

Annual Report 2015



Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

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Chairperson's statement

I am pleased to present the annual report of the National Disability Authority (NDA) for 2015 to the Minister for Justice and Equality. This report outlines the activities and outputs of the National Disability Authority, to deliver on the final year of our 3-year strategic plan 2013–2015.

As the independent state body with statutory duty to provide evidence-informed advice to the Government and officials on policy and practice relevant to the everyday lives of people with disabilities, we are committed to ensuring we focus our work to impact real changes in policy implementation on the ground. This is guided by our vision, our strategic goals, and the opportunity to influence the shaping and delivery of policy ongoing so that people with disabilities can have greater participation in Irish society and can live the lives of their choosing. Universal Design of the environment is key to ensuring everyone can access and easily use services, products, facilities, information and communication technology, and the general built environment as independently as possible. Our work programme for 2015 covered target areas for promoting the adoption of universal design in practice. As 2015 was the Irish Design Year, we focused on a number of partnership initiatives with key stakeholders in the design sector.

I am pleased to advise on the progress we made in the following areas in particular:

- **Enhancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities:** We have conducted research and advised over the years on key employment, training, and education policy areas to support the achievement of this goal. We have been delighted to support and guide the development of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities by officials, which was launched by the Taoiseach on 2nd October 2015. We will continue to play our part in guiding its implementation, delivering on specific actions ourselves, and monitoring progress in the overall delivery and outcomes of the strategy.

We were pleased to see a continued improvement in the numbers of persons with disabilities employed in the public sector, with the overall level reported at 3½%. However, as set out in our statutory report on compliance by public bodies in 2014 published last year, it is clear that not all bodies are fully compliant. Last year we issued our first formal

determination of non-compliance by the HSE with the requirements for employment under Part 5 of the Disability Act. We have since directed that they implement specific measures to address, further to approval by the Minister for Health. We look forward to seeing these being progressed from 2016.

- **Transforming Lives:** Much of our work in 2015 entailed a range of projects that together guide the implementation of the national programme “Transforming Lives”. This programme, when implemented, will see a move to person-centred supports that enable people with disabilities to have choice and control in their lives, and to be part of the community.
- **Systems to ensure quality and safe residential services:** Following a request from the Minister for Disability in the Department of Health, we undertook a review of the impact and learning one year on from the implementation of standards, regulations and an independent inspection process by HIQA. The Project ran over 2015 and entailed detailed analysis of findings plus wide ranging consultation with persons with disabilities, their families, staff in services, HIQA, HSE, and disability bodies. The report will provide learning to guide improvements and will inform the NDA’s advice on same.
- **Accessible Services:** We were pleased to see our work with the HSE on guidelines for accessible health services come to fruition with an official launch in 2015. The guidelines are being rolled out in training for HSE staff.
- **Focus on Autism:** We continued to work with Departments and agencies to guide on how policies and practice could better take account of the needs of persons with autism. This informed a programme of actions adopted for roll out as part of the National Disability Strategy. We also ran a productive workshop with representatives from the justice sector to inform guidelines on engaging and supporting those with autism who come in contact with the justice system.
- **Mainstream Public Services:** In marking the fifteenth anniversary of the NDA, we focused our annual conference on inclusive mainstream public services and the role of planning and leadership. It was our first cross-border event and covered key service areas including online services, employment supports, and disability awareness.
- **Education and Universal Design:** We ran a conference in partnership with stakeholders on this theme in November 2015 to mark Irish Design Year and—further to our statutory duty—to promote education on universal design for the relevant professions. Partners

included Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown, Dublin City University, and National Standards Authority. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to highlight what works well in teaching universal design in range of disciplines.

- **Understanding Universal Design:** We ran a Grand Universal Design Challenge in 2015. Enterprise Ireland came on board so that, for the first time, the Challenge included the award of grants for further development of the winning ideas.

It was the first full year that the current Authority was in place, and I would like to thank my fellow members for their work throughout 2015, especially for their contribution and engagement in the development of the strategy for the NDA for the next 3 years. I would also like to thank all of the members of our Finance and Audit Committees for their work and guidance over the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank the staff of Disability Policy section in the Department of Justice and Equality for their support and engagement, as well as the staff of the Financial Shared Services unit, shared IT support services, and print management service, for their continued support to the National Disability Authority.

Finally, I would like to recognise the commitment, energy, expertise, and high standard of work that was delivered by the staff and management of the National Disability Authority. Their dedication and determination to ensuring the NDA can guide real and lasting change in the lives of people with disabilities is evident in the work they have progressed in 2015.

Helen Guinan,
Chairperson

Overview and policy context

Over the three year period of the National Disability Authority's Strategic Plan 2013–15, we have delivered a wide-ranging programme of work under all the key elements and objectives of the strategic framework.

The strategic plan had been approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality in June 2012, but inevitably there have been changes over the intervening period in terms of some of the key performance indicators. This was largely due to significant pieces of additional work undertaken, guided by requests for research, information and advice from the Minister, government departments and agencies and by changes and developments that arose in the policy landscape. In addition, with the loss of personnel who could not be replaced, the NDA operated with fewer staff than envisaged when the strategic plan had been drafted. External circumstances would have impacted on timeframes for projects and their focus also.

Major new projects that were undertaken by the National Disability Authority in the three year period included:

- Facilitating, at the request of Government, the preparation of the comprehensive employment strategy for people with disabilities and associated action plan
- Research and analysis, at the request of the Minister of State for Disability and Mental Health, of the operation of the new system of regulation, standards and inspection of residential disability services, which took effect from end 2013
- Significant work with the Department of Health and the HSE on implementing the Transforming Lives programme of reforms, and undertaking some of the analytic work to underpin the reform programme
- Leading out on drafting and a nationwide consultation exercise on national standards for disability support services in line with the HSE's New Directions policy
- Research, mapping of supports and programmes, and consultation with people in the autism community, to guide on a programme of additional actions in relation to autism incorporated into the National Disability Strategy
- Organising a programme of regional consultations on the objectives for the next National Disability Strategy Inclusion Plan post 2016

- Research and guidance on Universal Design Homes
- Roll out of the universal design in practice in the tourism sector.

Over the course of 2015 the National Disability Implementation Plan was in its final year for implementation. The Department of Justice and Equality led out on preparations to develop a strategy and actions for the next period to be delivered by a wide range of government departments and agencies. The National Disability Authority was tasked with facilitating independent consultation to guide the strategic priorities and objectives as a first step. This entailed regional meetings, focus groups and online submissions.

The finalisation of the national Comprehensive Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities as approved by Government and launched in October 2015 was a significant development, as was the establishment of an Implementation Group with an independent chairperson to monitor and report on progress.

These particular developments will play a major part in the future work and strategies of the National Disability Authority.

Strategic priority 1: National Disability Strategy

“To support the effective delivery of the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan through our research, advice and guidance to Government Departments and public bodies and to monitor the outcomes for people with disabilities.”

The National Disability Authority continued to advise Government Departments on disability policy and practice, and in particular, on the implementation of the commitments in the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2013–15. This was progressed through bilateral engagement, input via committees and through specific projects. Some highlights of that work are shown here.

