinforcing oppressive race, class, gender and dis/ability status inequities (Gair and Baglow, 2017). This contradicts the professions commitment anti-racism, diversity and social justice.

Furthermore, the absence of financial remuneration undermines social work's status as a legitimate profession by perpetuating the notion that social work is akin to volunteerism rather than skilled labour. Students from adjacent professions such as nursing, midwifery and clinical psychology are remunerated, highlighting the valued professional status of these professions (The Psychological Society of Ireland, 2022; Campbell, 2023).

Importantly, the lack of financial remuneration for placements is a significant deterrent to starting and completing social work degrees (Morley *et al.*, 2022), critically undermining recruitment efforts at a time when Ireland faces a severe shortage of qualified social workers. Considering that the "overall number of applicants to existing courses appears in fact to be falling recently, with some individual HEI's also reporting challenges in filling existing programme places from one year to the next" (O'Meara, 2024, p. 6) it is quizzical why there is no attempt to explore the possibilities for financial remuneration for placements or the reduction of course fees as the initial method of recruitment; Especially when considering exorbitant university fee hikes to study social work and the accommodation crisis. Instead, there are explorations concerning the expansion of the number of programmes and placements. This is utterly illogical and

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fails to address the root causes of the recruitment problem, particularly when considering that, as O'Meara (2024, p. 7, emphasis in original) notes, "placements *do* get filled each year".

Recognising the self-evident exploitative practice of unpaid placements, the way that this reproduces societal inequalities and undermines initiatives to reduce labour shortages, the EU parliament, in June 2023, voted overwhelmingly in support of the drafting of legislation to ban unpaid internships in the EU (O'Carroll and Kassam, 2024).

Additionally, the necessity for students to seek and balance paid employment with their unpaid placements often results in diminished educational outcomes (Morley, 2023). Providing financial remuneration for these placements will allow students to fully immerse themselves in their professional development, enhancing the depth of their learning and ensuring the competence of future practitioners (Morley, 2023). Contrary to concerns that financial remuneration might reduce the educational value of placements to mere employment, it is actually the absence of payment that undermines the educational potential of these experiences. The lack of financial support forces students to divide their focus between paid employment to sustain themselves and their placements, detracting from the quality of their learning during placements. It is, again, quizzical why there is so much attention ensuring that there are adequate placement opportunities available to future social work students (see for example O'Meara, 2024), but no attempt to ensure that future social work students can actually engage with the learning opportunities that are made possible by these placements.

Furthermore, given the current overburdened state of the profession and the shortage of qualified social workers, students frequently step in to fill essential personnel gaps within organisations. Compensating students for their placements acknowledges their valuable contributions and aligns with the ethical mandate of the profession that all workers, which includes students, deserve fair compensation.

Payment for work, that includes the work of students while on placements, is a fundamental aspect of any respected profession. The fact that social work placements are not paid, is fatal for students, the quality of their education and the future of the profession. There are numerous international movements such as P4P, students against placement poverty, and paid placements Aotearoa NZ which recognise the importance of addressing "placement poverty" (Morley, 2023, no page).

This motion, if passed, would represent a significant step forward in strengthening the social work education system in Ireland, ultimately enhancing the quality of social

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service delivery across the country.

**Poll Results:** motion 2 was passed with:

- 47 votes in favor
- 3 against
- 8 abstention

### Motion 3

**Proposed by:** Frank Brown **Seconded by:** Kerry Cuskelly

The IASW calls upon the HSE to lift its recruitment embargo for social work posts within adult community mental health teams.

#### **Explanation:**

1. National mental health policy 'A Vision for Change' and the updated 'Sharing the Vision' outline that each community mental health team (CMHT) should include social work (VFC) 9.9 & the composition of (CMHT serving a population of 50,000 should comprise...two psychiatric social workers (one per 25,000), (VFC) 11.7.1. Each patient attending community mental health teams should have an allocated key worker and care plan (STV) recommendation 28. Not replacing vacant social work posts within community mental health teams would be a breach of national mental health policy.
2. The arbitrary recruitment embargo prevents the recruitment to vacant social work posts within community mental health teams.
3. The embargo is placing an unfair burden on those social workers remaining within mental health services to cover vacant posts, it is affecting the quality-of-service provision to service users, many at risk of homelessness, delaying their discharge from acute psychiatric units and limiting the support they may need to stay well.
4. Social work students qualifying this summer who are interested in working within community mental health teams may seek employment outside of Ireland because of this recruitment embargo.

**Poll Results:** motion 3 was passed with:

- 54 votes in favor
- 0 against
- 4 abstention

### Motion 4

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly **Seconded by:** Sinead McKenna

That the IASW board convene a working group whose aim is to develop a SMART action plan in relation to Advanced social work practice based on the SWAMH April 2024... in adult mental health briefing paper.

**Explanation:** Within a rapidly changing and evolving health and social care climate, investment in the further development of the vital role of social work across Irish social and health services should be a key priority for government departments, employers and the public. Recent reports have highlighted the need for reform of health and social care professions roles in the area of advanced practice and the priorities off the Chief HSCP Office includes developing advanced practice roles across health and social care professions in Ireland. At departmental level, a Health and Social Care Workforce Planning Strategy, Action Plan and Planning Projection Model is being developed with technical support provided by the European Commission. A key outcome of this project is the production of rolling health and social care workforce planning action plans with targeted policy measures for health and social care workforce reform.

**Poll Results:** motion 4 was passed with:

- 53 votes in favor
- 1 against
- 2 abstention

### Motion 5

**Proposed by:** Mary Mc Namara **Seconded by:** Lisa Hurson

That the IASW call on the HSE to resource Social Work staffing in CAMHS to the recommended levels as per Vision for Change. We are currently resourced nationally at only 40% Vision for Change.

**Explanation:** The low levels of Social Work staffing in CAMHS is having a direct impact on the service users. There is a very significant systemic component to CAMHS presentations and therefore a systemic response is required to aid recovery. Social Work intervention is required in almost all CAMHS cases, however, due to shortages it is not always possible to provide the required input. Safeguarding is another significant regulatory requirement and SW provide leadership and oversight on this on MDT's.

**Poll Results:** motion 5 was passed with:

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- 51 votes in favor
  - 0 against
- 2 abstention

### AGM MOTIONS 2023

The final motions (1-6) were circulated to all members and were available to download from the IASW website.

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne **Seconded by:** Sinead McKenna

That the IASW call upon the Minister of State for Mental Health to review the proposed implementation of that part of the Report of the Expert Group on the Review of the Mental Health Act 2001, regarding criteria for involuntary detention, because implementation of that recommendation could lead to the unnecessary delay in a person receiving treatment and to premature discharge when a patient is only beginning to recover.

**Explanation:** Recommendation 13b, within the **Report of the Expert Group on the Mental Health Act 2001** (2014) is of particular concern and despite the well-meaning intention of the Expert Group to raise the threshold for involuntary detention, it is not in the interest of persons with severe and enduring mental illness who lack insight into their condition, to **change the criteria for detention as proposed.**

We welcome many of the recommendations of the **Report of the Expert Group on the Review of the Mental Health Act 2001**, and we support in particular those recommendations that will protect voluntary patients who may lack the capacity to consent to treatment (Recommendations 22 to 33.)

However, we argue that the human rights of patients are protected within the existing wording of the involuntary criteria (Section 3 (1) a and b, without the need to change the wording in Section 3 (1) a, and b, of the Mental Health Act, specifically in relation to risk to the patient and others. Indeed, every person should have the right to live in the community free from serious mental illness that could put them and others at serious risk.

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So, we are calling in our motion that the specific wording below as it is written in the current Act is not changed.

***'Serious likelihood of the person concerned causing immediate and serious harm to himself or herself or to other persons...and ...would be likely to lead to a serious deterioration in his or her condition,' is not changed to.***

Recommended change in wording (13b)

***'Is immediately necessary for the protection of life of the person, for protection from a serious and imminent threat to the health of the person, or for the protection of other persons'.***

The fact that the Expert Group recommendation 36 re. Authorised Officers (AOs), all future applications should be made by a trained mental health professional who is actively seeking the least alternative to involuntary admission, while trying to limit risk to the patient and others and ensure timely treatment, this will enhance the protection of the rights of patients.

The proposed wording '**imminent threat to the health of the person**' (as opposed to the existing 'serious deterioration) is unhelpful, as the reality for those of us (Mental Health Act AOs Sec 9 MH Act) who make an assessment for an application for involuntary admission is that patients who are mentally ill can neglect themselves as a result of psychotic or paranoid thinking in terms of diet, isolation and self-care. This does not happen 'imminently but gradually over a period of weeks and months to a '**serious deterioration**' when action needs to be taken. Also, of concern to the many mental health professionals who work with patients who have severe and enduring mental illness, lack insight, and have numerous previous admissions, is that the proposed Report of the Expert Group recommendation 14, recommends that detention should only be as long as...**the person continues to satisfy all the stated criteria**. The cause of concern is that when the patient is beginning to recover but still lacks insight, they may be discharged from detention because there is no longer an imminent threat to their health, or life. The risk of premature discharge is that patients may disengage from treatment and working with mental health professionals in the community, there will be no time also, to support the patient in improving their psycho-social needs, this could result in financial difficulties, relationship problems and even homelessness.

**Ref: Report of the Expert Group on the Review of the Mental Health Act 2001 (DOH.2014)**

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### **Criteria for Detention (p89)**

12. Detention of a person with a mental illness cannot be permitted simply by virtue of the fact that the person may have such an illness or because his or her views or behaviour deviate from the norms of the prevailing society.

### **13. The recommended new criteria for detention are:**

a. the individual is suffering from mental illness of a nature or degree of severity which makes it necessary for him or her to receive treatment in an approved centre which cannot be given in the community; and

b. it is **immediately necessary for the protection of life of the person**, for protection from a serious and **imminent threat to the health of the person**, or for the protection of other persons that he or she should receive such treatment and it cannot be provided unless he or she is detained in an approved centre under the Act; and

c. the reception, detention and treatment of the person concerned in an approved centre would be likely to benefit the condition of that person to a material extent.

14. Detention should only be for as long as absolutely necessary, and the person continues to satisfy all the stated criteria.

15. Immediately a person no longer satisfies any one of these criteria, the admission or renewal order must be revoked. In those circumstances, the person may only remain in the approved centre on a voluntary

### **The current wording of the Mental Health Act 2001: Section 3 of the 2001 Act**

relating to mental disorder reads as follows: '3.—(1) In this Act "mental disorder" means mental illness, severe dementia or significant intellectual disability where— (a) because of the illness, disability or dementia, there is a **serious likelihood of the person concerned causing immediate and serious harm to himself or herself or to other persons**, or (b) (i) because of the severity of the illness, disability or dementia, the judgment of the person concerned is so impaired that failure to admit the person to an approved centre would be likely to **lead to a serious deterioration in his or her condition or would prevent the administration** of appropriate treatment that could be given only by such admission, and (ii) the reception, detention and treatment of the person concerned in an approved centre would be likely to benefit or alleviate the condition of that person to a material extent.

### **Poll Results: motion 1 was defeated with:**

- **9 votes in favor**
- **18 against**
- **9 abstention**

### **Motion 2**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

**Proposed by:** Aoife Bairead **Seconded by:** Kate Gillen

That the IASW calls for Tusla to protect and promote the role of social work as the key profession to deliver relevant services to children and families in all children's services and to explicitly recognise that relationship building, support, advocacy and critical thinking are key elements of the social work role.

**Explanation:** Due to the chronic issues in retention in Tusla, unfilled social work vacancies are being replaced by other professions. These professions appear to be utilised to offer direct support to children and families while social workers are being asked to act by way of case managers, providing a helicopter service rather than direct intervention. This undermines the integrity of the social work profession which is, primarily, centred around relationships and assessments and targeted response and interventions? In addition, it ignores the voices of children and families who in various bodies of research, most recently the 'Through the Eyes of the Child' report, have expressed their view that having a consistent social worker with whom they can build a relationship result in a more positive experience of the service provided within the Child and Family Agency. While services to children must continue in times of constraint, eroding the role of social workers will do serious harm to the quality and safety of all our children's services.

**Poll Results:** motion 2 was passed with:

- 31 votes in favor
- 0 against
- 3 abstention.

### Motion 3

**Proposed by:** Caroline Boyd **Seconded by:** Aoife Bairead

This AGM agrees that the IASW advocate to the Department of Health and DCEDIY for a review of the use of "special arrangements" to provide accommodation and care to young people in lieu of an appropriate residential placement. This practice should be ceased in a planned way and alternative arrangements be put in place to ensure consistency and quality of care for any child who requires it.

**Explanation:** In April 2022 the IASW raised our concerns regarding the crisis in residential care to Tusla. This letter also set out some of the core issues we believed were integral to resolving this emergency. This crisis has not abated, and in many parts of the country appears to have worsened. Given this we believe there is a need for the Department of Health and DCEDIY to review this as a matter of urgency.

Central Residential Services is to provide residential placements for children and young

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people who are requiring this type of care. There is a well-documented shortage of placements and the increasing use of “special” arrangements to provide this care. These arrangements have included the use of hotels, homeless hostels, and apartments.

The staff are from agencies who are privately set up. Young people have no stability in these types of placements, often being placed outside their own geographical area, some distance from supports and birth family. They are cared for, often on their own, with a staff team who at times are not able to provide the boundaries and guidance needed.

Settings like hotels are an alien environment when we think about what a home situation should look like and how the needs of a vulnerable young person should be met. Often these young people are out of mainstream education and with the moving from one area to another it can be difficult and time consuming trying to get timely access to supports for a young person e.g., tutor, CAMHS, GP. Social Workers are often driving long distances to see young people. Family visits are a huge challenge in this situation.

