

Galway Rape Crisis Centre

Annual Report 2015



Our Vision

GRCC's vision is of a just and equal society where everyone has the right to live free from sexual violence and abuse.

Our Mission

GRCC is dedicated to providing a professional, caring and confidential counselling and support service for those in our community affected by sexual abuse and sexual violence. We also work towards ending cultural and societal tolerance of sexual violence through advocacy, awareness raising and education programmes.

The half-circles in our logo symbolise a listening ear, we are always here to listen and support in a safe environment. They also symbolise the ripples of healing that we hope reach throughout society each time a person is given the opportunity to break the barrier of silence. We also incorporated the cornflower into our logo which has its basis in Greek mythology. The story goes that one of the centaurs, Chiron, is said to have used the flower to heal wounds, including his own, after battle. It signifies the Centre's approach to healing, encouraging survivors to reclaim their lives. Finally, we have chosen blue to reflect our work with survivors, a universal colour which symbolises trust, wisdom and understanding.

'Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine'.

Table of Contents:

Page No:

Introduction	1
Executive Directors Report	2
Chairpersons Report	3
Client Services	5
Statistics	7
Helpline Statistics	11
Financial Statement	13
Fundraising	14

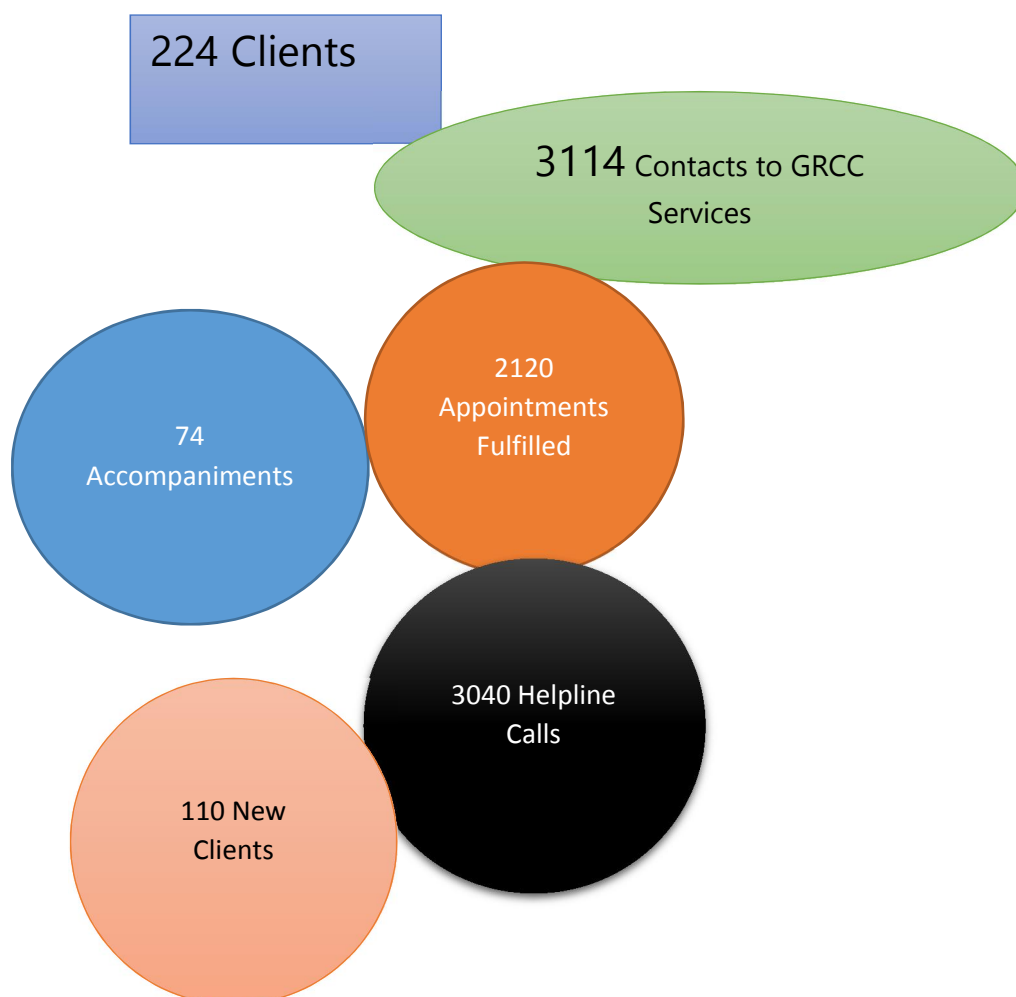
Introducing GRCC

The Galway Rape Crisis Centre provides a quality professional counselling and support service for survivors of sexual violence and abuse. Through our lobbying and education workshops we also work towards an end to cultural and societal tolerance of sexual violence and abuse.

