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GOSHH IRELAND CLG
ANNUAL
REPORT
2020

2020 AT A GLANCE



5,747 Service Users



1,413 Client Contact Hours

467 Counselling Sessions

1,341 Personal Support Sessions



125 Training Hours



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72,268 Unique Website Visitors



67 Peer Support Group Sessions



225 HIV Tests
213 HCV Tests
216 Syphilis Tests



13,354 Free Condoms Provided

Welcome to this summary and celebration of our achievements in 2020. I hope it will increase understanding of just what it is that we do here at GOSHH, and provide an overview of the breadth of our service provision throughout the mid-west of Ireland.

The big news event of the year, and a major challenge to our services, was, of course, Covid-19. We closed abruptly in March, following the public health guidelines issued by the government, when we were forced to cancel sessions without notice. All clients were offered support online or over the phone, but we had to suspend our rapid testing services and our training programme. We opened our doors in July following modifications to our work spaces and investing in sanitiser and other personal protective items. We were able to resume testing services and to offer face to face sessions for our clients, by working in staff teams and following a rota to ensure minimal cover in the office at all times.

We were forced to close our doors again in September but, because mental health and sexual health services were prioritised, we were able to continue testing and working in person, albeit by appointment only.

Initially numbers dropped as people adapted to what was a new reality for all of us. As the staff team settled into the restrictions, they developed new and creative ways of working. A socially distanced walk and talk became the session of choice for a number of our clients, whilst others opted for remote sessions. The silver lining here was that GOSHH became more accessible for those who live a distance away from our offices, as well as those who would be nervous about attending in person.

Other achievements include:

- G GOSHH facilitated 408 individual counselling and support sessions focussing on gender identity while working with 488 service users whom identify at Trans*
- O 67 support groups for those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual were facilitated, along with 330 individual counselling and support sessions.
- SH GOSHH provided 54 sexual health training workshops for youth and community groups, as well as supplying over 13,000 condoms free of charge.
- H 225 Rapid HIV Tests were performed, and 212 support and counselling sessions were provided for people living with HIV. The rapid testing programme also included 213 Rapid Hepatitis C Tests and 216 Syphilis Tests. 404 calls to our helpline were to discuss HIV and/or Rapid HIV Testing.

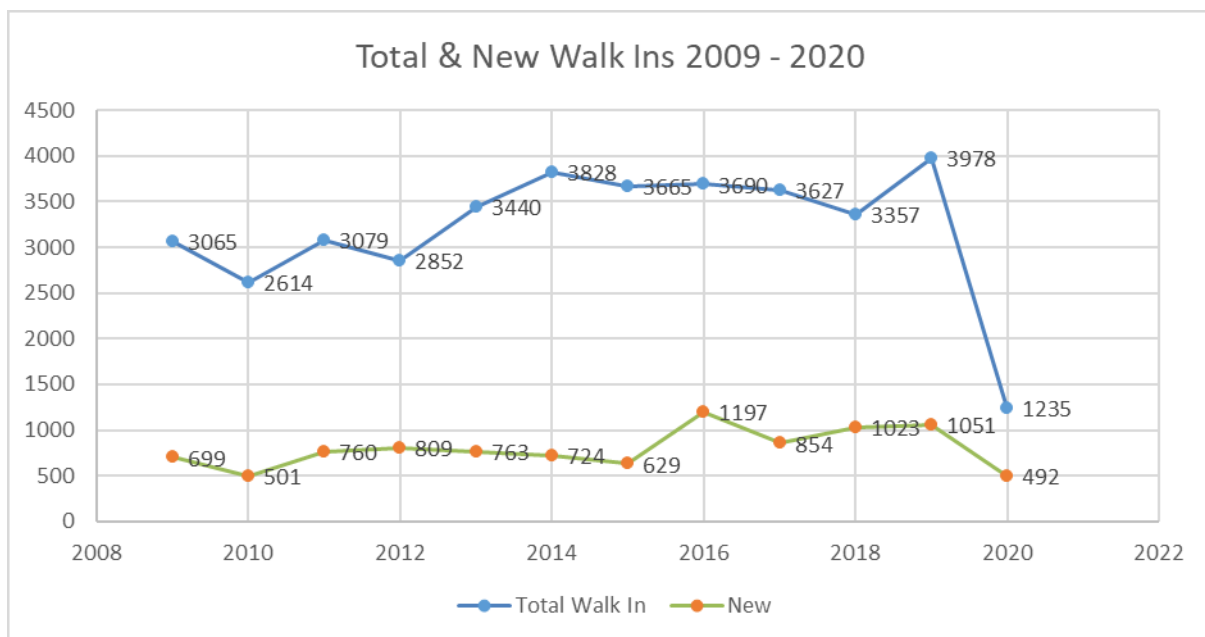
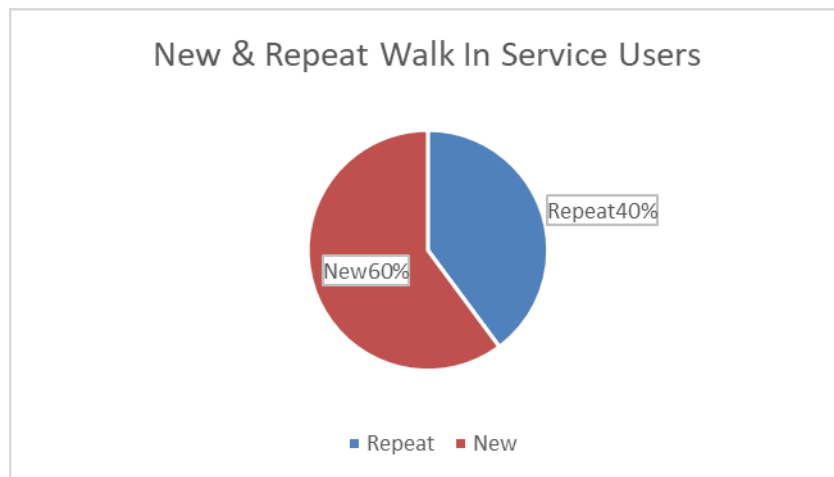
In terms of staff we said thank you and goodbye to Rachel Newland who left to set up her own play therapy practice and Aoife O'Carroll who left to work with the Prison Service; and we recruited two new members of the team – Youth Workers Edel Mitchell and Jessica Curtin.

I would like to thank the staff team for their zooming skills, professionalism, and hard work throughout the year; I appreciate your commitment, both to GOSHH and to the welfare of our clients. I believe that your enthusiasm for your work positively impacts on the service provided by GOSHH; I particularly admire your ability to 'pull out all the stops' and rise to the occasion when

required, a trait that you really needed this year! Thanks also due to our team of volunteers, including counsellors and the Board of Management, who devote time and energy to help GOSHH run smoothly and effectively.

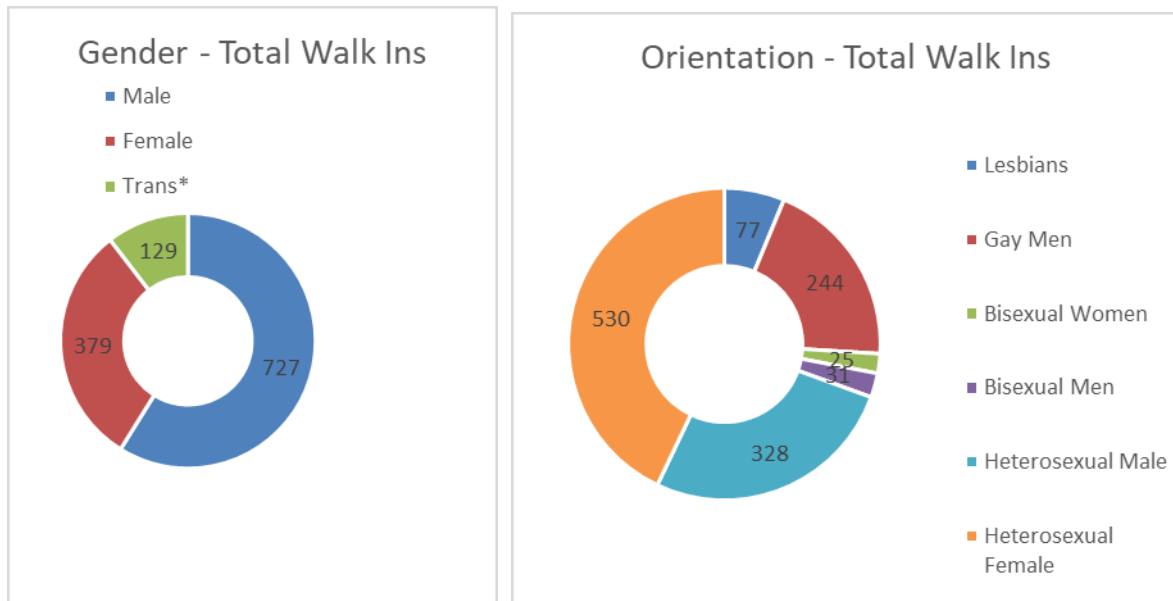
Walk In Service Users

1235 Service Users walked in through the doors of GOSHH in 2020, 60% (743) of whom were new to the organisation. While this is a large percentage of the total people that came through the doors, the overall number is significantly reduced due to the office being closed for casual walk ins for the bulk of 2020.