Advice to Department of Health and HSE

National Guidelines on Accessible Health and Social Care Services

These guidelines were launched by Minister of State Kathleen Lynch, TD and Mr. Tony O’Brien Director General, HSE in early 2015. The guidelines were developed by the HSE in partnership with the National Disability

Authority and give practical guidance on how to plan and deliver health and social care services that are accessible to patients or service users with a disability. The HSE has undertaken a programme of staff training on these guidelines.

Transforming Lives — National Disability Authority

The National Disability Authority is a member of the Steering Group on implementation of the Transforming Lives programme arising from the “Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services” in Ireland, and of a number of the subgroups appointed by the HSE to advance its implementation.

Specific pieces of work undertaken include:

- The development of interim Standards for “New Directions”, the new approach to Adult Day Services. These standards have now been ratified by the HSE for implementation under the New Directions programme
- Advice to the HSE in developing the policy on Safeguarding Adults from Abuse and provided inputs to the sub group on Advocacy services for people in residential settings, as well as, advice on CCTV usage
- Continued engagement with HSE and Department of Health around a national information/data framework for disability services, and management of a piece of research, funded by the HSE, in that regard
- Continued research and consultation around the development of a national outcomes framework for disability services
- Ongoing research around forecasting future service need in the light of demographic developments
- A major project on evaluation and costing of the new service model

Review of HIQA inspection process of residential services for adults and children with disabilities

The National Disability Authority at the request of the Minister for Mental Health, Disability and Older People at the Department of Health conducted an independent review of the experience of regulation, standards and inspections of residential services for people with disabilities, with a particular focus on the first year of operation. Such residential services are provided for just fewer than 9,000 people with disabilities at approximately 1,200 locations. Designated centres range from large congregated settings to community group homes to supported independent living. Sometimes, a group of residences is treated as a single designated centre. The relevant Regulations and Standards came into force in November 2013 and the

Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) began inspections from that date.

The National Disability Authority's Review included quantitative and qualitative analysis of published reports, and engagement with key participants in the process, including residents, family members, staff, service provider managements, the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), the HSE, and disability organisations. A sample of 192 reports covering the first year was selected for in-depth analysis. This was complemented by a summary statistical analysis of all HIQA published reports as of 17 August 2015. The National Disability Authority presented a report of its findings to the Minister at the end of 2015. The report will be published in early 2016.

Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities

Support and facilitation to develop the strategy

In October 2015, the Government published a ten-year comprehensive employment strategy for people with disabilities. This cross-government approach will bring together actions by different government departments and state agencies to address the barriers and challenges to employment of people with disabilities. The strategy includes an initial three-year Action Plan with specific timetabled commitments. The National Disability Authority had been charged by Government with facilitating development of the strategy through background research on what works, undertaking consultation with people with disabilities, guidance on targets, engaging with Government Departments around commitments to be included in the Action Plan, and assistance in preparing the text of the strategy. That includes an illustration of possible pathways to employment. The NDA advised on the content of the strategy, and the process for monitoring and measuring impact.

The National Disability Authority was appointed within its role as independent advisor to membership of the implementation group established by the Minister to monitor and oversee implementation of the Strategy. The group has an independent chair, Fergus Finlay, who will report to the Minister on progress and make recommendations.

Peer-led employer support service and helpline on disability

The Government decided that the commitment in the strategy to a three-year pilot of a peer-led employer support service and helpline would be funded and that the National Disability Authority would oversee and fund this initiative. The aim of this service is to build and enhance employer capacity to recruit and retain staff with disabilities by having a peer to peer service which provides authoritative advice and information.

The National Disability Authority commissioned the three national employer umbrella groups, IBEC, ISME, and Chambers Ireland to jointly provide such a service to all employers nationwide. An integral part of the arrangement is that the organisations are to use their mainstream channels and membership network to engage with employers on disability issues. The service will deliver on the key employer commitments set out in the “Engage Employers” section of the Action Plan under the comprehensive employment strategy. The proposal received from the employer consortium in response to the specification prepared by the NDA was independently reviewed, fine tuned and agreed. To enable the service get up and running from the start of 2016, start-up funding was given in 2015 to enable recruitment of staff and development of an information website on disability for employers. The service is open to employers whether or not they are members of one of the participating umbrella bodies.

Employment research and guidance

Research on Vocational Rehabilitation Services

A study was commissioned by the National Disability Authority on Good Practice in Vocational Rehabilitation in other jurisdictions, with a focus on the design of systems. The draft final report received at end 2015 covers systems and services in twelve jurisdictions, four of which were studied in depth. The findings were discussed with key Departments and agencies at a roundtable hosted by the NDA in December 2015.

Research Promotion Grant Scheme on Employment theme

The annual Research Promotion Grant Scheme in 2014 was on the theme of employment, and offered grants of up to €25,000 to projects selected through an open competitive process. Four projects were completed or substantially completed in 2015.

a. Research on education and employment experiences of people with a disability

This research was conducted by the Economic and Social Research Institute, based on a statistical analysis of data in the National Disability Survey 2006.

Key findings were:

- People who were affected by their disability during their school years tended to have lower levels of educational qualifications than the wider population
- 17 per cent of people with disabilities missed some time in school because of their disability and 15 per cent left school sooner than they would have liked
- Most working-age people with a disability have worked in the past (56 per cent) or are currently working (29 per cent)
- The highest proportion who have never had a job, or who have left a job because of a disability, is among those with poor health, low stamina, or mental health difficulties
- Those who left work because of a disability tended to be older adults, people with mental health difficulties, and those with problems of health, pain or stamina
- About half of those not in work state they would like a job if the circumstances were right
- Survey participants were asked what would support them to hold a job. Flexible work arrangements such as reduced hours were identified by 46% cent, modified job tasks by 29% and disability accessibility modifications by 32%.

b. Research on return to work after stroke

Research on factors associated with return to work after stroke was conducted by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. This research included a literature review, a national survey of stroke survivors as well as focus groups and semi-structured interviews. The findings emphasised the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to assist people who have experienced stroke return to work, as well as communication between healthcare professionals and employers. Fatigue was identified as a key hidden difficulty people faced in resuming employment. Gradual phased return to work was found as important in facilitating successful transition back to work.

c. The impact of fatigue on work ability of people with rheumatic disease

About a third of sick absences from work arise due to musculoskeletal conditions of which different forms of arthritis or rheumatic disease are among the most common. This study focused on the influence of fatigue associated with these conditions on the ability to work. The research was conducted by the School of Physiotherapy, Trinity College Dublin. The study included a survey of about 300 people, most of whom who were currently working, as well as semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Key findings were:

- Fatigue is a pervasive symptom in employed individuals with rheumatic disease
- Physical demands of work, and fitting in with work schedules were the two reported areas of greatest difficulty, and higher fatigue levels meant greater difficulties
- A significant number of respondents had another concurrent condition
- Younger workers tended to experience more difficulties related to fatigue
- Employers tended to have little awareness of the fatigue issue

d. Transitions from education and training to employment for people with disabilities

A research contract was granted to Dublin City University to look at Transitions from Education and Training to Employment for People with Disabilities. This report is due for completion in 2016.

Employer guide to retaining staff with acquired disability

A revised version of the NDA's guide with updated contact details for reconfigured state employment support bodies was prepared, designed and printed. Copies of the Guide were circulated to relevant organisations and via different employer networks.

