



**EASTERN
HEALTH
BOARD**

BORD
SLAINTE
AN OIRTHIR

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

COMMUNITY WELFARE SERVICE

1995



Table of Contents.

Section	Page.
1. Introduction	1.
2. A Process of Strategic Development of the Community Welfare Service.	2.
3. ISTS - Progress Report	4.
4. Working Party on the Eastern Health Board Community Welfare Service.	6.
5. Report of the Review group on the role of Supplementary Welfare Allowances in relation to Housing.	8.
6. Travellers Team '95	10.
7. Homeless Persons Unit, Charles Street.	12.
8. National Social Service Board	14.
9. Money, Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)	16.
10. Cara Statistics.	17.
11. Back-to-School Clothing and Footwear Scheme.	19.
12. Appeals	20.
13. Appendices.	21.

INTRODUCTION

In introducing the Annual Report of the Community Welfare Service for the past number of years I have highlighted the great change facing the service and the challenge presented to us all to respond positively to that change. We are now in the midst of that change. The implementation of the ISTS computer system for S.W.A payments is on schedule with "go live" date fixed for June 1996. The Review Group on the Role of S.W.A. in Housing has reported to the Minister for Social Welfare. The Review Group concluded that the rent and mortgage supplements are an important element of housing policy and, like the other elements of housing policy, should be administered by Housing Authorities. A Working Group representative of management and unions has examined the workloads of Community Welfare Officers and made recommendations for the measurement and distribution of these workloads. A process of Strategic Development of the service is underway to determine the direction in which the service is going and the role it wishes to play in the future. So, it's all happening out there! In addition the number of MABS clinics continues to grow and further AIDS satellite clinics with an integral community welfare service are planned. It is a tribute to all who work in the service that we are coping so well with these changes and developments. The response of all staff has been extremely positive and supportive. I congratulate all involved. The commitment and dedication of all concerned augers well for the future.

Michael Hanratty,
Senior Administrative Officer.

A PROCESS OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY WELFARE SERVICE.

1. **Background.**

1995 saw the development of a strategic management initiative in the Community Welfare Service. This *Process of Strategic Development of the Community Welfare Service*, as it has been named, grew out of a decision of the Superintendent Community Welfare Officers to be more pro-active in the management of the Service. The Superintendents appointed a sub-group to compile a report for the Programme Manager, Community Care. This report looked at the Community Welfare Service in terms of its ability to provide a high quality, customer responsive service. It also looked at the management role of the S.C.W.O. The report concluded that the Service needed to adopt a strategic management approach if it was to survive the final years of the millennium.

The Programme Manager endorsed the report's findings and engaged a consultant, Michael Reilly, to facilitate the process. A two-day workshop attended by all the Superintendents, the Senior Administrative Officer and the Programme Manager was held to initiate the process. Further one-day workshops were also held. These workshops embraced the values of involvement and inclusiveness of all grades of staff and other stakeholders, including the clients. Of particular importance is the involvement of C.W.O.s. The workshops also led to the formation of a Support Group whose function is to *"provide support to the people and the process and to be pro-active in encouraging, facilitating and motivating everyone involved"*.

2.0. **What is Strategic Management.**

Strategic management is the process of making decisions which affect the future of an organisation. It is the match an organisation makes between its own resources and the demands, opportunities and threats of its external environment.

There are three inter-related stages to the strategic management process: analysis, choice and implementation. Each stage informs the others so the process is both iterative and on-going.

2.1. **Analysis.**

There are two aspects to analysing an organisations environment: Its external environment and its internal environment.

2.1.1. **Assessment of the External Environment.**

In order to be in a position to make strategic decisions about the future of the Community Welfare Service we must know what the demands, opportunities and threats from the external environment are. We need to know what the expectations of those who have a stake in the Service are. To this end, we must be clear who these stakeholders are. We then have to find mechanisms for

engaging these stakeholders in our decision-making process. Indeed, we have to find ways of involving the stakeholders in our on-going analysis of the external environment.

2.1.2. Internal Assessment.

In order to meet the demands, opportunities and threats from the external environment, we must know what the strengths and weaknesses of the Service are. To this end, we must examine and evaluate the structure, culture and resources of the Community Welfare Service. In particular, the mission and mandate of the Service must be evaluated in terms of present expectations and a renewed mission and mandate clarified. The mission is clarified by reaching consensus among all the stakeholders as to what the Service's desirable future is.

2.2. Choice.

When we have an initial assessment of the Service's Strengths and Weaknesses and know what Opportunities and Threats we face from the external environment, we will have conducted what is generally referred to as a SWOT Analysis (SWOT = *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats*). The strategic choice then, is how do we get from where we are now to that agreed desirable future. Within this choice, decisions have to be made on how to build on the Service's strengths, eliminate or minimise its weaknesses, capitalise on the opportunities facing it and position it so as to reverse, minimise or eliminate threats to its future in such a way as to best achieve its goals. The issues facing the Service which are identified in the SWOT Analysis have to be prioritised and tackled one by one within this reference.

2.3. Implementation.

There is a danger that plans can be developed and left to gather dust on shelves. However, because the Process of Strategic Development of the Community Welfare Service is a strategic management initiative, the *implementation* of the strategy forms an integral part of the strategy itself. Strategic management does not just plan *what* needs to be done - it spells out exactly *why* it has to be done, *when* it has to be done, *how* it has to be done, *by whom*, *what* resources are necessary to carry it out and *where* these will come from.

Furthermore, the process of strategic development itself embraces the values of inclusion and involvement. This means that all those who are *stakeholders* in the Service must be involved in the decision-making process in such a way that they can influence the decisions. It also means that a communications strategy must be an integral part of strategic process. To this end, Community Welfare Officers, clients, client-groups, other Community Care disciplines, other agencies including government departments must be involved in the process.

Nigel A. Nolan,
Superintendent Community Welfare Officer for
Research, Training and Development.

ISTS - PROGRESS REPORT.