There needs to be an analysis of why so many young people are now needing residential care as opposed to foster care, are there gaps in the current system of residential care and the wider system that mean young people end up being discharged from placements prematurely and that consideration be given to the issues that should be considered in resolving this crisis as raised by the IASW in 2022.

**Poll Results:** motion 3 was passed with:

- 32 votes in favor
- 1 against
- 3 abstention.

### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Kate Gillen **Seconded by:** Caroline Boyd

That the IASW advocate to the Department of Health and DCEDIY for adequate resourcing of Children’s Disability Network Teams including the recruitment of social workers in order that wait lists for assessment and service provision are reduced and ultimately waiting lists are eliminated.

**Explanation:** Children’s Disability Network Teams are struggling with provision of assessment and service due to difficulties in recruiting and retaining multi - disciplinary

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teams with some teams able to provide universal services only while others have extensive waiting lists e.g., one area currently has 650 children on its waiting list.

While the implementation of Progressing Disability services for children and young people was meant to ensure fairer access to services regardless of location, this model was not properly resourced or supported from inception and there are huge gaps in the quality of assessment and service provision across the country. This has resulted in a high number of children not receiving an adequate service and their needs not been met by key services. These children are already vulnerable by virtue of their additional needs. This absence of support only serves to exacerbate this and cause additional stress to them their school settings if they have one and the families who are caring for them

**Poll Results:** motion 4 was passed with:

- 33 votes in favor
- 0 against
- 2 abstention.

### Motion 5

**Proposed by:** Aoife Bairead **Seconded by:** Maria McGloughlin

This AGM supports the IASW is seeking the establishment of a government working group for planning the creation of a dedicated trauma informed support service to support care experienced children and their families. This working group should include stakeholders from all relevant government departments including the DCEDIY, the HSE, the Department of Justice and the Department of Education, alongside key stakeholders from the voluntary sector including care experienced families and foster carers.

**Explanation:** The recent publication *'They shouldn't have to ask': Exploring the need for specialist mental health services for care-experienced and adopted children and their families'* by Coulter et al (2022) gives a robust analysis of the complex emotional, behaviour and mental health needs that many care experienced people present with. It further looked at the implications of these needs on the wider family system, particularly due to the difficulty in not only accessing therapeutic services, but more importantly accessing those with the knowledge and expertise to meet their child's 'complex and multiple needs'. Equally the lack of integrated, holistic services that supported the child and the family system was a huge barrier to children's recovery from the trauma and adversity experienced. The article concluded that a specific attachment and trauma service that children and their families can access in a timely and coherent manner was required.

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The authors call for the following.

1. Increase support for foster carers and adoptive parents.
2. Provide routine early mental health screening for care-experienced and adopted children.
3. Provide additional trauma and attachment training opportunities for CAMHS, child welfare and education practitioners.
4. Increase capacity to provide specialist therapeutic services.
4. Improve inter-agency communication and collaboration.
5. Adopt a 'whole-family'/household 'ordinary care' approach in relation to addressing the mental health needs of care-experienced and adopted children.
6. Instigate a degree of assessment priority within CAMHS in light of the high risk of harm faced by children in care and those who are adopted.
7. Create a dedicated specialist attachment- and trauma-informed therapeutic service for care-experienced and adopted children and their families.

**Poll Results:** motion 5 was passed with:

- 34 votes in favor
  - 0 against
  - 3 abstention.

### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Maria McGloughlin **Seconded by:** Caroline Boyd

This AGM is calling on Tusla to establish a more comprehensive and holistic support system for foster carers. This includes a significant increase in the rates of subvention paid for carers and a significant expansion of support services for carers. The contribution of foster carers should be formally recognised when it comes to other matters for example pensions.

**Explanation:** For the last 2 years the use of Special Residential Emergency arrangements evidence that there are not sufficient fostering or residential placements. Now children under 10 years old are regularly in a position where there is no foster placement available and placed in emergency arrangements that may not be suitable to their needs.

It has been long established that foster homes should be homes for life especially where children remain living in care on a long-term basis. Increasingly at least one of the parents who are fostering are expected to stay at home and there is a financial burden in caring that is not recognised. This is not reflective of most family home where children are not in alternative care and additionally creates a barrier for new foster carers from diverse backgrounds entering the pool of foster carers available. The increase in subvention is important in that the current allowance has not been

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increased in the last decade and this is causing stress to carers rather than recognising the value of the caring as it did when last increased. It is recognised that having the stability of a carer available at all times is important but this needs to be a financially viable arrangement for families.

Foster Parents in parts of the country and/or with agencies where good support services are available report that this is really valued by them, and they find that this is important in maintaining them in their role as carers. It is also recognised that timely early intervention that meets the needs of the children can have a significant role in preventing placements ending in an unplanned premature way.

**Poll Results:** motion 6 was passed with:

- 38 votes in favor
- 0 against
- 1 abstention.

## AGM MOTIONS 2022

### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly **Seconded by:** Paul McCarthy

That this AGM affirms the following:

- Social work is a human-rights based profession,
- “Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to Social Work” (IFSW, 2014),
- “That society has an obligation to pursue justice, in all its forms, on behalf of every person including the assertion and protection of their human rights” (IASW, 2020),
- “Social workers around the world have a long history of working for the achievement of human rights, including an explicit grounding of practice in human rights principles: human dignity, non-discrimination, participation, transparency, and accountability” (Mapp et al, 2019).
- Social workers work to uphold human-rights in their every-day practice in practical and tangible ways.
- The concept of human rights is interwoven into the very fabric, narrative and history of Social Work and the removal of any reference to human rights in CORU’s Code of Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers grievously alters the narrative and meaning of Social Work in Ireland.

**Explanation:** Further to the successful motion passed in the 2021 AGM, “That the IASW, in recognition of its centrality to Social Work Values, Ethics and Practice, initiate a campaign for the reinstatement of the term ‘Human Rights’ in the Social Workers

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Registration Board (CORU) Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics”, we wish to (re)affirm social workers explicit commitment to being a human rights-based profession at this AGM. We want to do this to ensure CORU and any other external organisations, bodies, or persons not familiar with the activity, skills, knowledge, and theory-base of social work, is clear that social work is a human-rights based profession. The #SWisHumanRights campaign continues to advocate for the reinsertion of references to human rights in the CORU Social Work code of conduct and ethics. This motion contributes to this advocacy.

**An Amendment was proposed to the Motion. Amended to read:**

- Social work is a human-rights based profession and discipline.

**54 in favour - 0 abstentions - 1 against.**

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### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Áine Davin **Seconded by:** Kerry Cuskelly

That this AGM supports calls for the development of “Safe Harbour” legislation which would provide liability protection to social workers where, in situations of proven high caseloads, low resources, and excessive demands from management, workers would not find their professional registration coming into question, should they, due to the aforementioned constraints, not be able to work to reasonable safe standards.

**Explanation:** An example of Safe Harbour legislation for in health care would be in parts of America “Safe Harbour” is something a nurse can invoke to protect their licences if they find themselves in compromised practise situations where it is not in the best interest of patients for them to accept an assignment, e.g., accepting expanded patient assignments. This legislation is necessary for social workers in the current working environment.

**46 in favour - 9 abstentions - 0 against.**

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### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Vivian Geiran **Seconded by:** Majella Hickey

**Emergency Motion** That this AGM supports the decision to create a new category of membership.

#### **Section 1: Membership**

##### **Criteria**

- 1.1. The membership of the Association shall consist of:
  - a. Individuals who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW

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formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are recognised as social workers by the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

- b.** Overseas members need also be registered by a relevant registration board as outlined above.
- c.** Individuals who hold membership of the British Association of Social Workers, Northern Ireland may be admitted to 'Associate' membership of the IASW. Associate members do not have voting rights at the Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings.
- d.** Individuals who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, students on recognised social work qualifications, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.
- e.** Student members being persons undergoing a recognised undergraduate course of studies in Social Work or a recognised post graduate course under conditions prescribed by the Board of the Association
- f.** On the invitation of the Chair, a Commercial Person who is not a Member of the Company may be co-opted to the Board either to fill a vacancy or as an additional Director provided that the appointment does not cause the number of Directors to exceed the maximum number of Directors. That person so co-opted shall remain a Member of the Board only until the next Annual General Meeting, when s/he shall retire and may stand for re-election at that AGM.

**Explanation:** BASW NI has a unique place as the only UK jurisdiction to share an international land border, that being with the Republic of Ireland. IASW and BASW NI have a close working relationship and regularly partner on specific projects, e.g.

1. SWSD 2018 Conference (Dublin)
2. Joint WSWD celebrations 2020, 2019 and 2017
3. Shaping Professional Identity: A all-Ireland study.
4. An Abuse of Power (conference on elder abuse 2021)
5. Joint statements on Brexit and join letters to respective governments.

Brexit has brought about a fracture in the seamlessness of cross-border activities on the island of Ireland and both parties recognise the potentially damaging impact of this, as such we think it is beneficial to have a clear and public relationship that strengthens our existing cooperation.

Both organisations are keen to explore a more formal link and to explore the idea of Associate Membership. The idea has been signed off by the NSC of BASW NI and The Board of IASW.

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We would like to pilot an associate membership scheme which would, under agreed terms and conditions, enable members of one professional body, IASW, becoming associate members of BASW NI. The scheme would also entitle members of BASW NI to become associate members of IASW. Associate membership of one body will be the gateway to joining the activities of the other body and building our respective professional organisational connections in areas of mutual interest and benefit. We will set clear terms and conditions of what an associate scheme will offer, North and South.

**55 in favour - 1 abstentions - 0 against.**

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### AGM MOTIONS 2021

#### **Motion 1 – CARRIED**

**Proposed by:** Aine McGuirk **Seconded by:** Vivian Geiran  
On behalf of the IASW Board of Directors.

That the IASW will increase the number of members on the Board of Directors, from ten (10) to eleven (11) for the coming year and that this arrangement is to be reviewed again by the Board ahead of the 2022 AGM.

**Explanation:** As per Rule 45 of the IASW Constitution, the number of Directors shall be not less than seven (7) and unless and until determined by the Company in general meeting, not more than ten (10). As per Rule 56, the Company may from time to time by ordinary resolution increase or reduce the number of Directors and may also determine in what rotation the increased or reduced number is to go out of office. There are currently ten Directors. One of these is stepping down at this year's AGM, creating one vacancy. The remaining nine Directors have resubmitted their names for consideration for re-election this year and there are two new candidates for the single vacancy arising. Because of the nature of the work programme currently being undertaken by the Board, allied to the valuable contribution the two 'new' candidates can bring to the Association, the Board seeks to facilitate the incorporation of the two new Directors to the Board, for the coming year.

**55 in favour - 2 abstentions - 2 against.**  
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#### **Motion 2 – CARRIED**

**Proposed by:** Niamh Finucane **Seconded by:** Paula Markey

That the IASW would advocate for the recognition of social work in the provision of bereavement care in Ireland and for the provision of a bereavement social work posts in all hospitals, hospices, and nursing homes in Ireland.

**Explanation:** Social Workers have competence in the provision of bereavement support and bereavement counselling to bereaved relatives. Social Workers nationally, both within the acute sector and within the hospice sector, have a long history in the provision of a range of bereavement support and counselling to individuals and families as they adjust to the death of their relative. The deaths may have been sudden, such as a Road Traffic Accident, suicide, or an acute event or it may have been an anticipated death. Social workers support bereaved relatives with the psychosocial transitions that

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arise in their life as a result of the death, provide support in relation to practical issues and also provide therapeutic support. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in the number of deaths where someone could not be present at the time of death, death being experienced as sudden or unexpected, or people dying before they ordinarily would have. It is expected that there will be a significant increase in the need for bereavement support and counselling in the weeks and months to come and that some of these bereaved relatives may present with complicated or disenfranchised grief. Many people may have questions about their relative's care, or around the time of death. Social Workers are skilled communicators with the appropriate competence in grief and loss to support this work and provide a range of bereavement care for individuals and families. However, there will be a need for additional resources to meet the anticipated need and social workers should be appointed as part of the range of supports.

**59 in favour – 2 abstentions – 2 against**

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### **Motion 3 – CARRIED**

**Proposed by:** Anne O'Loughlin, SIGA **Seconded by:** Aidan Cooney, ASaP  
On behalf of SIGA & Adult Safeguarding Associate Group.

That IASW will write to the Minister for Justice requesting that before any legislation is commenced regarding the Dying with Dignity Bill No 24 of 2020 that a legislative and regulatory framework is in place to protect a person's right to life, basic legal rights to independent living, social care services, health services and palliative care. That the proposed legislation is compliant with supported decision-making as outlined in the Assisted Decision-Making Capacity Act 2015 (which must be fully implemented) regarding the person's free informed and unambiguous decision at the time of signing the declaration (S.9) and at the time the assistance in dying is rendered (S.11).

**Explanation:** The Dying with Dignity Bill No 4 of 2020 is before the Dail at 3rd Stage/ Committee Stage. The Bill is concerned with fundamental issues of human rights and solidarity. Debate must have utmost regard for the complexity and sensitivity being considered. The IASW motion is based on the need for a legal and regulatory framework to be in place before any legislation is passed that protects a person's right to life, health, palliative care, and participation in decision making and procedural safeguards around decision making.

**43 in favour - 9 abstentions - 8 against**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Seconded by:** Sinead McGarry

That the IASW Board commit to conducting a scoping exercise to determine the best approach to undertaking a governance review of the Association, to include consultation & feedback to members.

