



New Directions, August 2026 Newsletter



Green Gables and Reach Day Services recently had a certificate presentation for the Service Users who completed their SUSO (Speak Up, Speak Out) course, read more about it inside...



Staff and Service Users from Rise Day Service hosted a BBQ to remember, turn to page 14!



Las Granadas have been busy this Summer in the allotment at Corkagh Park, see page 11!.



Avoca Day Service hosted a Graduation Day recently, find out who was honoured and why 😊

This month we explore the eight pillar which underpins New Directions, we look at **‘Support for Accessing Bridging Programmes to Vocational Training.’**

Accessing bridging programmes to vocational training helps people build basic skills, confidence and work readiness before entering major career courses. These transition supports target school leavers, individuals with specific support needs or those currently looking for employment.

Key Steps to Get Started;

- 1) Identify your local support hub: Contact your regional Education and Training Board (ETB) or a local training centre.
- 2) Check social welfare or funding eligibility: Many bridging courses let you keep your payment or switch to a training allowance.
- 3) Assess specific support needs: Speak with a job coach or employment advisor about specialised entry courses or grants. For more information, check out;

[Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme](#)



Meet the Staff Member

Amy Quinn

Hi everyone! My name is Amy Quinn and I've been working with SJOG Liffey Region for nearly 14 years. I currently work as the Assisted Decision-Making Coordinator, and my role spans across both our residential and day services. Every day is different, and I have the opportunity to work alongside colleagues, the people we support, and their families to help promote rights, choice, and independence.

One of the things I enjoy most about my role is building relationships with so many different people across our services. No two days are ever the same, and I love that my work allows me to support people in making decisions that are important to them while helping staff put person-centred practices into action.

I live in Tallaght with my husband, Gary, and our two-year-old twin daughters, Cora and Nia, who certainly keep us on our toes! Life is busy, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

When I do get some spare time, I enjoy spending quality time with family and friends, getting out for a walk, watching murder documentaries, enjoying a good coffee or can of monster, travelling, or simply relaxing or at least trying to relax with twin toddlers after a busy week.

Thank you for taking the time to get to know me a little better. I look forward to seeing many of you around the services!



Looking After Your Skin

Easy Read Health Information



1. Wearing a Pad

You may wear a pad if you leak wee.

Sometimes your pad will get wet.

This is a normal part of wearing a pad.

Changing a wet pad helps you stay comfortable.

Changing a wet pad also helps protect your skin.



2. A Wet Pad Can Make Your Skin Sore.

A wet pad keeps moisture next to your skin.

If your skin stays wet for a long time, it can become sore.



Your skin might feel itchy.

Your skin might sting or burn.

Your skin might feel painful.

Your skin might look red or different from usual.

3. A Wet Pad Can Damage Your Skin



Wet skin can become damaged more easily.

Your skin might become very red.

Your skin might become cracked or raw.

Sometimes your skin can break.

Broken skin can be painful.

Tell someone if you notice a change in your skin.

4. Sitting or Lying Down for a Long Time



Sitting in the same position for a long time can put pressure on your skin.

Wet skin can be damaged more easily by pressure and rubbing.

Ask for support if you need it.



Lying in the same position for a long time can also put pressure on your skin.

Change your position when you can.

Ask for support to move if you need it.

5. When You Have Your Period



You may have period blood in your pad.

Sometimes your pad may have both period blood and wee in it.

This is normal.

Change your pad regularly during your period.

This helps protect your skin.

It can also help you feel comfortable.

A woman and a young woman with Down syndrome are sitting at a wooden table in a kitchen. The woman is pointing at a document on the table. The young woman is looking at the document. There is a floral mug on the table. The background shows a kitchen with a window and a plant.

-  A wet pad keeps moisture next to your skin.
-  Moisture, heat and rubbing can irritate your skin.
-  Damaged skin can sometimes become infected.
-  Tell someone if your skin is very sore.
-  Tell someone if your skin is broken.
-  Tell someone if you have a rash that is not getting better.
-  Tell someone if you notice a change that worries you.

7. Smell



Wee and period blood can smell stronger when they stay in a pad for a long time.

Having a wet pad does not mean you are unclean.

Change your pad when it is wet.