The Centre was founded in 1984 by a group of women who were concerned about the lack of services for survivors of sexual abuse. Since then it has grown to become the second largest member of the Rape Crisis Network Ireland. The Centre currently employs 1 full time and 12 part-time staff, and has in the region of 12 volunteer counsellors, 25 volunteer support workers and numerous fund-raising and other volunteers.

Over the past number of years, GRCC has moved from being a collective organisation to having a Board of Directors in order to meet criteria of transparency and accountability set by the Revenue Commissioners and the Health Service Executive. We have also signed up to the Governance Code for Community and Voluntary Organisations in Ireland, a clear indication of the pride that the Centre places on best practice in Governance.

Key Figures January-December 2015



Executive Director Report

As I have only recently taken over as Executive Director of the Galway Rape Crisis Centre (GRCC) I wish to start by wishing Aoibheann McCann, our previous Interim Director every good wish for the future. Aoibheann was a very capable and talented director whose work I admire. I know everyone here in the GRCC wishes her the best as she moves forward in her career.

I would also like to thank the Chairperson, John Daly and the Board of the Centre for giving me this opportunity to progress the wonderful work of the Centre. It is important to continue to develop the progressive work of the centre and to work collaboratively with our colleagues in the other RCC's around the country and with organisations working against violence against women, children and men.

The focus of our work is our clients, their families and supporters. Our aim is to meet their needs through our counselling services. During 2015 we received 3,040 calls to the centre. During the same period 2,115 client appointments were fulfilled. Even so the reality is that we have a constant client waiting list which is unacceptable. This is due to historical cuts to our core funding and the fact that GRCC, like many charities has to fundraise to supplement their income. Our commitment to the victims of rape, child sexual abuse and assault will continue and we as an organisation will continue to highlight the impact these horrific crimes have on the wellbeing of our clients.

The subject of rape, incest and all sexual abuse is a difficult conversation to have. It is hidden and very often our clients are unable to share their stories with family or friends. That is why the work of our counsellors is of utmost importance. We need to begin an informed and open public discussion about this reality, while being conscious of any upset it might cause our clients. Our public representatives and policy makers need to engage with the RCCs and support us through increased funding.

Education is an effective and important tool in helping our young people learn how to protect themselves and to have informed discussions around issues such as consent. We are collaborating with our colleagues in the Manuela Riedo Foundation to promote educational awareness in our second level schools during the coming year. Our joint aim is to establish three pilot projects in schools in Galway, Kerry and Wexford. Our funding providers Tusla are working hard to understand the needs of our sector, as they endeavour to find extra resources to support our work.

In conclusion I want to thank the Counselling, Front Line, and Administrative staff of GRCC for their commitment, kindness and empathy for our clients. A special thank you to our Volunteer Counsellors and to our SATU volunteers, all of whom give generously and freely of their time to support our clients. I would like to thank our colleagues in the SATU unit in Galway and the Garda Síochána for their support. Most importantly I want to thank our brave clients for placing their trust in us and for believing that we will always put their needs first.



Cathy Connolly

Chairpersons report on behalf of board

Hello Everybody

GRCC is on a journey and we have already travelled on a long road together. The journey is never ending and as volunteers and staff we need to ensure our constant commitment to the clients of GRCC. On behalf of the Board at GRCC I would like to welcome Cathy Connolly, as our Executive Director and congratulate the staff and volunteers on the wonderful work they are doing. I would like to reassure our clients that we are a Client focused centre and every decision discussed and taken has our clients at the heart.

Under my watch and that of the previous chairperson, I can say that GRCC is prudent in its spending and no expenses/allowances are claimed by any board member. Our budget fails to cover the costs of the services we offer and therefore we rely on additional donations from the people of Galway, from whom we are always grateful. The GRCC continually strives to adhere to the highest possible standards of corporate governance and its accounts are independently audited.

I would like to thank all our stakeholders and look forward to continue working with everybody.