**Explanation:** The IASW recently invested in developing a comprehensive and impressive advocacy strategy for the association in conjunction with Kelleher O'Meara consultancy. The strategy recommends, amongst other things that, "The focus of IASW's Special Interest Groups would shift from being interest-based to being issue-based and that their structure within IASW's overall governance is reviewed". In light of this it would be prudent to conduct a full governance review of the association including, but not limited to, constitution, SIGS, associate groups, working groups, council, board, to ensure the association is fit for purpose moving forward and can fully implement the excellent advocacy strategy and statement the association now hosts.

**54 in favour**  
**5 abstentions**  
**3 against**  
**Motion was carried.**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Paul McCarthy

**Seconded by:** Kerry Cuskelly

That the IASW, in recognition of its centrality to Social Work Values, Ethics and Practice, initiate a campaign for the reinstatement of the term 'Human Rights' in the Social Workers Registration Board (CORU) Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

**Explanation:** The forward to CORU's original Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers (Byelaw 2011 - S.I. 143 of 2011) states "Social Work is a profession based on principles of human rights and social justice". In referencing "The social work values informing the code", item number 1 on the list of "particular duties" of Social Workers is to "Uphold human rights in your practice". Furthermore, in the original CORU Code, again at the top of the list, in the "Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance Expected of Registered Social Workers", under the heading "Respect for the inherent dignity and worth of persons", item number 1 is: "Upholding human rights in your practice"; elaborating to describe how Social Workers "should uphold human rights" in their practice. Additionally, item number 9, in this same list, states that Social Workers' "are responsible for acting in the best interests of service users" and, as such, that Social Workers, "must.... work in line with the principles of human rights and social justice".

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Indeed, in total there are 6 separate references to 'Human Rights' in CORU's original 2011 Code. The International Federation of Social Workers' definition of Social Work states: "Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to Social Work". The IFSW's definition of Social Work is a beacon to Social Work practitioners across the world, many of whom tenaciously hold onto the values embodied in this definition, none more so than those working in extremely difficult, precarious, and oppressive social and political conditions. Irish Social Workers, too, also have a deep-rooted fidelity to the IFSW's definition, exemplified by the inclusion, verbatim, of the above quoted sentence in the IASW's newly revised Code of Ethics', launched just last month. Indeed, in its Social Work Values Statement, the IASW's new Code further notes, that "Society has an obligation to pursue justice, in all its forms, on behalf of every person including the assertion and protection of their human rights"; and again 'Human Rights' is referenced in item number 1 of the Code's Principles of Social Work Practice. Additionally, the IASW's newly revised Code of Practice, also references 'Human Rights' noting that members must "Protect and promote the human rights of those who use social work services". As a further illustration of the significance of 'Human Rights' to Social Work, the phrase 'Human Rights' is referred to on 16 occasions in the 16-page British Association of Social Workers' 'Code of Ethics for Social Work: Statement of Principles'. However, as we now know, albeit for reasons which remain speculative, there is no mention or reference to 'Human Rights' in CORU's revised Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (2019). Aside from the inherent and inextricable relationship of 'Human Rights' to Social Work Values, Ethics and Practice, and indeed that the very concept of 'Human Rights' is interwoven into the very fabric, narrative and history of Social Work, the removal of any reference to 'Human Rights' in CORU's Code of Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers is extraordinary; not only in terms of the act of removing the phrase 'Human Rights' from the Code itself, but also, and more significantly, its effective altering of the narrative and meaning of Social Work in Ireland. This by the body which governs Social Work in Ireland, and to which Social Workers in Ireland must be registered with to practice. As such opposition of Irish Social Workers to its removal, as represented by this motion, is an important and critical stance for the IASW, on behalf of Social Workers in Ireland, to take. The removal of 'Human Rights' from CORU's Code has implications for how we, as Social Workers, both individually and collectively, understand, frame and practice our profession, a profession which, we understand, at its heart, encompasses a fundamental commitment to 'Human Rights'. As Social Workers we pride ourselves in working democratically, in partnership and co-operatively, facilitating, advocating, and challenging. We now have a duty to challenge the removal of 'Human Rights' from the Code governing our profession, and we have a responsibility to campaign to ensure it is reinstated. Given the global landscape dominated by increasing inequality, a worsening climate crisis and the Covid19 pandemic, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission maintain that "it is more important than ever that we adhere to clear human rights and equality values in our deliberations and decision-making". "Social Work bereft of the commitment to human rights is like a footballer who is no longer

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able to run and kick the ball" (Garrett, 2021).

**56 in favour**  
**3 abstentions**  
**3 against**  
**Motion was carried.**

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### Motion 6

**Proposed by:** Kate McCaffery

**Seconded by:** Susan Doherty

The Working group looking at the role of social work with Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Services proposes that the members support the proposed Statement of Position.

**Explanation:** This statement of position and supporting documents are in draft form currently, however, we are aiming to have this work completed by the end of May/beginning of June and the working group are keen that statement be ratified and published by the board as soon as is possible. This statement is a first step in encouraging Irish social workers to consider the needs of TGNC service users and to identify, seek and become involved in these referrals. The draft statement of position is as follows: It is the position of IASW that Social Worker have essential roles, both to the individual and across wider society, in: taking an affirming clinical position which acknowledges the diversity of gender and provides unconditional positive regard for all gender identities and expressions – a position which honours and supports the integrity, diversity, and worth of each service user, as well as the right of all individuals to live authentically. Providing care and support to TGNC individuals across all health and social care services, so that they may fully participate in social, educational, occupational, and economic life. Developing Transgender/ Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC)-specific competency in areas of particular relevance to TGNC service user's wellbeing, such as engagement, clinical assessment, support, and intervention delivering services and interventions to TGNC service users that are culturally competent, developmentally appropriate, and trans-affirmative which enrich individual, family, and collective wellbeing. Engaging in advocacy activities to address barriers and inequalities that exist in organisations and society. Upholding human rights and social justice, including support for TGNC service users based on that community's identified needs. Developing, promoting, and implementing social policies aimed at promoting social justice and improving social conditions and equality for TGNC individuals, their families, groups, and communities. It is the position of the IASW that social work services should be accessible to TGNC service users, regardless of their stage and type of transition, both as part of a specialised multi-disciplinary team and/or as part of a social work

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caseload in other TGNC non-specialist teams in in-patient and community-based services.

**58 in favour**  
**4 abstentions**  
**2 against**  
**Motion was carried.**

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## AGM MOTIONS 2020

### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Aine McGuirk, Chair of the IASW  
**Seconded by:** John Brennan, Vice-Chair of the IASW  
On behalf of the IASW Board of Directors

That the members of IASW formally adopt the revised and updated versions of the IASW Code of Ethics and Code of Practice.

**Explanation:** At the AGM of the IASW on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019, grave concerns were expressed about the new revision of the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers. Following a motion at that AGM, the IASW contacted CORU regarding this matter. CORU replied to this letter on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 stating that they would not change their code. The IASW decided to go ahead with revising and updating its own codes which would reference CORU's Code and align it to the core principles of social work as laid down by the International Federation of Social Workers' Statement of Ethical Principles. The draft documents before you are the result of that redrafting.

**47 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**1 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** Dr. Colletta Dalikeni, Board Member of the IASW  
**Seconded by:** Oluromade Olusa & Evelyn Oboh, Members of the IASW

That the IASW incorporates learning about Racism, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion into its CPD activities and advocate for updating current social work education curriculum and practice to include other world views, diverse knowledge systems, and intervention methods that reflect the multicultural makeup of Ireland today.

In particular we believe it is crucial that the IASW provides a platform for ongoing

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discussion of 'Racism' in social work which is a reality for those who experience it both social workers and service users and encourage learning that helps Social Workers challenge systems and professional practice that perpetuate racism in Ireland.

**Explanation:** This motion comes on foot of two global pandemics: The 'Racism Pandemic' (Death of George Floyd) and Corvid 19 (Disproportionate number of Black and Ethnic minorities dying from the corona virus due to lack of access to quality health care and other supports). The brutal homicide of George Floyd in Minneapolis in the hands of White US police officers has resulted in a global response and outcry to an issue that is the elephant in the room but nevertheless least spoken about in the public arena in our society. Taoiseach Leo Varadkar in his speech in the Dáil Eireann on the 4th of June 2020 and again on the 11th of June 2020 on 2FM acknowledged the existence of Racism in Irish society and has committed to the enactment of hate crime legislation and anti-racism public awareness campaign in the future.

As part of a racist society social work in Ireland is not immune to racism. Various Irish scholars have lamented the existence of racism in social work practice guidelines (Christie 2010)

The disproportionate high number of Black African families in childcare proceedings was highlighted in the Child Care Law Reporting Project by Carol Coulter in (2013). That 'African families are 20 times more likely to find themselves in the childcare courts than other members of Irish Society' is a cause for concern. The report highlighted that no easy explanations for these statistics could be provided and that the issues involved were more practice based than a matter for the courts. Misunderstanding in Cultural differences and in conceptualisations of child abuse were however not ruled out as possible contributory factors. Coulter 2013 recommended the need for social work training to include a focus on working with difference.

We believe Social work as defined by IFSW through the leadership of IASW has a crucial role in promoting and supporting development and initiating transformation of traditional social work education and practice to include other world views as represented in the current Irish multicultural demographic profile and the Social Work ethnically diverse population it serves.

We call upon the IASW to join The Irish Network Against Racism in support against Racism and formally request the Government to support the enactment of hate crime legislation without delay.

'Furthermore, given the historical discrimination experienced by Minceir/Travellers in Ireland, the IASW acknowledges the need for social workers to regularly reflect on their practice using an anti-racist lens. Minceir have recognition from the Irish state as separate ethnic group and as such Social Work practice should provide space and acknowledgement for diversity in all its forms.

**46 in favour**  
**4 abstentions**  
**No-one against**

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### **Motion was carried**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly, Member of the IASW

**Seconded by:** John Brennan, Vice-Chair of the IASW

That the IASW develop a policy that supports special interest groups when engaging in advocating on issues of relevance to the profession and the communities we work with.

**Explanation:** This motion is asking the IASW to develop an operational guideline / policy to scaffold the work of special interest groups when engaging in advocacy related work e.g. developing position papers, issuing press releases, statements etc on issues of relevance to the profession and the communities we work with. This guideline/policy would seek to ensure coordination of advocacy efforts across SIGS, Council and Board to ensure maximum communication, best use of limited resources and less duplication of effort.

**54 in favour**

**4 abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Motion was carried**

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#### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly, Member of the IASW

**Seconded by:** John Brennan, Vice-Chair of the IASW

That the IASW develops an advocacy strategy that defines advocacy for social work and advances the social work role in advocacy work.

**Explanation:** The development of independent advocacy services has led to a questioning by others of the role of social workers as advocates for service users/clients who are vulnerable. Developing a strategy would therefore be timely and would aim to highlight and clarify advocacy as a core function of social work in upholding human rights and promoting social justice.

This motion is being sought following the successful International Committee conference "Advocates and Allies" in 2019. Evaluations from the conference advised that social workers were interested in the association pursuing actions around broader social justice, human rights, and advocacy-based social work values.

**58 in favour**

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**3 abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Kaylene Jackson, Member of the IASW

**Seconded by:** Donal Gill, Member of the IASW

That the IASW call for a systemic review of all areas of Social Work practice with a view to developing a National Social Work Strategy for the next decade.

**Explanation:** Investment in primary and social care services has been fragmented and disproportionate across Ireland. There is a significant lack of Social Work in areas such as Primary Care Setting, Local Authorities, Acute Hospital Services, Mental Health Services, Disability, Criminal Justice and Safeguarding. The recent pandemic has demonstrated the implications for social determinants of health and well-being in addition to acknowledging the need for all service provision to adhere to principles of Social Justice and Human Rights. Social Work as a profession is vital to the implementation of such policy and processes based on those principles. Social Work as a profession has become undervalued by the State and undermined in relation to the lack of investment and resource. A National Social Work Strategy is now essential to protect those within the profession and promote recruitment and retention. A Strategy is also fundamental to protecting and promoting the rights of persons who require and necessitate engagement with professional Social Work practice across the multitude of areas of Social Work Practice.

**55 in favour**  
**4 abstentions**  
**1 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Kaylene Jackson, Member of the IASW

**Seconded by:** Donal Gill, Member of the IASW

That the IASW support the Decision Support Office in calling for immediate and full commencement of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015.

**Explanation:** The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 will support the work of

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social workers across many domains in ensuring that the rights and preferences of service users are central to all decision-making and care planning. The guiding principles of the Act align closely with Social Work professional ethics and values and it is envisaged that social workers will have a key role in the implementation of the Act and the work of the Decision Support Office.

**59 in favour**  
**2 abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Kaylene Jackson, Member of the IASW  
**Seconded by:** Donal Gill, Member of the IASW

That the IASW call for reform of the Safeguarding Legislation to give powers of entry to Safeguarding and Protection teams to Private Nursing Homes.

**Explanation:** All residents of nursing homes, both public and private, and residents in other congregated settings have the right to protection from harm or abuse. Medical Social workers who have supported persons entering residential settings note the lack of statutory support for Safeguarding and Protection teams to enter privately run nursing homes to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect. Recent review of the national policy does not address this issue and residents remain at risk without access to supports and safeguards available to those in public units.

**\*\* Withdrawn \*\***

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### **Motion 8**

**Proposed by:** Patrice Reilly, Member of the IASW  
**Seconded by:** Aisling Coffey, Member of the IASW

That the IASW calls on the HSE to ensure that social work is included as a core and essential member of multidisciplinary teams working with older people and other adults who may be vulnerable in community, residential and acute settings.

**Explanation:** In light of Covid-19, and in terms of equality of access and human rights, all adults in Ireland should have a right to access to the support and services of a social worker regardless of their residence or the geographical area in which they reside.