National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan

We continued to participate in the National Disability Strategy Implementation Group chaired by the Minister, and to provide the secretariat for the Disability Stakeholders Group.

Consultation on next National Disability Strategy Inclusion Plan

We advised the Department of Justice and Equality in relation to the process for developing a new National Disability Strategy Inclusion Plan 2016–2018. This included facilitating independent consultation on strategic priorities and objectives. We assisted with national and regional consultation which included an invitation for submissions, an online consultation, a series of regional consultations (Dublin, Tullamore and Cork) and a focus group of people with intellectual disability. Almost 300 people took part in one strand or another of the consultation exercise. The NDA has arranged analysis of the findings which will be ready in early 2016.

Disability Stakeholders Group

The national Disability Stakeholders Group has an independent Chair appointed by the Minister. It consists of the main disability umbrella organisations, along with a number of individuals with lived experience of disability. This group provides advice on the monitoring and implementation of the National Disability Strategy. The National Disability Authority provides the secretariat for the Group. The Disability Stakeholders Group held four ordinary meetings in 2015 and participated in one National Disability Strategy Implementation Group meeting, provided input into the mid-term review of the existing plan, as well as providing advice on the development of a new implementation plan in 2016.

Programme of actions on autism

The Cabinet Committee on Social Policy adopted a Programme of Actions on Autism, informed by research and advice from the National Disability Authority, and by consultation we had undertaken with autism organisations and representatives of people with autism. A key theme to emerge from the consultation with autism stakeholders was that there was a need for significant awareness raising and the development of guidance within the public sector in Ireland around autism. The programme is designed within the framework of the National Disability Strategy and strengthens it on the autism dimension. Government Departments and state agencies have responsibility to deliver specific commitments under this programme.

In addition, some specific actions in the programme are being progressed by the National Disability Authority, including a review of the Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information Provided by Public Bodies in the light of any specific issues for people with autism; development of guidance for housing officials; and development of guidance for the justice system.

Advice on Justice matters

The National Disability Authority continued to promote access to the justice system for people with disabilities. We met with the Gardaí on implementing the EU Victims of Crime Directive as regards crime victims with disabilities. We held a workshop with representatives from the Justice sector, including the Courts Service, Prison Service, Probation and the Gardaí, to inform development of guidance for the Justice professionals on engaging and supporting people with autism who come into contact with the system. We made a submission to the Criminal Law section of the Department of Justice on their Discussion Paper on Sexual Offences against Vulnerable Persons and we continued to provide advice in the context of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015.

Advice to Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Interdepartmental working group on special needs in preschools

The National Disability Authority was an active member of the interdepartmental working group on addressing the requirements of children with special needs in mainstream pre-school Early Childhood and Education settings. Previous research done by the National Disability Authority on international practice on the inclusion of children with disabilities in pre-schools informed the work of this group. The working group's report on "Supporting Access to the Early Childhood Care and Education programme for children with a disability" was published in September 2015. An implementation plan has now been approved by Government and the National Disability Authority will continue to support the work of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the implementation of this new model of support for children with disabilities in 2016.

Access to mainstream public services

Request to review statutory Code of Practice

A request was received from the Minister to review the Statutory Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information Provided by Public Bodies, in particular in relation to autism, and a consultation was held with relevant interests to inform that review.

NDA Annual Conference — inclusive mainstream public services

The National Disability Authority's Annual Conference took place on Monday 12 October 2015 in Dublin on the theme Planning and Leadership for Inclusive Mainstream Public Services for People with Disabilities. This marked fifteen years since the announcement as Government policy that public services would be obliged to serve people with disabilities as an integral part of their mainstream services to the public, a policy given legal effect in Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005. The conference had a cross-border focus, with speakers from the Republic and Northern Ireland, as well as the UK and Canada, and examples of initiatives to successfully include people with disabilities. Contributions covered leadership for change, disability and age-inclusive local authorities, universally-designed digital and online services, and employment of people with disabilities. The conference was attended by 155 people including senior public servants, people with disabilities and disability organisations from the Republic and Northern Ireland. Conference presentations are on the NDA's website at www.nda.ie.

Monitoring impact of National Disability Strategy

During 2015, the NDA published on its website the results of a survey it had commissioned on National Disability Strategy Indicators in 2013, and comparing the results with previous similar surveys for 2009 and 2011. This focused on accessibility of transport and local facilities, heritage sites, and use of technology.

Monitoring public sector employment

Reported employment of people with disabilities in the public sector at 3.5% in 2014

The National Disability produced its eighth report on employment of people with disabilities in the public sector during 2015. This showed that a reported 3.5% of staff employed in public sector bodies at end 2014 were people with disabilities. This is a slight increase from 3.4% in 2013. This is the fourth successive year of exceeding the 3% target provided in the Disability Act 2005.

The total number of employees with recorded disabilities was 6,771, an increase of 307 from the 2013 figure. This is the highest number of staff with disabilities recorded since the process of statutory monitoring began, and against a backdrop of an increase of about 2,700 in the total number of staff employed in the bodies which reported.

The National Disability Authority has advised that recruitment should be a key focus area for public bodies over the coming year. There is an opportunity to use increased recruitment activity to help bodies not currently reaching the 3% target to achieve that goal. For those currently over the target, a focus on recruitment of staff with disabilities will build in a margin to cope with future retirements. Public bodies should ensure that their recruitment activities are “disability-proofed” to give candidates with disabilities a fair opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. It is noted that the Government’s Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities provides for a phased increase of the 3% target to reach 6% by 2024, and for an examination of current recruitment processes and channels.

Compliance with Part 5 requirements

Section 49 of the Disability Act provides a process in relation to public bodies that are found non-compliant with their obligations under Part 5 of the Act in two successive years. These obligations can be summarised as:

- Insofar as practicable, to promote and support the employment of people with disabilities
- To meet the target proportion (currently set at 3%) of employees with disabilities, unless there are good reasons to the contrary

In line with the statutory procedures, a number of public bodies were formally contacted for additional information in relation to their results for 2012 and 2013. Of these, following consideration of the information supplied in response to successive requests, the Authority formally deemed the Health Service Executive to be non-compliant in these years. The Authority sought the statutory consent of the Minister for Health to formally request the Health Service Executive to undertake a set of specific measures intended to bring it towards compliance with the Act. Under the legislation, it is mandatory for the Health Service Executive to comply with any such statutory request for action.

Promoting positive attitudes to disability

The National Disability Authority advised the Department of Justice and Equality on proposals in relation to the Department’s Disability Awareness Initiatives Fund 2015, and provided assistance in implementing these.

The National Disability Authority organised a Primary Schools Competition, on the theme “Someone Like Me”, on behalf of the Department. Entries were received from 25 counties. The overall national winner, chosen from the 25 county winners, was announced at a ceremony in December.

In addition the National Disability Authority ran tender competitions on behalf of the Department to select suitable bodies to provide awareness raising material on autism for the public sector, and to provide autism awareness training to the public sector.

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The NDA advised the Minister on possible roles the Authority could play in supporting implementation and monitoring of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, having regard to research by the NDA on institutional arrangements in other jurisdictions, and the roles of other national bodies.