Go Raibh Mile Maith Agat

John Daly



Chairperson, GRCC



Board of Management 2016

Chairperson – John Daly

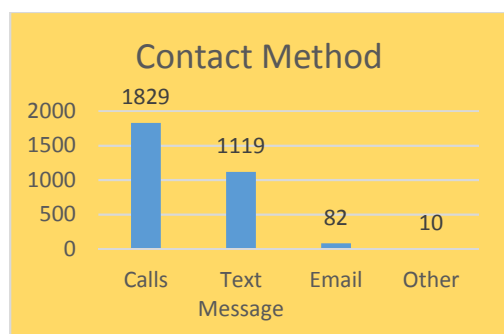
Secretary – Máire Furlong

Treasurer – Ken Walsh

Board Members – Karen Golden, Pdraig McNeela, Maree O'Connell Olivia Lavelle

Counselling and Support Services

The first contact a survivor will make with us is through our telephone helpline. Through our helpline we offer support to regular clients, supporters of survivors, people who require information on the services we provide or those who wish to talk about issues relating to sexual violence or sexual abuse. Other times, the survivors contact us through email or Facebook. Also, when a client attends SATU they are offered follow up services at GRCC.



"I wasn't sure what to expect but I got a calm, safe, non-judgemental environment"

Counselling

The Centre provides a professional and confidential counselling service with specifically trained counsellors in a caring and safe environment. Through this counselling, the centre offers social support to survivors and affords them the opportunity to examine how the experience of sexual violence and/or abuse they went through affected their lives.

During the first meeting with the client, which is called the 'initial appointment', the clients current situation is discussed, how they are coping right now, what means of support are available to them and what kind of support they are looking for from our service.

After the initial appointment, counselling can take the form of short-term crisis counselling, or long term counselling. 2,120 face-to-face counselling sessions took place in the Centre in 2015.

Short Term Crisis Counselling

Survivors of sexual abuse and sexual violence often experience crisis at some point in their lives and this is often what causes them to contact GRCC. During this 'crisis' time the survivor's coping skills are at a low level, leading them to feel overwhelmed and unable to deal with what has happened to them. Our frontline staff, who answer the telephone helpline, also see clients for their first appointment which is followed up by six crisis appointments if needed.

Long Term Counselling

During long-term counselling, the client and counsellor identify the individual needs and goals, which form the basis of how the issues the client faces are dealt with in the counselling session. The survivor is also given the opportunity to examine how the sexual abuse and/or violence has affected their lives.

Telephone Helpline 1800 355 355

The helpline is generally how women and men make their first contact with GRCC. It is the most important, and usually the most common point of contact for our clients when they are seeking the services of GRCC and the 1800 number allows our clients to contact us free of charge and confidentially.

The helpline is available from 10am to 1pm Monday to Friday. There were 3,040 calls and texts to the helpline in 2015. This vital service is often the first contact survivors have with the centre.

"I was afraid to come here but it was calm and bright and safe. The service has given me back my life. I think the GRCC carries out lifesaving work and it is difficult to hear that they need to fundraise to keep the work going. The service has helped me more than I can say"

Male Clients

GRCC has a counselling and support service that specifically caters to male survivors of sexual violence. It is similar to that offered to female survivors, but because it is orientated towards men it endeavours to remove the taboo and isolation surrounding the issue, to provide the survivors with a safe environment in which to disclose the sexual abuse, to enable the survivors to come to terms with the long term effects of abuse and to enable them to make positive changes in their lives and to ensure that they no longer feel alone. Male clients represented 10% of clients at GRCC in 2015.

When Frank first came to GRCC he was leaning against the door jamb...he'd had a few drinks to stiffen his resolve. He lay on the couch in the counselling room in the foetal position and sobbed out his story. Three years later he had picked up his career as a musician, had written and produced a CD, organised concerts, is "happy out" and is now in the course of taking action against his abuser in the courts. It's hard to imagine that he had strong suicidal thoughts not so long ago. He still has his moments of sadness and anger but Frank is a transformed man.

Support Services

GRCC facilitates several support groups for survivors of sexual violence including Ear acupuncture (NADA) and Capacitar. The aim of these support groups is to remove the isolation the survivors feel within society, experience support from people with similar experiences and to learn new coping skills such as meditation and mindfulness.

The Capacitar group meets on Wednesdays from 1pm to 2pm. Capacitar connects the mind and body to combat negative thoughts and manage anxiety using guided mediation, Acupressure, Mindfulness techniques, Visualisation and breathing exercises. Tai Chi body movement is incorporated to promote serenity through gentle movement.

Christmas Sharing

The Centre traditionally holds an annual Christmas Sharing event for clients, which is usually held on the last Friday before Christmas. The Christmas Sharing is a group event which facilitates survivors coming together and sharing what Christmas means to them at a time of the year that can be very difficult.

Outreach

GRCC provided Outreach services in Gort and Ballinasloe in 2015 with an aim to expand this service to other locations in 2016/17. The Outreach Clinics facilitate clients who are unable to attend our main centre. This gives the option for clients to access GRCC services in their own locality for more flexibility.