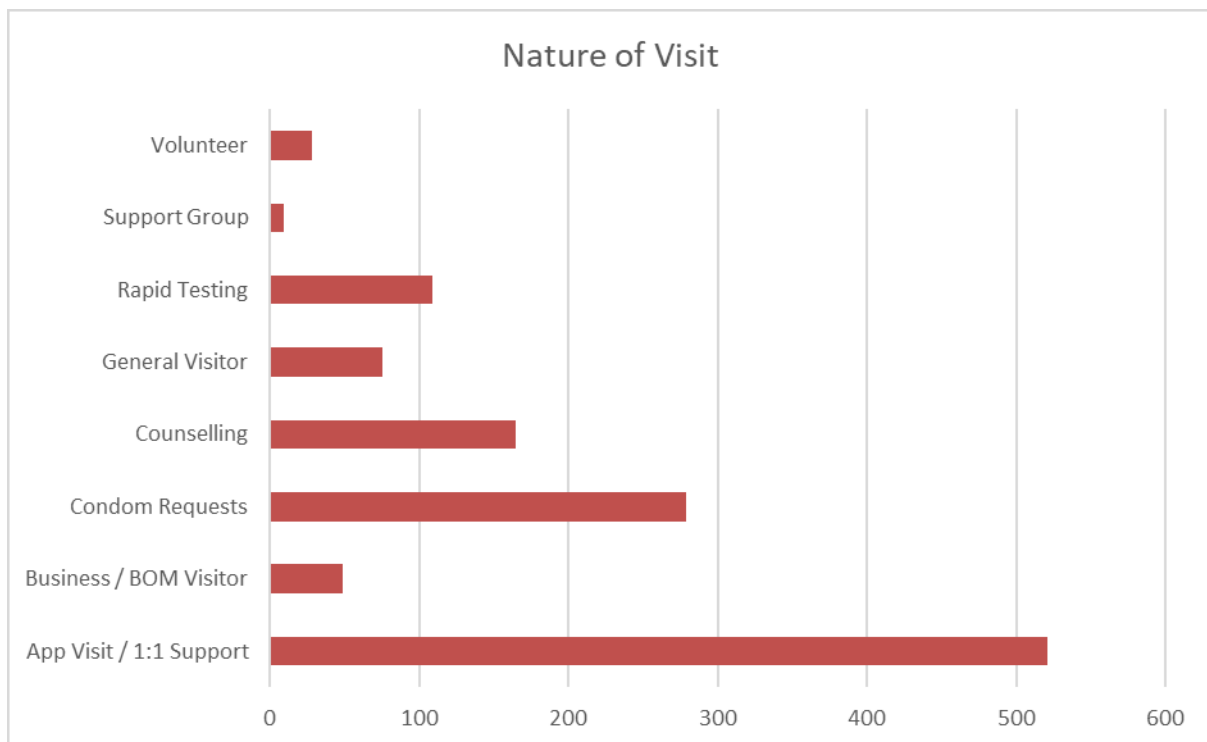


The Gender breakdown for Walk In Service Users during 2020 saw an minor increase in those who identified as Male (58.87% / +0.37%) and a decrease in those whom identify as Female (30.69% / -4.09%). Those who identify as Trans* increased when compared to last year (10.44% / +3.54%).

The orientation breakdown shows that the majority of Service users are listed in the heterosexual categories, 69.47%. Gay & Bisexual Men represent 22.27% while Lesbian & Bisexual Women represent 8.26% of the total service users.



People coming through the door for appointments with Support Workers / 1:1 Support is the most popular reason for Walk In Service Users with the GOSHH Free Condom Service moving to the second most popular reason for the first time. Appointments with Sessional Workers / Counselling is the third highest nature of visit for the year followed by Rapid Testing.



The majority of people coming through our doors are aged between 20 and 39 whilst 32.7% of people we work with are over 40 which reflects the work we are doing with parents and family members seeking support.

Education and Training



We continued this year to provide training for the community and for professionals working within the community. Our model of training and facilitation centres around working with people face to face, allowing time and space to explore some of the most sensitive and challenging issues relating to their lives and the lives of the people they work with and for personal and professional development. This model has been shown to offer participants the opportunity to safely explore and process these issues, whilst also building their capacity, comfort and confidence.

It was not possible to continue with this model of training provision after March 12th, and we explored our options around this and adapted our training delivery. We knew that the vast majority of our existing workshops could not simply be replicated using the online platforms, so instead we embraced the changing face of training delivery and developed new interactive workshops and webinars that leant themselves to online delivery. This meant we could still work with and support communities and professionals to help ensure they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to work with others around gender, orientation, sexual health and HIV and much more.

Online training has been both rewarding and challenging. It has provided us with lots of learning opportunities around the use of various online platforms for training delivery and an opportunity to explore what works and what doesn't, as well as a chance to develop our own best practice in online delivery. It has also provided us with an opportunity to reach more people, as the requirement for everyone to be in the same physical space is no longer there and people from anywhere in the country and even the world could potentially participate.

It has been a challenge to maintain the interactive nature of the training we provide and some of the training programmes we deliver or co-deliver including the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FPSHP) and our one day "Working with LGBTI Young People" had to be stopped completely as they could not be delivered online. A new 2-hour webinar on Working with LGBTI Young People was developed which provided much needed information and support, with a view to following this up with a face to face workshop as soon as it is safe and possible to do so.

Over the course of the year we delivered 42 workshops and 499 people participated in our training workshops and programmes, including young people, parents, professionals and sex workers. Between 2015 and 2019, the number of hours of training and capacity building we provide has increased by 145%. The number of hours of training and capacity building for service providers has increased by 194% and there has been an increase of 77% in the number of hours of training and capacity building for youth and community groups.

Here are some examples of the training we delivered:

Gender and Orientation:

We provided a range of face to face training around Gender and Orientation in the earlier part of the year including Working with LGBTI Young People and An Introduction to Gender and Orientation. We also provided online training in this area and developed new webinars and workshops to meet the need for ongoing support and information from parents and professionals.

Sexual Health:

We were able to provide face to face training for professionals at the beginning of the year on Working with Young People around Sexual Health as well as Relationships and Sexuality Education workshops in partnership with the youth services. Later in the year we provided online sexual health training with the Teen Parent Support Programme (TPSP) and provided training and support to the disability services.

We provided online training on Sex Work: The Myths, The Facts and The Law to staff from homeless agencies in response to an identified increase in street work in conjunction with SWAI (Sex Workers Alliance of Ireland).

As part of the 'Working It' research project we co-designed and co-facilitated face-to-face Peer Researcher Training with University of Limerick Global Minds Programme.

HIV:

We co-designed and co-facilitated training for ICRSE (International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe) and HIV Justice Network. This training brought Sex Workers and HIV activists together from all over Europe for capacity and skills building around HIV, Sex Work, Human Rights, the Law and specific sub population issues.

Student Placements

We continued our partnerships with the Higher Education Institutions and Colleges of Further Education in providing an opportunity for students on various courses of study to gain practical experience in the field and an opportunity to practice their skills under supervision. We were delighted to welcome Frankie and Gavin from LIT and Kieren from UL to the team during the year. We know that it was a challenge for them to complete their placements at that time and for the most part online.

Information and Promotion



GOSHH provides information, awareness raising, and promotion services, including stands at regional events and awareness weeks to increase public awareness and understanding, as well as on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the GOSHH website. GOSHH also introduced the new GOSHH newsletter as well as launching the OH MY GOSHH Podcast.

Events

Irish AIDS Day, 15 June: GOSHH celebrated Irish AIDS Day by creating a window display which could be seen by the public walking by the building, social media campaigns were run throughout the week on our social media platform's advertising testing and letting people know that we were still open.

World AIDS Day, 01 December: GOSHH ran a social media campaign throughout the week. We also recorded a video for the European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG) and had an article published in their newsletter about challenges facing PLWHIV in the Mid-West of Ireland.