1995 was a crucial year for the ISTS (Integrated Short Term Schemes) Project. It was the time for setting out the requirements for the SWA side of the Project. This meant long and complex discussions with the system analysts from both the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and Andersen's Consultancy. Our requirements list had then to be matched against the available resources - time, money and staff (especially programmers). We were then faced with the difficult task of negotiating with DSW and trying to reach a consensus on what was essential for SWA purposes and what could be deferred until a later date. This type of negotiating is part and parcel of all computer projects. The net result is that while we may not have got all the features we would have liked from day one, we do have a good workable system. We also have a commitment to further development based on a priority list drawn up by the people using the new system.

By the beginning of the year all Health Boards had a Project Manager working full time on the project. In seven of the boards the Project Manager was a SCWO who was seconded to the position. In the NWHB it was an SEO from the Management Services Department. later on in the year the Project managers were joined by CWOs from each of the health boards. There were 12 CWOs in total, with four from the EHB. The Eastern Health Board Community Welfare Officers were Geraldine Manning-Doyle and Claude Delaney, who commenced in August, and Noel Barry and Rita Tighe, who commenced in September. These worked on the various sub-projects - Geraldine was involved in system testing, Claude worked on the user manual, Noel was involved in developing the training materials and Rita worked on the procedures manual.

In the Autumn, briefing sessions were held for all Community Welfare Staff in the Eastern Health Board. These were held either in Dublin Castle or the Board Room in Dr. Steeven's. A prototype of the system was demonstrated at these sessions, which gave an opportunity to all staff to see how the new system might look. These sessions also provided an opportunity for CWOs to ask questions, to make suggestions and to discuss how the new system might impact on their working life.

The Eastern Health Board ISTS Steering Committee, chaired by the Programme Manager for Community Care met on a monthly basis throughout the year. This provided an opportunity to update relevant staff in the EHB on the progress of the project and also to iron out any local EHB issues. The Consultative Forum, which consisted of a CWO from each SCWO area also met on several occasions throughout the year.

On a national level, towards the end of the year, Sylva Langford, the Principal Officer in the SWA section in DSW, took on a major co-ordinating role in the project. She has been instrumental in ironing out difficulties and resolving problems and her commitment and dedication has been of great assistance to all the Health Boards.

On a personal level, one of the significant benefits of deriving from the ISTS Project has been the close working relationship between all Health Boards. For the first time all the Community Welfare Sections in the Health Boards were working together on a joint project. This resulted in a very fruitful exchange of information and much learning for all concerned. Likewise, throughout the year close working relationships were built up with all sections in DSW. All of this should have long-term benefits extending far beyond the ISTS Project itself.

During 1996, ISTS will begin to impact on the lives of everyone working in Community Welfare. It is at this stage that the hard work and commitment of all the people from the Health Board and the Department of Social Welfare should start bearing fruit.

Frank Mills,
ISTS Project Manager.

Working Party on the Eastern Health Board Community Welfare Service.

The Eastern Health Board and representatives of both Impact and SIPTU Community Welfare staff agreed to establish a Working Party on the Community Welfare Service in June 1995. This forum was set up following continual industrial relations difficulties over staffing levels in the service. The remit of the Working Party was to make recommendations on the delivery of Community Welfare Services.

The Working Party met on sixteen occasions from July to December 1995. A detailed survey of nine districts was undertaken by the group to analyse different district traits. A questionnaire was circulated to all district CWO's to ascertain characteristics and non-quantifiable features of their work. A report has been finalised and is to be presented to the CWO membership's of both unions, EHB Management and the Department of Social Welfare.

The report attempts to address in detail two key features of service delivery:

1. Workload Measurement

The Working Party recognised that there was a disproportionate distribution of work and there was no agreed means of establishing equitable workloads. An examination of the contributory factors which impact on CWO work was undertaken.

A formula of workload measurement using the Cara Statistics for quantifiable work and providing for non-quantifiable work by weighting each payment-type relative to the non-quantifiable features highlighted in our surveys was agreed. A target number of points, which is currently set at 3450 (resulting from the formula) has been agreed as a reasonable workload. The formula agreed will be subject to an annual review.

The formula will make it possible for any CWO to apply the formula to his/her year end (December) Cara Statistics and establish their district weighting. If the weighting falls outside an accepted band, currently 3400 to 3700, there would be a case for redistribution or additional staff.

2. Administration of Housing Supplements

The Working Party examined a number of proposals on the administration of housing supplements. After comprehensive discussion and consideration it was decided to opt for a specialised housing unit. This unit would be established to deal with all functions, operations and payments of housing supplements and rent deposits. Staff comprising of 20 CWO's, 2 SCWO's and 8 clerical staff would be allocated to the unit.

The proposed unit would involve the removal of all housing functions from the local district remit. The unit would also offer an opportunity for staff to opt to work in housing exclusively. The specialist housing unit would have a central base and CWO's attached would also be available in satellite clinics throughout the EHB region.

Conclusion

The recommendations of the Working Party report are radical and far reaching. If agreement on implementation of the recommendations is secured it would involve large scale change to current district boundaries. Community Welfare area's would experience a shift in staff resources. The need to progress sensitively will be paramount.

However, it must be borne in mind that the purpose strived for is equitable workloads for all CWO's and a better service to the public.

Copies of the complete Working Party Report are available through SCWO's or Union Representatives.

Fergal Black,
Community Welfare Officer.

REPORT OF THE REVIEW GROUP ON THE ROLE OF SUPPLEMENTARY WELFARE ALLOWANCES IN RELATION TO HOUSING.

1. Introduction

Expenditure under the Supplementary Welfare Allowances (S.W.A.) scheme on rent and mortgage supplements nationally increased from £7 million in 1989 to £54 million in 1994 (There was a further increase to £60 million in 1995). In July 1995 the Government decided that a group should be established to review the role of S.W.A. in housing. The group, representative of the Departments of Social Welfare, Environment, Finance and Health, and of the Local Authorities and Health Boards, first met in September, 1994, and reported to the Minister for Social Welfare in December 1995.

