

Social Workers in Ageing

SIGA Committee Members

Chair: Aisling Coffey

Vice Chair: Fiachra McCabe

Secretary: Caroline O Donoghue

Committee Members: John Brennan, Anne O Loughlin, Martina Mc Govern, Asong Jingwa and Joyce Doyle

Meetings

SIGA held five meetings during 2018-2019:

11/07/18	19/09/18	21/11/18
20/02/19	24/04/19	

Membership

SIGA membership numbers for 2018-2019 were: 95

Activities / Events and Other Highlights for 2018-2019

All SIGA work during the 2018-2019 terms falls under these objectives and is outlined below:

1) Provide a Professional Forum for Social Workers Working with Older Persons to Exchange Information and Support.

- ✓ SIGA generally meets **bi-monthly** in St Mary's Hospital. At these meetings there are information updates and discussion on many issues affecting social work with older persons including:
 - Assisted Decision Making Act and the HSE's national implementation programme.
 - National Clinical Programme for *Older People* (NCPOP) and the *Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons* (ICPOP)
 - The establishment of integrated care teams in each CHO and the role of social work on these teams.
 - Progress in respect of the HSE's Draft Adult Safeguarding Policy
 - Statutory Home Care Consultation
 - Supporting persons and families living with dementia
 - Standards for HSE funded home care
- ✓ In between meetings there was regular **email correspondence** via the chair in relation to education, conferences, publications and resources to support social workers in their practice

2) Influence Policy, Legislation and Service Delivery via IASW Structures

A) Draft HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy 2018.

The HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy Review Development Group sought feedback on its *Draft HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy 2018* during the summer of 2018.

SIGA members welcomed a policy that promotes the human rights, empowerment and protection of ALL adults, who for whatever reason, at a point in time, do not have the capacity to protect

themselves from harm. Indeed, the fact the “*Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse: National Policy and Procedures 2014*” was a Social Care Division Policy was a major source of concern to social workers, a concern that was raised via IASW structures with the National Safeguarding Office in 2016 and 2017. SIGA similarly welcomes the change in terminology from “vulnerable adult” to “adult at risk of abuse” as inclusive and non-stigmatising.

This SIGA feedback on the “*Draft HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy 2018*” was compiled following the analysis of submissions from social work representatives working with older and younger adults across primary care, integrated care, medical, rehabilitation and residential care settings. The contributors who spent considerable personal time providing feedback on this draft policy were Caroline O Donoghue, Helen Holohan, Martina McGovern, Anne O Loughlin, Deirdre Mc Nally and Aisling Coffey. The feedback was analysed and collated by Aisling Coffey and is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

B) Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and the Mental Health Commission (MHC) Draft National Standards for Adult Safeguarding.

SIGA Secretary Caroline O Donoghue kindly lead out of SIGAs submission in respect of the above.

C) Dept of Health - Stakeholder Feedback - Questions and Themes to be Addressed in Developing a National Health Sector Adult Safeguarding Policy.

SIGA members contributed to this feedback at September’s SIGA meeting.

D) Home Care Services

Year on year IASW has been calling on government to increase funding for home care for all adults who require this service and to put home care on a statutory footing. In 2018-2019 IASW again worked with 21 other NGOs calling for increased investment in home care. Aisling Coffey, Chair of SIGA represented the IASW in press releases 01/10/18 and 20/11/18 calling on the government to increase funding for home care, which IASW members had passed as a motion at the IASW AGM 2018. These press releases are available on the IASW website under news. The previous year SIGA made a submission calling for home care to be put on a statutory footing. This submission is similarly on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

E) Dementia Diagnostic Project Steering Group

The chair of SIGA is currently representing the profession on the National Dementia Office (NDO) Dementia Diagnostic Project Steering Group. The NDO commenced a project to develop dementia diagnostic services nationally. The project aims to establish a standardised approach to the assessment and diagnosis of dementia across primary, secondary and tertiary services, ensuring timely diagnosis and intervention for people with dementia. The project is linked to the National Dementia Strategy priority action area relating to timely diagnosis and early intervention. The Chair of SIGA attends meetings approximately quarterly and keeps SIGA members and Council updated. Indeed, participation in this steering group has stimulated much discussion at SIGA meetings in respect of the role of social work in supporting persons with dementia and their families at assessment, diagnosis and post diagnosis.

There is also an **NDO Post Diagnostic Project Steering Group** and Matthew Gibb, the director of the Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC), is the social work representative.

During the summer of 2018 the chair of SIGA was asked to represent the profession as part of a multidisciplinary advisory group lead by Matthew Gibb who was seeking to develop professional guidance to support the organisation and facilitation of evidence-based Dementia Post-diagnostic Psycho-educational Programmes. Congratulations to the National Dementia Office (NDO) and the Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC) on this published a guidance entitled “*THE NEXT STEPS: Dementia post-diagnostic support guidance: Essential information for health and*

social care professionals” published in early 2019. These extremely thorough guidelines are essential reading for every social worker working with people with dementia and their families.

F) National Consultation - Draft Codes of Practice on Advance Healthcare Directives

An Advance Healthcare Directives Multidisciplinary Working Group has been established under the ADM Act by the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, T.D. to prepare draft codes of practice in relation to the Advance Healthcare Directive provisions contained in the Act. Submissions were sought on these draft codes in May 2018. SIGA Members Siobhan Quinn, Clíodhna Beaumont, Fiachra McCabe, Anne O Loughlin and Aisling Coffey drew on their professional knowledge and experience to develop a concise, well-informed submissions on the following draft codes:

- “A Draft Code of Practice for Designated Healthcare Representatives”
- “A Draft Code of Practice for Health and Social Care Professionals on Advance Healthcare Directives”

These submissions are available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

G) HIQA / MHC Advisory Group to inform the Development of National Adult Safeguarding Standards for Health and Social Care Services.

SIGA is delighted that a SIGA member, Anne O Loughlin is the IASW rep on this Advisory Group and she continues to keep SIGA updated on these matters.

3) Professional Development of Social Work Practice to Examine Opportunities for Education and Involvement in Research

SIGA was delighted to welcome **Collette O’ Regan, Training and Information Coordinator, LGBT Ireland** to our AGM on 11/07/18. Collette spoke about the “*Visible Lives*” research conducted which examined the **lived experience and needs of LGBT older persons**. Following on from this presentation a number of SIGA members availed of the opportunity to engage with LGBT Ireland to train as LGBT champions.

4) Advocacy / Representation on the Needs of Older Persons from a Social Work Perspective

A) Home Care Campaigning

As outlined under section 2 D above, SIGA has been active this term in campaigning on the need for enhanced resources for home care for older persons and younger adults with a disability.

B) National Clinical Programme for Older People (NCPOP) and the Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (ICPOP)

John Brennan remains engaged as IASW rep on the NCPOP and the ICPOP. John kindly provides updates in writing on his activities at each SIGA meeting.

An Inter-professional Interest Group (IIG) was formed in late 2015 within the NCPOP to bring together health, social care and other related professional representatives. The Interest Group is embarking upon a project to review discipline-specific and inter-professional competencies for those working with older people. There is a literature review on interdisciplinary working in progress and the group are currently engaging a research officer to pursue this objective.

The nine ICPOP ‘Pioneer’ Sites for Integrated Care are continuing to develop. Five of these teams have a social worker and we are delighted that they are all SIGA members. **John Brennan and Patrice Reilly** continue to convene a working group comprising of these five social workers.

It has been my pleasure chairing SIGA this term.

2018-2019 Publications

Nil