European Testing Week: This runs twice a year in March and November raising awareness raising promoting testing and treatments for HIV and Hepatitis C across Europe.

We promoted a full social media campaign for 10 days around both weeks, focusing on #KnowYourStatus for HIV and #FindTheMissingMillions for Hepatitis C. The campaign went out over

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and included some podcasts from people living with Hepatitis C. The tagline was ‘Test. Treat. Prevent’. We also provided community based rapid testing for HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis C from our offices on Davis Street.

International Sex Workers Rights Day, March 31: We shared posts from the SWAI and the ICRSE.

World Hepatitis Day, July 28: As members of the World Hepatitis Alliance we were part of their international video relay. We also shared relevant podcasts, information posters, and social media posts throughout the day.

International Day to Eliminate Violence against Sex Workers, December 17: We highlighted research by Front Line Defenders and Advocate Magazine which found a sharp increase in violent attacks, defamation, and other threats to sex worker activists in 13 countries during the pandemic.

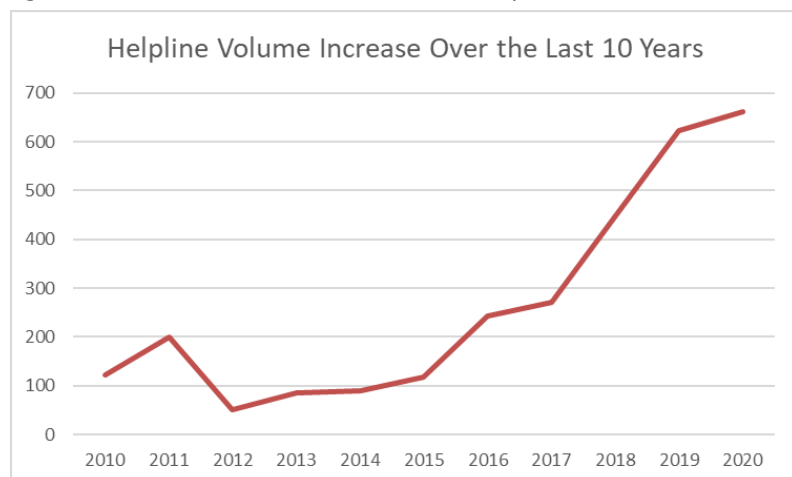
Limerick Pride Festival, July 6-11: We created an online video to highlight our services and support for Limerick Pride.

Helpline

The helpline service operates through the office number, social media, text, phone and email. This service runs concurrently with our other services during office hours, Monday to Friday. In 2020 we recorded all time high numbers through our helpline service; our doors were closed, but our lines were open.

We received 662 helpline contacts ranging across our service.

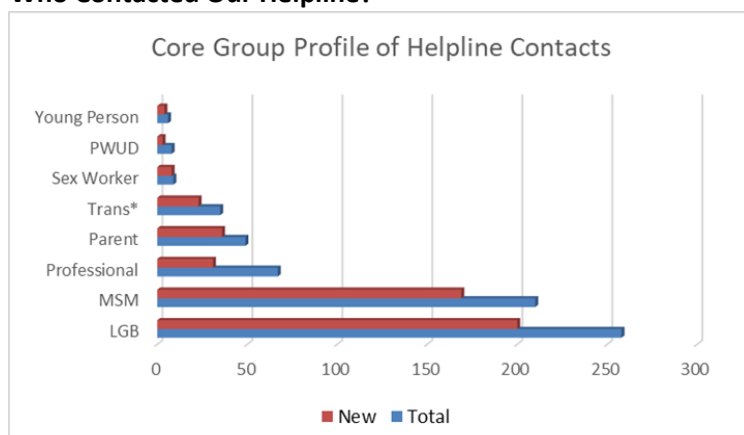
The total amount of time GOSHH committed to helpline contact was just over 92 hours, with an average of 8 minutes per contact.



How Did People Contact Us?

Since 2017 the trend towards contacting us directly through the office line has continued (72% in 2020), whilst the percentage of people contacting us through social media has decreased. Online contact accounted for 25% of all helpline contact.

Who Contacted Our Helpline?



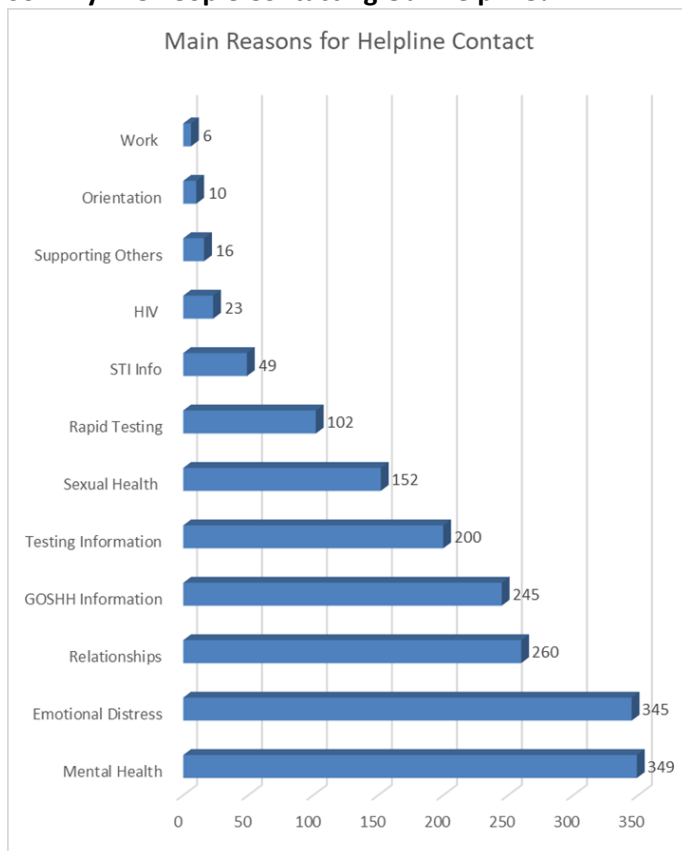
56% of contacts were with people who identified themselves as male, and 38% identified as female. There were 6% of people recorded as unknown gender. Of the 370 males, 47% were heterosexual men and 47% were gay men. The remaining

6% were bisexual men. Heterosexual women accounted for the highest percentage (31%) of all contact and 78% of all female identified contact. Lesbian and bisexual women accounted for 9% of all helpline contacts.

The age range of contacts varied from teens to late fifties, with the highest percentage being in their twenties (40%) and thirties (38%).

The majority of people who contacted us (78%) were Irish with the remaining 22% being from new or migrant communities. Of these 143 people, 89 were from West and Eastern Europe with the others originating from North and South America, Africa, The Middle East and Asia.

So Why Are People Contacting Our Helpline?



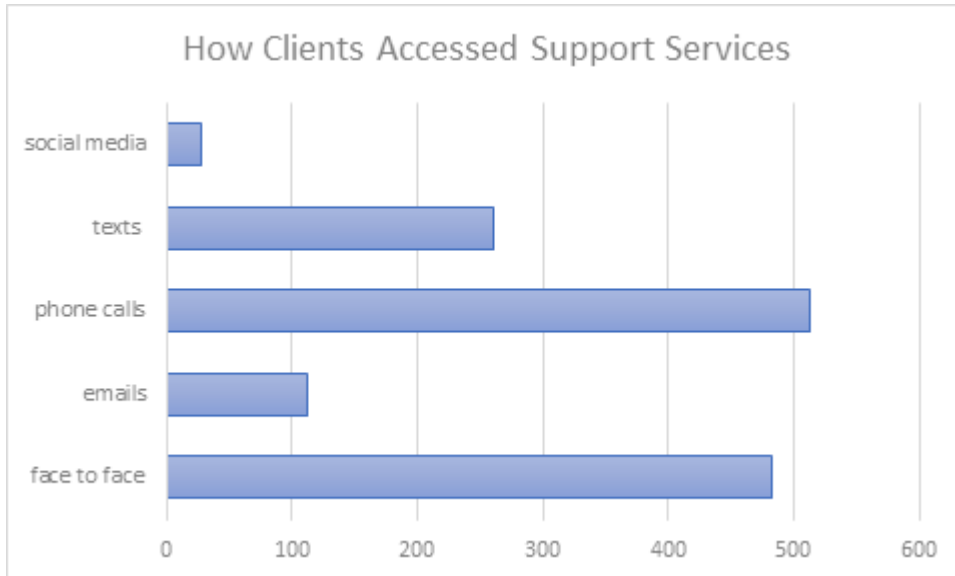
We received a high volume of contacts looking to know if our services were operating, clarifying how our services worked remotely, and enquiries specifically about face to face support services that may be available for young people.