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Aside from the general risk to a persons' physical, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing, changes and issues arising from Covid-19's may increase the potential for an older person to be exposed to abuse. This in itself further increases the need for equal access for all to social work services.

**\*\* Withdrawn \*\***

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### Motion 9

**Proposed by:** Linda Curran, Member of the IASW  
**Seconded by:** Elaine Donnelly, Member of the IASW

That the IASW endorse the campaign to revise and amend the CFRA Act 2020 to include all pathways to parentage and ensure all children have a legal relationship with their intended parents.

**Explanation:** The Children and Families Relationship Act was commenced in May 2020. This gives legal recognition for both parents of some children. The current legislation is gender neutral and applies to use of donor sperm and/or donor eggs in an Irish fertility clinic. Outside of that many families are not covered, for example, if a heterosexual couple use a surrogate abroad. There is automatic right to parentage for females and gay male couples that use a surrogate. The CFRA Act does not include same sex fathers, reciprocal IVF, surrogacy, at home inseminations, those who have used a known donor, those who had their fertility treatment abroad and children born abroad.

This has created a vacuum whereby the children within some families do not have a legal relationship with both of their intended parents.

The implication of this is that the parents have zero legal relationship to their children. Further implications for the children involved include issues with their non-birth parent taking them to the doctors and making medical decisions, applying for a passport for the child, if the couple split up they would have zero recourse regarding access and guardianship rights. Children are left vulnerable in terms of maintaining their relationship with the non-biological parent as cohabitation is an essential tenet for guardianship rights. Critically, if one of the parent's pass-away, the other may have no legal relationship with the child. Currently, in such cases the parent would have to apply for testamentary guardianship, and this can be challenged by the deceased birth parent's family etc. It would leave the child in a vulnerable position.

The CFRA Act has started to make some provisions for some families. However, it does not go far enough, and this results in some children being left in a precarious legal position for the reasons previously outlined. All pathways to parentage were not fully explored prior to the enactment of this Act and hence exclusions have arisen.

LGBT Ireland are looking to form an overall alliance to capture all groups advocating on this issue e.g. the equality for children campaign (LGBT), the 221+ group (cervical cancer

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group), some of these women want to use surrogates and the state won't pay for treatment as they don't currently regulate surrogacy, etc.

The IASW can endorse this campaign by making a statement of support, using social media platforms to raise awareness of the shortfall in legislation which precludes some children from having a legal relationship with both of their intended parents, and writing to relevant TDs and ministers regarding this matter. The alliance is calling for Dr Conor O'Mahoney to be appointed as special rapporteur with a mandate to look at all pathways to parenthood, the statement of support should include this directive also.

**33 in favour**  
**17 abstentions**  
**5 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### AGM MOTIONS 2019

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Regina Mullan

**Seconded by:** Claire Barnwell

On behalf of the Council of Irish Adoption Agencies (CIAA)

That IASW, along with CIAA, call for a direct meaningful dialogue with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr. Katherine Zappone, to ensure that the voice of social work practitioners is clearly heard, along with other stakeholders, about issues that are currently having a detrimental effect on adoption social work practice. That the IASW & CIAA call upon the Minister for the establishment of an ongoing consultation process about any new proposed amendments to the Adoption & Information and Tracing Bill 2016 to ensure that the competing rights of all parties are given the correct balance.

**Explanation** There was an announcement by the Minister on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019, without prior consultation with social work practitioners or other stakeholders, that she had secured government approval to draft further amendments to the privacy provisions in the Adoption I&T Bill 2016. The purpose of the proposed legislation is to give a statutory basis to the provision of adoption information. There is a presumption in favour of disclosing identifying information to adopted adults as far as legally and constitutionally possible which includes giving them a legal right to their original birth certificate and birth information from agency files. These amendments have sought to resolve a constitutional dilemma regarding the right to identity versus the right to privacy that is reflected in Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights which stresses the right to information about birth parents is not an absolute right but that this must be balanced against the rights of other parties to have identifying information about them disclosed. The amendments do not however take into consideration the social work practice issues of trying to provide an Information and Tracing Service, the increase in already lengthy waiting times there would be for would be service users, or the additional unnecessary resource implications should these amendments be implemented.

Minister Zappone's announcement has been made against the backdrop of an ongoing controversy around part of the current draft legislation which requires that before birth information or an original birth certificate can be released, an adopted person will be required to swear an affidavit, later amended to a sworn statement, to ensure they will respect the birth mother's need for privacy and will not contact her against her wishes. The new amendments will now replace the need for a signed undertaking by contacting the birth parent(s) for their consent before any birth information or their original birth certificate will be released. This would imply that the birth parent's right to privacy has now assumed greater weight than the adopted

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person's right to identity. This is a retrograde step as traditionally social workers have been releasing limited non-identifying information to adopted persons from agency files before contact is made with the birth parent in line with the Standardised Framework on Information and Tracing published by the Adoption Board in 2005. There are many ramifications for practice as there are adopted adults who request background information but may not wish to proceed to an active search; it would preclude releasing medical information in life threatening situations; it would create unnecessary psychological pressure on all concerned; cause serious long term delays and a misuse of resources when there are still long waiting lists for this service around the country; deprive adopted people of even very basic information for even lengthier periods of time and create additional dilemmas where birth parents can't be traced. Providing background information, as has been the practice, allows those searching to make an informed choice and to receive counselling and support. By not doing so this may create a greater risk of birth parents being traced through other avenues and then contacted directly without their right to privacy being respected.

**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**1 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Regina Mullan

**Seconded by:** Claire Barnwell

On behalf of the Council of Irish Adoption Agencies (CIAA)

That IASW call for the exemption of adoption under the new GDPR legislation as this was intended to protect people's rights to confidentiality and not deprive them of a right to information about their birth parents and is in contravention with the United Nations Convention of Human Rights.

**Explanation:** The new GDPR regulations have had unforeseen implications for current social work practice in relation to providing an Information and Tracing Service and directly impacted on the ability of social workers to provide a professional service to adopted adults and birth parents and their relatives. The current practice of providing non-identifying information has been overshadowed by concerns that this would be regarded as a potential breach of these regulations and that lack of adherence would result in the imposition of extremely hefty agency fines. There is no longer any continuity in service provision as these regulations are being interpreted differently from one social work area to another. Information previously provided is no longer being made available causing confusion for service users and lack of confidence in

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social workers. Considerable social work time is being taken trying to resolve the dilemmas being posed by these regulations and is impinging on the ability to provide a personalised service to service users, many who are very vulnerable. It is contended that it was never the intention to apply GDPR regulations to the provision of background information in relation to adoption where there is not a need to protect the disclosure of non-identifying information. Exemption is the only way to now stop social workers continuing down a tortuous road of trying to provide a caring client focused service where the limitations of the current interpretations of GDPR regulations have almost brought the service to a standstill

**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**1 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly

**Seconded by:** Elaine Donnelly

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

The AGM requests that the IASW board collaborate with the FORSA National Social Work Professional Committee to develop a clear rationale from a professional perspective on the need for Social Work Clinical Tutors in the workplace throughout the country to support social work student training.

**Explanation:** The profession does not have workplace Clinical Tutors to support student training – however Clinical Tutors have been allocated for other professions e.g. Nursing, medical. Social work student training courses are at the cusp of crises on a yearly basis due to a shortage of workplace clinical placements and lack of supports to facilitate these essential workplace placements. Completion of at least 1000hours (6 months) of Practice Placement Education in the workplace is mandatory to successfully complete the course and secure CORU registration and must be supported by the health service.

**Amendment:** develop a clear rationale from a professional perspective on the need for Social Work Tutors in the workplace throughout the country to support social work student training.

**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**

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**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly

**Seconded by:** Elaine Donnelly

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

The AGM requests that the IASW board collaborate with the FORSA National Social Work Professional Committee to develop a clear rationale from a professional perspective on the need for Social Work research Coordinators in the workplace throughout the country.

**Explanation:** The profession does not have workplace Research Coordinators to support enhancing and developing clinical expertise in social work—however posts similar to this have been allocated for other professions e.g. Nursing, medical.

**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly

**Seconded by:** Elaine Donnelly

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

The AGM requests that the IASW board collaborate with the FORSA National Social Work Professional Committee to develop a clear rationale from a professional perspective on the need for Social Work Advanced Practitioner posts throughout the country.

**Explanation:** Agreement through CHO negotiations (Forsa) to review HSCP career pathways.

Advanced Practitioner posts exist in other HSCP professions.

The National HSCP Office Strategy identifies the development of Advanced Practitioner posts as one of their key objectives.

The National Social Work Professional Committee have a "Social Work Structures" document which has already been advocating for the development of Advanced

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Practitioner posts to enhance to support social workers in remaining in clinical practice if they so choose, as a way to enhance and support expertise within the social work workforce etc.

**28 in favour**  
**1 abstention**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly

**Seconded by:** Elaine Donnelly

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

The AGM requests that the IASW board collaborate with the FORSA National Social Work Professional Committee to develop a clear rationale from a professional perspective on the need for a national workforce planning review for Social Work together with a review of social work student training including assessment of capacity to train students in the workplace, overcoming barriers, supports required, creating capacity and determination of student numbers.

**Amendment:** National workforce planning review for Social Work together with a review of social work student practice in placement training

**29 in favour**  
**1 abstention**  
**No-one against**  
**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly

**Seconded by:** Elaine Donnelly

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

The AGM requests that the IASW board collaborate with the FORSA National Social Work Professional Committee to develop a clear rationale from a professional perspective on the need to review the career pathway for social workers, which has not been the subject of review since the McHugh/Doran report 2004.

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**Explanation:** In light of the changing structures within the health and social care services overall (CHO negotiations, Slainte Care Implementation), a review of social work career structures is timely. A letter on the CHO Operating Model from Head of Division, Eamonn Donnelly, FORSA, October 17th, 2018, states the following:

- "Confined competition in each CHO area for Grades IV to VII, for filling of support structure posts.
- Significant progress on advancing successful claims for Therapy Managers In Charge III claims.
- Agreement to review career pathway for Health and social care Professionals, which has not been the subject of review since the McHugh/Doran report 2004. An assurance that the introduction of network manager posts will not result in a reduction of therapy manager posts".

**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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**Motion 8**  
**Proposed by:** Ann Byrne  
**Seconded by:** Anne O'Loughlin

In the 2019 Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers:  
[http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/2019\\_03\\_06\\_SWRB\\_Code\\_for\\_Website.pdf](http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/2019_03_06_SWRB_Code_for_Website.pdf) the term Family is not included. Family Work is a central to the work Social Workers do every day.

Currently Page 5 of the Social Work Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct & Ethics reads:

In this document:

- 'You must' is used as an overriding principle or duty.
- 'You must not' is used as an absolute prohibition.
- 'You should' is used to describe the course of action that is generally best practice, but acknowledges that another approach may be appropriate in particular circumstances, or that there may be factors outside your control that affect your ability to comply.
- The term "service users" includes service users, patients, clients, and anyone else who uses your service. In addition to complying with this Code, you also have a duty to keep up-to date with legislation or legal developments that affect your professional practice.

**Explanation:** This omission must be corrected to ensure that this essential and

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

important work is acknowledged in the Professional Code of Practice. Social Workers work with Children and their Families and Individual Adults, so our clients are families. This is an importance component of our role. We are calling on IASW to address this with CORU as a matter of urgency.

**Amendment:** The term “service users” includes service users, families, patients, clients, and anyone else who uses your service.

**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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**Emergency Motion 1**  
**Proposed by:** Sarah Donnelly  
**Seconded by:** Kerry Cuskelly

This AGM has serious concerns about the direction of the revised CORU Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics in which CORU appears to have moved away from the core principles of social work, particularly in relation to the social work profession’s foundations of social justice and human rights. The AGM therefore calls on the Board of the Association to request CORU to withdraw the current edition of the Code and to align a new version of it with the core principles of social work as laid down by the International Federation of Social Workers’ Statement of Ethical Principles.

**Explanatory:** The current version of the Code has moved significantly away from some important elements that were contained in the previous iteration. Most notably, reference to the pursuit of social justice as a core value of social work have been taken from its rightful position at the opening of the document and placed at the end.

Reference to upholding human rights as a core principle of social work has been deleted.

The demand to ‘respect the inherent dignity and worth of persons’ has also been deleted and replaced by the demand for social workers to act in the ‘best interest’ of those who use their service (CORU Code p6). The ‘best interest’ principle goes against contemporary beliefs and is contrary to the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015. Current thinking views the ‘best interest’ principle as being paternalistic and against a rights-based approach to work. The 2015 Act does not allow ‘best interest’ to be used as the basis for decision-making by professionals, so there is an immediate conflict.

The Code for social work should be much more discipline-specific than it is now in order to ensure that the profession’s aims and values are immediately apparent to any reader.

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**29 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2018

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Anette O'Callaghan

**Existing Article 53.** The Directors shall be elected each year at the Annual General Meeting of the Company and shall hold office until the next AGM. All members will be eligible for election but before submitting their nomination for election to the Board, they must be nominated by at least two other members (but excluding a nomination by herself or himself) whose membership is valid at the time of the nomination. Nominations should be sent in writing to the registered office of the Company at least 5 days before the AGM. Nominations may be sought at the AGM in the event that not enough nominations for all positions have been received.

**Explanation:** The Directors of the Board believe that Directors should seek support outside of the Board when looking to be re-elected. This is to prevent the Board operating as or being perceived as operating in a vacuum. This is also in line with good governance.

**Amendment: Article 53.** The Directors shall be elected each year at the Annual General Meeting of the Company and shall hold office until the next AGM. All members will be eligible for election but before submitting their nomination for election to the Board, they must be nominated by at least two other members (but excluding a nomination by herself or himself or a current Director of the IASW) whose membership is valid at the time of the nomination. Nominations should be sent in writing to the registered office of the Company at least 5 days before the AGM. Nominations may be sought at the AGM in the event that not enough nominations for all positions have been received.