2. Terms of reference

The terms of reference of the Group were:

- (a) to identify the factors underlying the increase in rent and mortgage supplements under Supplementary Welfare Allowance and the likely future trends in demand for these supplements;
- (b) to consider the most cost effective and efficient method of assisting people on low incomes who are unable to meet their housing needs, especially their long-term needs, having regard to budgetary exigencies and to identify any legislative or other changes that may be required having regard to the range of provisions which currently exist in the context of existing Government policies in the housing area;
- (c) in the light of paragraph (b), to clarify the respective roles of the Departments of Social Welfare and Environment, local authorities and health boards in the area of housing assistance;
- (d) to identify appropriate arrangements for assisting tenants of Voluntary Housing Associations who are unable to afford the rents charged for dwellings provided under the Capital Assistance Scheme, having regard to the existing policies for assisting with voluntary housing.

3. Main findings and recommendations

The main findings and recommendations of the report are:

- 3.1 That the growth in demand for and expenditure on rent and mortgage supplements is due to a combination of many factors including
 - improved information facilities and increased awareness of the social welfare assistance available
 - changing social expectations
 - the demand led nature of the SWA scheme
 - changing patterns of household formation e.g. one-person and lone-parent households
 - continuing high levels of unemployment
 - slowing down in the Local Authority house building programme in the years 1987 - 1992
- 3.2 That these factors will continue to affect future demand.
- 3.3 That there is a fundamental difference between the "demand-led" approach of the S.W.A. scheme and the "priority based" approach of the Housing Authorities in meeting social housing need.
- 3.4 That this difference of approach is undesirable and that an integrated approach to the assessment of housing need and the allocation of housing resources should be adopted within a single legislative framework. The Review Group welcomed the commitment in "a Government of Renewal" that "all forms of housing assistance will be administered by the local authority".
- 3.5 That the rent supplementation in the private rented sector is a cheaper way of housing single people than building Local Authority accommodation. At current interest rates there is no evidence to show that rent supplementation is a lower cost option for families than direct local authority building.
- 3.6 That the payment of S.W.A rent and mortgage supplements reflects both an unemployment trap and a poverty trap. That consideration be given to introducing measures aimed at ameliorating the effects of these traps.
- 3.7 That the rent supplements be paid only in respect of properties which have been registered in accordance with the forthcoming Regulations on the registration of private rented dwellings.

Following acceptance of the Report by the Government, an inter-departmental group is to be established to work out the practical detail of integrating the rent and mortgage scheme into the general housing service under Local Authorities.

Michael Hanratty
Senior Administrative Officer.

TRAVELLERS TEAM '95

The Traveller's Community Welfare Service has been operating for the last 10 years. In accordance with the Health Strategy, it is now an appropriate time for an in depth internal and external review of its work. This is presently being completed. The larger Community Welfare service is on the verge of enormous change, and in keeping with client consultative initiatives, traveller groups covering the Dublin city and county area were invited to a series of meetings which commenced in late '95 to discuss how best the Community Welfare Service can serve the Traveller Community in the future. Since the unit was opened on 21/10/85, there have been ongoing criticisms of the very idea of a different service for travellers, regardless of the service quality. Despite this fundamental criticism, many travellers feel a preference for the special service for reasons based largely on its convenience for users and the relationships and knowledge built up over the years between the team and Travellers.

Several Traveller groups have made submissions to the Eastern Health Board following the above meetings and after a final joint consultative meeting, a decision will be made on the future operation of the team. On a policy and practice level, the team undertook a review frequently occurring Exceptional Need Payment items or circumstances to ensure that our aid continues to address the unique needs of the Travelling community.

There has been an improvement in the quality of many halting sites in the Dublin area, with several having design and layout input directly from the Travellers who will occupy them. These better sites have meant that the team has had to aid replacement and repair of household items and repair caravans less frequently than in the tougher conditions on unofficial side of the road or field sites. Plumbing and mains electricity, and secure stone kitchen, bathrooms, and utility rooms mean that fridges and washing machines can be supplied, contributing greatly to improving quality of life.

In contrast, however, heating of caravans, and condensation continue to be problem areas. Bedding can get musty in caravans due to condensation, particularly in winter and must be replaced more frequently than in houses. We help with the purchase or installation of various ways of heating caravans; solid fuel: gas fixed or "super ser") new generation paraffin oil, or on sites with mains supply, electric heaters. Each type has its own drawbacks and advantages from safety, purchase cost, condensation, useful life, running cost (both fuel & parts) points of view and many families have marked preferences for one type or another. None are ideal. If a growing family trade up to a larger caravan, some items such as heaters may be included to make up the sale of the old caravan and the family may then need help again with a heat source.

Patterns of movement within the travelling community have changed within the last few years. Now many more clients in the Dublin area, while retaining the traveller way of life in all other respects, choose to live in one place continuously, usually on an official halting site or group housing scheme. Often the very poorest and the most affluent travellers are the most mobile, but for very different reasons. The small

numbers of travellers who travel on independent means do not often call on our services. The poorest travellers end up most often on the worst unofficial sites. In the experience of the team this group have also been most vulnerable to vandalism (e.g. having caravan windows broken at night). Illegal moneylending continues to be a problem for some families. Typically the money lender makes available a caravan to a poor traveller at a punitive repayment rate (often 80% of total income) and the recipient struggles to repay the usurious loan for a period until he cannot keep up with the repayments and the caravan is repossessed. A great deal of violence, secrecy and fear surrounds this process, and we have had only limited success in addressing it. With this and similar problems in mind, (access to loans/low traveller take up of MABS etc) the author has been involved in setting up a new piece of research on credit needs and proposed solutions for travellers in Dublin. This research is funded by the Department of Social Welfare and will be jointly carried out by 2 researchers employed by the management group: Tom McCann, a member of the South Dublin Travellers Action Group and Paul Quinn, a professional researcher. A survey will be conducted amongst Travellers and groups serving Travellers during the summer of '96, and a report completed and published in November '96. This is the first time that the Department of Social Welfare has supported such research and represents an important acknowledgement of the different financial and cultural needs and practices of travellers.

Many Travellers who opt to move into standard social housing experience problems and the failure rate of tenancies has been high in the past. In an attempt to address this, Andy Doogue, Social Worker with the Catholic Youth Council based at Brookfield Traveller Information Centre, in conjunction with South Dublin County Council, has run several "Preparation for Housing" courses for small groups of imminent tenants. Community Welfare Officers from the team have given talks on these courses outlining how our service can assist during and after moving into a house. The courses have been a success in contributing to more stable long term tenancies.