Our local STI clinic was operating at a greatly reduced capacity from March, as a result we had a high volume of people looking for sexual health tests and trying to access PrEP.

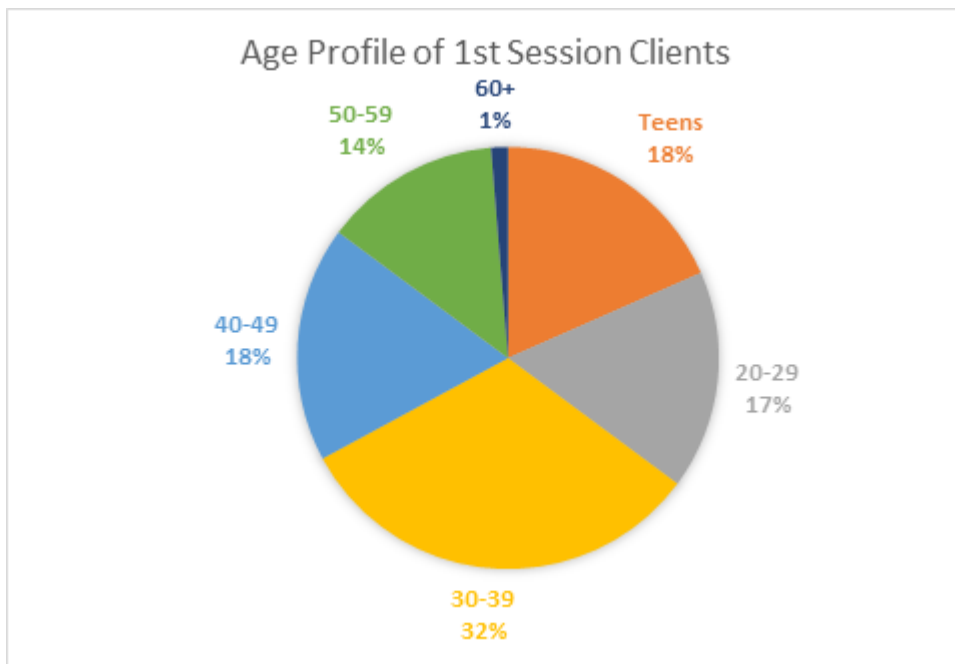
It is obvious from the high level of emotional distress and mental health contacts that our staff need to be versatile and highly skilled in order to provide the quality helpline service we deliver.

Personal Support

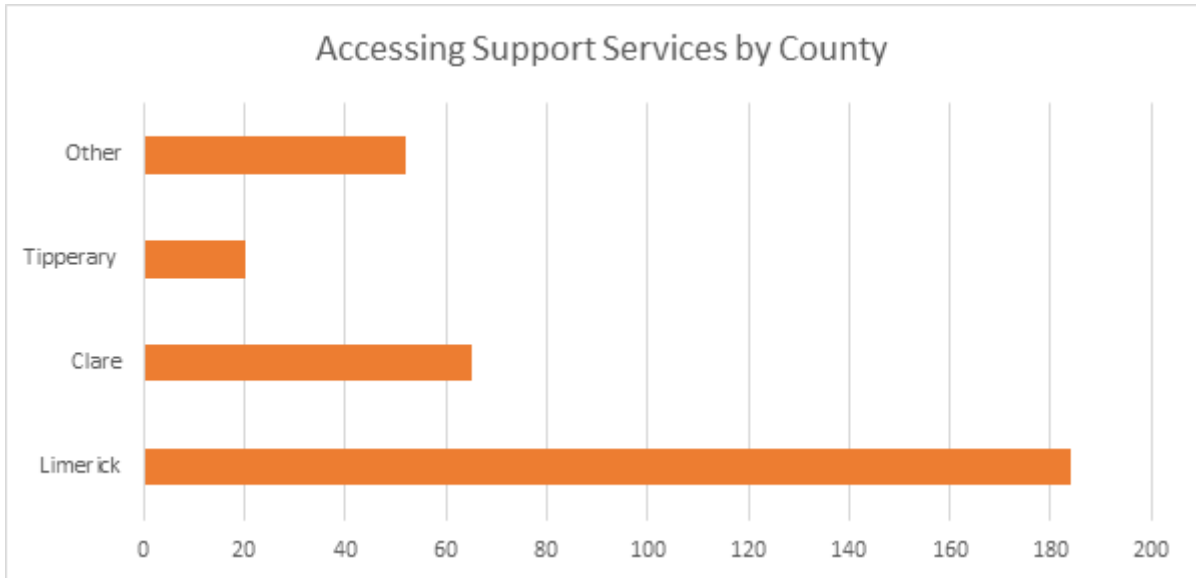
Support can be accessed through email, phone call, text, social media, and face to face. This year the service provided 1341 sessions of personal support to 321 service users in the areas of Gender Orientation Sexual Health and HIV. Most of the support took place via telephone, text messaging, emails and virtually (Zoom, Teams) with an increase in telephone calls (513) seconded by Face to Face (482). 75% of service users accessing support services were of Irish origin followed by the African population at 9%.



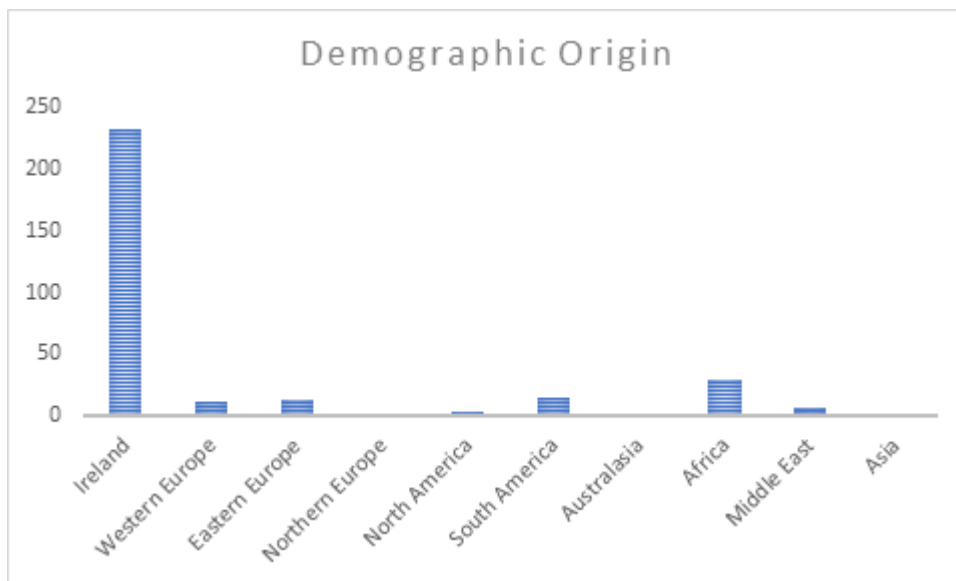
The largest group who utilise the service identify as LGB and MSM, closely followed by people who identify as Trans* and people living with HIV. The highest number of service users (32%) who accessed the support services were those aged between 30-39 of whom 39% identified themselves as heterosexual males, and a further 22% identified themselves as gay men.



Since our offices are in the city centre, people living in and around Limerick tend to engage with personal support in GOSHH more often than those that live in Clare and Tipperary. They either have to travel to us or we arrange a suitable outreach location for a meeting.



The majority of our clients are Irish, with African, South America, Middle East, Eastern and Western European being the next biggest cohort of clients. This year has seen an increase in people from migrant communities other than Africa seeking support.



Coping strategies, family issues, and isolation were the top three presenting issues for personal support sessions. Coping strategies are significant predictors for mental health measures essential in managing mental health and building a healthy, sustainable lifestyle. The lack of LGBTI+ and sexual rights in some countries restricts free expression of orientation; people migrating from countries with oppressive practices have meant an increase in service users seeking support. These particular support sessions include exploring personal safety issues, concern around family attitudes, the impact on a client’s mental and emotional health, as well as developing coping strategies. Family issues, orientation, self-esteem, relationships, and advocacy have been prominent for clients; partnership work with housing, medical, and addiction agencies has been a key part of this work.

Young people who identify as Transgender had particular concerns about waiting lists, access to hormones, lack of support from schools, particularly with regards to using chosen names and pronouns, as well as bullying from peers.

The main issues coming up for people living with HIV were related to stigma, isolation, negotiating relationships, disclosing of HIV status to family, potential partners and health professionals such as dentists. Stigma, especially, continues to be a major problem, coupled with a lack of up to date HIV information among the general population.