**49 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Aine McGuirk

**Existing Rule:** Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

3:2:10: Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups and Committee shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management & Event Planning.

**Explanation:** Where relevant, to ensure that new guidelines, policies, protocols etc. encompass all members of Council; Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups and Committees. The Group Protocol was discussed at Council(s) meetings during the year and was widely supported, this motion followed a previous motion of 2017, which would have required all members of SIGs to be IASW members. This had been removed from the protocol. The IASW Board believes that the SIGs are a vital element within the IASW and it is crucial that the committee members are IASW members and have an understanding of the IASW as a whole.

**Amendment to the Rule:** 3:2:10: Special Interest Groups and Committee shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management, Guidelines & Application Form for CPD Funding & Group Protocol.

**48 in favour**  
**1 abstention**  
**No-one against**  
**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Aine McGuirk

**Existing Rule:** Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups

3:2:3: Application to form a Special Interest Group shall be approved by the Board of Directors, Special Interest Groups shall operate to the agreed policy and procedures of the Association.

**Explanation:** To ensure newly formed Special Interest Groups operate in accordance with the Guidelines for Setting up a Special Interest Group, in the best of interest of good governance & financial practices, understanding roles & responsibilities of committee members, and have effective meetings. The newly formed special interest groups will follow the SIG protocols.

**Amendment to the Rule:** 3:2:3: Application to form a Special Interest Group shall be approved by the Board of Directors, Special Interest Groups shall operate to the agreed policy and procedures of the Association, including but not limited to; the Guidelines for Setting up a Special Interest Group.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**49 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Aine McGuirk

**Existing Rule:** Section 1: Membership – Criteria 1:1:

**a. Social workers** who hold a social work qualification recognised by the former CQSW recognised by the CCETSW, the National Social Work Qualification Board or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

**c. Social workers** who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification recognised by the former CQSW recognised by the CCETSW, the National Social Work Qualification Board or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

**Explanation:** In order to use the protected title of Social Worker, Social Workers MUST register with the Social Work Registration Board CORU. Therefore, members of the association who are not registered with CORU, cannot use this protected title.

### **Amendment to the Rules:**

**a. Individuals** who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

**c. Individuals** who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

### **Proposed change to the amendment to the Rules:**

**a. Individuals** who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are recognised as social workers by the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

**c. Individuals** who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, students on recognised social work qualifications, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW

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or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

**Votes for the Amendment of rules (a) and (c)**

**47 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**2 against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

**Votes for the Amendment of rules (a) and (c)**

**49 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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**Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** John Brennan

The IASW calls upon the Department of Health to review the Nursing Home Support Scheme with all relevant parties, to ensure that provision is made for the cost of social activities within each nursing home, so that every resident living in a nursing home has disposable income as intended by the Scheme.

**Explanation:** Members have advised that in the Greater Dublin area, many nursing homes, to fund additional day time activities are charging residents additional charges and leaving them with little or no income at all, (even necessitating them to use their savings). IASW believes that it is a matter for the National Treatment Purchase Fund and Department of Health via changes to Nursing Home Support Scheme (policy and legislation) to address this situation and IASW will work proactively with advocacy groups to advocate on behalf of those affected.

**49 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Motion was carried**

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**Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Éadaoin Ní Bhroin

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**Seconded by:** Louise Timmins

I- That the IASW call upon the Department of Health and the HSE to support the recruitment of Primary Care Social Workers to the required level as stated in the 2001 Primary Care Strategy ie: .5 / 1 Primary Care Social Workers per primary care team

II- That the IASW call upon the Department of Health and the HSE to develop a proper and effective career structure and governance for Primary Care Social Worker's and to create career development opportunities for Professionally Qualified (Primary Care) Social Workers to Senior Practitioner, Team Leader and Principal grades.

### **Explanation:**

- There are currently only 3 Permanent Primary Care Principal's, 7 Permanent Team Leaders and 5 Senior Practitioners in Primary Care Social Work Services in Ireland. There are 6 counties in Ireland without any Primary Care Social Work cover: Mayo, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Louth and Leitrim and a number of counties with only partial cover i.e. Cork, Kerry, Tipperary and Galway and other counties with 1 social worker for the whole county i.e. Sligo.
- There are 366 Primary Care Teams in Ireland (details taken from the HSE's Health Atlas), and only approximately 80 Primary Care Social Workers. This figure of 80 social workers is 103 less than the minimum if there was to be .5 Social Worker per Primary Care team. The 2001 Primary Care Strategy states that there should be .5/1 Social Worker per primary care team throughout Ireland. We are advocating for each Community Health Organisation to have a Primary Care Social Worker in each primary care team. A proper career structure ensures proper governance which as a result has a positive outcome for our service users. Current staffing levels mean that people living in some counties in Ireland have no access to a primary care social worker service and in other counties there is limited access to a social work services in primary care.
- Furthermore, there is a lack of recruitment opportunities available for Primary Care Social Workers which has also resulted in geographical areas with no social work cover, i.e: when Primary Care Social Worker's leave these posts to progress their career in other social work areas. There are also some Primary Care Social Workers that are currently completing duties that fall into the job description of a Principal, Team Leader and Senior Practitioner. Where this is the case, we are asking the IASW to consider the upgrading of their positions to the appropriate level by the HSE.

**49 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Motion was carried**

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## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Barbara McDonough

**Seconded by:** Michelle Losty

The IASW calls upon the government to immediately increase the funding allocated for home care packages and to have access to home care available on a statutory basis.

#### **Explanation:**

- This is a serious and long-standing national issue.
- Restrictions in place to different degrees nationally re accessing HCPs for both under and over 65 age groups.
- In some CHOs no new HCPs or increases to existing HCPs are being approved by the HSE.
- This is reportedly due to a lack of HSE funding being available to meet the need.
- This is leaving Service Users with unmet needs, unsafe and at risk in the community.
- It is adding to carer stress which is leading to breakdowns in care arrangements and relationships.
- Service Users & their carers have reported feeling pressured into going in to LTC as there is no safe alternative when no HCP available.
- Service Users are not having their wishes / right to self-determination respected or followed.
- The only way to access a HCP is through acute hospital under the winter initiative thus putting increased pressure on acute services unnecessarily.

**49 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 8**

That this association call on Government to address the deepening crises in our fostering services through developing initiatives to alleviate the severe staffing shortage by establishing additional social work training opportunities, promoting more flexible recruitment policies and exploring strategies to retain social work professionals within child care services. Such initiatives could form an interim measure while awaiting the more comprehensive response which this association has already called for via the establishment of a Working Party on Foster Care.

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**Explanation:** Social workers in many parts of the country are struggling to identify and support sufficient numbers of suitable foster placements capable of responding to the demands made on the service. Fluctuating staff levels and protracted vacancies within Fostering Teams compound this. While the numbers of children in care have peaked in the past three years, the legacy of inadequate resourcing continues to have a detrimental impact on Tusla's ability to deliver adequate levels of service in many areas. A root and branch analysis of how the relevant state agencies and Government departments respond to the needs of children within foster care is urgently needed so that effective solutions can be pursued.

**Amendment:** That this association call on Government to address the deepening crises in our fostering services through developing initiatives to alleviate the severe staffing shortage by establishing additional social work training opportunities, promoting effective recruitment policies and exploring strategies to retain social work professionals within child care services. Such initiatives could form an interim measure while awaiting the more comprehensive response which this association has already called for via the establishment of a Working Party on Foster Care.

**49 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**No-one against**  
**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 9**

**Proposed by:** Cahal McHale

**Seconded by:** Harold Barber

That this association calls on HIQA to reject any request from Tusla to temporarily suspend its inclusion of certain requirements under Standard 15 of the National Standards in Foster Care which require that Link Work duties be carried out by qualified social workers.

**Explanation:** HIQA regularly refer to the fact that their role is to inspect the performance of agencies under the criteria laid down within the National Standards drawn up by government. However, while they do not set the standards, they do have discretion under which standards they will select to carry out specific inspections. As the body that represents Professional Social Workers, the IASW is committed to maintaining high standards in Social Work practice and where appropriate draw attention to any attempts to erode established Social Work roles.

**Amendment:** That this association calls on HIQA and DCYA to reject any request from

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

Tusla to temporarily suspend its inclusion of certain requirements under Standard 15 of the National Standards in Foster Care which require that Link Work duties be carried out by qualified social workers.

### **Motion 10**

**Proposed by:** Cahal McHale

**Seconded by:** Harold Barber

That this association calls on Tusla to withdraw its proposal to request HIQA to temporarily suspend its consideration of the requirements under Standard 15 of the National Standards in Foster Care which require that Link Work duties be carried out only by a qualified social worker.

**Explanation:** It was strongly advocated when the National Standards in Foster Care were being drawn up, that social workers should specifically be named as the profession tasked with carrying out the important work of supervision and support of foster carers as part of the range of duties of recruitment, assessment and support of foster placements. It would be a serious retrograde step if these responsibilities were to be open to assignment to other disciplines at the discretion of an agency.

**Amendment:** That this association calls on Tusla and DCYA to withdraw its proposal to request HIQA to temporarily suspend its consideration of the requirements under Standard 15 of the National Standards in Foster Care which require that Link Work duties be carried out only by a qualified social worker.

### **Amendment to Motions 9 & 10**

**49 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

### **Amended Motion 9 & 10**

**42 in favour**

**7 abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

Frank advised the attendees that the Board has prepared a Memo in relation to this motion, a copy which was included in the participant pack.

Frank asked the attendees, if their preference was to vote by; show of hands or by secret ballot:

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Votes for show of hands**

**48 in favour**

**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 11**

**Proposed by:** Maria McGloughlin

**Seconded by:** Maeve Foreman

That this Association supports the repeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland as proposed by the Oireachtas because it has been found to adversely affect the health and well-being of communities of women that our members support and work with and purpose that the Association issue a statement to this effect.

**Explanation:** On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, the Irish electorate will be asked to vote on a proposal to amend the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment to allow provision for regulation of termination of pregnancy. The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution provides that the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment would not limit freedom to travel between Ireland and other states, allowing women to travel freely to other countries for a termination of pregnancy.

Social Work is a profession that acknowledges structural inequality in our society and strives to promote egalitarian values. The most vulnerable women do not have the resources to travel and as such are denied access to termination of pregnancy purely on foot of their financial standing; as demonstrated by the Citizen's Assembly this is something that is currently available to women who have access to a passport, citizenship, financial resources and family support. Vulnerable women, women experiencing homelessness, seeking international protection whether in direct provision or not, experiencing domestic abuse, and women in poverty are discriminated against in a system that is permissive of terminations abroad once you have access to resources. Additionally, women and girls who have applied for asylum in Ireland are prohibited by Section 16 (3)(a) of the International Protection Act 2015 from leaving the state without the consent of the Minister for Justice. To do so constitutes an offence. Furthermore, asylum seekers are disenfranchised in the forthcoming referendum.

As social workers, self-determination, and the right to have a choice to make decisions in respect of an individual's own belief system and personal values is at the core of an empowering practice. By supporting the repeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment social workers support service users to make decisions in respect of their own health care, and family needs.

**39 in favour**

**No abstentions**

**9 against**

**Motion was carried**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2017

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne

**Existing Rule:** Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups

3:2:10 Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups and Committee shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management & Event Planning.

**Explanation:** Where relevant, to ensure that new guidelines, policies, protocols etc. encompass all members of Council; Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups and Affiliated Groups. The Group Protocol was discussed at Council meetings during the year and was widely supported, this motion followed a previous motion of 2016, which would have required all members of SIGs to be IASW members. The Group Protocol will require all members of the SIG committee who make the day to day decisions for the SIG to be members. Currently only the Chair and Sec are required to be members. There are other requirements within the SIG protocol which mirror the best practices of limited companies and the IASW Board, allowing rotation from the committee after continuous term of 6 years for general committee members. Also, there is a requirement that the re-election to the role of Chair or Sec. should only be for three years. IASW Board believes succession planning is important and key roles of Chair and Sec should have a clear time span for those volunteering for the role. The IASW Board believes that the SIGs are a vital element within the IASW, and it is crucial that the committee members are IASW members and have an understanding of the IASW as a whole.

**Amendment to the Rule:** 3:2:10 Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups and Committee shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management, CPD Funding & Group Protocol.

**14 in favour**

**3 abstentions**

**19 against**

**Motion NOT carried**

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#### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne

**Existing Rule:** Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups

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3:2:3 Application to form a Special Interest Group shall be approved by the Board of Directors, Special Interest Groups shall operate to the agreed policy and procedures of the Association.

**Explanation:** To ensure newly formed Special Interest Groups operate in accordance with the Guidelines for Setting up a Special Interest Group, in the best of interest of good governance & financial practices, understanding roles & responsibilities of committee members, and have effective meetings. The newly formed special interest groups will follow the SIG protocols.

**Amendment to the Rule:** 3:2:3 Application to form a Special Interest Group shall be approved by the Board of Directors, Special Interest Groups shall operate to the agreed policy and procedures of the Association, including but not limited to; the Guidelines for Setting up a Special Interest Group.

**Motion NOT carried  
Fell with Motion 1**

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### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Aine McGuirk

**Existing Rule:** Section 2: Ethics & Values

2:1. Members are required to adhere to the following:

- a) IASW Code of Ethics and Code of Practice
- b) IASW Rules and Byelaws
- c) In addition, members who are registered as social workers will be required to adhere to the CORU/ Social Workers Registration Board's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

**Explanation:** Both these documents (a) and (b) have been reviewed by a working group and were deemed to be outdated in terms of best practices and in the light of the CORU code which addresses all important points within the previous IASW documents. All social workers must abide by CORU Code of conduct and ethics for social workers. This document is to be reviewed and IASW will play an active part in this process. IASW may develop an updated code of conduct and ethics in addition to the CORU code of conduct and ethics following the recommendations of any subsequent working group.