The NDA provided information and advice on legislative changes to support ratification of the UN Convention, particularly in relation to the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act, and in relation to deprivation of liberty safeguards.

Review of the Operation of Part 4 of the Disability Act

In December 2013, the Minister for Justice and Equality requested the NDA to conduct a review of the operation of Part 4 of the Disability Act 2005, as mandated by s. 44 of that Act. Part 4 of the Act deals with Genetic Testing. A targeted consultation on the review had been held between September and November 2014. A report of the consultation was completed in February 2015.

Strategic priority 2: Living independently in the community

“To undertake and collaborate on research and data collection, and to provide information, advice and guidance to guide policy, systems and service changes to ensure that people with disabilities can live independently and participate in the community as active citizens.”

Research and Advice programme

The National Disability Authority undertook its own research and also commissioned a number of pieces of research to inform policy and practice. It continued in its role of providing advice through engagement with Departments and public bodies, participating on committees and working groups, and developing written advice papers.

Individualised funding

Advice paper on Resource Allocation

The National Disability Authority submitted an advice paper to the Department of Health and the HSE on the recommended choice of assessment tool to underpin a resource allocation model for social care supports for people with disabilities, drawing on our previous field research and our examination of other characteristics and potential benefits of the different models.

Implementation of resource allocation and individual budget models

A research contract was awarded in late 2015 to examine the practical issues when transitioning to and implementing a system of funding of social care supports based on individual needs, namely a new resource allocation model. This would be as an alternative to the current system of block grants to disability service providers, and the study will draw on experience in other jurisdictions. Individualised funding in this context also includes systems where individuals get a personal budget to buy in their own services. This work continues into 2016.

School leaver funding

The NDA also commenced research in partnership with the HSE, designed to underpin a fair system of resourcing of appropriate supports for individual school leavers entering HSE services, and this project will continue into 2016.

Preventing bullying of children with disabilities

The Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan, TD launched the National Disability Authority's research on "Preventing school bullying of children with special educational needs or disability" in November 2015. This research focussed on effective interventions to prevent bullying of children with disabilities or special education needs, as part of the Department's Action Plan on Bullying. The findings emphasise the importance of "whole-school" approaches.

Other research in progress

Research on families and siblings

Three pieces of research were approved for grant aid under the 2015 Research Promotion Grant Scheme under the theme of “families” and these will complete in 2016. The projects which were successful in securing funding all look at different aspects of the carer and sibling relationship and over different stages of life, and include an analysis of data from the IDS-TILDA study on sibling carers, an analysis of social welfare data, and focus group and other qualitative research. The projects are:

- Understanding family strategies that enable long term and sustainable home environments for older people with an Intellectual Disability (TCD)
- Building Capacity among Adult Siblings of People with Intellectual Disabilities/Autism (UCC)
- Exploring Resilience and Family Support Structures in Families with a Person with Intellectual Disability (UCD)

Parental attitudes

Research commissioned to examine the educational expectations of parents of children with disabilities was at final draft stage at year-end. This draws on the micro-data from the Growing Up in Ireland Survey.

Medical assessment systems for social welfare

The NDA has commissioned a review of medical assessment systems for social welfare payments in other jurisdictions. The first part of the study which related to payments to individuals with disabilities was completed, and the second part of the study which relates to assessment systems for carer payments will complete in 2016.

Flows between employment, unemployment and economic inactivity

The NDA commissioned research to analyse flows of people with disabilities between employment, unemployment and economic inactivity, which uses the micro-data from the Quarterly National Household Survey. This is due to complete in 2016.

NDA scholarship scheme

The NDA up to 2004 offered PhD scholarships, on a competitive basis, for research on disability topics. During 2015 the Authority noted that one of the scholarships in the area of special needs assistance would be discontinued. The student concerned has undertaken to share with the

NDA the fruits of her research up to the point of termination to use as background information.

Demographic change and strategic forecasting

The NDA has undertaken initial work, as part of the Transforming Lives implementation process, on strategic forecasting of disability service needs in the light of population change. This work when complete will inform future planning for resource requirements for the HSE-funded disability services programme.

Disability across the lifecycle — research using key national data

The National Disability Authority has undertaken or funded a number of pieces of research to look at aspects of disability across the lifecycle, based on special analyses of data from national data sets:

- Analysis of education and employment issues for people with disabilities using the National Disability Survey (as described under Strategic Priority 1) — commissioned research published in 2015
- Analysis of educational aspirations of parents of children with disabilities, using Growing Up in Ireland survey data — commissioned research, final draft report received end 2015
- Exploration of issues around sibling care of people with intellectual disabilities, drawing on information from the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing — Intellectual Disability Supplement (as listed above under research on families and siblings).

Work on quality in disability services

The NDA is a member of a HSE working group under the Transforming Lives programme which is charged with working on a quality assurance framework for disability services.

The implementation of standards is one of the key elements of any such framework, and NDA's major project on the regulation, standards and HIQA inspection system in disability services has shown practical areas for improvements.

Another key element is an agreed outcomes framework for disability services. The NDA developed a draft paper in 2015 drawing on research and international practice, and is engaging in consultations with disability

service users to guide finalisation of the suite of recommended outcome measures.

The NDA is also a member of the HSE steering group which has been set up to consider how service standards can be raised and negative culture in services addressed in the light of issues raised by the Áras Attracta investigation.

Assistive technologies and telehealth/telecare

Research was completed in 2015 which analysed the data from the National Disability Survey on the factors influencing need for and availability of assistive technology. The findings showed that people's assistive technology needs in relation to a second form of disability were much less well served than in relation to their primary disability.

Background research from a research contractor to NDA and NDA's own research synthesis has been done to inform future engagement and policy advice around systems of telecare and telehealth.

Recognition of good standards and quality in services to people with disabilities

Following an earlier review of NDA activities under this objective, the strategy has been to pursue inclusion of disability/universal design in mainstream awards programmes with a wide reach. Funding has been given to secure a universal design strand in the following awards programmes, as detailed under "Strategic priority 3: Universal Design of the environment".

Strategic priority 3: Universal Design of the environment

“To promote excellence in universal design to facilitate maximum participation in Irish society”

The NDA’s Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) has a statutory function to promote Universal Design (UD) in practice, to guide standards, encourage training and education in universal design for the relevant professions and occupations and create greater awareness. The centre works with a range of stakeholders across public, private and voluntary sectors in this regard with the clear focus on creating an environment which includes the built environment, products and services and information communication technologies that are easier to use, access, and understand for all people.

The Centre delivered a number of design challenges over 2015 as a means of creating awareness and understanding of the principles of universal design in practice.

24-Hour Universal Design Hackathon

A 24-Hour Universal Design Hackathon was operated by the Centre as part of a major conference during the year of Irish design. A Hackathon is a process of redesign. The Universal Design Hackathon explored the challenge of redesigning a product or service to make it easy to understand during the first time of use. The focus of the Hackathon was on access, understanding and ease of use in line with the definition of universal design in the Disability Act 2005.

Building on a legacy of successful 24 Hour Universal Design Challenges, the Centre collaborated with the Norwegian Centre for Design and Architecture and Dublin City University (DCU) Innovation Campus to create a new model for Universal Design Hackathons.

