

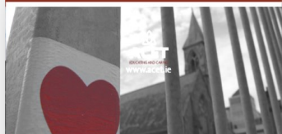


## **Annual Report 2015**

**AIDS Care Education  
and Training**

# ACET Ireland 2015

## CEO's Report



### 2015 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

2015 was a year of significant activity for ACET. We want to take this opportunity to thank you, our supporters and funders for making this happen.

Our outputs (the things we did) show a record number of interventions, training hours and other creative spaces.

Our outcomes (the impact we had) show stories of improved health, relationships restored, leaders challenged and equipped, and hope embraced.

Our work and the impact it makes now stands as a robust legacy over the decades as we head towards our 25th Anniversary. Yet the picture that keeps returning to my mind is that of seedlings - small and vulnerable pieces of work that have been birthed in and adapted to the quickly changing surroundings of HIV, substance use, poverty and more.

This is demonstrated in the creative respite spaces we deliver with our care clients, our support for church leaders living with HIV, our new partnership with the Department of Education and Skills in seeing drug education capacity built across the North Inner City of Dublin and in the success of our Stories of Belief events.

It shows that your support for ACET has allowed a beautiful and vibrant ecosystem of activities to develop, some rooted in our beginnings, some bursting with the newness of life. Thank you to our board, staff and volunteers. We are excited about where God is leading us, and we hope you will continue to walk with us with your faithful support.

— **Richard Carson, CEO, [richard.c@aceti.ie](mailto:richard.c@aceti.ie)**



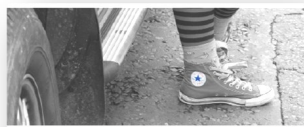
Images from  
ACET Int.  
Conference  
2015. *Right:*  
Dr. Patrick  
Dixon, Rich-  
ard Carson,  
Sheila Dixon,  
Dr. Sujai  
Suneetha



### Board:

Prof. Samuel McConkey (Chair)  
Ifedinma Dimbo  
Moyra O'Neill

Tony MacCarthaigh  
Rev. Dr. Trevor Morrow  
Richard Phillips



## ACET CARE Update

As ever, in 2015 we engaged with different individual backgrounds, circumstances and responded to a wide range of personal needs, working closely with medical social workers and forming new collaborative relationships with clients.

**Health:** Established clients showed greater engagement with health services, especially relating to goals integrated in their care plan. Examples of this included a greater commitment to methadone reduction, physical rehabilitation and medication adherence. Several clients also expressed a need to access and engage with mental health services. Care staff facilitated discussions with clients about emerging mental health concerns and assisted in providing extra supports including counselling and referrals to high-risk mental health services.

**Housing:** Several clients expressed a desire to seek housing transfers as a result of inadequate housing conditions and a rise in community tensions, anti-social behaviour and gang related intimidation in particular areas. Staff also supported client applications to transfer to smaller accommodation with the intent to discourage adult children and extended family members from moving in or remaining at home and causing disruption to family circumstances. Taking into consideration long housing waiting lists, time was spent helping clients manage expectations and working on payment plans to reduce arrears in the hope of strengthening pending applications. We also worked with those facing the challenge of managing homelessness and ill health.

**Respite:** During the summer months respite was offered to particular client families as a direct response to physical and mental health crises', chaotic household circumstances and bereavement. Self-supported respite was provided for two family units and five client families received a facilitated respite stay in Wicklow. Several day outings also took place for young people, as part of our summer project funded by Dublin City Council. During the mid-term and Easter breaks there were several youth activity outings to places like Fort Lucan, the cinema, JumpZone and Stephen's Green. These outings worked to complement the ongoing family work, providing quality respite support for both carer and young person, as well as reinforcing positive relationships through fun, mentorship and affirmation.



**Young & old:** Needs addressed by care staff included support following a new HIV diagnoses in an older person, issues around HIV & ageing, and independent living skills. There were new babies born in existing client families and referrals of new youth clients following summer project engagements. This represented the intergenerational care response required by care staff as care support was tailored to the needs of family composition and structure.



**Christmas:** There are always financial stresses relating to Christmas and specific expectations and pressures from family members and the community. A significant number of clients experienced grief due to bereavement and anniversaries which reflected both new and historic losses. The strain of winter creates a hardship on personal health causing isolation and affecting vital coping skills. With support from sponsors who gave towards the annual hamper deliveries and provided hampers, we delivered tailor-made hampers and spent time discussing budgetary management, resources and supports, health maintenance needs and how to maintain coping skills over the Christmas break. Time was spent developing strategies with families as to what the new year could bring, and how to best encourage and work with them to achieve these goals.