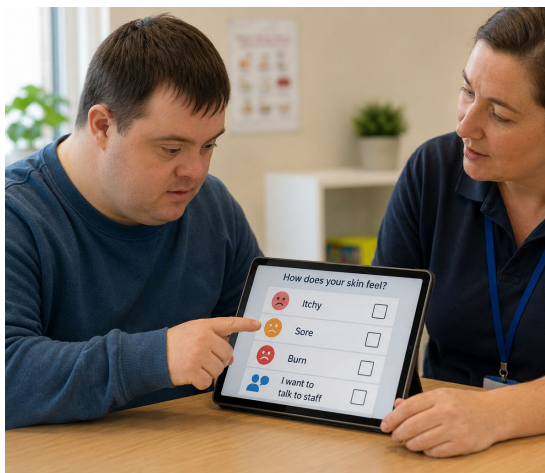


Wash gently when you need to.

This can help you feel fresh and comfortable.



-  Go to the toilet when you need to.
-  Change your pad when it is wet.
-  Wash your bottom and private areas gently.
-  Dry your skin gently.
-  Put on a clean, dry pad.
-  Ask for support if you need it.



9. Tell Someone

Tell someone if your skin feels sore.

Tell someone if your skin feels itchy.

Tell someone if your skin hurts or burns.

You can tell a staff member.

You can tell a nurse.

You can tell someone you trust.

10. Your Privacy and Dignity



Your body belongs to you.

Your privacy is important.

You have the right to privacy when you use the toilet.

You have the right to privacy when you wash or change your pad.

Anyone helping you should treat you with dignity and respect.

You can ask for help when you need it.



Remember



Change your pad
when it is wet.



Keep your skin
clean and dry.



Change your position
when you can.



Check your skin.



Tell someone if your
skin is sore.



Ask for support when
you need it.



Looking after your skin
can help keep you healthy
and comfortable.



Avoca Day Service

On the 23rd July, there was cause for celebration when Avoca held an in-house Graduation ceremony for the Service Users who attend their day service. This was organised as a way of marking the end of first part of the year.



Awards Given;

Paul Hogan – Most obliging individual in Avoca Day Service.

Jennifer Bagnall – Most Stylish lady in Avoca.

Derek Cullen – Most cheerful man in Avoca.

Gavin Kavanagh – Most pleasant man in Avoca Day Service.

A huge well done to all for what sounded like a fun awards event 😊

Las Granadas Day Service



A group of individuals from Las Granadas, Kenneth Quigley, Eimear Mc Creary, Ciaran Kelly and Sarah Forrest Reid work very hard at their allotment in Corkagh Park. They have planted flowers and vegetables such as Sunflowers, Lettuce, Spinach, Tomatoes, Beetroot, Carrots, Onions, Cucumber and Rhubarb. They love to bake with their produce; such as a delicious Rhubarb crumble, also bringing vegetables home. They have made friends with other gardeners and all like to share their produce. The group are supported by staff members Veronica Achlitner and Doreen Donnelly. Well done all!



SUSO in Liffey Region



Service Users who attend Green Gables and Reach recently completed their SUSO course. SUSO stands for "Speak Up, Speak Out!", a personal development and assertiveness training programme created by Inclusion Ireland. It is designed to help people build essential self-advocacy, communication, and leadership skills.

The Programme aims to teach participants how to identify and express their feelings. Build confidence to say what they like or dislike. Empower individuals to speak up about personal choices and rights. Encourage teamwork and leadership roles within groups.

SUSO works by using fun, interactive, and playful games, exercises, and videos. Its is delivered through accessible workshops and digital training guides. SUSO is often led or co-facilitated by self-advocates with lived experience of disability.

Genil Campus Summer BBQ



It was an afternoon to remember on Wednesday 22nd July at the Genil campus in Maynooth. Dermot, Daisy and the team from Rise Day Service hosted an amazing BBQ with Irish and Croatian food. The sun was shining, Jason had the drinks flowing and spirits were high as it was the height of Summer. Daisy cooked and served some traditional Croatian sausage, cheese and sauces which were delicious. Thank you to all for inviting me to come along, I already cannot wait for the next event 😊



MapleWalk - A Great Day at Boley Equestrian Centre

Three men from **Maple Walk Day Service** – Ger, Thomas and Joe – enjoyed a fantastic day at **Boley Equestrian Centre** in Co. Wexford on **24 August**.

The visit was part of Ger and Thomas' personal goals. Joe also decided to take part because he wanted to try something new and overcome some of his fears around horses.

With support from the team at Boley Equestrian Centre, all three men had the opportunity to get close to the horses and experience horse riding. There were plenty of smiles, encouragement and a great sense of achievement throughout the day.

It was especially rewarding to see everyone taking part in their own way, building confidence and enjoying a new experience.

Ger, Thomas and Joe all had a brilliant time, and the outing showed how trying something new can help people work towards their personal goals, build confidence and discover new interests.