Five teams worked continuously for 24 hours in prototyping and designing. The teams were comprised of experienced designers, design educators and design students. One team won both, the Judges Choice and the People’s Choice Award for their redesign of the door access system used for some

locked public toilets. DCU presented prizes to the winning team and support to explore further development of the design.

Universal Design Grand Challenge 2015

The 2015 Universal Design Grand Challenge Student Awards Competition, held in the Westin Hotel on 4th June, was a great success. Student entries received were up by 40% from 2014 and represented a wider range of university courses. This year's winner of the Peoples' Choice Award, voted on by members of the audience, was Jack Gregan from IT Carlow for his design "Go Therapeutic Horse Riding Aid". The aim of the design is to enhance and improve the therapeutic effect of horseriding for everyone whose condition benefits from it.

The design also won the Judge's Choice Award, which is selected by a panel of leading Irish designers and innovators.

The Grand Challenge initiative in 2015 benefited from a new partnership with Enterprise Ireland to provide grants for designs that show potential to be further developed. This entails a Commercial Case Feasibility Support grant provided by Enterprise Ireland. It is a funding support which can be obtained by researchers, in partnership with their Technology Transfer or equivalent office, for a short Feasibility Project (up to 3 months) to scope and develop the commercial case for their innovation.

Two projects were awarded this grant by Enterprise Ireland on the night. They were Jack Gregan, IT Carlow for his design "Go Therapeutic Horse Riding Aid" with Isabella Morehead and Dylan McKimm from the National College of Art and Design for their "Ripple" universal jerry can cap and filtration system. "Ripple" is designed to have particular application in developing countries where clean and accessible water is at a premium.

Advising and assisting in the development of standards on universal design

"To produce guidelines to support the achievement of universal design of everyday products and services to enhance quality of daily life for individuals and to promote independence across the lifecycle"

Universal Design in European Commission Mandate 473 “Design for All”

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design continued in its work over 2015 with key stakeholders to support the development of a European standard to include a focus on universal design. This involved in the European Commission’s Mandate M/473 “Design for All” project. Part of the Mandate M/473 deliverables involved appointment of the NDA as Convenor for a working group (CEN-CENELEC JWG 5) to conduct development of a new standard (or other adequate deliverable) that would address the design, development and production process of goods manufacturing and service provision in the priority areas. The intention is that it would describe how to consider accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons following a Design for all (Universal Design) approach.

It is part of a series of work supported by the European Commission on implementing Accessibility as related to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is expected to be a key publication that will inform further sector specific standards and guidance. When published as a European Standard (as expected) it will be harmonised and distributed by National Standards Organisations across Europe. The NDA work on this project is scheduled to be completed 2018.

“To engage with education and accreditation bodies on a strategic approach to embedding universal design in continuous professional development, third level curricula and accreditation”

Universal Design 2nd-Level Short Course

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design continued its project on developing a Universal Design curriculum module for use in second-level schools and for use with Further Education. The curriculum highlights respect for diversity as related to introducing students to design problem-solving based on user-centred Universal Design practices. The project responds to the advisement to introduce Universal Design thinking earlier into education so as to improve later uptake at 3rd level. The Short Course is being aligned with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, revised Junior Cycle Framework. This project will continue into 2016 with the piloting of the module with a range of educational institutions.

NDA Universal Design in Education Conference 2015 (UDIEC)

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design operated a two day conference on Universal Design in Education in Dublin Castle on the 12th and 13th November. The conference was run in partnership with the Institute for Technology Blanchardstown (ITB) and received support from Irish Design 2015, the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) and Dublin City University.

The conference featured 4 keynote speakers, 12 workshops, and panel sessions of leaders in education and industry. It was attended by 230 participants over the two days, primarily from higher and further education in Ireland. It provided an opportunity to highlight good practice in teaching Universal Design in disciplines such as architecture, engineering, computer science and product design as well Universal Design for Learning from Ireland and internationally. The workshops provided practical skills and methods for educators new to Universal Design in these disciplines to incorporate Universal Design into relevant courses of education.

Outputs from the conference include an increased awareness of teaching methods and curriculum resources for Universal Design, academic papers on best practices in teaching Universal Design, a video featuring Universal Design in education across a range of age groups and videos featuring keynote presentations and highlights from the conference. These are available at <http://Education.UniversalDesign.ie>. Other outputs in development include a book on teaching Universal Design and partnerships to develop further curriculum materials in relevant course of education in Ireland.

Continued Professional Development in Universal Design for Architects

The RIAI and NDA established a Memorandum of Understanding to work in partnership on the development of continuous professional development (CPD) for architects and architectural technologists in Universal Design. The first phase of this work is a research project to inform the development of the course content which commenced in 2015.

The project entails joint working by the School of Architecture, University of Limerick and international partners including the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA) at the University of Buffalo. The project is due for completion in 2016.

Universal Design and Urban Environments

The Centre continued in its engagement with local authorities to influence design of urban environments. This included in 2015:

- Working in collaboration with the Galway City Council to deliver a workshop for architects, engineers, people with disabilities and older people on 18th July with Professor Catherine Bridge from New South Wales University, Australia
- A walkability audit of sites in Dublin and Galway with a group of diverse users to identify improvements from a universal design perspective testing a new Liveability APP tool, which will be explored in terms of future potential.
- Presenting to a symposium of architects in an event hosted by Galway City Council on the theme of universal design homes.

Shared Space Design Pilot Schemes

The Centre engaged with Engineers and Architects in Galway City Council to discuss a potential Shared Space Pilot including post-evaluation of this space in line with Universal Design principles. The Centre also met with the Senior Engineer at the Roads Division, Dept of Transport. The aim is to explore the potential of a shared space pilot for 2016.

Research on Universal Design Audit Tool for Roads and Streets

At the NDA annual conference on the 12th October 2015, the Minister for Justice and Equality launched the “How Walkable is Your Town” report. The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design partnered with Age Friendly Ireland to produce the report. The report is based on Walkability Audits which were carried out in eight Irish towns and urban centres as part of the 2014 Age Friendly Towns Programme.

The information collected in the audits will be used to inform the development of a quality audit for roads and streets being developed by the Centre, in consultation with the Department for Transport, Tourism and Sport. It provides valuable evidence of the features of roads and streets that can prevent people with a wide range of abilities from easily accessing local amenities, shops and services in their community.

Promoting awareness and understanding of universal design

“User Experience for All” seminar

In partnership with the Irish Internet Association, the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design ran a half-day “Deep Dive” event on UD for the web on 26 November in the Digital hub. The half-day seminar featured 5 speakers showcasing best practice in designing websites and apps for a diverse range of users, from large private and public sector websites such as government departments and public bodies to developing apps for teaching fractions and symmetry to children ages 8 to 11. The event was attended by 80 user experience designers, primarily from Irish web agencies. The aim was promoting best practice in the design and maintenance of online content so that all people can access and use.

Universal Design and Occupational Therapy

The Centre met with Trinity College Dublin CORU, the regulatory body overseeing professional registration for the Health Profession disciplines, in relation to enhancing understanding of Universal Design and the built environment as part of the education curriculum for Occupational Therapists, given the relevance to lives of their clients.