—Hansi Chisnall and Olivia Corbett, [hansi@acet.ie](mailto:hansi@acet.ie); [olivia@acet.ie](mailto:olivia@acet.ie)

*“(That respite) was better than any vacation I’ve ever had. Whenever I think about it, I just remember how peaceful and beautiful it was. I’ll never forget that time.”*

*“(Our respite time) was just what our family needed.. we didn’t fight at all, no one disturbed us - it was so peaceful, everyone got along. And I said, ‘See? This is possible.. we can do this when we get back home.’ Everyone saw it was possible.”*

*“I feel so much lighter after talking with you... I feel like I can’t talk about this with anyone. It’s such a relief.”*

## ACET Care, the Numbers

75 individual clients ∞ 32 family units ∞ 184 family care visits ∞ 152 youth care visits ∞ 72 counselling hours ∞ 508 (including 95 volunteer led) adult home care visits ∞ 349 residential Respite sessions ∞ 88 clinic/medical accompaniments

After hearing from clients regarding their care needs and how those can be met, ACET staff responded with:

- **HIV-specific support for newly diagnosed clients** and the provision of practical health information. This included clinic accompaniment, setting up appointments, in-home emotional support, discussions around boundaries and handling disclosures.
- **Planning and delivery of a successful multi-family residential respite** which brought up a range of conversations and feedback about confidentiality/disclosures and provided a time to create positive memories in a peaceful setting.
- **A weekly time was created for teenage clients** to meet for their own emotional support and mentoring, shaped by their self-named needs. This developed into respite, a small group and one-to-one support.
- **Advocacy for clients** in respect to their treatment by medical staff and hospitalization experiences. As a result of escalating chronic health conditions, extensive time was spent accompanying and supporting clients who are receiving medical treatment.
- **Mental health support** specifically related to growing personal and/or family member addiction issues and drug debts. Care staff worked alongside clients to manage subsequent anxiety, stress, dependency issues, and broaden personal support systems.



Representatives from ACET, AIDS West, BelongTo, Concern, Dochas, Gay Health Network, GOSHH, HIV Ireland, the HSE, Irish Family Planning Association, OutHouse, Positive Now, SpunOut.ie, & the Union of Students in Ireland with Minister for Health Leo Varadkar to launch a 5 -day national World AIDS Day 2015 campaign "Solidarity with all people living with HIV."

## MATILDA PROJECT



# Matilda Project

**The Matilda Project is a project of ACET Ireland, set up in 2001 as a response to people dying of AIDS in Zimbabwe. We help fund school breakfasts, home-based care, food packs, and support groups for adults living with HIV. Other organisations—ACET UK and Golder Trust for Orphans—also help fund breakfasts, food packs, school fees, and the support groups.**

Drought, crop failure and hunger have been the biggest challenges for those living with HIV in Zimbabwe over the past year.

Matilda partner, Tshelanyemba AIDS Care & Prevention Programme, based in a rural southwest corner of the country, has risen to the challenge of almost doubling the amount of food bought and distributed each month. With the distance from food suppliers in Bulawayo and the poor road, especially for the last 40km of the journey past Maphisa, this is a logistical mountain! Their truck frequently gets multiple punctures.



Gift and the team of area co-ordinators compile a register each month of the 550-600 most vulnerable families - patients on ART, orphans, those with disabilities - to receive 10 kg mealie meal, a bottle of cooking oil, soya chunks and beans. People travel up to 45 km to collect this food on foot, by bike, in donkey carts.

Severe Acute Malnutrition in under 5s is at emergency response levels, but there isn't much sign of intervention so far. Teenagers living positively on ART are a new cohort in the pandemic. Before the roll-out of anti-retrovirals, all these children affected by mother-to-child transmission died. Now a new generation of young people are surviving. Some are doing well, others are very unwell because their level of nutrition is inadequate. The growth of many has been stunted by the impact of HIV on their childhood. Quality of care provided by relatives varies from family to family. Willard, of ACET CCP, uses Matilda funds to pay school fees and buy food packs for these young people, but in this year of food shortages and rising prices, the need is growing.