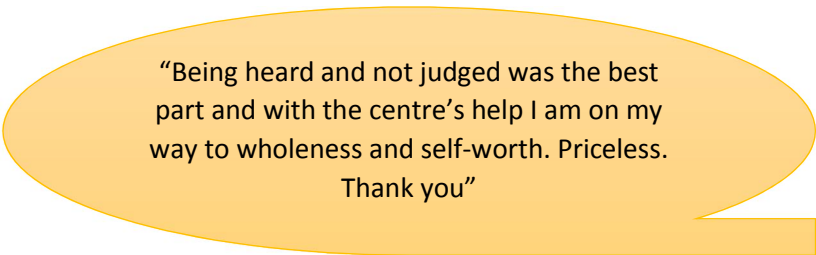
Advocacy & Service Accompaniment

As an additional support, the Centre offers clients accompaniment to services like doctors, solicitors, the Courts or the Gardaí and can also contact an agency on the client's behalf. We also organise reporting to Gardaí in the Centre's premises if the client would feel more comfortable. Counsellors can support survivors with writing Victim Impact Reports post-conviction. In 2015, 3 clients were supported with Court Accompaniment and 11 clients were supported with Garda Accompaniment in 2015. It is often necessary for clients to attend court more than once and GRCC staff will support the client throughout the process. GRCC can also access legal advice on behalf of a client if it is needed.

Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU)

The Galway Sexual Assault Treatment Unit has been in operation since 2009. We are part of the specialist team that provide easily accessible, holistic services which address the medical, psychological and emotional needs and appropriate follow up care for survivors of sexual crime, in a supportive, sensitive manner. This includes provision of treatment such as emergency contraception and medication to reduce the possibility of developing sexually transmitted infection.

The SATU services respond to requests from the Gardaí for the collection of forensic evidence to aid the legal process and also provide services for people who do not wish to report the incident to the Gardaí. There is no charge for any of the SATU services or follow up appointments. Galway SATU services can be contacted at any time via your local Garda Station, or by contacting the Galway unit 091765751 or 0876338118 Mon -Fri 08.00- 16.00.



"Being heard and not judged was the best part and with the centre's help I am on my way to wholeness and self-worth. Priceless.
Thank you"

Psychological Support

GRCC provides Psychological Support Services within the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) to survivors in the aftermath of a Sexual Assault. Within GRCC the SATU Team consists of co-ordinator Bernadette Daly and a team of fully trained Volunteer Psychological Support Workers who are on call 24\7. In 2015 the Galway SATU had 60 cases and our Support Workers were in attendance to support all 60 Survivors.

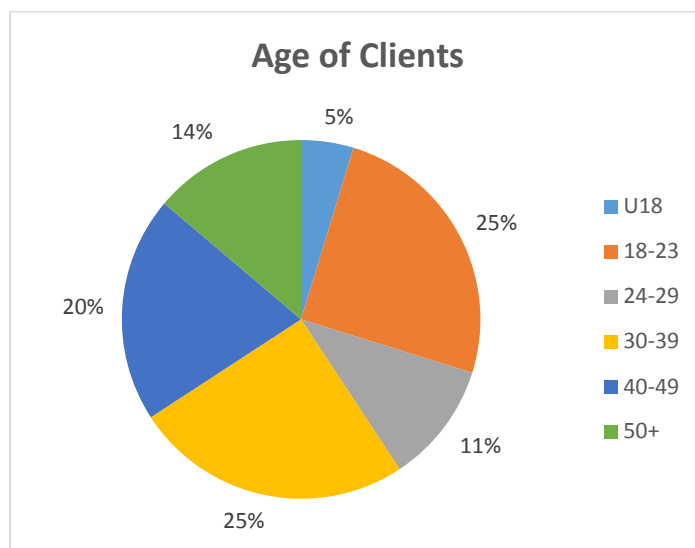
In 2015 9 new Support Workers were trained to be part of the team.

"The counselling I received in GRCC has given me back my confidence, and made me realise the abuse I suffered really was not my fault"