There are multi-disciplinary groups headed up usually by the Area Medical Officer active in several areas of the Dublin suburbs. They are made of workers from many disciplines who come into contact with travellers in their job and include CWO Traveller Team, Social Workers, Teachers, Nurses, Travellers themselves, Priests, Traveller Action Groups Etc. The group in the Clondalkin area (attended by the author) meets every 6 weeks or so and has been particularly successful in liaising with the Local Authority regarding site development and improvement and on other more day to day matters such as rodent control on large halting sites.

It seems to be a hazard of the specialist CWO team that our area of work is sometimes only partially understood by our mainstream colleagues, and this article has attempted to illustrate some of the ongoing concerns and activities of the team.

On a personal note, Dermot Whelan has left the team after 10 1/2 years and will be missed by travellers and fellow workers alike. Dermot is now working in Coolock. Marion Foody Feeney has joined the team. Although there is a particular consultation process coming to a close for the team at present, the process is established, and we hope to maintain an ongoing dialogue on client need. We want to ensure that the

team's work practices continue to evolve and tailor response to the perceptions, demands, and needs of clients, and further to identify and meet this need in the way that is most desired by our clients.

John Cantillon,
Community Welfare Officer.

HOMELESS PERSONS UNIT, CHARLES STREET.

The Homeless Persons Unit in West Charles Street continues to ensure the provision of emergency accommodation to homeless people in the Eastern Health Board region. The office is open to single women and families each weekday morning from 10 am to noon and each afternoon from 2 pm to 4 pm for single men. Most people applying are offered hostel accommodation with a smaller number (generally women and families) offered Bed & Breakfast places. Asylum seekers are referred to youth hostels or to the Red Cross Hostel in Merrion Road(when available).

In 1995, some 2706 new cases presented, including 335 asylum seekers for whom a special clinic is held on Wednesday mornings. The existing out-clinics at the Iveagh Hostel (Tuesdays), York House (Wednesdays) and the Simon Community (Thursdays) have been maintained. More than 4,000 cases presented through the year averaging 600 per week. Like the number of new cases at approximately 50 per week, this is similar to previous years. A slight overall increase is due to a rise in asylum seekers applying, both as an actual increase and as an increased percentage of all cases.

Asylum seekers are evenly balanced between people from Eastern Europe and Africa. Over 600 cases in total were assisted with B&B accommodation with approximately 35-45 being in place at any given time. The city's hostels can accommodate slightly less than 700 cases at any time. Given that the spill over into B&B is proportionately small compared to the bed spaces available, and that about 500 cases are medium to long term in hostels, the number of new cases per week is balanced by a similar number leaving emergency accommodation. Of the 500 cases mentioned, not all are in hostels all the time and this group also shows movement out of homelessness. Two thirds of cases are male but the higher or more intense welfare needs of families mean the service is well balanced. The main change over previous years is the increase in drug related problems among young families and single people. Although the reality of alcohol abuse underlies much of the individual reasons for homelessness, drug issues, particularly heroin usage, characterise the more stressed and difficult cases requiring intense welfare work.

Out of hours Service

The free-phone-based Out of Hours Service has completed its second year. A Community Welfare Officer is available from 5 pm to 1 am on weekdays and from 10 am to 1 am at weekends. 8173 client calls were received in 1995 made by 2586 cases which is a slight increase on 1994 which tended to 200 calls per week (a trend maintained in 1996). This is probably due to increased awareness of the service though some weeks numbers can drop to 180 approx. The character of cases is broadly similar to last year, representing: new homeless cases; a low level of repeat calls by people already in hostels and regular contact by about 332 cases in the year. This figure tallies closely with the day services experience. The later category still only constitutes 10% of the total, calling 6 times or more. The night service is an effective co-ordinator of bed use, maximising beds available over the course of the night and liaising with all the available hostels.

Conclusion

Overall the service has not experienced any overwhelming change, though an increase in drug related problems and the level of asylum seekers is expected to continue. As a provider of SWA and welfare services, and as an agent for the Dublin Local Authorities in the provision of emergency accommodation, the Homeless Unit has been again successful over the last year.

Pat Bolger,
Community Welfare Officer.

NATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE BOARD

In September of last year I was appointed as a member of the National Social Services Board by the Minister for Social Welfare, Proinsias De Rossa. My appointment should be seen as a recognition by the Minister of the role and work of Community Welfare Officers and an opportunity for a CWO to express opinions at a high level

The current Board is an expanded one with fifteen members and has a significantly increased budget. This follows the transfer of responsibility for the N.S.S.B. from the Department of Health to Social Welfare on 1st June 1995.

The functions of the National Service Board are laid down in an Act of 1984 and are as follows:

- (a) To advise the Minister and to keep him informed on the developments of Social Services generally and, whenever the Minister requests, to advise him and keep him informed on such aspects or branches thereof or particular social services as the Minister may specify.
- (b) To promote greater accessibility, co-ordination and public awareness of social services.
- (c) To promote, whether by means of the provision of financial or material aid, personnel or services, or otherwise, the development of services and schemes in local communities for the dissemination of information and advice in relation to social services and in this respect to promote, develop and encourage voluntary community activity in relation to social services.
- (d) To promote, develop, encourage and assist, whether by means of the provision of financial or material and, personnel or services or otherwise, the work in relation to social services of such bodies as the Minister may specify.
- (e) To report to the Minister every six months as to the manner in which aspects of accessibility, co-ordination or awareness of health services which particularly hinder the promotion of health or the encouragement of individual responsibility for personal health can be improved.

The Board carries out its functions in its day to day work in a variety of ways. The most obvious is its role in the development and support of Information Services and in particular through it's work with the Citizens Information Centres (CIC's). The Board also has a broad role in promoting information and advice by supporting and resourcing information-giving organisations. The principal resource provided is the *information file system*. The files, which are updated regularly, are available to a wide range of subscribers, be they individuals or organisations, among them each Community Care area in the Eastern Health Board. It is envisaged that the file system

will be computerised and this is already at pilot stage. This is something that Community Welfare Officers should take note of in the light of our computerisation programme and our role as information givers. The Board's work is supported by its well established Training Service which assesses the training needs of volunteers throughout the country and provides courses on a wide range of topics such as effective management and developing teamwork. It also organises training courses, seminars and conferences to support local organisations who provide information services or who wish to set up such a system and in certain cases grants may be made available. The Board complements this work by a range of publications such as *Relate* and the effectiveness of its work is regularly evaluated through frequent research and user surveys. A more recent development is the establishment of a Mobile Information Service which is designed to meet the needs of areas which are not served by information centres.