**Amendment to the Rule:** 2:1. Members are required to adhere to the following:

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

- a) Members who are registered as social workers will be required to adhere to the CORU/ Social Workers Registration Board's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

**\*\* Withdrawn by the Board \*\***

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Aine McGuirk

**Existing Rule:** Section 1: Membership

1:2: Members of the Association shall be subject to the Association's code of ethics and practice and the Association's Rules and Byelaws and/or CORU Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics of Social Workers, and a breach of these may result in termination of membership under Article 5 of the Articles of Association

**Explanation:** Both these documents (a) and (b) have been reviewed by a working group and were deemed to be outdated in terms of best practices and in the light of the CORU code which addresses all important points within the previous IASW documents. (All social workers must abide by CORU Code of conduct and ethics for social workers. This document is to be reviewed and IASW will play an active part in this process. IASW may develop an updated code of conduct and ethics in addition to the CORU code of conduct and ethics following the recommendations of any subsequent working group.

**Amendment to the Rule:** 1:2: Members of the Association shall be subject to the CORU Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics of Social Workers, and a breach of this may result in termination of membership under Article 5 of the Articles of Association.

**\*\* Withdrawn by the Board \*\***

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne

IASW calls upon the Government to fund and legislate for a statutory social work service for vulnerable adults, including those with a mental health, intellectual or a physical disability, etc. HSE National Safeguarding Office defines a vulnerable person as; "an adult who may be restricted in capacity to guard him or herself against harm or exploitation or to report such harm or exploitation"

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Explanation:** Ireland does not have a statutory social work service for adults as a result many vulnerable persons can fall within the gaps of care. The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and Safeguarding (Bill) 2017 will require quality services for vulnerable people. There is evidence within the UK of how social workers can address these requirements. Undertaking capacity assessments and care co-ordinating for vulnerable persons. Clearly primary care teams in particular will need to be fully staffed in terms of the recommended numbers of social workers and enhanced following a review of the assessed needs.

**19 in favour**  
**1 abstention**  
**4 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** The IASW Board of Directors  
**Seconded by:** Aine McGuirk

That the Constitution be approved and adopted as the new Constitution of the Company in substitution and to the exclusion of all existing Memorandum and Articles of Association.

**Explanation:** The company's name was automatically changed on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016. This did not include updating the company's name on its existing Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Under the 1963 – 2013 Acts, a CLG has a separate memorandum and articles of association. Under the 2014 Act, a CLG has a constitution which is a two-part document containing a memorandum and articles. Although not required, it is recommended that a CLG adopts a new constitution which is based on the new 2014 Act as opposed to their existing memorandum and articles based on the 1963 – 2013 Acts. This allows the CLG access new provisions in the 2014 Act which are not available under the 1963 – 2013 Acts and ensures that the current memorandum and articles of association do not conflict with any mandatory rules under the 2014 Act.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Cahal McHale

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Seconded by:** Karen Hope

On behalf of Social Workers in Foster Care (SWIFC)

That this association calls on the Minister for Children & Youth Affairs to establish a Working Party to review Foster Care provision and progress the further development of the service for children in care, based on the recommendations of the SWIFC/IASW discussion document – “Foster Care: Envisioning the Future” published in March 2017

**Explanation:** The context for the SWIFC motion arose from a range of proposals the committee considered for promoting the recommendations within the discussion document. It was felt that a motion at the AGM would draw attention of the membership to the document and the issues highlighted within it and also reinforce the IASW board’s mandate to lobby Government, specifically the Minister, on the recommendations it sets out.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2016

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Chairperson IASW

**Seconded by:** The IASW Board of Directors

On behalf of the IASW Board of Directors

The Board of the IASW set up a task force to review the feasibility of evoking a change to Rule 3:2:3 of the IASW Rules & Byelaws and to explore all avenues to increase membership of the Association as per the IASW strategy

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:3: The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the Special Interest Group shall be members of the Association.

**Explanation:** The Board of the IASW are proposing to 'phase-out' non-members joining Special Interest Groups, in order to prohibit non-members from using the professional body, it's funds, resources and staff without paying the appropriate membership fee.

**Amendment:** 3:2:3: All members of the Special Interest Group shall be members of the Association, as of June 2017

**\*\* Withdrawn by the Board \*\***

**It was proposed instead that the Board set up two task forces:**

**1) develop a membership strategy and 2) to look at SIG Structures**

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#### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Chairperson IASW

**Seconded by:** The IASW Board of Directors

On behalf of the IASW Board of Directors

Alteration to the IASW Rules & ByeLaws.

Rule pertaining to Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups.

Amendment to the Rules & Byelaws.

**Existing Rules:** Section 1 Membership Criteria

1.1. The membership of the Association shall consist of:

A. Social workers who hold a social work qualification recognised by the former CQSW recognised by the CCETSW, the National Social Work Qualification Board or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

B. Overseas members need also be registered by a relevant registration board as outlined above.

C. Social workers who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification recognised by the former CQSW recognised by the CCETSW, the National Social Work Qualification Board or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

D. Student members being persons undergoing a recognised undergraduate course of studies in Social Work or a recognised post graduate course under conditions prescribed by the Board of the Association.

**Explanation:** In order to ensure the Board, have the necessary professional skills and expertise to achieve the associations Strategic Priorities, the Board of Directors are looking to amend the Rules and Byelaws to elect a Commercial Director to the Board. The Board believe that a diverse, well balanced board can make better decisions and will bring more general skills, outside of Social Work i.e. Much needed skills brought onto the boards in areas such as Marketing/PR/Finance/Legal. Board is refreshed and re-energised with injection of new blood and fresh ideas.

Increased board diversity. The association can be exposed to a whole new network of contacts i.e. Media Contacts, Potential Funders, etc.

**Rule Addition:** E. On the invitation of the Chair, a Commercial Person who is not a Member of the Company may be co-opted to the Board either to fill a vacancy or as an additional Director provided that the appointment does not cause the number of Directors to exceed the maximum number of Directors. That person so co-opted shall remain a Member of the Board only until the next Annual General Meeting, when s/he shall retire and may stand for re-election at that AGM.

**20 in favour**  
**3 abstentions**  
**11 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### Motion 3

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Chairperson IASW

**Seconded by:** The IASW Board of Directors

On behalf of the IASW Board of Directors

Alteration to the IASW Rules & Byelaws.

Rule pertaining to Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups.

Amendment to the Rules & Byelaws.

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:1 Special Interest Groups are formed by members who seek to pursue the best interests of service users and promote the professional development of social workers.

**Explanation:** To clarify the difference between an IASW Special Interest Group and an Associate.

**Amendment to the Rule:**

3:2:1 Special Interest Groups are formed by members who seek to pursue the best interests of service users and promote the professional development of social workers. Special Interest Groups are open to social workers of any grade.

3:2:2 Associate group are formed by members who seek to pursue the best interests of service users and promote the professional development of social workers. Associate groups do not need to be open to social workers from any grade.

**44 in favour**

**1 abstention**

**No-one against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

-----  
**Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Aine Davin

**Seconded by:** Anna Carroll

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

That the SWAMH committee call on the IASW to negotiate with the HSE so that proper resources and structures are put in place so that social workers can safely implement the "safeguarding vulnerable adults at risk of abuse" policy as per the CORU code of ethics and social work principal.

**Explanation:** A new HSE Social Care national policy "Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse" (S.V.P.R.A.) has been introduced and was implemented in 2015 without adequate consultation with all stakeholders, both those inside the Social Care directorate and those in other areas such as mental health and Intellectual Disability.

Under this policy, the H.S.E Safeguarding and Protection Teams (S.P.T.'s) are monitoring and in effect line managing social work departments across the H.S.E and other H.S.E funded agencies with regard to their management of concerns about vulnerable adults. This is concerning from a fitness to practice perspective as there are no clear lines of accountability. It is also concerning that contrary to the statement on page 4 of the

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

S.V.P.R.A. policy, in practice the previous Elder Abuse policy has not been subsumed into the new S.V.P.R.A. policy, persons over the age of 65 years do not have access to the Safeguarding and Protection Teams if they are outside the auspices of the social care division. This is discriminatory and means that a service that used to exist for those persons previously has been withdrawn without any notice or consultation with relevant stakeholders.

This policy also advises that where an adult is assessed as having capacity to make decisions, and decides not to give workers permission to pass on their information to the Safeguarding and Protection Teams (S.A.T's) the policy's instructions is to ignore these wishes, complete the relevant preliminary screening forms and forward to S.A.T. which in effect ignores the Service User's Constitutional right to privacy, legislation, and earlier comments in the policy about the presumption of decision-making capacity.

This motion calls for the I.A.S.W to speak out on our behalf, insist that clarity is provided and proper structures and resources are put in place so that we can practice safely and ethically as per our code of ethics and our professional standards and principles.

**Amendment:** That the SWAMH committee call on the IASW to continue to negotiate with the HSE so that proper resources and structures are put in place so that social workers can safely implement the "safeguarding vulnerable adults at risk of abuse" policy as per the CORU code of ethics and social work principals

**Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2015

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Chairperson

**Seconded by:** Aisling Coffey, Treasurer

Alteration to the IASW Rules & Byelaws.

**New Rule;** 3:2:12 – Special Interest Groups, Affiliate Groups & Associate Groups shall submit a short-written report on their Groups activities at least three working day prior to each Council Meeting.

**Explanation:** In submitting a short report prior to the Council Meeting, the Group(s) are assisting the Office Manager with the minute taking and keeping the Council section on the website up to date.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Chairperson

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne, Vice Chair

Alteration to the IASW Rules & Byelaws.

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:4: The Chair of the Special Interest Group or a nominee who is a member of the Association shall attend Council meetings.

**Amendment:** 3:2:4: The Chair of the Special Interest Group & Affiliate Group or a nominee who is a member of the Association shall attend Council meetings.

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:6: Special Interest Groups shall prepare an annual report on their activities and membership each year in advance of the Association's AGM.

**Amendment:** 3:2:6: Special Interest Groups & Affiliated Groups shall prepare an annual report on their activities and membership each year in advance of the Association's AGM.

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:7: Special Interest Groups shall not operate a separate bank account.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Amendment:** 3:2:7: Special Interest Groups and Affiliated Groups shall not operate a separate bank account.

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:8: Up to date information regarding the contact details of the Executive Officers of each Special Interest Group shall be forwarded to the Association.

**Amendment:** 3:2:8: Up to date information regarding the contact details of the Executive Officers of each Special Interest Group & Affiliate Group shall be forwarded to the Association.

**Existing Rule:** 3:2:9: Special Interest Groups shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management and Event Planning.

**Amendment:** 3:2:9: Special Interest Groups & Affiliated Groups shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management and Event Planning.

### **Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Chairperson

**Seconded by:** Clodagh Donnelly, Director

Amendment to the IASW Rules & Byelaws.

Section 1: Membership.

**Existing Rule:** 1:2: Members of the Association shall be subject to the Association's code of ethics and practice and the Association's Rules and Byelaws and a breach of these may result in termination of membership under Article 5 of the Articles of Association.

Article 5 A member of the Company shall cease to be a member:

(a) If by Notice in writing to the Secretary of the Company s/he resigns his membership.

(b) If any member shall refuse or wilfully neglect to comply with any of these Articles of Association or shall have been guilty of such conduct as in the opinion of the Directors either shall have rendered her/him unfit to remain a member of the Company or shall be injurious to the Company or if the Directors shall for any other good reason require that a member shall be expelled such members may by a Resolution of the Directors be expelled from membership provided that s/he shall have been given notice of the intended resolution for her/his expulsion and shall have been afforded an opportunity of giving orally or in writing to the Directors any explanation or defence as s/he may think fit. Notice under this Article shall be deemed to have been served if it is sent by

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

post in accordance with the provisions set out in Article 65 of these Articles whether or not it is actually received by the member intended to be served with such notice.

**Amendment:** 1:2: Members of the Association shall be subject to the Association's code of ethics and practice, the Association's Rules and Byelaws and/or CORU Code of Professional Conduct & Ethics for Social Workers and a breach of these may result in termination of membership under Article 5 of the Articles of Association.

**25 in favour**

**5 abstentions**

**11 against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2014

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Treasurer of IASW

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne, Vice Chair of IASW

Alteration to the IASW Rules & Byelaw's.  
Rule pertaining to Membership Criteria.

**Existing Rule:** 1.1: Social workers who have retired but who had previously held a social work qualification recognised by the former National Social Work Qualification Board, or who are registered as social workers with the Social work registration Board of CORU.

**Amendment:** 1.1 (C) Membership Criteria: Social workers who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification recognised by the former CQSW recognised by the CCETSW, the National Social Work Qualification Board or who were registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.

**Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley, Treasurer of IASW

**Seconded by:** Joe McCarthy, Director of IASW

Alteration to the IASW Rules & Byelaw's.  
Rule pertaining to Section 3: Council & Special Interest Groups.

**Existing Rule:** Section 3:2 Rule 3:2:7: Special Interest Groups shall prepare a financial report regarding all financial accounts managed by that Special Interest Group and forward the financial report to the Association as part of the Association's obligation to complete a financial audit of accounts.

**Amendment:** Section 3:2 Rule 3:2:7: Special Interest Groups shall not operate a separate bank account.

**Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2013

#### Motion 1

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne, IASW Director

**Seconded by:** Billie Anne Johnston, IASW Director and Secretary

IASW calls upon the HSE to ensure that all the newly appointed social workers in mental health services have access to line management social work supervision.