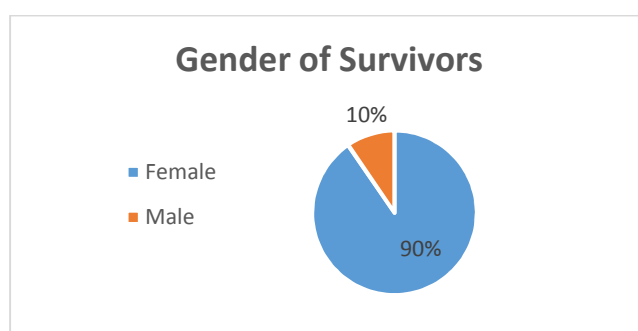


Statistics 2015

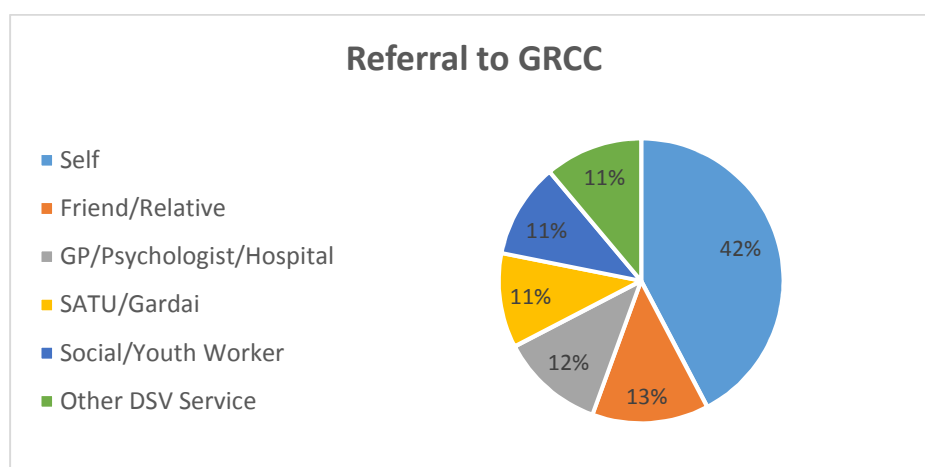
- **3,040 calls, texts and emails to the helpline**
- **2,120 face-to-face counselling sessions**
- **110 New Clients**
- **60 clients supported by Galway Rape Crisis Centre Psychological Support Worker at SATU**



In 2015 30% of GRCC clients were under the age of 24. This data provides GRCC with essential information as it aims to provide more education and awareness programmes to Second Level students. Studies show that when counselling is accessed shortly after a sexual assault occurs the adverse effects of that assault are lessened and this is particularly important to a young person as it reduces negative impacts in their lives.

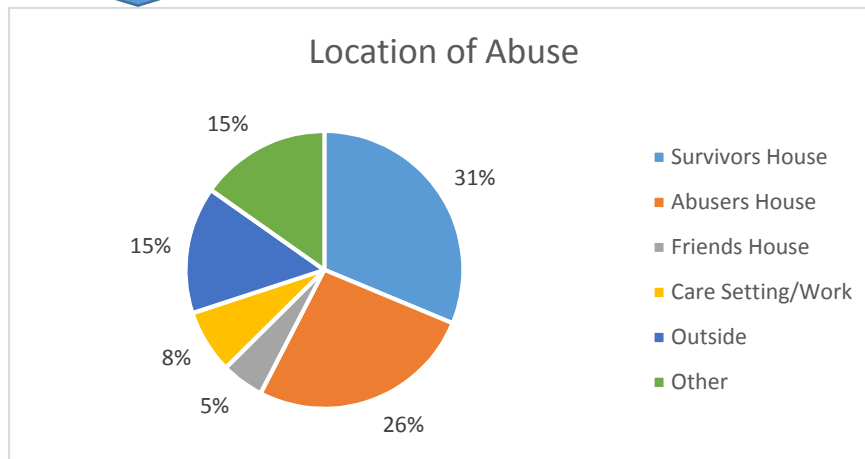


90% of GRCC clients were female and 10% male in 2015. There has been a slight decrease (5%) in male clients since 2013. Only 5% of attendees at the Galway SATU clinic are men. Unfortunately many men do not avail of this valuable service.

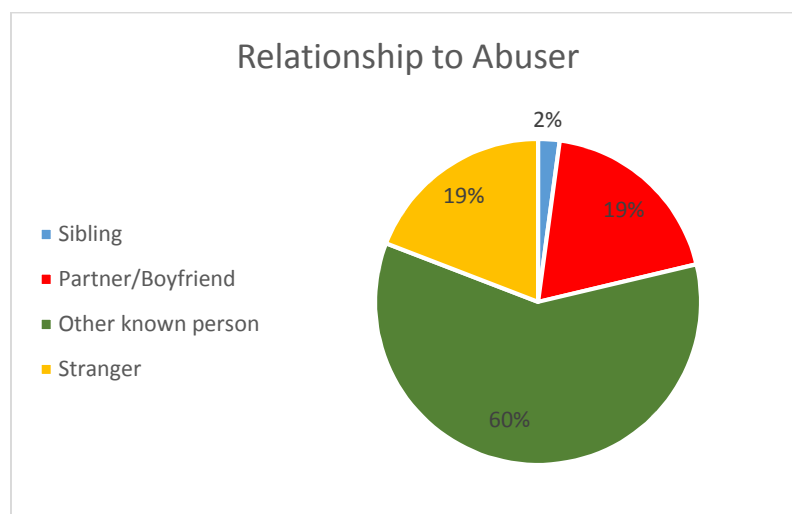


42% of clients made contact with the Centre themselves but clients can be referred from a variety of sources including medical or other professional support services.

