

£3 Million Cash Injection for Victims

A £3 million cash injection, aimed at sustaining and expanding on the work of victims groups helping those most directly affected by the Troubles, has been announced by Victims Minister, Adam Ingram.

The Core Funding Grants Scheme, launched in January, builds on a range of support measures already introduced by Mr Ingram in response to the recommendations made by Sir Kenneth Bloomfield when he was Victims' Commissioner.

It follows the announcement by the Secretary of State in September that extra funding would be available for Victims Groups. Launching the Scheme, Mr Ingram said:

"This funding will provide vital assistance to groups working with victims in Northern Ireland. These groups need to be financially secure to concentrate on

their essential practical work and the £3 million funding will ensure that many more victims needs are met. Groups which are not yet ready to apply for core funding may apply for seeding funds."

The Victims Liaison Unit and the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust (NIVT) held joint seminars during February in Omagh and Belfast to explain the detail of the Core Funding scheme. Responses so far to the seminars have been positive and applications are now being received from eligible groups.

If you have any queries, "Guidance for Applicants" leaflets are available from Avril Craig in NIVT, Tel: 028 9024 5927.

Searches for the Disappeared Resume

The final searches for the bodies of the disappeared has begun. Announced by The Independent Commission for the Location of Victims Remains, the Gardai Siochana will resume the searches at sites in:

- Bragan, Co. Monaghan
- Ballynultagh, Co. Wicklow
- Coghallstown, Co. Meath
- Oristown, Co. Meath
- Templeton, Co. Lough

The Commission said the searches will be focused and limited in extent and will last approximately 3 weeks.

£25,000 Cash Boost for Grant Scheme

The Victim Support Grant Scheme has received an additional £25,000 from the Victims Liaison Unit, bringing the total amount of funding to £225,000. Although the scheme was already oversubscribed by March, it is hoped that this extra funding will provide more support to newly established groups.

Michaela McCabe, Development Officer, for the Victim Support Scheme, tells us how the scheme works;

"In August 1999, the Community Relations Council (CRC) established a small grant scheme with the support of the Victim Liaison Unit called "Victims Support Grant Scheme". Projects already supported include:

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Insight.....

Into Family Therapy

Interested in training in Family Therapy?

Isobel Reilly from the Association for Family Therapy talks about new training developments in Northern Ireland.

What is Family Therapy?

Family therapy is a way of helping people that focuses on the interpersonal aspects of their lives. Families and other significant relationships play a central part in the development of individual identity, roles and choices. Family therapists take all this into account and are interested in people's day-to-day social and cultural contexts and what gives meaning to their lives.

This is particularly important in situations of trauma because it isn't only an individual who is affected by a traumatic event, other family members may have been caught up in it as well. Even if this is not the case, the individual often brings home their distress. It can affect their sense of who they are, as well as their role and responsibilities within the family. Family therapy is different to individual counselling and psychotherapy as it tries to work with all those in a person's 'network'. This approach seeks to harness the resources people have, even though undermined by distressing events and the unhappiness this may bring.

Where is it available?

Family therapy is generally available in child and adolescent mental health services, in family resource centres, juvenile justice and also in the Family Trauma Centre, Belfast. It is generally a brief form of therapy and can combine individual sessions with family meetings. Research has proved its effectiveness in both helping people cope with difficulties and putting their lives together again.

What about training?

Training as a qualified family therapist can take up to four years, in line with other post professional psychotherapy training requirements in the UK, Republic of Ireland and the rest of Europe. There are three levels involved: Foundation, Intermediate and Qualifying, the last taking two years and incorporating substantial supervised practice. Successful completion of this final stage leads to registration with the UK Council of Psychotherapy.

A number of staff have undertaken foundation courses in Craigavon and Belfast. The current intake on the Belfast based course includes four students on Training Bursaries from the Victims Support Grant Scheme. Intermediate training has been organised in Newry and Derry/Londonderry through a distance learning programme from the Family Institute in Cardiff. This was sponsored by Barnardo's and the WHSSB.

Until now anyone wishing to complete the full training had to go to Dublin or over to England. From December 2000 there will be a Qualifying training course available in Northern Ireland – the Masters in Systemic Psychotherapy at Queen's University Belfast. What is so special about this training is that it will include elements not covered in equivalent programmes in the rest of the UK and Ireland:

- Family therapy in the context of community conflict and continuing uncertainty
- NI specific issues of discrimination and sectarianism and implications for culturally sensitive therapeutic practice

Making all this happen is a partnership between the Association for Family Therapy, the Family Trauma Centre in South and East Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, Barnardo's Family Resource Centres in Newry and Moy, Whitefield Juvenile Justice Services, the Royal College of Nursing and Queen's University School of Social Work.