**Explanation:** Approximately 70 social workers were recruited for child and adult community mental health teams via the Government funding for the national mental health clinical programmes. IASW/SWAMH/ CAMHS are aware that a number of social workers do not have a reporting relationship to a social work line manager and supervisor.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### Motion 2

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne, IASW Director

**Seconded by:** Kerry Cuskelly, IASW Director

IASW calls upon the HSE to ensure that all the newly appointed social workers in mental health services have access to a computer and desk space.

**Explanation:** Approximately 70 social workers were recruited for child and adult community mental health teams via the Government funding for the national mental health clinical programmes. IASW/SWAMH/CAMS are aware that a number of social workers do not have access to office facilities, such as a desk or a computer.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### Motion 3

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne, IASW Director

**Seconded by:** Billie Anne Johnston, IASW Director and Secretary

IASW calls upon the HSE to revert the decision March 2013 to remove social workers from the exemption grades for replacement and ensure that all social workers who resign or retire are replaced on a one for one principle again.

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

**Explanation:** IASW is concerned that a recent HSE Circular 005/2013, removes the exemption grades such as social workers from the employment controls arrangement, this means that in order to fill any post the 2 for 1 principle applies.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly, IASW Director

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne, IASW Director

The IASW calls upon the HSE, the Department of Environment and Local Government, all County Councils, all Housing Associations, and all other relevant stakeholders to implement the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016 Implementation Framework.

**Explanation:** We are currently experiencing an increasing housing crisis across the country, in relation to the marginalised populations that social workers engage with. The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016 Implementation Framework was published in July 2012. It's vision is to "facilitate access, for people with disabilities, to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living" (pg. 2). However, the IASW is aware that in certain areas of the country, local county councils are drafting housing policies that directly contravene the National Implementation Plan. In certain areas county councils are actively not building local authority houses or increasing their social housing provision due to "lack of interest". There are also no local cross-sectional committee's in some areas. These committees should be in place in every area to actively address the strategic aims of the Implementation Plan.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Kerry Cuskelly – IASW Director

**Seconded by:** Frank Browne – IASW Director

Following on from the previous motion, The IASW calls upon the HSE, the Department of Environment and Local Government, all County Councils, all Housing Associations and all other relevant stakeholders to ensure that the core members of the local cross-

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

sectional committee's focused on implementing the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016 Implementation Framework is made up of all relevant frontline staff and stakeholders.

**Explanation:** It is crucial that the membership of the cross-sectional committee's include frontline social workers in mental health and disability, service users (or their advocates) and other relevant stakeholders who work on the frontline. The IASW does not accept "lack of resources" as an excuse for not forming these committees or addressing the housing crisis to date.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

### **AGM MOTIONS 2012**

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** Jason Watson, IASW Executive Member

**Seconded by:** Ineke Durville, President IASW

The IASW Executive request permission from the A.G.M to make an Application to become a Company Limited by Guarantee.

**Explanation:** as the current set up of the Association leaves its Executive Members open to personal Litigation, should a member decide to take Legal Action against the Association. The Executive wish to protect themselves now and any future members of the Executive, by becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee, under The Companies (Act) 1963/1990.

**84 in favour**

**4 abstentions**

**No-one against**

**Motion was carried**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Jason Watson, IASW Executive Member

**Seconded by:** Ineke Durville, President IASW

If the Application to become a Company Limited by Guarantee is to be made then the IASW Constitution, as it stands has to be changed, in order to meet the requirements of the Act. The Executive requests permission from the AGM to adopt the Memorandum and Articles in place of the current Constitution.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Explanation:** The Executive sent the proposed Memorandum and Articles to every member of the Association for their consideration. The current Constitution of the Association does not meet the requirements of the Companies Acts 1963/1990. The new Memo & Arts do meet the requirements of said Acts.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne, Member of IASW

**Seconded by:** Deirdre Jacob, Member of IASW

That this Association calls on the HSE to prioritise the implementation of the primary care strategy in regard to the requirement that every primary care team has a social worker as a core team member.

**Explanation:** For the first time in Ireland, since the development of the primary care strategy and the subsequent recruitment of primary care social workers, vulnerable adults who are not accessing specialist or secondary services have access to a social work service, however the primary care strategy that stated that each primary care team have at least .5 to 1 social work has not materialised, due to insufficient funding and also to some funding for social work posts being redirected to other uses.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne, Member of IASW

**Seconded by:** Ineke Durville, President IASW

That this Association calls on the Department of Children and other relevant Departments to ensure that Children and Families Services are adequately resourced, prior to the enactment of mandatory reporting (of children suspected of being abused or neglected).

**Explanation:** From the evidence of other jurisdictions mandatory reporting will inevitably lead to increased reporting of children at risk to children and families services, so to ensure that services undertake quality assessments and interventions, there will need to be an adequate social work service so as to filter out and allocate social workers to work with the children that are at risk.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Declan Carey, Member of IASW

**Seconded by:** Donal O'Malley, Member of IASW

That this association calls on the Minister for Health and CORU to reduce the fees for registration for social workers immediately.

**85 in favour**

**2 abstentions**

**1 against**

**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Declan Carey, Member of IASW

**Seconded by:** Donal O'Malley, Member of IASW

That this association calls on the Minister for Finance to have a clothing tax allowance for social workers included in the Finance Acts, as all other allied health professionals are entitled to this allowance.

**5 in favour**

**5 abstentions**

**78 against**

**Motion NOT carried**

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Deirdre Jacob, Member of IASW

**Seconded by:** Patrice Reilly, Member of IASW

That the association calls on the HSE to work alongside Primary Care Social Workers and management to develop an appropriate management structure to support the development of primary care social work services in the community.

**Explanation:** There has never been an established management structure for PCSW's, most management arrangement have come as a result of local agreements and

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

goodwill from managers from 'other services'. If we are to develop an effective PCSW service, there must be appropriate management structures based within the context of other primary care services under the new primary care management structure. This will also help to clarify arrangements for those PCSW's who are currently managed within the changing children and family's structure.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2011

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley

**Seconded by:** Saragh McGarrigle

The IASW Executive request permission from the A.G.M to seek to make an Application to become a Company Limited by Guarantee.

**Explanation;** as the current set up of the Association leaves its Executive Members open to personal Litigation, should a member decide to take Legal Action against the Association. The Executive wish to protect themselves now and any future members of the Executive, by becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee, under The Companies (Act) 1963/1990.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Donal O'Malley

**Seconded by:** Saragh McGarrigle

If the Application to become a Company Limited by Guarantee is to be made then the IASW Constitution, as it stands will have to be changed, in order to meet the requirements of the Act.

**Explanation:** The Executive propose to call an extraordinary A.G.M in order to inform the Association of the Proposed changes to the Constitution, prior to them actually being made.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Roberta Mulligan

**Seconded by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

We call on IASW to explore the possibility of employing a social worker to work on behalf of members. In addition, that the IASW designate a member of the executive to the task of tracking CORU.

**Explanation:** In light of the newly enacted Code of Conduct for Social Workers and upcoming registration requirements, it is important that Social Workers have someone working for IASW to take on responsibility for actively pursuing information from and communication with CORU

1. To ensure IASW has sufficient time to become adequately familiar with progress and developments related to the registration process and
2. To ensure the implications of these are known in a timely manner and are adequately responded to.

**- in favour**

**1 abstention**

**4 against**

**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** David Williamson

**Seconded by:** Saragh McGarrigle

On behalf of Social Workers in Probation

Probation Officers are required to exercise the skills of Professional Social Workers and the working protocols of the Probation Service are founded on and incorporate social work skills and practices. Therefore, the Probation Special Interest Group requests that the IASW calls on the Department of Justice to recognise the NQSW/CQSW/Social Work Registration as the basic entry requirement into the service for the Probation Officer grade.

**Explanation:** While recognising that those currently working in probation who have alternate qualifications to the NQSW have made a valuable contribution to the service, it would be important, given the current times and with registration of social workers, that going forward there is a basic minimum entry requirement of the social work qualification in order to continue safe-guarding the professionalism of the Probation Service.

The probation service has committed considerable resources over a four-year period to up-skill 40 probation officers to the NQSW. Given this considerable resource commitment, it would make sense going forward to have NQSW as the minimum standard in order to free up such resources for development in other much need areas in the service.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

Once the 40 Probation Officers have completed their NQSW course, the vast majority of Probation Officers will be Professionally Qualified Social Workers.

This motion is intended to further promote the development and professionalisation of social work in Ireland. The more we understand about the complexities of offending behaviours, the more apparent it becomes that the competencies and skills of professional social work are essential in dealing with these realities.

**- in favour**

**1 abstention**

**1 against**

**Motion was carried**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2010

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** Sarah Houston

**Seconded by:** Mary McNamara

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the Mental Health Commission that all newly established "Approved Centres" for the in-patient treatment of Children and Adolescents with mental health difficulties, whether public or private, have full multidisciplinary teams including social workers, as per the regulations of the Mental Health Act 2001 and the recommendations of 'A Vision for Change'.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Mary McNamara

**Seconded by:** Sarah Houston

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the Health Service Executive, in their capacity as service providers & service funders, that all community based Child and Adolescent mental Health Service (CAMHS) teams, including in-patient teams, have their full complement of multidisciplinary team members, including social workers as per the Mental Health Act 2001 and the recommendations of 'A Vision for Change'.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne

**Seconded by:** Donal O'Malley

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

The IASW calls upon the HSE to ensure that all social workers working for the HSE or for agencies funded by the HSE have access to supervision from a professionally qualified social work line manager.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**- in favour**  
**- abstention**  
**3 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Patricia Daly

**Seconded by:** Anne O'Loughlin

On behalf of Social Workers in Ageing (SIGA)

Advocacy for older people is complex and the IASW endorse this document as a discussion document and pursue the issues raised in it surrounding the new HSE NAPA volunteer scheme for older people in residential care scheme have raised including:

- Complexity of cases dealt with by volunteers.
- Risk management.
- The boundaries of the volunteer's role.
- Issues of confidentiality.
- The interplay and overlap of the volunteer's advocacy role and the professional social work advocacy role, especially the social worker's knowledge of the client history.
- The conflict in the concept of the volunteer advocate role being solely directed by the client and independent whereas the social worker is taking an overview, systemic, ecological and holistic view in the best interest of the client, frequently a client with cognitive and capacity issues.

**- in favour**  
**3 abstentions**  
**1 against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Frida Lowry

**Seconded by:** Anne O'Loughlin

On behalf of Social Workers in Disability (SWID)

The SWID National Committee proposes that IASW draft a policy document regarding good practice for social workers in the recording /collection and protection of confidential client information in the multi-disciplinary team setting.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**- in favour**  
**2 abstentions**  
**- against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Paul McCarthy

**Seconded by:** Kirsten Byrne

On behalf of Social Workers working with Children & Families (C&F)

That the Children and Families SIG calls on the IASW to oppose the proposed implementation, by the HSE, of the National Child Care Information System (NCCIS), in particular the Standardised Business Process.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion7**

**Proposed by:** Paul McCarthy

**Seconded by:** Kirsten Byrne

On behalf of Social Workers working with Children & Families (C&F)

That the Children and Families SIG calls on the IASW to draw attention to the inequity in the care and aftercare provision for separated young people (unaccompanied minors) in Ireland.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 8**

**Proposed by:** Paul McCarthy

**Seconded by:** Kirsten Byrne

On behalf of Social Workers working with Children & Families (C&F)

That the Children and Families SIG calls on the IASW to contact the Assistant National Director of Children and Families to request that the IASW be represented on any future taskforce, committee or otherwise involved in any initiatives to do with children and family services, including the reconfiguration of children and family services.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2009

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** Aoife McGrath

**Seconded by:** Steve Peet

On behalf of Social Workers in the Southern Region

The Southern Branch calls on the IASW to express concerns with HSE management with regard to the current system of recruitment for basic grade Social Work, which involves national generic recruitment panels. The expression of such concern needs to be explored by the IASW in terms of professional policy recommendations for recruitment and should address the issue of the short form interview which does not take into account specialist knowledge and professional social work experience.

**Amendment:** The Southern Branch calls on the IASW to express concerns with HSE management with regard to the current system of recruitment for Social Workers which involved national generic recruitment panels. The expression of such concerns needs to be explored by the IASW in terms of professional policy recommendations for recruitment.

**- in favour**

**1 abstention**

**3 against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Kirsten Byrne

**Seconded by:** Gavin Mulhall

On behalf of Social Workers working with Children & Families (C&F)

This SIG calls on the IASW to monitor the progress of the Children's Rights Bill and in case of further delay write to the Minister for Justice to express our concern.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Seconded by:** Sheila McKenna

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the IASW to call on the Minister for Health to extend the remit of the Mental Health Commission to include the review of the involuntary detention at inpatient services of children and young people under the age of 18.

**- in favour**  
**5 abstentions**  
**- against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

**Seconded by:** Sheila McKenna

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the HSE to provide clear guidelines regarding the involuntary detention of children under the Mental Health Act 2001.

**- in favour**  
**4 abstentions**  
**- against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Aoife Mc Grath

**Seconded by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the IASW to support social workers in CAMHS in developing a policy on best practice in relation to caseload management for social workers on CAMHS teams.

**Amendment:** We call on the IASW to support social workers in Special Interest Groups in developing a policy on best practice in relation to caseload management for social workers.

**Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Sheila McKenna

**Seconded by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the HSE to ensure that newly established in-patient mental health units for children and adolescents include social workers on their teams.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

**Seconded by:** Ineke Durville

On behalf of the IASW Executive

The Irish Association of Social Workers recognises that there is no empirical evidence supporting the use of reparative therapy, though there is evidence of mental health risks associated with reparative therapy interventions used with lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Therefore, the IASW discourages social workers from providing interventions designed to change sexual orientation and from referring to practitioners or programmes that claim to do so.

**Amendment:** The Irish Association of Social Workers recognises that there is no empirical evidence supporting the use of reparative therapy, though there is evidence of mental health risks associated with reparative therapy interventions used with lesbian, gay or bisexual people. The IASW is strongly opposed to use of reparative therapy and discourages social workers from providing interventions designed to change sexual orientation and from referring to practitioners or programmes that claim to do so.

**- in favour**

**1 abstention**

**- against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 8**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne

**Seconded by:** Donal O'Malley

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

### **Amendment:**

**Proposed by:** Billie Anne Johnston

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

HSE Patient Charges, IASW calls upon 1)The Minister for Health and Children to review the unjustified 28% increase in patient charges for all those living in HSE provided or funded accommodation and 2) The HSE to ensure the fair and consistent implementation of the financial assessment process with regard to patient charges.

**Amendment:** HSE Patient Charges, IASW calls upon 1)The Minister for Health and Children to review the 28% increase in patient charges for all those living in HSE provided or funded accommodation and 2) The HSE to ensure the fair and consistent implementation of the financial assessment process with regard to patient charges.

**20 in favour**

**11 abstentions**

**13 against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 9**

**Proposed by:** Frida Lowry

**Seconded by:** Coleman Parker

On behalf of Social Workers in Disability (SWID)

SWID propose that IASW, given the requirements of the Assessment of Need process (Disability Act 2005) adopt the recommended standard of good practice developed by SWID (Social Workers in Disability) for Social Workers undertaking assessments.

This comprises the following documents:

- The Social Work Role (March '07).
- The Framework Documents (May'07).
- The Guidance Sheet (March '09).

**- in favour**

**7 abstentions**

**3 against**

**Motion was carried**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2008

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** David Hughes

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the DOH&C and HSE to fully resource community mental health teams in line with the recommendations of 'Vision for Change' to ensure equality of access for children to multidisciplinary assessment and services across the country.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** David Hughes

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the DOH&C and HSE to open, as a matter of urgency, inpatient services throughout the country for children and adolescents experiencing mental health crises in line with 'Vision for Change'.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We call on the DOH&C and HSE to provide funding and study leave for the Continuing Professional Development of social workers as in line with best international practice.

**\*\* Withdrawn \*\***

**Amendment:** We call on the DOH&C and HSE to provide equity of access to funding and study leave for the Continuing Professional Development of social workers as in line with best international practice.

Declan asked for figures to back up this – in some areas more support than others - when writing to Dept.

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

**Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

We fully support the Government's commitment to recognising in legislation gay and lesbian relationships. We call on the Government to introduce legislation without delay, granting full equality to gay and lesbian relationships.

**Motion NOT carried**

**Amendment:** We fully support the Government's commitment to recognising in legislation gay and lesbian relationships. We call on the Government to introduce legislation without delay that provides for full equality for gay and lesbian relationships.

**Amended Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Margaret Groarke

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

That the HSE take immediate steps to ensure that there is a Principal Social Worker in Adult Mental Health, in post, in every Catchment Area in order to act with due diligence regarding the provision of a safe service in line with policy and procedure for effective service development and management and the supervision of front line staff.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Margaret Groarke

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

That the HSE make arrangements to ensure that every Mental Health Social Worker is provided with professional clinical supervision by a qualified Social Worker

**Motion was carried unanimously**

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

That the HSE fund at least one social work post per consultant led Adult Mental Health Multidisciplinary Team and the practice of one social worker covering several teams is ended.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 8**

**Proposed by:** Aoife McGrath

On behalf of Social Workers in the Southern Region

The Cork Branch calls for all Special Interest Groups of IASW to establish a policy document on case-load recommendations for Social Work in different areas of specialist practice.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 9**

**Proposed by:** Aoife McGrath

On behalf of Social Workers in the Southern Region

The Cork Branch calls on IASW to write to the DOH&C requesting an urgent review of the assessment officer post, and the operation of this post, under the Disability Act. A number of issues discussed. It was decided to write to Dept. presenting motion and listing issues.

**- in favour**

**2 abstentions**

**- against**

**Motion was carried**

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## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

### **Motion 10**

**Proposed by:** Aoife McGrath

On behalf of Social Workers in the Southern Region

The Cork Branch calls on IASW to adopt a policy on social work supervision.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 11**

**Proposed by:** Aoife McGrath

On behalf of Social Workers in the Southern Region

The Cork Branch calls on the IASW to recommend to the DOH&C and State Services that they would consider appropriate training for translators.

**\*\* Withdrawn \*\***

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### **Motion 12**

**Proposed by:** G. Mulhall

On behalf of Social Workers working with Children & Families (C&F)

Children & Families SIG calls on IASW to write to the Minister for Health and Children and the Minister for Health outlining social work concerns on the impact of cutbacks and on-going employment controls on the delivery of services to Children and Families.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 13**

On behalf of the IASW Executive

The Executive seeks a mandate to spend capital to address the administrative crises within the office.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

### **Emergency Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** Bernadette Casey

On behalf of Dublin/Mid-Leinster Elder Abuse Social Workers

IASW urges that in the future all vacant social work posts for Elder Abuse (known currently as Senior Caseworker for Elder Abuse) should be open to professionally qualified Social Workers with three year's post qualification experience of working with any care group, and that the HSE amend the eligibility criteria accordingly.

**- in favour**

**2 abstentions**

**3 against**

**Motion was carried**

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### **Emergency Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Bernadette Casey

On behalf of Dublin/Mid-Leinster Elder Abuse Social Workers

That the post of Senior Case Worker for Elder Abuse has the title changed to Senior Social Worker for the Protection of Older Persons to reflect the job description, the eligibility criteria, the qualification and the profession of the holders of the posts.

**- in favour**

**- abstentions**

**1 against**

**Motion was carried**

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### **Emergency Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** John Brennan

Social Workers in Ageing (SIGA)

This AGM calls on the Government and Health Service Executive to stop the severe cutbacks and reinstate community, respite, and residential care services because of the detrimental effect on vulnerable older persons and their careers.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

## AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024

### AGM MOTIONS 2007

#### **Motion 1**

**Proposed by:** Marie Therese Mulholland

**Seconded by:** Miriam Mooney

On behalf of the IASW Council/Executive

The IASW Executive/ Council proposes the following changes to the Constitution and General Rules:

A- We propose that article 2.5.2: "The Honorary Treasurer shall furnish the Annual General Meeting with an audited statement of the accounts of the Association" be amended to read "The Honorary Treasurer shall furnish the Annual General Meeting with a statement of the accounts of the Association prepared by a firm of accountants"

B- The IASW Executive/ Council proposes that anyone whose subscription is 2 months or more in arrears shall be served with a notice to this effect in writing to the last address registered with the Association.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 2**

**Proposed by:** Marie Therese Mulholland

**Seconded by:** Miriam Mooney

On behalf of the IASW Council/Executive

The IASW Executive proposes that Gabriel Kiely and Monica Egan be made honorary members of the IASW.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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#### **Motion 3**

**Proposed by:** Jean Lyons

**Seconded by:** Lizzie White

On behalf of Social Workers in Foster Care (SWIFC)

That the SWIFC Group explore the extent to which the necessary dedicated team structures have been put in place for the delivery of foster care services across the

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

country in line with the government's Working Group Report on Foster Care and request IASW to make representation to the Department of Health and Children highlighting the discrepancies nationwide.

**Explanation:** There are no fostering team structures in place despite the Working Group Report from the Department of Health and Children stating that there should be)

**- in favour**  
**2 abstentions**  
**- against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 4**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne

**Seconded by:** Len Amory

**Amendment:**

**Proposed by:** Frank Browne

**Seconded by:** Len Amory

On behalf of Social Workers in Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)

We call upon social work training colleges to be more pro-active and flexible in attracting males on to the relevant courses.

**Explanation:** According to NSWQB" Social Work Posts in Ireland" (2005): in 2001 the percentage of male students enrolling to professional social training courses was 16%; in 2004 this had reduced to 13%.

The arguments for a balanced gender mix are numerous, both in individual therapeutic work and in teamwork. Both genders bring a range of qualities, experiences, and perspectives. The absence of males on social work training courses and in the workplace is arguably going to impact on the ability of future social workers to engage with male service users in particular. Most post-graduate social work training courses in the Republic require a social science degree. Males are under-represented on these courses and hence males are then not accessing social work training. The option of diploma courses without the requirement of a social science degree as in other jurisdictions might be one way of addressing the gender imbalance.

**10 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**18 against**  
**Motion NOT carried**

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**Amendment:** Mary Allen agreed in principal but requested clarification on what was meant by being 'pro-active and flexible in attracting males'. Other concerns over 'dumbing-down' were voiced and it was also argued that colleges and universities did plenty to attract people of both sexes. Marie Therese Mulholland (President Elect) suggested amendment be made and that the word 'flexible' be scored out.

**15 in favour**  
**No abstentions**  
**17 against**  
**Amended Motion NOT carried**

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### **Motion 5**

**Proposed by:** Terry Bradshaw

**Seconded by:** Aoife McGrath

On behalf of Social Workers in the Southern Region

We would like to call on the IASW to seek clarification on the employment embargo issue with the Department of Health and Children. We would like to have the above concerns addressed in relation to why this embargo continues to be in place, when there is a significant need to increase staff in all areas. Should the Department of Health need further evidence of staffing issues, we call on the HSE to investigate service delivery to be carried out. We call on the IASW to demand that this embargo be lifted.

**Explanation:** There have been recent aspirational moves forward in terms of legislative practice (i.e. the revision of Children First, Child Protection legislation in respect of grooming, & the Children's Constitution), yet there continues to be significant resource/staffing difficulties on the ground. This is the result of the HSE employment embargo on increasing staff in Social Work. This is of concern as it will impinge on the effective implementation on such Acts and also on the standard of Social Work Practice. This is evident in the Southern region by the number of unemployed Social Work graduates (while college places were doubled, there has been no increasing work placements to meet the demand). The consequence of ignoring staffing issues is that social workers in practice, in the Southern Region, are carrying unmanageable caseloads which result in unsafe crisis response from Social Work teams. Social Work in the Southern Region is experiencing excessive wait listing in all Social Work specialist areas (i.e. Child Protection, Medical, Fostering, CAMH). This not only impacts on the mental health of social workers in the field, but also on service provision for families who are most in need.)

**Motion was carried unanimously**

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

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### **Motion 6**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

The IASW calls on the HSE, voluntary agencies, the Mental Health Commission, and IMPACT to meet with the IASW to both discuss the implementation of the Mental Health Act 2001 and to resolve the lack of clarity about the roles of social workers working in mental health and learning disability in the HSE and voluntary services in the new regulations.

**\*\* Withdrawn \*\***

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### **Motion 7**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

The IASW calls on the HSE to provide an Out-of-Hours Child Protection Service on a national basis to meet the needs of children and young people living in crisis situations outside of regular office hours and to support the role of social workers in mental health and learning disability under the new regulations under the Mental Health Act 2001.

**Amendment:** Out-of-Hours community care teams.

**22 in favour**

**- abstentions**

**3 against**

**Amended Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 8**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

The IASW calls on the HSE to urgently address the issue of the unacceptably long waiting lists for the assessment and treatment of children and young people throughout the country referred to social workers working in mental health and learning disability with concerns about mental health, emotional and behavioural difficulties, ADHD and

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

autistic spectrum disorders.

**25 in favour**  
**4 abstentions**  
**- against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 9**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

The IASW calls on the HSE to establish multi-disciplinary therapeutic residential placements to which social work teams in mental health and learning disability can refer children and young people with complex emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties. CAMHS call on the IASW in partnership with unions to promote the recognition and remuneration of additional training.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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### **Motion 10**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

The IASW calls for the full resourcing of NEPS (the National Educational Psychological Service) to facilitate effective inter-agency work involving NEPS and SWA, improved educational and mental health services to children and young people and appropriate referrals to the two distinct services.

**9 in favour**  
**13 abstentions**  
**6 against**  
**Motion NOT carried**

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### **Motion 11**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

**Seconded by:** Billie Anne Johnston

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

The IASW calls on the HSE to immediately lift the embargo on the recruitment of new staff to Learning Disability, Mental Health and Community Care teams.

**4 in favour**  
**11 abstentions 9 against**  
**Motion NOT carried**

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### **Motion 12**

**Proposed by:** Declan Coogan

On behalf of Social Workers in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

The IASW calls on the HSE and employing agencies to recognise the additional training undertaken by many social workers in different psychotherapies and other work-related fields and to take account of these in determining pay levels for staff, in line with recognition given to other grades of health service staff.

**\*\* Withdrawn \*\***

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### **Motion 13**

**Proposed by:** Anna Carroll

**Seconded by:** Theresa McDonagh

On behalf of Social Workers in Disability (SWID)

Social Workers in Learning Disability call on IASW to continue to promote the importance of the social worker working in learning disability in early intervention teams.

**- in favour**  
**1 abstention**  
**- against**  
**Motion was carried**

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### **Motion 14**

**Proposed by:** Ineke Durville

**Seconded by:** Pat Waldron

On behalf of Social Workers working with Children & Families (C&F)

## **AGM MOTIONS 2007-2024**

The Special Interest Group for children and families call on the IASW to write to the Department of Health and Children to increase the funding for the HSE in order to provide additional social workers and resources to enable the social work staff to carry out their statutory functions including prevention.

**Motion was carried unanimously**

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