I was afraid coming to GRCC but the counsellor reassured me and I wasn't frightened. After coming I was calmer and better able to make realistic choices. The service was very grounding, calm, safe and trusting. The GRCC saves people's lives, their sanity, restores families, thank you for your help and support

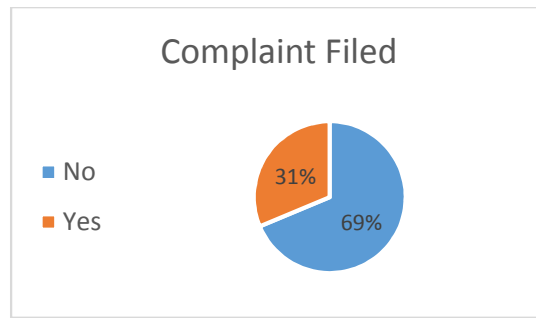


From this chart we can see that abuses can occur in various different locations but more likely happens in a setting familiar to the survivor, most typically in their own home or in the home of someone they know.

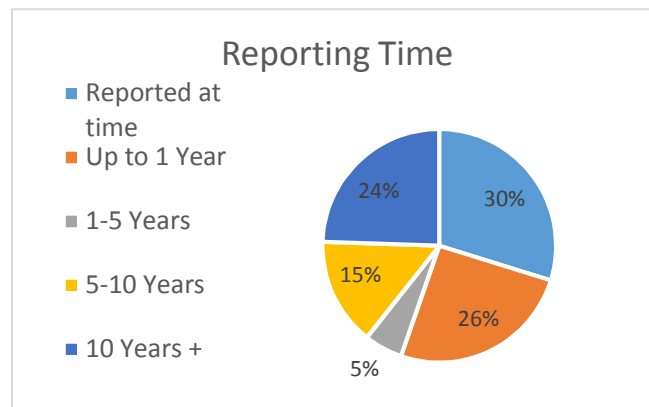


In over 80% of cases the perpetrator was known to the survivor. This contradicts the most common perception that sexual violence is most frequently perpetrated by a person/s unknown, 19% of perpetrators were strangers.

Overall, 80% of cases were perpetrated by a friend, acquaintance or neighbour, with over 1/3 of perpetrators family members, and partners or ex-partners.



From the data above we can see that most clients do not report to the Gardaí, with less than 1/3 of clients making an official complaint.



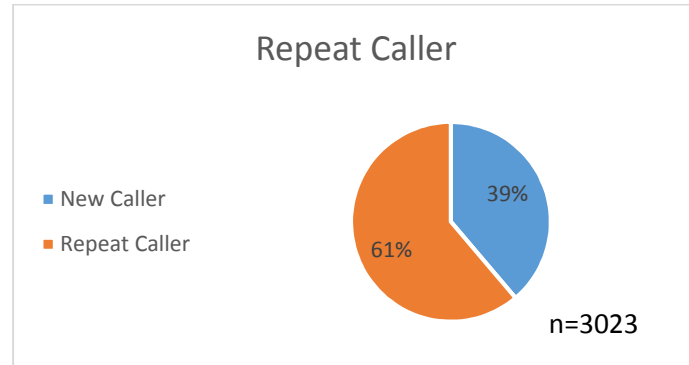
Of the 110 new clients registered in the reporting period, 27 incidents were reported to the Gardaí.

Unfortunately there is a very low conviction rate in Ireland and often this can be a reason for clients deciding not to officially report to the Gardaí. As seen in the data, for many survivors the perpetrator is often someone close to them and this creates more complexities in terms of reporting. The GRCC supports any client that chooses to report to the Gardaí and to proceed with legal proceedings, but the client is under no obligation to take any steps that they are not comfortable with.