—Wendy Phillips, [matildaproject@gmail.com](mailto:matildaproject@gmail.com)



Godknows, age 16, has been living with HIV his whole life. He and an older sister live with his grandmother since their parents passed away in 2008. He isn't well or strong and the long walk to school is very tough for him.





## Matilda Project, the Numbers

Up to **460 families** affected by HIV and hunger received **food packs** every month ∞ 198 home-care volunteers care for **712 HIV-infected patients** ∞ 147 clients are involved in 9 support groups—2 have weekly savings clubs ∞ **61 primary & 43 secondary students** school fees are paid ∞ **237 orphans** receive **food packs during school holidays** ∞ **2,732\*** children eat breakfast every day in **8 schools** (\*including 738 funded by ACET UK) = **388,830 breakfasts in 2015**

## ACET International Conference

Delegates from 16 countries met in Ealing in September 2015 to share their diverse experiences of responding to HIV. The ACET family is now over 27 years old with long-established agencies in places like Thailand and Uganda continuing, while new initiatives begin in places like Lithuania. It was great to see a mix of old and new faces and share our experiences of engaging with the changing face of the virus.





## Talbot Centre

In September we began a new partnership with the Department of Education & Skills and the Talbot Centre—HSE.

The Education Worker in the Talbot Centre is part of a multi-disciplinary team that is committed to developing supportive relationships with children, young people and their families whose lives have been affected by drug and/or alcohol use in the North Inner City of Dublin. We administer this post which sees workers in a broad range of agencies including schools, parent groups and YouthReach centres trained in drug education and prevention.

A highlight in 2015 was the delivery of Learning Together Working Together which trained 21 community workers including public health nurses, Gardaí and youth workers on building a collaborative approach to substance use and helping participants recognise and respond to substance use in their client group. ACET also directly delivered one of the training sessions for this course.



## Stories of Belief

Our fledgling LGBT & Faith project took on a new lease of life in 2015. We hosted three “Stories of Belief” events which involved bringing together church leaders and LGBT Christians (including leaders). These days were marked by profound courage, vulnerability, openness, insight, hope, faith, love as well as many tears and hugs. Our times together were expertly facilitated by **Pádraig Ó Tuama**, leader of the **Corrymeela Community** and we are grateful to **Trinity College Dublin**, **Lucan Centre** and the **Orlagh Retreat Centre** for their hospitality. In addition, the publicity around these events allowed us to support a number of young LGBT Christians who had experienced recent exclusion from their local congregations. Thank you to our main funders for this project, **The Community Foundation for Ireland**.

*“Meeting you has given me hope! Something I haven’t felt in some time. Thank you again for everything.”* - LGBT Christian

*“I have been a Christian for 30 years and in ministry leadership for 20 years. This is the first time I have met a Christian who is gay and I have been deeply blessed by them. I thought it was only ever my job to bless them and now I don’t know what to think.”*

*“The conversation was real - in a Christian world where often LGBTQ people are spoken ‘about’ it was a positive experience being talked and listened to. Hopefully the conversation can continue...”* LGBT Christian



## Migrant-led Churches

Ever since the turn of the century, when the incidence of HIV in Ireland increased with the migration of those from sub-Saharan African countries, the local church has had an increased focus.

In 2015 we continued our training with leaders of migrant-led churches. At our training we make ourselves aware of the story of HIV in Ireland and the responses that must be made in areas such as prevention and testing. We also train on listening skills, exploring how the local congregation can be transformed to a space that listens well to its own margins in addressing stigma while naming the challenges this brings. Thanks in particular to the **Leadership Development Group of Christ Apostolic Church** and to **Lucan Centre**, our excellent hosts.

Our support for those we train does not end with our last session but continues across capacity-building supports including through the 2015 National World AIDS Day Campaign. The face of HIV among ethnic minorities, as well as the place of the migrant-led church in Ireland, is undergoing significant change, not least as a result of migration back out of Ireland. We have identified two emerging themes: 2015 saw our first gathering of church leaders living with HIV, a really beautiful and special place. We also identified parenting skills as an area of need as the generation shift from those who grew up outside of Ireland to their Irish children takes place. Therefore we began development of a partnership with **ACET Northern Ireland** that will see, in 2016, their Open College Network accredited course on Parenting Skills rolled out in Dublin. In addition, Richard Carson had the opportunity to attend the HIV Prevention England Conference in London at which he met with leaders of other projects across England working with churches. Finally a special word to our partners **Acts of Compassion Projects**, led by Rev Amos Ngugi, for their work in the North Inner City of Dublin and beyond. We are grateful to a range of funders for making this project happen, principally **MAC AIDS Fund**, as well as the **PA Foundation**, **Dublin City Council**, and **Ormond Quay and Scots Endowments**.