Sex Worker Support:

GOSHH provided personal support to 24 sex worker clients; 16 of these were existing clients and 8 were new. We provided a total of 129 support sessions for these clients.

18 of the 24 sex worker clients returned more than once for follow on support. 1 client identified as male, 1 identified as Trans* and the other 22 identified as female. 15 of the female sex workers identified as heterosexual and 6 as bisexual with 2 identifying as lesbian. Altogether 37% of all sex worker clients identified as LGBT.

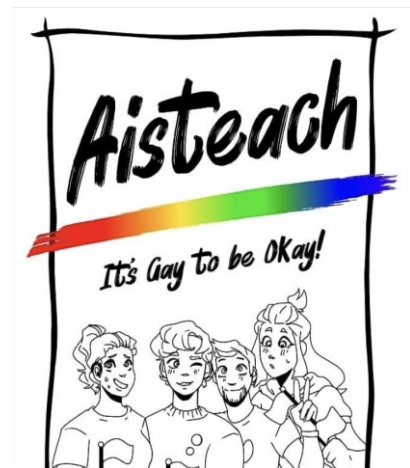
The ages ranged from the early 20s to the late 50s. 58% were in their 30s, 12% were in their 20s and the remaining 30% were over 40. The preferred method of contact was via a phone call. 39% of our sex worker clients were living with addiction and 21% were also affected by homelessness. Initial support focused mainly around work, drug and alcohol issues, and coping strategies. Ongoing support included focus on self esteem, mental health and housing.

Support Groups

The Q's is an LGBTQI+ youth group which is for young people aged between 14-19. GOSHH, in collaboration with Limerick Youth Services, run this group every Friday from Lava Java's youth café from 5-7pm. In 2020, a total of 54 group sessions took place.

During the year, the youth group still were able to take part in a variety of different activities because the group was moved online. In July Pride packs were sent to young people's homes and a virtual pride parade was held over Zoom. This was a way that the young people could celebrate pride in a meaningful way, although the group were physically apart, holding a virtual event meant that the group were still able to celebrate together.

Members of the Q's group created a booklet called Aisteach. The booklet contains coming out stories, history of alt fashion in the LGBTQI+ community and general support information for LGBTQI+ young people. There is a variety of different poetry and illustrations which were created by members of the group.



This group is a space where young people can be themselves in a safe and inclusive environment, make friends and develop new skills through a variety of different activities.

Genderwise is a group for young people aged 14-18 who identify as Trans*, non-binary, or are exploring their gender identity, and is held once a month. A total of 9 Genderwise sessions took place in 2020. The aim of the group is to allow young people to come together in a non-judgemental setting which is free from discrimination and social exclusion.

The Outlet is a social group for adults who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans* and meets monthly. The Outlet ran 4 times during 2020.

This group is an informal space which gives individual's the opportunity to meet one another and discuss common interest with each other.

A variety of different issues are discussed in our social support groups. Peer support, coping strategies and coming out being the main issues discussed throughout the three support groups.

In a time when we were apart, it was important that our social support groups took place. It was a time of great of isolation for many, by providing a safe and supportive online space it meant that our group members could feel connected and were supported.

Counselling



We provided a total of 467 counselling sessions to 43 clients; our counselling services moved entirely remotely for a period of time and some clients were not comfortable with this or did not have a safe confidential space in their homes to engage with counselling in this way so they decided to wait until face to face services resumed.

In terms client profile, of the 43 clients, 16 were male, 13 were female and 14 were transgender. With regard to orientation, 28 of our clients were LGB and 15 were heterosexual. Over half of our clients were from Ireland (28) but our clients were also from all over the world, including other Western European countries, Northern Europe, North America, Australasia, Middle East and Asia. A wide variety of topics were explored in sessions; some of the main presenting issues included coming out, coping strategies, anxiety, emotional distress, family issues, mental health, orientation, gender, relationships and self-esteem. This year specifically, isolation was an issue that was predominant as some of our clients struggled with isolation prior to the pandemic due to the stigma and discrimination they often experience in society based on their gender or orientation and this isolation was exacerbated by social restrictions.

When people initially presented to seek counselling they mentioned being at breaking point; that they could not continue without support and they felt unable to continue as they were. It would appear that the pandemic intensified situations and feelings so, thankfully, self-preservation propelled people into our service.

Rapid HIV and Syphilis Testing Programme



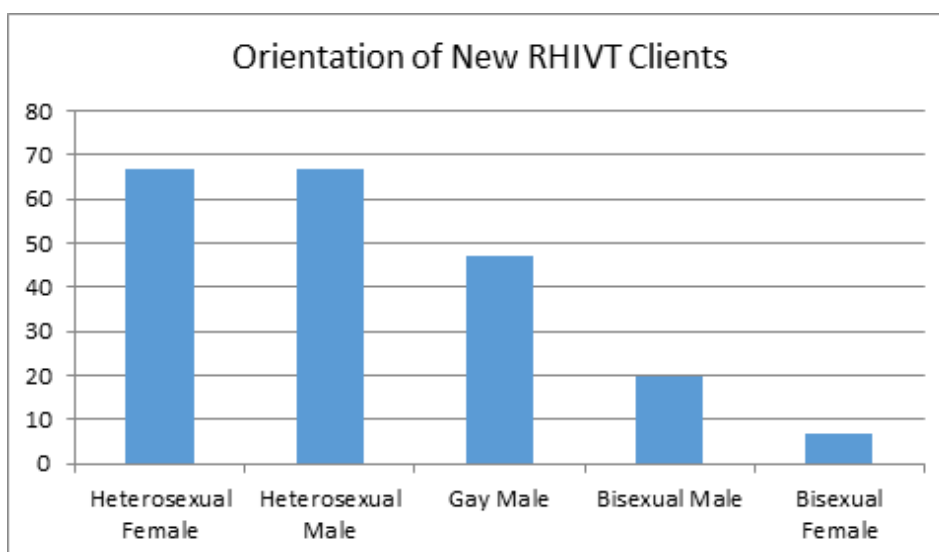
GOSHH is one of three agencies involved in the national KnowNow Rapid HIV testing programme that focuses on providing peer led community-based rapid HIV tests

In 2020 GOSHH:

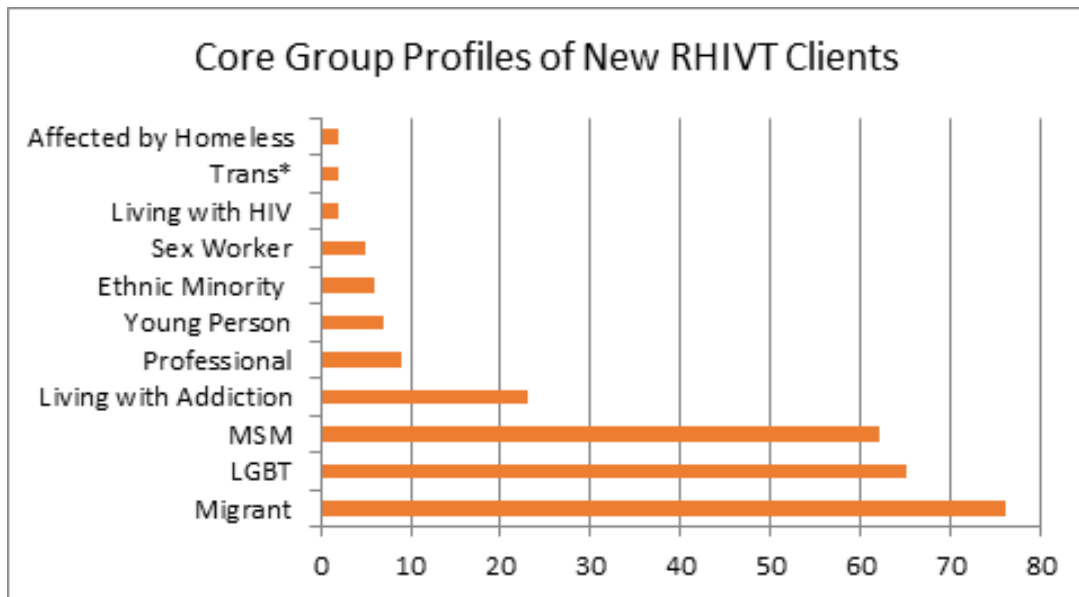
- ✓ Provided 411 tests (211 HIV and 200 Syphilis) in community settings and our offices.
- ✓ Had 5 reactive results: 2 for HIV and 3 for Syphilis
- ✓ We provided rapid testing to Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and University Limerick (UL), this proved to be successful as the uptake was high due to effective communication and publicity from both GOSHH and the higher-level institutions.
- ✓ Social media campaigns on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and GOSHH website offering testing services included opening hours, how to book an appointment, all safety precautions in place before, during and after testing



