



Engaging Dementia (formerly Sonas apc)

Annual Report 2017

Sonas apc changed its name to Engaging Dementia in late 2018. While the Sonas Programme will continue to be a core element of the organisation's work, the new company name was chosen because it better reflected the breadth of the organisation's work in dementia training services, dementia friendly design and community activities. The decision was taken as part of a major strategic review, which began in early 2018.

Introduction

Engaging Dementia continued to work to an ambitious three-year strategic plan in 2017, driven by a mission to provide people with dementia and their care partners with evidence-informed supports to enable them to live full and meaningful lives. Engaging Dementia's services primarily involved the delivery of a range of training events and Ireland's biggest annual dementia conference, as well as other activities focused on improving the health and wellbeing of people with dementia and their carers across residential and community settings.

Finance

Engaging Dementia's independently audited Financial Statements for 2017 are available on the organisation's website at www.engagingdementia.ie and its page on the Charities Regulatory Authority website.

Engaging Dementia had a turnover of €315,859.00 in 2016, which included a bequest for €63,968.00. It made a small deficit (€5,367.00). Notwithstanding the deficit, the financial performance constituted an improvement on the previous year's financial results and reflected the organisation's ongoing work to grow new income streams, streamline its activities and establish a stronger long-term financial position.

Engaging Dementia delivered on the activities set out in the 2017 Service Level Agreement it had with the HSE, and would like to take this opportunity to thank the HSE for its support, without which the organisation would not be able to do its work.

Engaging Dementia's Finance Sub-committee continued to oversee the organisation's financial activities, with quarterly budget reforecasts and a close involvement in the financial management of the organisation. The Board of Directors continued with its monthly board meetings and quarterly budget re-forecast reviews, keeping the financial situation under continual review. The organisation was focused on increasing revenue streams through new activities and was mindful of controlling costs in all aspects of its operation.

Training delivery & Service development

Training events were held for nurses, allied health professionals, activity co-ordinators and care assistants in the Sonas Programme and a range of therapeutic activities/non-pharmacological interventions. Accreditation with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) was sought and secured for all Engaging Dementia workshops, courses and the conference in 2017.

Upskilling caregivers in the Sonas programme and other therapeutic interventions

The Sonas programme

The Sonas Quality Mark continued to support high quality implementation of the Sonas programme throughout Ireland. The Sonas programme, a therapeutic activity for people with dementia, is carried out with people who live in residential care settings, primarily nursing homes but also hospitals, community nursing units and day centres. A total of 223 healthcare professionals and care assistants completed the 3-day Sonas training course in locations nationwide and were certified as Sonas Programme Licensed Practitioners (SPLPs). A further 79 undertook the Sonas E-module to renew their Sonas Licences and 45 attended Sonas Licence Renewal Days. A small amount of Sonas training was carried out in the UK. The 4-year PhD Sonas Research Project progressed well, with projected publication dates for several of the project articles set for early 2016. The project was evaluating the effectiveness of the Sonas programme, with research sites in Dublin, Kildare, Louth and Meath.

The other key interventions/approaches that were covered in 2016 were:

1. Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST). CST is an evidence-based therapeutic intervention, sometimes called "brain gym", which has a demonstrated positive impact on the cognitive functioning and coping skills for people with early dementia. Dr Gemma Ridell, a Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Tutor with the University of East Anglia and skilled CST trainer, delivered two very well received CST Workshops in Dublin and Limerick, with a total of 45 attendees.
2. Montessori Based Activity Programming (MBAP) Workshop. The MBAP model at the centre of this workshop is an evidence-based non-pharmacological intervention for developing person-centred, effective, individualised activities with people with dementia. Deirdre Lewis, Consultant Nurse in Mental Health Services for Older People in Co. Antrim and Clare

Halliday, Registered Mental Health Nurse & Senior Staff Nurse in Co. Antrim, delivered this workshop in Dublin to 27 people.