While the provision of information and advice is the primary role of the Board, it has other responsibilities and functions. It has a statutory and administrative role in relation to both the National Council for the Elderly and the National Validation Body for Social Work Qualifications and Training. The Social Mentor Project is also administered by the Board on a pilot basis in counties Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. This project aims to link the skills of older people with specific expertise to the needs of voluntary organisations.

Having successfully set up a Citizens Information Money Advice Project in four Dublin Centres, the Board, on behalf of the Department of Social Welfare, runs a Money Advice Training Unit as a training and back up service for those involved in the area of money advice.

The current Board commences a three year term at a time of great change in Ireland and must set its goals and targets in this context. This change is being reflected in areas such as the proposed freedom of information legislation, developments in technology, the implementation of a National Anti-Poverty Strategy, the setting up of Area Partnerships and proposed white paper and chapter on the voluntary sector. The task of the new Board is to oversee the ongoing work while at the same time set targets and allocate resources to priority areas. When he addressed the Board, the Minister said he was open to the advice he would receive and, in particular, spoke of the need for an arms length integrated approach to information and information services independent of the Department of Social Welfare.

The new Board will have an interesting and challenging period of office. The fifteen members, who have wide experience of decision making and policy formulation at different levels, welcome that challenge and have formulated a three year development plan. I am honoured to be appointed to the Board and to be part of that challenge, I intend to use the opportunity constructively and to put forward a CWO point of view where appropriate.

Padraig Rehill,
Community Welfare Officer.

MONEY, ADVICE AND BUDGETING SERVICE (MABS)

I am involved as a member of the Management Committee of the greater Blanchardstown area Money, Advice and Budgeting Service. The concept of MABS arose from the growing realisation that the problem of money lending and indebtedness amongst families and individuals, needed to be effectively combated in a focused and professional way. If a person has difficulties with rent, mortgage, E.S.B., Gas, T.V. licence, moneylenders, banks etc. then the service can help them.

The aim of the service is to enable the person to pay off debts at a rate they decide leaving enough residual incomes to pay for necessities. There is also an opportunity to plan for credit in the future through the local Credit Union.

The service is free to all and is operated on both a referral basis and walk in service. The money advisor will negotiate directly with creditors on the clients behalf with a view to restructuring repayments to an affordable level. A client's repayment are combined into one single payment paid into a credit union account from that account various creditors are paid. A facility for a savings element can also be included.

The Management Committee of which I am a member is responsible for decisions with regard to employment of staff to run the service, the finding of office accommodation, purchase of office equipment and general management of funds. It should be noted that the service is entirely funded by the Department of Social Welfare. The success of MABS is due to a partnership approach involving representatives of Local Authorities, Dept of Social Welfare, Local Credit Unions, Gardai, Clergy and Community/Voluntary Groups.

Geraldine Fox,
Community Welfare Officer.

CARA STATISTICS

The *Cara* Statistics is a system of collecting and collating information on S.W.A. payments. The system, which is now generally referred to as the '*Cara* Stats.', consists of a two-part database which holds clients personal information such as name, address, date of birth, RSI number, sex, marital status, number of children, and source of income. The second part records S.W.A. payments made to each client by amount, type of payment (i.e. reason for the payment) and the date of each payment.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of payments-made by category in the Eastern Health Board region during 1995. Again this year, Supplements account for over half of all payments at 54.9%. A more detailed table of payment statistics is given in Appendix 1, where they are compared with the figures from 1994.

Payment Category	Number	%
Basic	169,332	24.2%
Supplements	384,711	54.9%
Exceptional Need	126,858	18.1%
Miscellaneous	19,575	2.8%
Total:	700,476	100%

Table 1: 1995 Payments by Category.

Within the supplement category, housing supplements account for most payments, as Table 2 reveals.

Supplements	Number	% of All Payments
Rent	244,848	35.0%
Mortgage (Local Authority)	21,487	3.1%
Mortgage (Others)	27,126	3.9%
Heating	3,756	0.5%
Diet	49,119	7.0%
Travel	21,633	3.1%
Former Home Assistance Cases	400	0.1%
Others	16,342	2.3%
Total Supplements:	384,711	54.9%

Table 2: 1995 Supplement Payments by Category.

Table 3 shows the total number of cases paid in 1995 for the Eastern Health Board region. It also shows the number of cases paid in each category. As the note points out, people paid in one category may also have been paid in the other categories meaning that the total is not the sum of the categories. Appendix 2 contains a more detailed statistical breakdown of cases paid in 1995 and shows a comparison with the 1994 figures.

Cases Paid - Payment Category:	Number:
Basic	34,319
Supplements	55,312
Exceptional Need	93,546
Miscellaneous	5,831
Total:	92,431

Table 3: Cases Paid in E.H.B. Area in 1995.

Note: The Total figure is the total number of individual clients paid and not the sum of the categories.

Table 4 gives a breakdown of the S.W.A. expenditure for 1995. It can be seen that supplements account for 62.7% of total expenditure. However, housing supplements (rents and mortgages), which had an expenditure of £36,255,795, account for 58.6% of all expenditure. Appendix 3 contains more detailed statistics on expenditure.

Expenditure:	Amount:	% of Total Expenditure:
Basic Payments	£11,446,635	18.5%
Supplements	£38,739,863	62.7%
Exceptional Needs Payments	£9,653,091	15.6%
Miscellaneous	£1,925,838	3.2%
Total Expenditure:*	£61,765,429	100%

Table 4: E.H.B. Expenditure on S.W.A. Payments for 1995.

*** Note: Expenditure recorded on *Cara* Statistics only - The Actual Expenditure is Higher.**

As mentioned above, all expenditure is not included in the *Cara* statistics: Three S.W.A. districts were not using the system for the complete year, one area's National Fuel Scheme was paid centrally and some expenditure is administered from head-office which is not therefore included either. Table 5 details the complete expenditure for 1995.