Universal Design and Housing

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, further to its work in conducting research and consultation with stakeholders, published and launched guidelines in May on:

- Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland
- Universal Design Guidelines, Dementia Friendly Dwellings for People with Dementia, their Families and Carers

Speakers who presented on the day were Professor Ed Steinfeld (Architect and leading Universal Design Expert), Robin Mandal (President of the RIAI), Ali Grehan (Dublin City Architect), and Laura Magahy (Chair of Irish Design 2015). The guidelines have been circulated to key stakeholders including the 130 people who attended the event. The guidelines are free to download from universaldesign.ie.

The Centre engaged with Clúid Housing in relation to applying the guidelines to a building project and with regard to the promotion of the Centre’s guidelines through that organisation’s research and publications, and target audience.

Awards

Electric Ireland wins the inaugural Netvisionary Universal design award

2015 was the first year that the CEUD supported a Universal Design category in the Irish Internet Association's Netvisionary awards held in the RDS on 9th October 2015. Over 50 entries competed for this cap-stone award which was won by the web agency Arekibo for the Electric Ireland website. The award event was attended by over 300 professionals from the web industry in Ireland, giving UD an unprecedented amount of exposure in this sector.

Universal Design category included in Irish eGovernment Awards 2015

The 2015 Irish eGovernment Awards featured for the first time a category on Universal Design. Entrants were asked to demonstrate how their online public service project incorporated the needs of a wide range of users, and produced an easy to use and accessible website. A large number of entries were received and the 6 shortlisted entries were announced in November 2015, with the awards ceremony scheduled to take place in January 2016.

RIAI Universal Design Award 2015

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design supports the Universal Design Award category in the annual RIAI Architecture Awards. The winners for 2015 were announced on 18th June. Fitzgerald Kavanagh and Partners won the Universal Design award for the second time, with the Restoration of St. Mel's Cathedral, Longford. St. Mel's Cathedral was also voted the people's favourite in the Public Choice Award, voted on by members of the public. Professor Edward Steinfeld (University of Buffalo) was invited by CEUD to chair the jury for the award.

Universal Design in Institute of Designers Ireland

CEUD continues its successful partnership with the Institute of Designers Ireland (IDI) to promote and advise the Universal Design (UD) category in the annual IDI Professional Design Awards and in 2015 the IDI Graduate Awards. The partnership with IDI enables CEUD to network with hundreds of design professionals. CEUD also continues to hold a seat on the IDI Council which was important with its affiliation with the Year of Irish Design (ID2015).

UD Mark: Destinations for All

The NDA held a Workshop on the 20th January with tourism experts and stakeholders to review a range of existing award schemes related to

Universal Design and Accessible tourism business. The Workshop overviewed the World Summit on Tourism and the Declaration on Destination for All. Follow-on activities included integrating Universal Design into a draft Destination for All Award roadmap, and plans for further development. A Workshop report was prepared and circulated to all attendees.

The follow on plans included collaboration with parties that are developing an International Tourism/Destination for All Award. NDA staff attended a meeting in Paris where the Award Roadmap was discussed with International representatives. Further follow on activities are being developed for a destination in Ireland to participate in pilot trials of applying the Award in Europe.

Irish Landscape Institute (ILI) Awards 2015

CEUD partnered and was part of ILI judging panel for their Annual Awards 2015. CEUD supported for the first time an UD ILI Award category. The ILI has been proactive in the promotion of UD in Landscape Design in Ireland.

Strategic priority 4: Effective and efficient organisation

“To develop an environment, supports, policies and systems to enable the National Disability Authority to effectively deliver on its strategic objectives.”

Shared Services

The NDA avails of financial shared services and an IT support service from the Department of Justice and Equality. The Department also provides an internal audit service to the NDA. The NDA's payroll and pension processing comes from the Payroll Shared Service from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Newsletter

Three issues of the National Disability Authority's electronic newsletter were issued to a mailing list of approximately 2,500 people, to provide updates in relation to the NDA's research, policy advice and guidance in

relation to disability and Universal Design, and links to the full documents on the website.

Maintaining an Effective Library and Information Resource

The NDA Library continued to provide a service for staff by conducting literature searches for staff to support the development of NDA's evidence based advice and for use in literature reviews and articles.

Other services to staff provided by the Library contractor included:

- instruction for staff in using online resources
- engagement with staff to guide improved response to meet needs
- collaboration with staff to enhance projects
- responses to queries from staff and general public.

Staff received regular updates on policy and research developments, online resources, online tools and training to support their work.

The Library continued to receive visits from the general public on Thursdays, as a reference only library. The library holds extensive collections on disability and related topics, universal design topics, as well as books, eBooks, eJournals, newsletters, and other materials.

Staff Resources

As a public service body the National Disability Authority continued to work within the employment control framework. Two staff retired in 2015. Sanctions were received to recruit staff to a permanent half time Senior Research Officer post and to a temporary full-time Senior Research Officer post, which will be filled in 2016.

The NDA continued to support staff through a series of lunchtime lectures on health and wellbeing. The Partnership Committee met on 4 occasions providing a forum to guide on an improved work environment.

Training and Development

The NDA continued to roll out a training and development plan for staff informed by the Performance Development Management System (PMDS) and individual needs which included attendance at seminars, training sessions and access to coaching supports including for example training in relation to:

- Effective Stakeholder Engagement Workshop
- Categorical Data Analysis and Logistic Regression
- Smart Public Procurement
- Qualitative Research Seminar
- Individualised Funding & Inclusive Vocational & Educational Training Seminar
- Embedding Risk Management
- Frameworks for Leadership Change, Innovation and Creativity
- HR & Training Masterclass
- Training in use of NVivo software for data analysis
- Training in Excel
- National Public Sector Pensions Seminar
- Public Service Pensions Training Seminar
- Dignity at Work: Preventing and Dealing with Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- Industrial Relations Conference
- Occupational First Aid Training
- Safety Representation Seminar
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Charing Meetings.

Accommodation

The NDA ensures the effective maintenance and use of its accommodation. This included a series of works and installation of an access control system. With effect from 1st July 2015 the NDA commenced a lease agreement with tenants for a number of offices, which accrued as Appropriations in Aid to our parent Department.

Finance and governance

In line with the National Disability Authority Act 1999, the NDA prepared and submitted financial accounts for 2014 to the Comptroller and Auditor General. The NDA submitted the approved financial accounts and Annual Report for 2014 to the Minister.

The Authority met seven times in 2015. The Audit Committee met four times in 2015, and their Chair reported at the Authority's final meeting of 2015. The Finance Committee met five times in 2015, and monitored and reported on the NDA's expenditure.

Energy

Overview of energy usage in 2015

The National Disability Authority Energy Team registers and maintains records for the National Disability Authority with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

The National Disability Authority has a total floor area of 2,633 m² which comprises a two-storey over garden level Victorian Building (×2), a link building completed in 2006 and an adjoining three-storey plus attic building completed in the early 1980s. The main energy users are:

- Electrical Energy: Lighting, ICT & Offices, Air Conditioning and General Services
- Thermal Energy (Natural Gas): Space Heating (LTHW radiator circuits and under floor heating) and Hot Water (HWS)

For the purposes of making a statutory return for 2015, 94% of electrical energy use in the buildings was attributable to the National Disability Authority. In relation to thermal energy, 82% of the natural gas used was attributable to the NDA.