Who do I contact?

Foundation

Belfast courses:
Arlene Healey, Family Trauma Centre (028 9020 4700).
Thompson Best, Whitefield (028 9030 1611)

Derry/Londonderry course:
Gerry Cunningham, Foyle Child and Family Team (028 7134 3501)

Intermediate

Cathy Jayat, Barnardo's Family Resource Centre, Moy (028 8778 9681)

Qualifying

Isobel Reilly, Queen's University School of Social Work, (028 9033 5426)

£25,000 Cash Boost for Grant Scheme (continued)

- small set up costs for victim support groups;
- research/audits, needs assessments and strategic and development planning projects;
- training in support services, for example, befriending, counselling, complementary therapy;
- training and resources materials that support those working with individuals affected by the troubles;
- the writing up of models of good practice that would be of use to other victim support groups.

Many of the groups that come into contact with the Community Relations Council not only require funding but also support and advice with the development of projects and programmes.

To date, the Victim Support Grant Scheme has received 126 applications (see table below for breakdown) with the average amount received being £2269.

District council area	No of Applications Received
Ards Borough	2
Armagh City & District	5
Banbridge District	4
Belfast City	39
Castlereagh Borough	1
Coleraine Borough	1
Cookstown District	1
Craigavon Borough	3
Derry City	12
Down District	2
Dungannon District	6
Fermanagh District	4
Lisburn Borough	4
Magherafelt District	1
Newry & Mourne District	2
North Down Borough	3
Omagh District	6
Strabane District	6
Multiple Areas	24

Hear & Now Conference

Report Back From Norma Patterson of NIVT

On 29 February and 1 March over 156 people attended the NIVT victims/survivors conference in the Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen.

A wide range of topics were covered during the two day residential conference including "Victims rights human rights?"; "Current work with victims/survivors"; "The effect of the conflict on young people"; and "Politics in times of transition".

From the conference evaluations, the overwhelming feedback was very positive with participants particularly feeling the small workshop groups had been very useful indeed. Many delegates expressed how impressed they had been by the willingness of people to talk openly and frankly about the issues which concerned them.

Some groups and individuals also expressed their interest in many of the speakers' inputs, and the value of hearing international as well as local experience; not to mention the useful contacts made with each other during sessions and social time.

Many valuable lessons were learned during the conference and it is clear that the ongoing debate about who is defined as a victim is far from over, as well as the difficulty about how we all take consideration of victims/survivors not aligned to groups. There was also a strong

call for an independent victims commissioner and a NI strategy for work with victims.

On behalf of N.I.V.T., I would like to express my thanks to all those who took part in the conference, helped organise or facilitate the event and to our co-sponsors, the Community Relations Council, Victims Liaison Unit & Fermanagh District Council.

A full conference report will be produced in the near future. This will be sent to all those who attended the conference. If you would like a copy please give your details to N.I.V.T. at:

N.I.V.T.
22 – 24 Mount Charles,
Belfast, BT7 1NZ
E-mail: npatterson@nivt.org

The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund ... Peace – Reconciliation – Support

Huge Response to Small Grants

In issue 2 of the Victims Liaison Unit Newsletter we reported that the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund was launching its first project to help address the needs of victims and survivors. The Small Grants Scheme is aimed at individuals who are currently experiencing financial difficulties and who have a present need to acquire an essential item or service.

Since its introduction five months ago, over 900 applications have been received and some £120,000 has been distributed in grants to approximately 325 individuals and families.

The Programme Co-ordinator for the scheme, Maria Joyce, said "the initial response to the Small Grants Scheme has been very positive. As a result we are now introducing short-term measures to reduce the backlog of grant applications that have inevitably built up over the first few months. I would ask applicants to be patient and would assure them that their application will be dealt with as quickly and sensitively as possible".

Can the Small Grants Scheme help you?

If you do not have the means to acquire an essential item or service, and as a result of the 'Troubles' you have,

- lost either a parent, partner or child;
 - have yourself been injured, or;
 - you are the primary carer for an immediate family member who has been injured;
- the Small Grants Scheme may be able to help you.