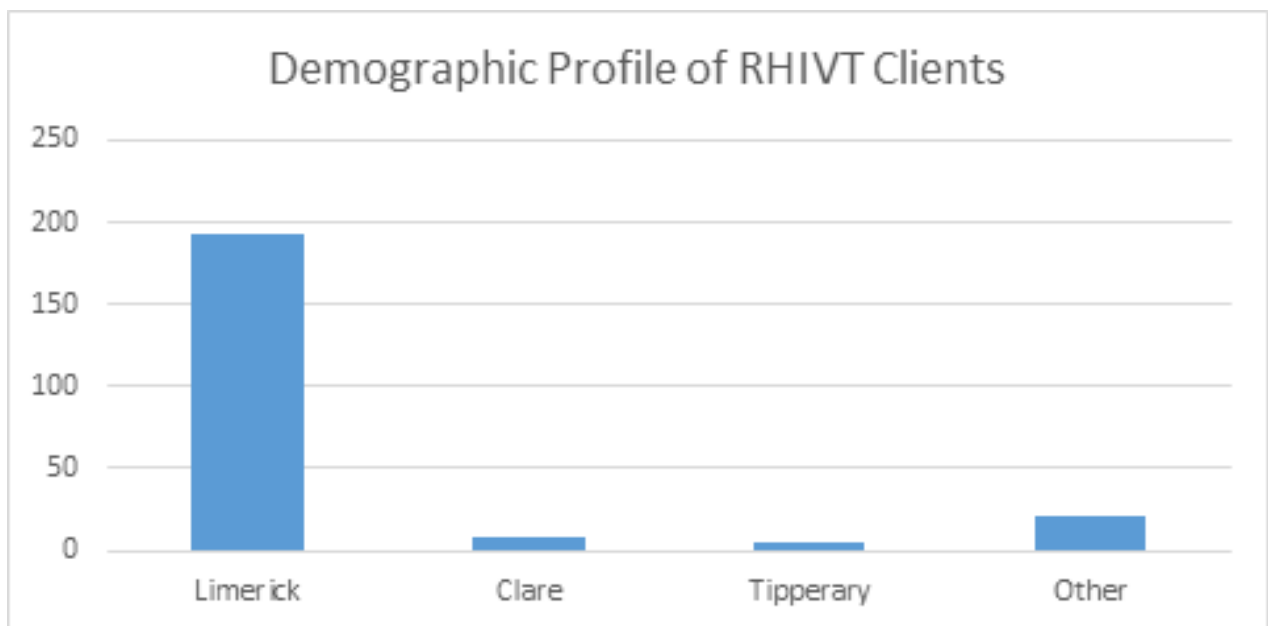
Volunteer Testing Team – LIT Valentines Week 2020



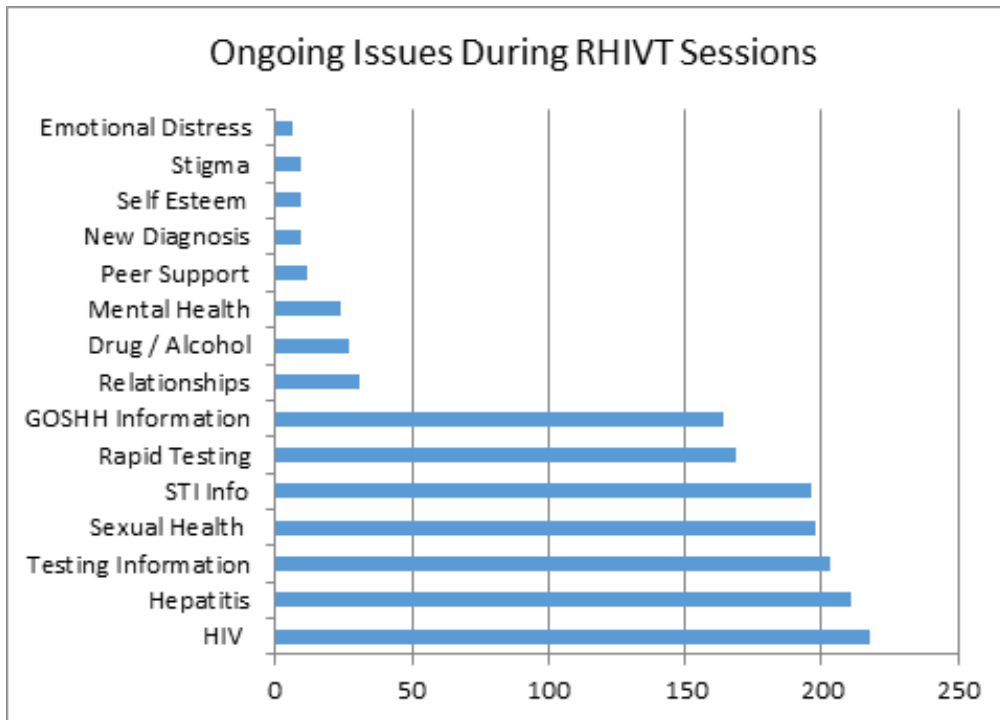
We had 208 new or first-time rapid HIV testing clients, 23% of whom identified as MSM and 10% as Bisexual male.



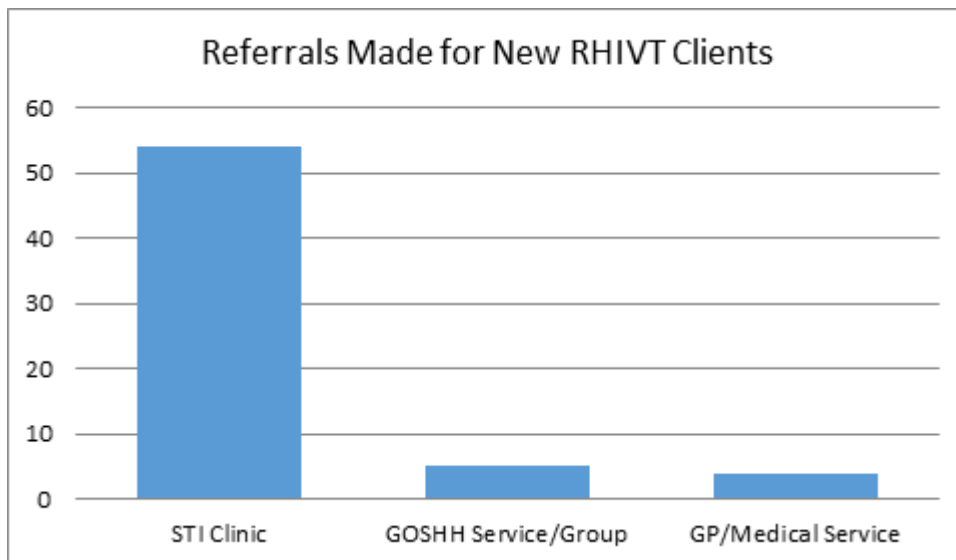
The highest number of populations in testing was from the migrant community (76), the majority of whom were from South America (23) Asia (17) and Africa (16).



The majority (85%) of people who received Rapid HIV Tests were from Limerick City or County. Females or Trans* gendered persons amounted to 36% of our total Rapid HIV testing clients.



The most frequently presented issues during rapid testing were worries about individual sexual behaviours that lead to being at risk of HIV and other STIs. Most service users availing to our services were looking for an HIV test and because the test is a combination, they were able to know their syphilis status as well. We spent a bit of time talking to our service users explaining the procedure, the end results of the test, and prevention interventions that the service user can avail of.



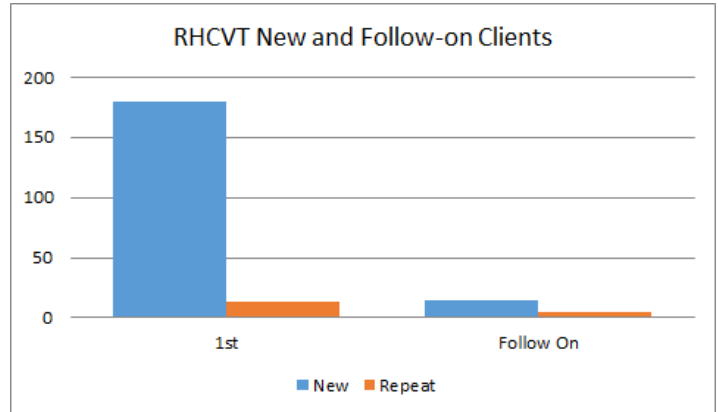
There were a number of cases referred to the STI clinic, some were service users looking to avail of PrEP and PEP and some of the presenting issues were of STI related infections which were to be assessed and treated by the STI Clinic.