3. Gardening the Dementia Friendly Way Workshop. Clive Jones of Newtown Saunders delivered this session providing practical guidance on how to support people with dementia to enjoy the therapeutic benefits of the outdoors. It was attended by 16 people.

9th International Dementia Conference (15th & 16th May 2017)

Building Knowledge, Leadership and Communities was the theme of Engaging Dementia's 2-day 9th International Dementia Conference, which continued to be the largest annual dementia event in Ireland. Held in the Citywest Hotel, Dublin, there were more than 280 delegates attending over the 2 days, with 20 exhibitors and 31 poster presentations. The main conference sponsor was Home Instead Senior Care and the associate sponsor was Homecare Medical.

Activities Audits

The Activities Audit involves a rigorous evaluation of how effectively a care centre supports its residents to have access to full and active lives. The care centre's service is set against the National Residential Care Standards and international best practice. The audit includes evaluation, recommendations for change and an Action Planning Day. There were two Activities Audits in 2016. We held an activities audit in a nursing home in the West of Ireland in early 2017.

Events for people with dementia and their families

Engaging Dementia continued its Summertime Series in 2017, with an event in Rathfarnham Castle in July 2017 for people with dementia and their families. The event involved music, activities and socialising for people with dementia and their families, and was attended by 31 people. The event was run in collaboration with Engaging Activities.

Dementia Friendly Garden (DFG) Project

Engaging Dementia, together with TrinityHaus Research Centre and Newtown Saunders Ltd, under the name Dementia Friendly Garden (DFG) Team, delivered a dementia friendly design service to a range of nursing homes in 2017. The DFG Team also designed and built an award-winning garden in Bloom 2017, Ireland's largest outdoor gardening festival, supported by funding from the TLC Care Centre Group. The garden was relocated to TLC Citywest following Bloom.

Spirituality

Led by Engaging Dementia founder Sr Mary Threadgold, Engaging Dementia continued to be actively involved in the area of spirituality and ageing in Ireland. Sinead Grennan participated in the Spirituality Interest Group in Trinity College Dublin (TCD), following Sr Mary Threadgold's retirement from the organisation.

Development of the Organisation

Governance Code Adoption

Engaging Dementia's Governance Sub-committee continued to develop organisational policies and procedures to underpin best practice governance in all areas of its operation, in collaboration with the full board, guided by the Wheel's Governance Code adoption pack. Significant progress was made. Engaging Dementia was registered on www.governancecode.ie as an organisation that was "on the adoption journey". Governance work was also guided by the HSE's series of quality and safety policies and procedures, and informed by HSE information sessions on this subject.

Registration with the Charities Regulatory Authority

Engaging Dementia maintained its registration with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA), publishing detailing information on the CRA website, including its audited annual accounts for 2016 and Annual Report for 2016.

Staffing & garda vetting

Engaging Dementia's staff complement was two full-time and two part-time employees. Dara Noone was appointed to the position of Events Co-ordinator, replacing Sarah Vance. A staff training programme was put in place that included Training in Protection of Vulnerable Adults. Engaging Dementia continued with its arrangement to process any necessary garda vetting submissions through the National Recruitment Federation (NRF).

Social media

Engaging Dementia continued to increase its online presence, maintaining the website, and expansion of its use of Facebook and continued use of Twitter.

Working with other stakeholders

Engaging Dementia continued to grow its links with key stakeholders in the services for older persons sector. These included: the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), the Health Service Executive (HSE), Nursing Homes Ireland (NHI), the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, the Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC), the Support and Advocacy Service for Older People (SAGE), TrinityHaus at Trinity College Dublin.

Board of Directors

There was just one change to the Board of Directors of Engaging Dementia in 2017. Sr Deirdre Wills retired from the board.

Thank you

Engaging Dementia wishes to express its sincere thanks to all of those organisations and individuals which have supported our work in 2017.