My counsellor has changed my life for the better forever and that is my strongest impression of the centre

Helpline Statistics 2015

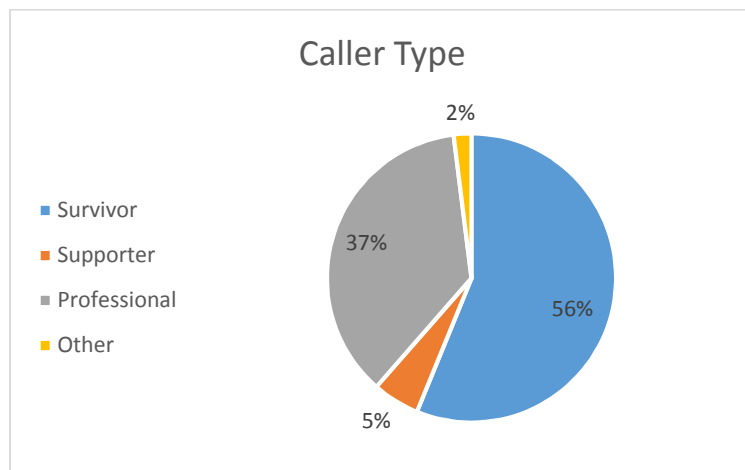
The helpline is open from 10am to 1pm. Prior to 2013 it was available from 10am to 5.30pm. There were 3,040 calls, texts and emails in 2015 as compared to 3,681 in 2013. Although there was a slight decrease, the numbers remain at a consistently higher rate since 2012, which is remarkable considering the helpline continued to be available for half the time than it was in 2012.



There were many new callers to GRCC this year, a 9% increase of people seeking information and support from 2014.

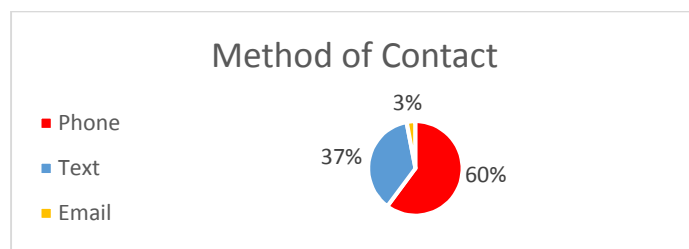
Clients reached out to the helpline in several ways, using a variety of platforms. Most of the contacts were through direct calls to the helpline (60%), while 37% of contacts were made through text, and 3% through a letter, social media or email.

There are now more people calling from other agencies and organisations on behalf of clients and this is obvious from the increase in numbers of professionals and supporters, which is up by 15% this year.



Over half of all helpline contacts were from survivors themselves (56%). Additionally, 37% of contacts were from professionals such as medical staff, social/youth workers etc. Supporters accounted for 5% of callers. Drop in counselling appointments can also be arranged for supporters.

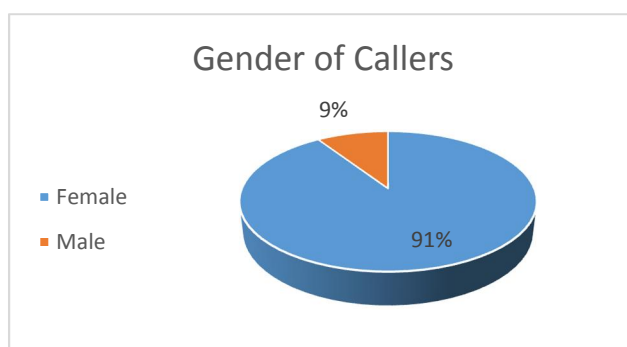
There is no way to tell before the call is answered who might be on the other side and just how important that first phone call can be to a survivor as they start on a challenging path to unburdening themselves from the impacts sexual violence has had on their lives.



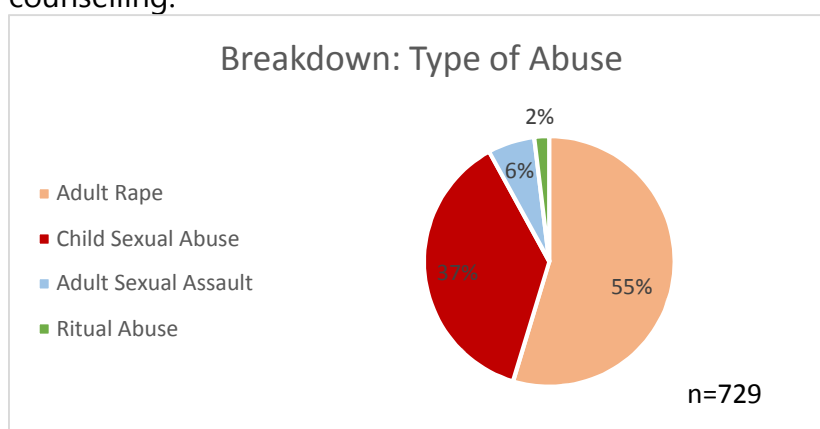
The way that people are now contacting GRCC is changing, we see a large increase in the numbers using text messages to contact the centre and more people sending emails as first point of contact. Social media is also playing a big role with much of our latest information being placed on the GRCC website or other platforms such as Facebook. Texts and emails are a more flexible way for clients and supporters to contact and engage with GRCC.