Rapid HCV Testing



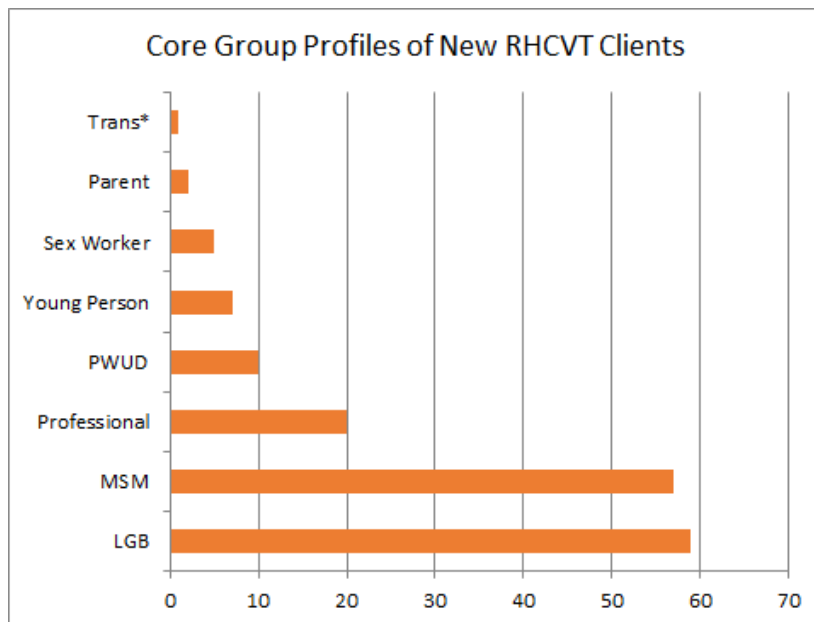
65% of RHCVT clients were male and 35% were female. Just over one third (68) identified as LGB. Just under a third (64) identified as heterosexual males and just under one third (63) identified as heterosexual females.

Altogether we provided 213 Rapid HCV tests, 180 were new to our testing service and 15 were repeat clients. This is the first year since our HCV community testing service began that we have had no reactive results for HCV.



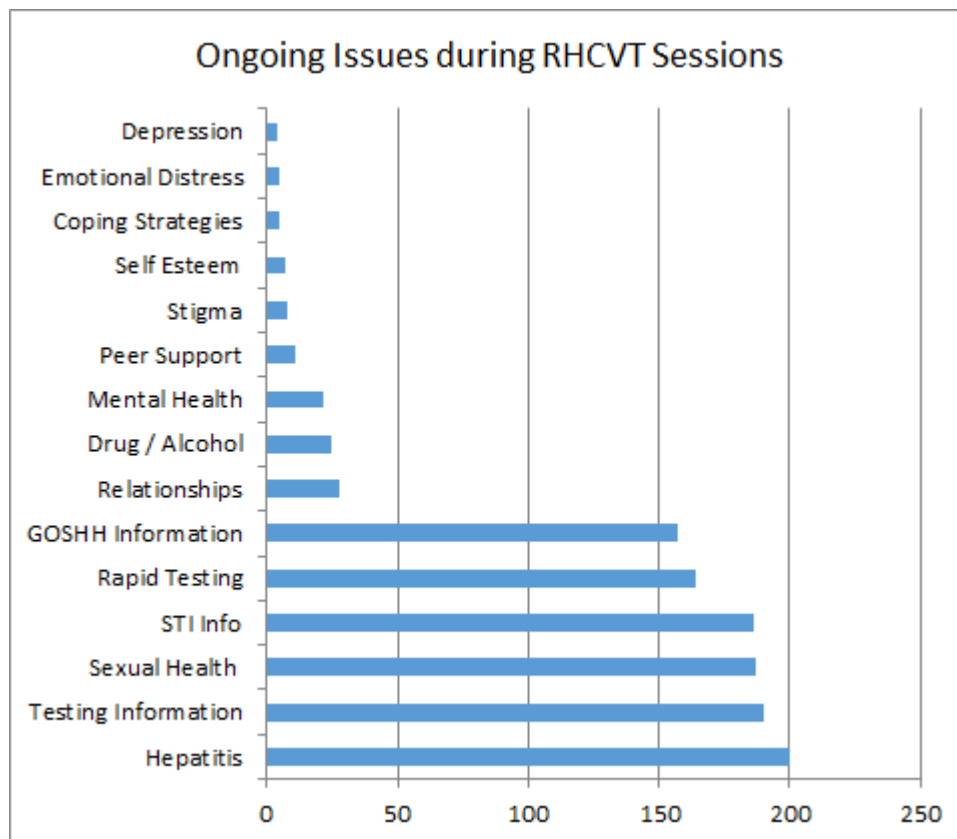
We tested 5 sex workers and 10 people living with active addiction; we provided 57 HCV tests to MSM.

70% of the people who tested for HCV had never tested for HCV before. Everybody could identify a potential risk for HCV transmission at some point in their lives.



Presenting Issues during Rapid HCV Testing Sessions

We can see from the chart below that the majority of conversations during rapid HCV testing were in relation to the test itself. Of note are the numbers of discussions about other issues such as relationships, drug/alcohol use, and mental or emotional health. A rapid testing session often results in referring people onto other agencies as a response to the discussion.



We made 51 referrals to the STI clinic, 4 referrals to GOSHH Services, and 3 referrals to a GP.

Sexual Health

We provided support for individuals around sexual health as part of our helpline, personal support, counselling, outreach and rapid testing services. We also provided sexual health promotion training to support and educate communities and professionals (see Training section for more on this), and we developed sexual health promotion projects and campaigns. The National Sexual Health Strategy and the Sexual Health Promotion Training Strategy provide a framework for our work in this area.

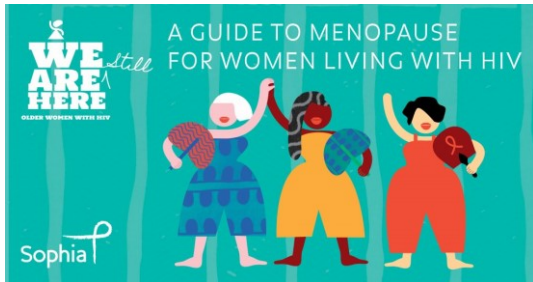
Website:

We reviewed and updated the sexual health digital content for our website. We have brand new content in the areas of relationships, sex, pleasure, sexual dysfunction, contraception, STIs, sexual health services and consent.

Disability:

We designed and delivered Sexual Health workshops for people with intellectual disabilities for the Rehabcare Group. Workshops are professional, accessible and comprehensive and focus on enabling positive sexual health for all. We provided one-to-one workshops with service users and their carers at the start of the year, and then were able to support the carers and staff to deliver these workshops themselves.

Menopause:



During World Menopause Week we highlighted some of the issues around the menopause using our social media channels including a new resource for women living with HIV and the menopause, collaborated with Emily Power Smith to create a menopause and sexual pleasure podcast and linked with the Wellness Warrior (aka Catherine O' Keefe) to promote a webinar around sexual pleasure and the menopause.

OH MY GOSHH! Podcast:



GOSHH's Health Promotion Worker Sarah Fitzpatrick launched the OH MY GOSHH podcast to coincide with World AIDS Day. Podcasts make information personal; they are a much more intimate way of getting information than reading an email or document. Some people may find accessing sexual health information on a face to face basis nerve-racking, therefore having up to date and accurate sexual health related information on a podcast is a great alternative.

The podcasts cover topics in Gender, Orientation, Sexual Health and HIV. Some guests who have featured on the podcasts include:

- Infectious Disease Specialist
- G.P.
- HIV Personal Support Worker
- Student Union Vice President
- Clinical Sexologist
- Art Psychotherapist
- Other guests with personal experiences to share

One of the most played podcasts so far has been with Infectious Diseases Specialist and Consultant Dr Sarah O'Connell who spoke about her role in the STI/GUM clinic in University Hospital Limerick (UHL), along with addressing frequently asked questions about the clinic, STIs and HIV.

Our podcast with the Vice President of the Students Union in Mary Immaculate College (MIC) Laura Charleton, was also very popular. In this episode GOSHH supported the students by speaking about services we offer and, most importantly, answering their sexual health related questions. This educational piece reached over 1000 students online as the video was also shared on the MIC Instagram page during their Sexual Health and Guidance Week. The podcasts were also shared by LIT during their Sexual Health Awareness Week. The launch of the podcast has received very positive feedback and has already reached a diverse group of audiences.