	Amount
Expenditure on <i>Cara</i> Statistics	£61,765,429
Missing Districts	£1,750,256
Misc. (contract burials, hostels, etc.)	£44,206
Back to School Clothing Scheme	£4,421,730
Actual Total S.W.A. Expenditure 1995	£67,981,621

Table 5: Actual Total S.W.A. Expenditure in the E.H.B. in 1995.

Back-to-School Clothing and Footwear Scheme.

Table 6 gives a breakdown of the Back to School Children's Clothing and Footwear Scheme for 1995, and Appendix 4 contains more detailed statistics.

Children Assisted:	Number:		
- Pre-School	17,496	No. of Applicants Paid	41,175
- Primary	45,695		
- Secondary	29,783	Cost for 1995:	£4,421,730
- Others	4,655		
Total Children Assisted:	97,629		

Table 6: E.H.B. Back to School Clothing & Footwear Scheme 1995.

Appeals.

Under Section 267 of the Social Welfare (Consolidation) Act, 1993, any person who is dissatisfied with a decision the Eastern Health Board makes in relation to Supplementary Welfare Allowance has the right to appeal that decision to the Board's Appeals Officer at 37 Castle Street, Dublin 2.

During 1995 a total of 2,092 appeals were received compared with 2,087 in 1994. A total of 2,372 appeals were finalised during the year with the following results:

	Number	%
Appeals Refused	2,099	88.5%
Appeals Allowed	261	11.0%
Appeals Withdrawn	12	0.5%
Total of Finalised Appeals during 1995:	2,372	100.0%

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 : S.W.A. Payments Statistics.
- Appendix 2: S.W.A. Cases Paid Statistics.
- Appendix 3: S.W.A. Expenditure Statistics.
- Appendix 4: Children's Back to School Clothing & Footwear Scheme.

Appendix 1:						
EHB End of Year Payments Statistics 1994 and 1995.						
	1994		1995		Difference	
Payments.	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Basic:						
Pen U/A U/B (Ord)	12,453	1.9%	11,415	1.6%	-1,038	-8.3%
Pen U/A U/B Appeals	12,635	1.9%	9,002	1.3%	-3,633	-28.8%
Pen DB / OIB	7,646	1.2%	5,893	0.8%	-1,753	-22.9%
Pen LPA (Ord)	32,860	5.0%	34,036	4.9%	1,176	3.6%
Pen LPA Appeals	1,716	0.3%	1,222	0.2%	-494	-28.8%
Pen Other DSW	4,307	0.7%	5,358	0.8%	1,051	24.4%
Pen DSS	955	0.1%	874	0.1%	-81	-8.5%
Pen HB (DPMA etc.)	26,823	4.1%	25,025	3.6%	-1,798	-6.7%
Pen Wages	817	0.1%	648	0.1%	-169	-20.7%
Pen Compensation	187	0.0%	112	0.0%	-75	-40.1%
Trade Disputes	289	0.0%	230	0.0%	-59	-20.4%
S.N.B.s	30,083	4.6%	30,688	4.4%	605	2.0%
Grad. U/B D/B	5,668	0.9%	9,377	1.3%	3,709	65.4%
Other Basic	31,704	4.9%	35,452	5.1%	3,748	11.8%
Sub-Total Basic:	168,143	25.8%	169,332	24.2%	1,189	0.7%
Supplements:						
Rent	221,101	33.9%	244,848	35.0%	23,747	10.7%
Mortgage Local Auth.	20,398	3.1%	21,487	3.1%	1,089	5.3%
Mortgage - all others	23,500	3.6%	27,126	3.9%	3,626	15.4%
Heating	3,799	0.6%	3,756	0.5%	-43	-1.1%
Diet	45,914	7.0%	49,119	7.0%	3,205	7.0%
Travel	21,366	3.3%	21,633	3.1%	267	1.2%
Former H.A. cases	512	0.1%	400	0.1%	-112	-21.9%
Other Supplements	13,740	2.1%	16,342	2.3%	2,602	18.9%
Sub-Total Supplements:	350,330	53.7%	384,711	54.9%	34,381	9.8%

	1994		1995		Difference	
Payments (cont.).	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Exceptional Needs						
ESB	4,277	0.7%	2,995	0.4%	-1,282	-30.0%
Gas	1,279	0.2%	1,116	0.2%	-163	-12.7%
Other Fuel	677	0.1%	557	0.1%	-120	-17.7%
Rent Arrears	404	0.1%	302	0.0%	-102	-25.2%
Rent (Deposits/Advance)	3,436	0.5%	3,457	0.5%	21	0.6%
Mortgage Arrears	148	0.0%	144	0.0%	-4	-2.7%
Bedding	635	0.1%	671	0.1%	36	5.7%
Furniture/Furnishings	2,611	0.4%	3,182	0.5%	571	21.9%
Household Appliances	10,105	1.5%	14,169	2.0%	4,064	40.2%
Clothing & Footwear	44,826	6.9%	48,351	6.9%	3,525	7.9%
Prams & Buggies	4,582	0.7%	5,162	0.7%	580	12.7%
Travel	8,469	1.3%	8,377	1.2%	-92	-1.1%
Funeral Expenses	1,531	0.2%	1,832	0.3%	301	19.7%
Minor Repairs	5,136	0.8%	5,378	0.8%	242	4.7%
Payments in Kind	13,002	2.0%	14,987	2.1%	1,985	15.3%
Other E.N.P.s	14,073	2.2%	16,178	2.3%	2,105	15.0%
Total E.N.P.s	115,191	17.7%	126,858	18.1%	11,667	10.1%
Miscellaneous:						
Sect. 213	330	0.1%	235	0.0%	-95	-28.8%
Sect. 216	59	0.0%	61	0.0%	2	3.4%
National Fuel Scheme	4,101	0.6%	5,287	0.8%	1,186	28.9%
Home Helps	7,737	1.2%	8,645	1.2%	908	11.7%
Hostels	165	0.0%	186	0.0%	21	12.7%
B & B	1,312	0.2%	1,643	0.2%	331	25.2%
Insufficient Means	2,670	0.4%	1,857	0.3%	-813	-30.4%
Underage Payments	2,116	0.3%	1,641	0.2%	-475	-22.4%
V de P Clothing Orders	16	0.0%	13	0.0%	-3	-18.8%
Travel Warrants	18	0.0%	7	0.0%	-11	-61.1%
Sub-Total Misc.	18,524	2.8%	19,575	2.8%	1,051	5.7%
Totals:	652,188	100.0%	700,476	100.0%	48,288	7.4%

Appendix 2:

EHB End of Year Cases-Paid Statistics 1994 and 1995.