For further information or an application form, please contact The Grants Office on Belfast 028 9024 5965, or write to:

The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund
 Grants Administration Office
 24 Mount Charles
 BELFAST
 BT7 1NZ

New Schemes to be Launched in May 2000

Two new schemes are to be launched by the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund this month, for those who have suffered as a result of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland. The first scheme offers short respite breaks and the second to be launched at the end of May is a chronic pain management scheme.

Respite Break Pilot Scheme What is a Respite Break?

A **Respite Break** is a short break to allow a person the opportunity to have a beneficial rest, away from their usual surroundings and the responsibilities and commitments that form part of their every day life. A **Respite Care Break** offers professional care for the duration of the break, such as might be provided by a residential/nursing home.

Who is the Respite Break/Respite Care Pilot Scheme for?

The Respite Break/Respite Care Pilot Scheme is for individuals for whom:

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- It has not been possible to take a break away from home and,
- who as a result of the 'Troubles' have either:
 - Lost a child;
 - Lost a partner;
 - Have themselves been physically injured in an incident;
 - Have become the primary carer for an immediate family member who has been physically injured.

What type of Respite Breaks will be available?

The Northern Ireland Memorial Fund will be offering the following respite breaks:

Respite Breaks

Coach tours and short breaks, for individuals, in hotels, guest houses, and caravan parks throughout Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales.

For people who were physically injured during the 'Troubles', have disabilities as a result, and wish to travel with their family, every effort will be made to find accommodation suitable to their needs.

Respite Care Breaks

Short care breaks are for those who were physically injured during the 'Troubles' and who would prefer, or whose condition necessitates, a respite break in a local residential/nursing home. For those who are the primary carer for an immediate family member who was physically injured, funding will be available to arrange residential/nursing care for their dependent, if the dependent is unable to travel with them.

What is not covered by this pilot scheme?

The Memorial Fund will not be able to award grants to reimburse individuals for breaks/holidays already arranged or taken. Part payment cannot be made towards the costs of breaks/holidays taken outside of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, or other breaks/holidays that fall outside the remit of this scheme.

How will travel arrangements be arranged?

To ensure best value for money and continuity of service for all travel reservations, the Memorial Fund has appointed a travel agent to deal with all

bookings in relation to this pilot scheme.

The Fund has also negotiated discounted deals with a variety of hotel groups, holiday parks and tour operators. All travel arrangements must be made through the appointed agent.

How do I apply to the scheme?

As with the Small Grants Scheme, the Respite Break Pilot Scheme will be administered from the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund's Grants Administration Office based in the N.I.V.T. premises in Belfast.

Application forms can be obtained by phoning the Grants Office on Belfast 028 9024 5965 or by writing to:
Northern Ireland Memorial Fund
Grants Administration Office
22-24 Mount Charles
BELFAST
BT7 1NZ

If you are interested in applying, you'll need to hurry. The closing date for applications is 12 June 2000.

The Chronic Pain Management Scheme

What is the Chronic Pain Management Scheme?

The Chronic Pain Management Scheme will be introduced at the end of May and aims to provide grant assistance towards private medical consultation and treatment with a medically qualified specialist in chronic pain management.

What is Chronic Pain?

For the purpose of this scheme, chronic pain is defined as persistent or recurrent severe physical pain which does not respond completely to simple pain killing drugs/medication.

Who can apply to the Chronic Pain Management Scheme?

People who have suffered physical injuries resulting in persistent chronic physical pain, as a result of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland, can apply.

What can you apply for?

You can apply for a grant to cover the cost of private consultations and treatment with a medically qualified specialist in chronic pain management. The size of the grant will depend on the frequency or type of consultations and treatment required, however, grants will not normally exceed a maximum of £500, and will be restricted to one award per individual in any 12 month period.

What is not covered by the Chronic Pain Management Scheme?

Awards can only be made for consultations with a medically qualified specialist in Chronic Pain Management and treatment

recommended by that specialist. The Fund cannot make retrospective awards to cover the costs of consultations or treatments already received.

How do I apply to the scheme?

As with the Small Grants Scheme and the Respite Break Pilot Scheme, the Chronic Pain Management Scheme will be administered from the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund's Grants Administration Office based in the N.I.V.T. premises in Belfast.

If you would like an application form, they can be obtained by ringing the Grants Office on Belfast 028 9024 5965 from 0900 am on 30 May 2000 or write to:
Northern Ireland Memorial Fund
Grants Administration Office
22-24 Mount Charles
BELFAST
BT7 1NZ

How can I support the work of the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund?

If you think you may be able to help support the work of the Memorial Fund, please contact the Fund's Administrator on Belfast 028 90 527939.