Since June 2015, the first-floor corridor in the Back Building has been leased and occupied by a private company. This company has a separate electricity meter, although it does not have a separate gas meter.

In 2015, the National Disability Authority consumed 399 MWh of energy, consisting of:

- 97.1 MWh of electricity;
- 301.9 MWh of fossil fuels;
- 0 MWh of renewable fuels.

The National Disability Authority can report:

- 13% cost savings since baseline;
- 29% lower consumption since baseline.

Actions undertaken in 2015

In 2015 the National Disability Authority undertook planning and implementation of range of initiatives to improve our energy performance, including:

- Lighting equipment and lighting control to save 13 MWh annually
- Controls for domestic hot water to save 17 MWh annually
- Building refurbishment caused a period of temporary increased energy consumption.

Altogether, these and other energy-saving measures saved the National Disability Authority 30 MWh annually.

Access Officer

The NDA's Access Officer, appointed in line with the Disability Act 2005 continued to be available to guide on any assistance required for persons with disabilities who accessed the NDA's facilities, events and website in 2015. The Officer's contact details are on the home page of the NDA's website.

Financial Statements for Year ended 31 December 2015

National Disability Authority (NDA) Authority Members' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2015

Authority Members' Responsibilities

Financial Statements

Section 17 of the National Disability Act 1999 requires the National Disability Authority (NDA or the Authority) to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality with consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

In preparing these financial statements, NDA is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in financial statements.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position which enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 17 of the National Disability Act 1999. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the board of National Disability Authority (NDA)

Helen Guinan,
Chairperson
Date: 24/6/2016

Siobhan Barron,
Director
Date: 29/6/2016

National Disability Authority

Statement on Internal Financial Control for the year ended 31 December 2015

On behalf of the Board of the National Disability Authority (NDA/Authority), I acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial controls is maintained and operated.

The systems can provide only reasonable, and not absolute, assurance that the assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner.

The board has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment is in place by:

- Establishing formal procedures through various committee functions to monitor the activities and safeguard the assets of the organisation.
- Ensuring clearly defined and documented management responsibilities and powers.
- Developing a strong culture of accountability across all levels of the organisation.

The Authority is satisfied that there are established processes to identify and evaluate business risks. This is achieved in a number of ways including:

- Identifying the nature, extent and financial implications of risks facing the National Disability Authority.
- Assessing the likelihood of identified risks occurring. The NDA has a risk register in place which includes strategic, operational, information technology, financial and reputational /compliance risks. In addition, risk analysis is completed at project planning and scoping stage.
- Assessing the NDA's ability to manage and mitigate the risks that do occur.
- Working closely with Government and various agencies and institutions to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the NDA's goals and support for the Authority's strategies to achieve those goals.
- Carrying out regular reviews of the strategic plan and evaluating the risks to the ability to bring the plan to fruition.
- Setting annual targets for each area of our business followed by the regular reporting on the results achieved.

- Establishing and enforcing standard procedures and provision under which financial assistance may be made available to projects, including provisions requiring repayment if the project does not fulfil commitments made by the contractor.

The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- A comprehensive budget system with an annual budget which is reviewed and agreed by the Authority.
- Regular reviews by the Authority of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts. Setting targets to measure financial and other performances.

The Authority has outsourced an Internal Audit Service, which operates in accordance with the Framework Code of Best Practice, set out in the Revised Code of Practice on the Governance of State Bodies 2009. During 2015 the Internal Audit Service was carried out by the Department of Justice and Equality. The Internal Audit Service's role includes reporting to the Audit Committee as appropriate. In May 2015, Internal Audit undertook a Review of Internal Financial Controls which the Audit Committee has considered.

The Authority has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Internal Audit Service recommendations to ensure proper and effective financial control procedures are maintained and oversees the internal audit function and related plans to include any newly identified areas.

The Authority's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal financial control is informed by:

- the work of the Internal Audit Service and the contribution of the Audit Committee established by the Authority which oversees the work of the Internal Auditor and of the corporate governance environment;
- the executive managers with the National Disability Authority who have responsibility for the development and the maintenance of the financial control framework ;
- the Finance Committee established by the Authority to report at least quarterly on financial expenditure and related issues; and
- the issues raised by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

I can confirm that the Authority has ensured an independent review of the effectiveness of the systems and internal financial controls.

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the above information is accurate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen Guinan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'H' and 'G'.

Helen Guinan
Chairperson
24th June, 2016

Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

National Disability Authority

I have audited the financial statements of the National Disability Authority for the year ended 31 December 2015 under the National Disability Authority Act 1999. The financial statements comprise the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves, the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of financial position, the statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial statements have been prepared in the form prescribed under Section 17 of the Act, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

Responsibilities of the Members of the Authority

The Authority is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, for ensuring that they give a true and fair view and for ensuring the regularity of transactions.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and report on them in accordance with applicable law.

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation.

My audit is carried out in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and in compliance with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of

- whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Authority's circumstances, and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed
- the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made in the preparation of the financial statements, and
- the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I also seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit.

In addition, I read the Authority's annual report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my report.

Opinion on the financial statements

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Authority as at 31 December 2015 and of its income and expenditure for 2015; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

In my opinion, the accounting records of the Authority were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited. The financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

Matters on which I report by exception

I report by exception if I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or if I find

- any material instance where money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where the transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them, or
- the information given in the Authority's annual report is not consistent with the related financial statements or with the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit, or
- the statement on internal financial Control does not reflect the Authority's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, or
- there are other material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I have nothing to report in regard to those matters upon which reporting is by exception.



Patricia Sheehan

For and on behalf of the
Comptroller and Auditor General

30 June 2016

National Disability Authority

Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

For the year ended 31 December 2015

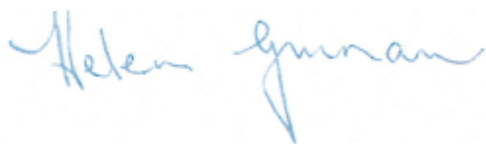
	Note	2015 €	2014 €
Income			
Oireachtas Grants	2	3,798,647	3,240,600
Net Deferred Pension Funding	6(c)	716,250	778,000
Other Income	3	31,953	22,357
Total Income		4,546,850	4,040,957
Expenditure			
Projects and Commissioned Works Payable	4	534,637	374,920
Administration and Operations Costs	5	2,626,893	2,353,470
Retirement benefit costs	6	1,229,000	1,236,210
Reduction in Value of Fixed Assets	7	78,468	73,963
Total Expenditure		4,468,998	4,038,563
Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year before Appropriations		77,852	2,394
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	8	78,468	68,784
Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year after Appropriations		156,320	71,178
Balance Brought Forward at 1 January		268,846	197,668
Balance Carried Forward at 31 December		425,166	268,846

All income and expenditure for the year relates to continuing activities at the balance sheet date.