	1994	1995	Difference.	
Cases.			No.	%
Basic:				
Pen U/A U/B (Ord)	5,770	5,377	-393	-6.81%
Pen U/A U/B Appeals	2,215	1,651	-564	-25.46%
Pen DB / OIB	2,789	2,414	-375	-13.45%
Pen LPA (Ord)	5,513	5,793	280	5.08%
Pen LPA Appeals	415	337	-78	-18.80%
Pen Other DSW	1,461	1,635	174	11.91%
Pen DSS	298	250	-48	-16.11%
Pen HB (DPMA etc.)	2,291	2,341	50	2.18%
Pen Wages	674	505	-169	-25.07%
Pen Compensation	110	54	-56	-50.91%
Trade Disputes	148	120	-28	-18.92%
S.N.B.s	3,743	3,702	-41	-1.10%
Grad. U/B D/B	966	1,412	446	46.17%
Other Basic	8,135	8,728	593	7.29%
Sub-Total Basic:	34,528	34,319	-209	-0.61%
Supplements:				
Rent	32,116	34,253	2,137	6.65%
Mortgage Local Auth.	3,204	3,198	-6	-0.19%
Mortgage - all others	4,426	4,564	138	3.12%
Heating	1,118	896	-222	-19.86%
Diet	4,373	4,720	347	7.94%
Travel	4,202	4,065	-137	-3.26%
Former H.A. cases	155	119	-36	-23.23%
Other Supplements	3,071	3,497	426	13.87%
Sub-Total Supplements:	52,665	55,312	2,647	5.03%

	1994	1995	Difference.	
Cases (Cont.).			No.	%
Exceptional Needs				
ESB	3,627	2,618	-1,009	-27.82%
Gas	1,071	941	-130	-12.14%
Other Fuel	535	443	-92	-17.20%
Rent Arrears	343	238	-105	-30.61%
Rent (Deposits/Advance)	3,224	3,295	71	2.20%
Mortgage Arrears	133	122	-11	-8.27%
Bedding	580	611	31	5.34%
Furniture/Furnishings	2,095	2,502	407	19.43%
Household Appliances	8,026	10,803	2,777	34.60%
Clothing & Footwear	31,856	34,244	2,388	7.50%
Prams & Buggies	4,301	4,808	507	11.79%
Travel	3,582	3,726	144	4.02%
Funeral Expenses	1,443	1,719	276	19.13%
Minor Repairs	4,025	4,169	144	3.58%
Payments in Kind	10,594	12,306	1,712	16.16%
Other E.N.P.s	9,487	11,001	1,514	15.96%
Total E.N.P.s	84,922	93,546	8,624	10.16%
Miscellaneous:				
Sect. 213	276	210	-66	-23.91%
Sect. 216	52	61	9	17.31%
National Fuel Scheme	2,298	2,790	492	21.41%
Home Helps	237	262	25	10.55%
Hostels	19	21	2	10.53%
B & B	735	926	191	25.99%
Insufficient Means	1,611	1,313	-298	-18.50%
Underage Payments	329	239	-90	-27.36%
V de P Clothing Orders	6	3	-3	-50.00%
Travel Warrants	14	6	-8	-57.14%
Sub-total of Misc.	5,577	5,831	254	4.55%
SUM of Sub-Totals:	177,692	189,008	11,316	6.37%
Total No. of Clients:	86,584	92,431	5,847	6.75%

Appendix 3:						
EHB End of Year Expenditure Statistics 1994 and 1995.						
Expenditure.	1994		1995		Difference	
	£	%	£	%	£	%
Basic:						
Pen U/A U/B (Ord)	£732,347.80	1.5%	£672,127.57	1.1%	-£60,220.23	-8.2%
Pen U/A U/B Appeal	£874,687.05	1.7%	£649,490.80	1.1%	-£225,196.25	-25.7%
Pen DB / OIB	£515,978.29	1.0%	£423,663.58	0.7%	-£92,314.71	-17.9%
Pen LPA (Ord)	£2,347,358.53	4.7%	£2,592,501.55	4.2%	£245,143.02	10.4%
Pen LPA Appeals	£135,953.55	0.3%	£100,875.95	0.2%	-£35,077.60	-25.8%
Pen Other DSW	£258,449.15	0.5%	£339,579.05	0.5%	£81,129.90	31.4%
Pen DSS	£58,893.55	0.1%	£51,396.90	0.1%	-£7,496.65	-12.7%
Pen HB (DPMA etc.)	£1,851,347.62	3.7%	£1,799,076.70	2.9%	-£52,270.92	-2.8%
Pen Wages	£55,515.88	0.1%	£48,672.75	0.1%	-£6,843.13	-12.3%
Pen Compensation	£8,731.65	0.0%	£6,649.06	0.0%	-£2,082.59	-23.9%
Trade Disputes	£18,313.40	0.0%	£18,173.95	0.0%	-£139.45	-0.8%
S.N.B.s	£2,107,661.27	4.2%	£2,276,974.12	3.7%	£169,312.85	8.0%
Grad. U/B D/B	£220,000.10	0.4%	£374,753.91	0.6%	£154,753.81	70.3%
Other Basic	£1,613,404.29	3.2%	£2,092,699.51	3.4%	£479,295.22	29.7%
Sub-Total Basic:	£10,798,642.13	21.4%	£11,446,635.40	18.5%	£647,993.27	6.0%
Supplements:						
Rent	£23,793,762.92	47.2%	£30,891,785.97	50.0%	£7,098,023.05	29.8%
Mortgage Local Auth	£1,450,122.66	2.9%	£1,634,083.81	2.6%	£183,961.15	12.7%
Mortgage - all others	£3,007,964.03	6.0%	£3,729,927.84	6.0%	£721,963.81	24.0%
Heating	£125,401.75	0.2%	£119,246.25	0.2%	-£6,155.50	-4.9%
Diet	£1,186,672.86	2.4%	£1,445,106.84	2.3%	£258,433.98	21.8%
Travel	£375,461.20	0.7%	£403,476.10	0.7%	£28,014.90	7.5%
Former H.A. cases	£9,975.85	0.0%	£7,203.85	0.0%	-£2,772.00	-27.8%
Other Supplements	£391,145.20	0.8%	£509,032.80	0.8%	£117,887.60	30.1%
Sub-Total:	£30,340,506.47	60.2%	£38,739,863.46	62.7%	£8,399,356.99	27.7%

