

Special Interest Group in Ageing (SIGA)

Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Aisling Coffey

Vice Chair and Secretary: Fiachra McCabe

Committee Members: John Brennan, Deirdre Mc Nally and Anne O Loughlin

SIGA members developed a vision, mission and objectives for this SIGA term aligned with the IASW strategic plan in 2016 which continue to guide our work.

SIGA Vision Statement:

Social workers engaging in the highest standards of professional practice with older persons, promoting positive ageing, supporting autonomy and self-determination and advocating for continuous improvement in service delivery.

SIGA Mission Statement

SIGA, as a Special Interest Group of IASW, seeks to enable the continuous professional development of social work practice with older persons and represent the needs of older persons from a social work perspective.

SIGA Objectives

1. Provide a professional forum for social workers working with older persons to exchange information and support.
2. Influence policy, legislation and service delivery via IASW structures.
3. Professional development of social work practice to examine opportunities for education and involvement in research.
4. Advocacy / representation on the needs of older persons from a social work perspective.

All SIGA work during the 2017-2018 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.
 - The HSE review of "Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse - National Policy and Procedures 2014"
 - Statutory Home Care Consultation
 - Living with Dementia

- ✓ 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
- ✓ SIGA was delighted to welcome the four newly appointed social workers to the Integrated Care Teams to SIGA and hopes that SIGA will be an ongoing source of support for them

2) Influence policy, legislation and service delivery via IASW structures

A) 2017 HSE Review of “Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse - National Policy and Procedures” (2014).

The IASW has held a firm commitment to ensuring the best possible social work service is available to vulnerable adults at risk of abuse. Even prior to this 2017 HSE national review, **Patrice Reilly** and I collated IASW member feedback on the implementation of this policy and submitted same to the HSE Safeguarding Office. This submission is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

This 2017 HSE review consultation process was undertaken in two phases:

1. This first phase concentrated on how the policy is experienced and working in practice for current users of the policy. There was a survey monkey questionnaire in May 2017 designed to capture this data. Many SIGA members made individual submissions at this time.
2. The second phase involved formal written submissions from stakeholder groups / individuals and direct face-to-face consultation via focus group meetings for more specific feedback and consultation. The Chair of SIGA via the IASW made a formal written submission in September 2017 and numerous SIGA members attended the focus groups run nationally from September 2017 to November 2017.

B) Home Care Services

During the summer of 2017, Ministers Simon Harris and Jim Daly, TD announced a public consultation on home care services.

Prior to the launch of the consultation process, the Chair of SIGA participated as part of a multi-agency group, to publish the “Discussion Document on the Consultation Process for the Establishment of a Statutory Homecare Scheme” document sent to Jim Daly, Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for Mental Health and Older People on 19/04/17. This discussion document is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

Following the announcement of the consultation on home care services, the Chair of SIGA made a submission on behalf of the group on 03/10/17. This submission is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

Through SIGA, the IASW was part of a multiagency group which welcomed the additional €37 million for home care in the budget on 10/10/17. This multi-agency press release is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

C) 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 has attended two meetings to date and we keep SIGA members and Council updated

D) Public Consultation on Draft Legislation relating to Deprivation of Liberty

Minister for Health, Simon Harris, TD, and Minister of State for Disability Issues, Finian McGrath, TD, opened a public consultation on draft legislation relating to deprivation of liberty on 08/12/17. The draft legislative provisions outline proposed safeguards for older people, persons with a disability and certain categories of people with mental health issues to ensure that they are not unlawfully deprived of their liberty in residential facilities. The Chair of SIGA made an IASW submission on the draft legislation on 12/03/18 which is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

3) Professional development of social work practice to examine opportunities for education and involvement in research

- ✓ The **SIGA Annual Conference “Promoting Excellence in Dementia Care”** took place on 10/11/17. The conference was opened by Helen Rochford Brennan, the Chair of the European Dementia Working Group who spoke of living with dementia. Emer Begley, Senior Project Manager at the National Dementia Office informed attendees on The National Dementia Strategy. Anne O Loughlin, Principal Social Worker and SIGA member, presented a paper on the Proposed Deprivation of Liberty Legislative safeguards. In the afternoon there were three parallel workshops focusing on dementia and loss, seeing and shaping the world WITH the person living with dementia and the role of music therapy in dementia care. Evaluation feedback was extremely positive with attendees commenting favourably on how the knowledge and skills gained will benefit their practice. The conference would not have been the success it was without the dedicated organising committee comprising **Fiachra McCabe, John Brenan, Deirdre McNally, Anne O Loughlin and Geraldine Healy**.
- ✓ At the SIGA AGM on 26/07/17, we enjoyed a **presentation from the Alzheimer’s Society Dementia Advisors**, Joanne Brennan and Ana Dalton. Thanks to **Clíodhna Beaumont** in the Mater for securing these speakers
- ✓ On 28/11/17, Brian Lambe, Services Manager from **Alone** kindly spoke of their agency’s enhanced services for older persons at national level.
- ✓ The Chair of SIGA represented the social work profession from July 2017 to January 2018 on a multidisciplinary group working on the newly launched **HSE HSCP Professional Supervision programme**.

4) Advocacy / representation on the needs of older persons from a social work perspective

A) Home Care Campaigning

As outlined under section 2 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)

John Brennan remains engaged as IASW rep on the National Clinical Programme for Older People (NCPOP). 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 and 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.

The nine ICPOP 'Pioneer' Sites for Integrated Care are continuing to develop. Four of these teams have a social worker. **John Brennan and Patrice Reilly** have convened a working group comprising of these four social workers and we are delighted to welcome these newly appointed social workers to SIGA.

C) Loneliness Taskforce Submission.

Senator Keith Swanick in collaboration ALONE formed the Loneliness Taskforce to coordinate a response to the loneliness and social isolation in Ireland. As part of the Loneliness Taskforce submissions in the form of recommendations for Government were sought. SIGA Members **Deirdre McNally and Geraldine Healy** drew on their professional knowledge and experience to develop a concise, well-informed submission which made recommendations to address loneliness in the short, medium and longer-term on 06/04/18. This submission is available on the IASW website under submissions and representations.

It has been my pleasure chairing SIGA this term.

Yours sincerely
Aisling Coffey
SIGA Chairperson
09/04/2018