As seen from the figures there is a large increase in people from other professional organisations and services which is forming an understanding by professionals that work with young people of the stigma surrounding sexual abuse and sexual violence.

Rape and sexual violence is the ultimate theft of self-control and often leads to a breakdown in the victim's sense of self-worth. The stigma and shame attached to rape often is the biggest barrier victims need to overcome in order to come to terms with what has happened.



Many more women than men contact the helpline and this is reflected in the numbers of clients attending GRCC for counselling.



From the above graph we can see that the calls GRCC receives corresponds similarly to the client groups that attend GRCC for counselling. All calls to the Freephone helpline are answered and responded to in a confidential and empathetic manner.

Financial Summary 2015

Income & Expenditure Account

for the year ended 31 December 2015

	Continuing operations	
	2015	2014
	€	€
Income	415,744	414,066
Administrative expenses	(448,199)	(442,107)
Other operating income	14,400	14,400
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess Expenditure over Income	(18,055)	(13,641)
Other interest receivable and similar income	33	298
Interest payable and similar charges	(102)	(295)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess Expenditure over Income activities before taxation	(18,124)	(13,638)
Tax on loss on ordinary activities	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess Expenditure over Income activities after taxation	(18,124)	(13,638)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Reserve Movement	(18,124)	(13,638)
Income & Expenditure Account brought forward	300,540	314,178
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Income & Expenditure Account carried forward	282,416	300,540
	<hr/>	<hr/>

There are no recognised gains or losses other than the surplus expenditure over income for the above two financial years.

On behalf of the board

John Daly

Director

Date: 09 May 2016

Kenneth Walsh

Director

Date: 09 May 2016

Fundraising 2015

Fundraising within GRCC was busy during the year with events such as “A Night At The Dogs” and annual events Flag Day and Churchgate Collection. These events were well supported by the people of Galway City and County.

There were also fundraisers organised by NV Hair Studio in Oranmore and Genband Ireland. NV was celebrating its 10th Anniversary and they very generously donated all proceeds on the day to GRCC.

GRCC was also nominated NUIG Student Union Charity of the Year and GMIT Charity of the Year, these were both amazing opportunities to promote awareness throughout the colleges of GRCC services and to raise vital funds through student fundraising activities.



Again, our deepest appreciation goes out to the volunteers and supporters who helped us this year. You have made a difference in the lives of survivors.



Staff and Volunteers had the privilege of meeting President Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina at Áras An Uachtaráin February 2015

2015 Fundraising Events



Christmas Market 2015



Flag Day 2015



Bank of Ireland Open Day

GRCC needs your Help!

Individuals and groups can organise fundraising events for the GRCC. Table quizzes, gigs and karaoke nights are fun events that raise a lot of money for the centre. The GRCC is so grateful to volunteers who organise events and give their time for bucket collections and bag packing.

Donations

All donations make a difference. All monies donated to GRCC are channelled back into the centre to provide our core services. You can donate in a few ways:

Donate Online

You can donate online on our website www.galwayrcc.org or by visiting www.idonate.ie and selecting our charity.

Sponsorship

Sponsoring or part sponsoring one of our fundraising events.

Post

Send a cheque, bank draft or postal order made payable to Galway Rape Crisis Centre, The Lodge, Forster Court, Galway, Ireland.

Standing Order/Direct Debit

To make regular ongoing donations to GRCC go to our website www.galwayrcc.org. Under the fundraising section there is a direct debit form which can be filled up online, printed off and sent to your bank and they will do the rest.

Become a Fundraising Volunteer

Volunteers play a major role with GRCC and have done so from our foundation in 1984. From holding a bucket to organising an event, volunteers over the years have contributed significantly to the financial needs of our centre. We desperately need volunteers and if you would like to become a volunteer with the Fundraising team please complete the form on the fundraising page on our website: www.galwayrcc.org, or contact us at fundraiser@grcc.ie

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised here, please contact the Galway Rape Crisis Centre Helpline on 1800 355 355

GRCC is grateful for the support of the following funders:



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Manuela Riedo Foundation



GMIT



**NUI Galway
Students' Union
Comhaltas na Mac Léinn
OÉ Gaillimh**



Galway Rape Crisis Centre
The Lodge
Forster Court
Galway
091 564800

Email: admin@grcc.ie

Website: www.galwayrcc.org