### Education & Training, the Numbers:

936 person-training hours in total across all our projects and partnerships\* ∞ **83 agencies and churches** represented at our training ∞ **50 leaders** of migrant-led and multicultural churches trained ∞ **40 one-to-one capacity building support interventions with church leaders** ∞ **3 Stories of Belief events** with LGBT Christians and church leaders ∞ **1 National World AIDS Day campaign** delivered in partnership with the HSE and 17 other agencies

\* All of our interactive, non-directive and creative training sessions are always with less than 20 people at a time

# Financial Report and Thanks

We are grateful to all those who gave regularly or through one-off donations or fundraising events, to both ACET and the Matilda Project. Many thanks, also, to all our volunteers, trustees, and members for their valuable contributions throughout the year.

We appreciate the support of the North Inner City Drugs and Alcohol Task Force; MAC AIDS Fund; the HSE Lottery Fund; The Community Foundation for Ireland; PA Foundation; Tusla, Child & Family Agency; Dublin City Council; CDYSB; Ormond Quay & Scots Presbyterian Endowments; ACET UK and ACET NI; Google; Pricewaterhouse Coopers; Ouzel Galley Society—Dublin Chamber of Commerce; St Patrick's Cathedral Community Fund; Third Space; Vox Magazine; Rialto Community Drugs Team; the GUIDE Clinic; the Mater Misericordiae clinic; HIV Ireland; Quality Action; Positive Now and all those in the HIV Services Ireland; Acts of Compassion Projects; the Corrymeela Community; Lucan Centre; Orlagh Retreat Centre; Notre Dame School; Trinity Church Network; Redeemed Christian Church of God; Dundrum Methodist Church; Christ Apostolic Church; Mercy Christian Fellowship; Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church and all the other churches that we have had the opportunity to collaborate and work with; and Discovery Gospel Choir.



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

*I was very encouraged to meet people who know and love Jesus from the LGBT community. I haven't had that privilege before and I was very struck and moved by their faith. I am crying out to God to help me to understand these issues and his heart for people and their sexuality. I am moved deeply by the event and want to understand how the Church should care for and love LGBT people." - Dublin evangelical leader*

*"I look forward to this (time together) every week... You're the least judgmental person I know. I always feel I can be honest and open and that is a relief." - client*

*Left to right: Christmas hampers ready to go; a walk in the countryside; Richard Phillips at the ACET International Conference, Sept 2015.*



Income and Expenditure sheet		2015	2014	2013
Year ending 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2014		€	€	€
<b>Income</b>	ACET	182,921	150,752	127,570
	Matilda	<u>106,786</u>	<u>79,284</u>	<u>77,222</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>289,707</b>	<b>230,036</b>	<b>204,792</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	ACET	-166,535	-147,164	-127,886
	Matilda	<u>-107,989</u>	<u>-67,216</u>	<u>-78,163</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>-274,524</b>	<b>-214,380</b>	<b>-206,049</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	ACET	16,386	3,588	-316
	Matilda	<u>-1,203</u>	<u>12,068</u>	<u>-941</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15,183</b>	<b>15,656</b>	<b>-1,257</b>
<b>Accumulated surplus brought forward</b>	ACET	-10	-4,198	-3,882
	Matilda	<u>19,838</u>	<u>8,370</u>	<u>9,311</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>19,828</b>	<b>4,172</b>	<b>5,429</b>
<b>Accumulated surplus carried forward</b>	ACET	16,376	-10	-4,198
	Matilda	<u>18,635</u>	<u>19,838</u>	<u>8,370</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35,011</b>	<b>19,828</b>	<b>4,172</b>

Balance Sheet (ACET & Matilda Project)		
As at December 31 2014		
	2015	2014
	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible Assets	65	—
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	154	2,564
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>75,434</u>	<u>57,200</u>
	75,588	59,764
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	<u>(40,577)</u>	<u>(39,936)</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<u>35,011</u>	<u>19,828</u>
<b>Total Assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>35,011</u>	<u>19,828</u>
<b>Reserves</b>	<u>35,011</u>	<u>19,828</u>



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