	1994		1995		Difference	
Expenditure (Co	No.	%	£	%	£	%
Exceptional Needs						
ESB	£237,114.90	0.5%	£171,796.27	0.3%	-£65,318.63	-27.5%
Gas	£85,289.85	0.2%	£81,330.87	0.1%	-£3,958.98	-4.6%
Other Fuel	£44,104.15	0.1%	£39,784.80	0.1%	-£4,319.35	-9.8%
Rent Arrears	£32,421.33	0.1%	£27,317.05	0.0%	-£5,104.28	-15.7%
Rent (Deposits/Adva	£486,028.65	1.0%	£489,736.30	0.8%	£3,707.65	0.8%
Mortgage Arrears	£45,802.50	0.1%	£36,123.81	0.1%	-£9,678.69	-21.1%
Bedding	£39,329.45	0.1%	£47,398.83	0.1%	£8,069.38	20.5%
Furniture/Furnishing	£198,136.54	0.4%	£249,907.65	0.4%	£51,771.11	26.1%
Household Applianc	£1,448,480.65	2.9%	£2,408,402.14	3.9%	£959,921.49	66.3%
Clothing & Footwear	£1,951,580.75	3.9%	£2,148,565.15	3.5%	£196,984.40	10.1%
Prams & Buggies	£280,183.60	0.6%	£383,617.34	0.6%	£103,433.74	36.9%
Travel	£167,939.90	0.3%	£172,668.15	0.3%	£4,728.25	2.8%
Funeral Expenses	£452,701.15	0.9%	£588,120.38	1.0%	£135,419.23	29.9%
Minor Repairs	£248,845.78	0.5%	£278,785.29	0.5%	£29,939.51	12.0%
Payments in Kind	£1,419,068.20	2.8%	£1,815,339.15	2.9%	£396,270.95	27.9%
Other E.N.P.s	£522,978.49	1.0%	£714,198.70	1.2%	£191,220.21	36.6%
Total E.N.P.s	£7,660,005.89	15.2%	£9,653,091.88	15.6%	£1,993,085.99	26.0%
Miscellaneous:						
Sect. 213	£28,098.92	0.1%	£17,614.80	0.0%	-£10,484.12	-37.3%
Sect. 216	£10,952.90	0.0%	£16,891.10	0.0%	£5,938.20	54.2%
National Fuel Sche	£307,616.30	0.6%	£364,465.10	0.6%	£56,848.80	18.5%
Home Helps	£617,975.79	1.2%	£674,721.40	1.1%	£56,745.61	9.2%
Hostels	£82,487.75	0.2%	£106,278.90	0.2%	£23,791.15	28.8%
B & B	£423,623.07	0.8%	£604,789.10	1.0%	£181,166.03	42.8%
Insufficient Means	£46,672.10	0.1%	£32,597.30	0.1%	-£14,074.80	-30.2%
Underage Payments	£71,336.80	0.1%	£62,857.70	0.1%	-£8,479.10	-11.9%
V de P Clothing Ord	£28,180.65	0.1%	£44,869.25	0.1%	£16,688.60	59.2%
Travel Warrants	£3,165.90	0.0%	£754.00	0.0%	-£2,411.90	-76.2%
Sub-total of Misc.	£1,620,110.18	3.2%	£1,925,838.65	3.1%	£305,728.47	18.9%
Total.	£50,419,264.67	100.0%	£61,765,429.39	100.0%	£11,346,164.72	22.5%

AREA	Applicants	Children Assisted					Cost	AVERAGE		
		Pre	Primary	Secondary	Other	Total		No of Children per family	Payment per family	Payment per child
1	2469	921	2517	1755	259	5452	£248,290.00	2.21	£100.56	£45.54
2	1238	430	1225	801	136	2592	£117,735.00	2.09	£95.10	£45.42
3	1705	709	1756	1111	153	3729	£168,120.00	2.19	£98.60	£45.08
4	2404	958	2269	1534	235	4996	£226,375.00	2.08	£94.17	£45.31
5	2601	1007	2942	1765	291	6005	£271,040.00	2.31	£104.21	£45.14
6	3104	1327	3653	2347	366	7693	£348,415.00	2.48	£112.25	£45.29
7	2294	947	2381	1489	243	5060	£228,380.00	2.21	£99.56	£45.13
8	2201	1288	2324	1126	200	4938	£217,410.00	2.24	£98.78	£44.03
9	1720	783	1724	1057	177	3741	£168,150.00	2.18	£97.76	£44.95
10	2517	929	3100	1912	185	6126	£276,495.00	2.43	£109.85	£45.13
11	2761	894	2698	2227	404	6223	£288,385.00	2.25	£104.45	£46.34
15	1292	607	1230	705	122	2664	£118,965.00	2.06	£92.08	£44.66
16	4517	1902	5349	3835	553	11639	£531,380.00	2.58	£117.64	£45.66
17	2822	1266	3505	2244	368	7383	£334,500.00	2.62	£118.53	£45.31
14	568	587	1110	510	82	2289	£100,440.00	4.03	£176.83	£43.88
Dublin Total	34213	14555	37783	24418	3774	80530	£3,644,080.00	2.35	£106.51	£45.25
12	3480	1467	3914	2609	480	8470	£385,135.00	2.43	£110.67	£45.47
13	3486	1474	3998	2756	401	8629	£392,515.00	2.48	£112.60	£45.49
EHB Total	41179	17496	45695	29783	4655	97629	£4,421,730.00	2.37	£107.38	£45.29

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