The Oh MY GOSHH podcast is available wherever you listen to your podcasts.

Parents:

We supported the promotion of new resources to support parents have conversations with their children about relationships and healthy sexuality development: Making the "Big Talk" many small talks: For parents of 4-7 year olds and Making the "Big Talk" many small talks: For parents of 8-12 year olds. We also promoted the revised Busy Bodies which is an information booklet for parents and primary school children on puberty.



Condom Distribution:



GOSHH is a partner of the HSE National Condom Distribution Scheme and we continued to supply a range of condom distribution schemes locally. The aim of these schemes is to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. These schemes can also provide a good introduction to broader sexual health services, and help prevent unplanned pregnancies.

We distribute free condoms, female condoms, lubricant sachets, and glyde

dams in the following ways

- Through our walk-in service.
- To services in the region who work directly with different population groups, especially those targeting young people and MSM such as outreach services, services running sexual health education programmes, or those running events.
- Through our CD Card scheme for young people under 18 years of age together with training, education, and other support.
- Through the Rapid Testing Service.
- Through targeted events – Irish/World AIDS Day, European Testing Week and Limerick Pride.



Condom dispensers were introduced in our entrance hallway so people could avail of free condoms without coming into the building, therefore reducing the numbers of people coming into the main reception area of the service.

We also developed a postal service where people could call, email, or DM on social media to get free condoms sent to them by post, providing 5,336 condoms, delivered directly in discreet packaging. In total we distributed 13,042 condoms and 7,380 lubricant sachets.

Gender and Orientation



In 2020 51.3% of our service users had diverse genders and orientations and were part of the LGBTI+ community. When we include family members and professionals, this increases to 60.9%. All staff working with gender diversity and orientation have noticed an increase in clients who identify under the LGBTI+ umbrella.

When we consider all the aspects of the work GOSHH does, including personal support, counselling, outreach, training and support groups, the majority of work is with those who have diverse genders and orientations and identify as LGBTI+.

Coping strategies, mental health, family issues and isolation along with self-esteem and gender identity have been the main presenting issues for LGBTI+ clients. A lot of our clients reported feeling like they can't be themselves and that their regular supports and ways to cope were removed, often these were things such as social outlets and also mixing with others.

It also highlighted some addictive tendencies that people had such as with alcohol and drugs that became more difficult to access.

There was an increase in anxiety and longing to experiment with their identity but feeling trapped in this as they could not do this in lockdown or quarantine.

More families have been reaching out for information and support for both the parents and their young people. There is a consistent message of parents looking for space for their child to explore their gender and not knowing how to access or provide this.

Sex Work Service Provision

In partnership with the Sex Workers Alliance of Ireland (SWAI) and the Sexual Health Centre, we worked with street workers to create a brand new resource for people who sell sex outdoors. This postcard was then handed out by outreach teams across the country.

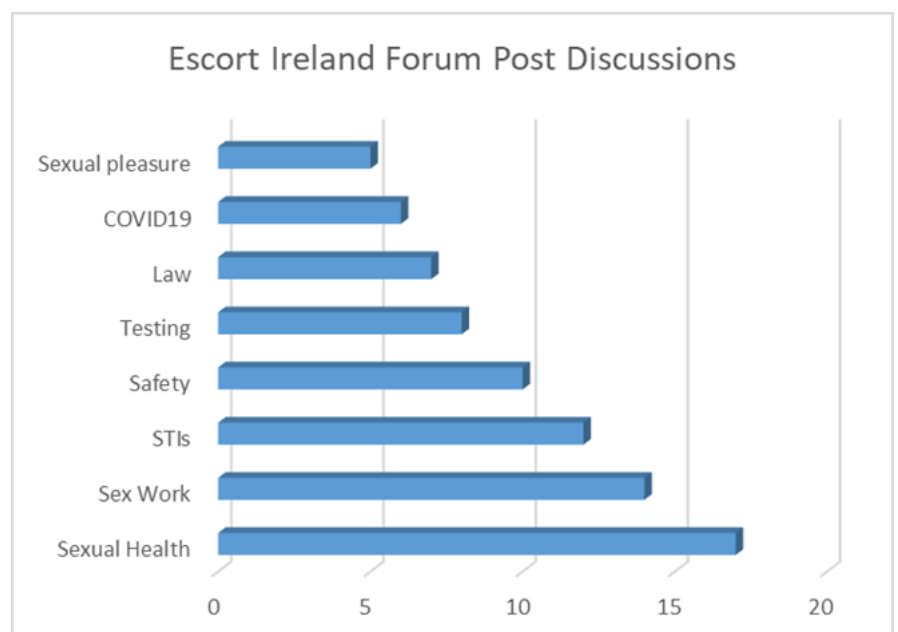
In July we co-authored a paper published in the Irish Sociological Journal 'Not Collateral Damage: Trends in violence and Hate Crimes experienced by Sex Workers in the Republic of Ireland.'

Social Media:

We posted in 34 forum threads, in 2 forum sections. Altogether threads that we were involved with had an accumulated viewing of 48,131 times. The 'Sexual Health Screening in Ireland' thread we created in 2016 received 2,622 views in 2020 and altogether has been viewed 63,091 times over the last 4 years by both buyers and sellers of sex.

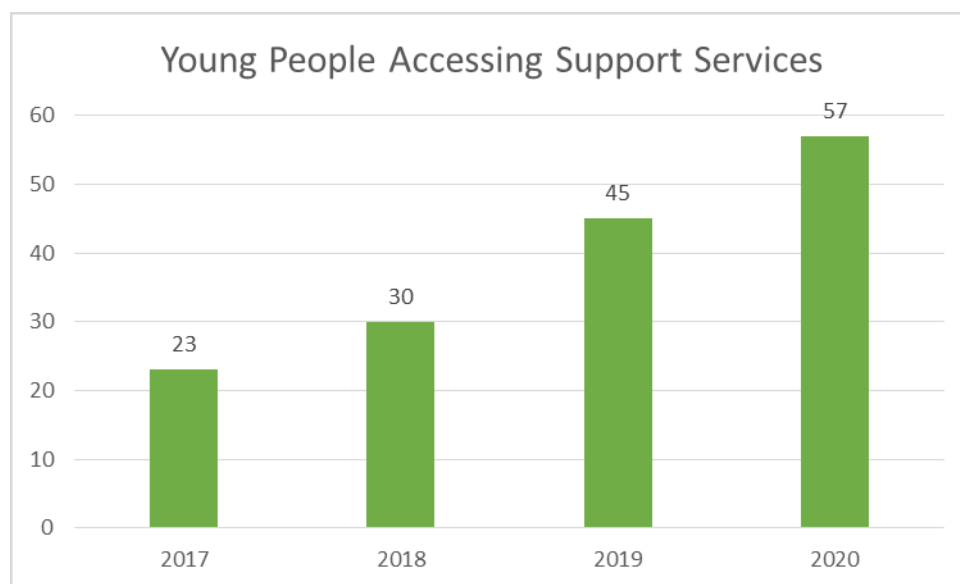
We received thanks a record 285 times which shows the relevancy of our posts for forum users is appreciated. Our profile was viewed 719 times this year and has been viewed 2473 times in total.

Conversations we were involved with covered the full range of sexual health and sex worker discussions. The most discussed topics were sexual health, sex work, STIs and safety. Testing and the law were the next highest on the list.



Our most connected private posts were about rapid testing and condoms. Our two most connected public posts discussions were around COVID19 and safety, and another about oral sex and safety.

Youth Work



There has been a steady increase in numbers since we have had a dedicated Youth Worker with 57 young people accessing these services.

There are several different reasons given for young people to access support:

Coming out	Gender	Transitioning
Bulling	Acceptance	Rejection
Relationships	Anxiety	Depression

In addition, the sense of isolation young people felt due to not being able to meet up with friends, attend school or social clubs was an extra concern.

Some sessions with young people happened over zoom and some face to face. It was found most young people preferred an in-person session, while others moved to remote sessions. Some young people did not feel safe enough at home to talk about the issues that they were facing without a fear of being overheard by family.

STAFF TEAM & COMPANY DIRECTORS

STAFF TEAM

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LGBT Worker

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Youth Support Worker

Rachel Newland

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Sarah Tucker, Kathryn Wilusz

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Placement Students

Kieren Diggpal, Francesca Martin, Gavin Nolan

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Health Service Executive

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Sexual Health &
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HSE Mid West
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National
Social
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An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
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An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



National LGBTI+
Inclusion Strategy
2019-2021



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



ciste na
gcuntas díomhaoin
the dormant
accounts fund



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
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Rialtas na
hÉireann
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