Interested in giving it a try?

Other centres or services interested in organising a similar experience can contact **Lara at Boley Equestrian Centre** by WhatsApp on **086 300 8980**.



Our Place: Closing Party at VISUAL Carlow

What Tony shared about being a paid leader with Carlow Arts Festival

The team got together to wrap up ****Our Place with Delta Centre, VISUAL and Carlow Arts Festival****. It was a chance for everyone to meet, look back at what we achieved and celebrate all the work that went into the project.

For me, this was a really big project. I was very proud to be a leader and co-facilitator. Being paid for my work and trusted to take on this role meant a lot to me.

I know I must be doing something right!

I want to say a big thank you to everyone who was part of Our Place. I really enjoyed working with everyone the staff, the artists, the funders and all the people behind the scenes who put so much work into making it happen.

A special thank you to ****Orla, Laura, Alan and Sinéad****. It was great working with you and learning from each other.

I am really proud of what we achieved together. But I know this isn't the end.

I hope even bigger things are ahead for Our Place. I want more people to experience it and more people to be part of what happens next.

Would I do it all again? ****100% I would!****

Thank you to everyone who came on this journey with us. ****This is just the beginning of Our Place.****



**St John
of God**
Community Services

Liffey



Our Place Tour
Wednesday and Friday
10 am - 3 pm
July - December 2026
Cookstown, Tallaght



**Please book your group by scan the
QR Code or go to
Your can book 6 people on
Wednesday or Friday
10 - 3pm
The tour is for 1 Hour
<https://bit.ly/4uYhOgv>**

Our Place Goes on Tour to Tullamore

On Thursday, 27 August, Our Place began an exciting new chapter as the sound art installation travelled to Muiríosa Services in Tullamore.

Doris Delaney and Ethan Brown, two of the original co-artists who helped create Our Place, were hired to travel to Tullamore and officially introduce the installation to its new home. Doris and Ethan shared the story behind the project, introduced the different art and sound pieces, and spent time talking with the men and women who attend Muiríosa Services and with staff. Their involvement means that the people who helped create Our Place are also taking a leading role in sharing it with new communities.

The team in Muiríosa are very excited to host Our Place for the next two months, giving many more people the opportunity to listen, explore and experience the installation for themselves. It is fantastic to see ****Our Place growing and travelling across the country****. What started as a collaborative project in Carlow is now reaching new people and new places, while creating paid opportunities for co-artists such as Doris and Ethan to lead the way. This is an exciting next step forward for Our Place.



DigiCoach project awarded ReThink Ireland grant to employ 30 DigiCoaches for 2027

We are delighted to share some great news. In 2027, the **DigiCoach Hub will employ 30 people with disabilities as paid DigiCoaches.**

This is possible thanks to **€200,000 in funding from Rethink Ireland** through the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund 4.0.

DigiCoaches are people with disabilities who use their own experience and digital skills to help other people.

They can help people learn how to use a phone or tablet, accessibility features, assistive technology, communication tools and other useful technology.

DigiCoach is about more than technology. It is about creating **real paid jobs for people with disabilities** and recognising the skills and experience they can bring to their communities.

DigiCoaches learn from each other, build their confidence and develop new skills. They also help other people become more confident and independent when using technology.

The DigiCoach Hub will work with disability organisations across Ireland so that DigiCoaches can support people in their own communities.

We are very excited to grow the DigiCoach Hub and to see **30 DigiCoaches being paid to share their skills and make digital inclusion happen in 2027.**





August – December
Friday 10 am – 1pm 

**Can a DigiCoach
support
your Service?**



DigiCoach.ie

**Fill in the
Booking Form**



bit.ly/DigiCoachSJOG

- One-to-One Digital Coaching
- Run Group Workshops
- Remote Technology Expertise

We can support:

- Communication tools
- Accessibility in Digital Devices
- Support peers and Staff to understand Digital Technology.
- Prize of an iPad for the service who are DigiChamps



**Clinical Design
& Innovation**
Person-centred, co-ordinated care

**RETHINK
IRELAND**

Our
Social
Innovation
Fund

**st John
of God** 

Thank You for Reading...

One more thing, the New Directions Online Engage sessions are now pre-recorded and the link to watch the August 2026 recording, filmed in Green Gables Day Service after their recent SUSO course, is here; [Online Engage August 2026 Greengables | Videos & Movies on Vimeo](#)



Could everyone please continue to send all your good news stories into me, we love to celebrate all the successes happening across Liffey Region's Day Services.

Get in touch

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This newsletter about New Directions information was made by Donna Hughes.