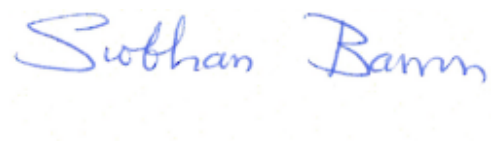
The Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the board of National Disability Authority (NDA)



Helen Guinan,
Chairperson
Date: 24/6/16



Siobhan Barron,
Director
Date: 29/6/16



Frank Cunneen,
Authority Member
Date: 28/6/16

National Disability Authority

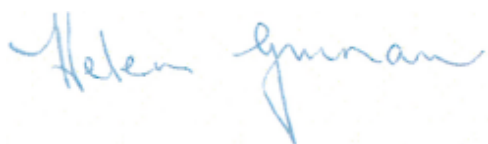
Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 31 December 2015

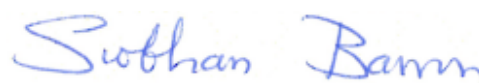
	Note	2015 €	2014 €
Surplus after appropriations		156,320	71,178
Actuarial (gains)/loss on retirement benefit obligations	6(b)	6,055,550	(978,000)
Adjustment to deferred pension funding		(6,055,550)	978,000
Total Comprehensive Income for the year		156,320	71,178

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the board of National Disability Authority (NDA)



Helen Guinan,
Chairperson
Date: 24/6/16



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Authority Member
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National Disability Authority

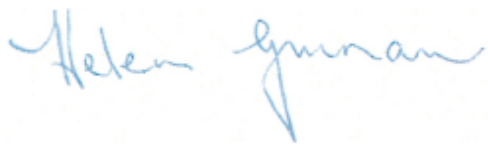
Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 31 December 2015

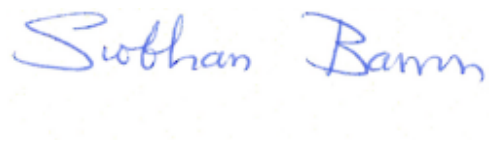
	Note	2015 €	2014 €
Fixed Assets			
Property, plant & equipment	8	2,729,241	2,807,709
Total Fixed Assets		2,729,241	2,807,709
Current Assets			
Receivables	9	474,060	305,399
Cash and cash equivalents		11,675	1,984
		485,735	307,383
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	10	(60,569)	(38,537)
Net Current Assets		425,166	268,846
Retirement Benefits			
Deferred retirement benefit funding asset	6(b)	(23,371,800)	(16,600,000)
Retirement benefit obligations	6(b)	23,371,800	16,600,000
Total Net Assets		3,154,407	3,076,555
Representing			
Capital account	7	2,729,241	2,807,709
Retained revenue reserves		425,166	268,846
		3,154,407	3,076,555

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the board of National Disability Authority (NDA)



Helen Guinan,
Chairperson
Date: 24/6/16



Siobhan Barron,
Director
Date: 29/6/16



Frank Cunneen,
Authority Member
Date: 28/6/16

National Disability Authority

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 December 2015

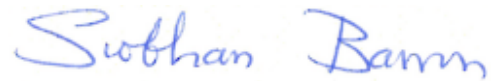
	2015 €	2014 €
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Excess Income over Expenditure	77,852	2,394
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	78,468	73,963
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	(168,661)	(45,924)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	22,032	(25,593)
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	9,691	4,840
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Payments to acquire Property, Plant & Equipment	-	(5,179)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	-	(5,179)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
Bank Interest received	-	-
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	-	-
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	9,691	(339)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	1,984	2,323
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December	11,675	1,984

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the board of National Disability Authority (NDA)



Helen Guinan,
Chairperson
Date: 24/6/16



Siobhan Barron,
Director
Date: 29/6/16



Frank Cunneen,
Authority Member
Date: 28/6/16

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2015

1. Accounting Policies

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by National Disability Authority (NDA/Authority) are set out below. They have all been applied consistently throughout the year and for the preceding year. The financial statements are presented in Euro (€).

a) General Information

National Disability Authority was set up under section 6 of the National Disability Act 1999, with a head office at 25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4 on 12 June 2000 on the dissolution of the former organisation, the National Rehabilitation Board.

The principal function of the National Disability Authority (NDA) is to advise the Minister for Justice and Equality regarding issues of policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities.

National Disability Authority's particular functions as set out in section 8 of the National Disability Act 1999 include:

- To act as a central, national body which will assist the Minister in the coordination and development of policy in relation to persons with disabilities
- To undertake, commission or collaborate in research projects and activities on issues relating to disability and to assist in the development of statistical information appropriate for the planning, delivery and monitoring of programmes and services for people with disabilities
- To advise the Minister on appropriate standards for programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities and to act as an advisory body with regard to the development of general and specific standards in relation to such programmes and services
- To monitor the implementation of standards and codes of practice in programmes and services provided to persons with disabilities and to report to the Minister thereon
- To liaise with other bodies, both corporate and unincorporated, involved in the provision of services to persons with disabilities and to facilitate and support the development and implementation of appropriate standards for programmes and services for persons with disabilities

- To prepare codes of practice for the purpose of achieving the aim of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities
- To recognise the achievement of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services to persons with disabilities, including through the provision of a disability equality awards system
- To prepare strategic plans.

Additional functions of the Authority under the Disability Act 2005 include:

- To prepare codes of practice relating to the accessibility of public buildings, services, information and heritage sites and to the employment of people with disabilities in the public sector at the request of the Minister (Part 3) to monitor compliance with statutory targets for recruitment and employment of people with disabilities in the public sector, recommend actions to be taken where these targets are not being met, and prepare codes of practice where requested (Part 5)
- To establish and operate a Centre for Excellence in Universal Design in relation to the built environment, products, services and information technology which will promote the principles of universal design so that each of these may be accessed, understood and used to the greatest practicable extent by people with disabilities:
 - In the most independent and natural manner, and
 - In the widest possible range of situations without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solution (Part 6).

b) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of the National Disability Authority for the year ended 31 December 2015 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland. These are the National Disability Authority's first set of financial statements prepared in accordance with FRS 102. The date of transition to FRS 102 is 1 January 2014. The transition to FRS 102 has not affected its reported financial position or financial performance.

c) Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared using the accruals method of accounting, except as indicated below and in accordance with FRS 102 under the historical cost convention. Financial Reporting Standards recommended by recognised accountancy bodies are adopted as they become operative. The financial statements are in the form approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality with the concurrence of the Minister for Finance under the existing legislation. The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to National Disability Authority's financial statements.

d) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

The NDA receives a grant annually from the Department of Justice and Equality as provided in the National Disability Authority Act 1999.

Revenue is generally recognised on an accruals basis; one exception to this is in the case of Oireachtas Grants which are recognised on a cash receipts basis.

e) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment, other than premises, at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

- (i) Freehold Premises: 2.5% per annum (Reducing balance)
- (ii) Fixtures and Fittings, Equipment: 10% per annum (Straight line)
- (iii) Computer hardware and software: 20% per annum (Straight line)

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

f) Capital Account

The Capital Account represents the unamortised value of income used for capital purposes (i.e. acquisitions).

g) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value, less a provision for doubtful debts. The provision for doubtful debts is a specific provision, and is established when there is objective evidence that the NDA will not be able to collect all amounts owed to it. All movements in the provision for doubtful debts are recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves.

h) Employee Benefits

Short-term Benefits

Short-term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year, and benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the Payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

Retirement Benefits

The NDA operates a defined benefit superannuation scheme for staff. Superannuation entitlements arising under the scheme are paid out of current income and are charged to the Income and Expenditure Account, net of employee superannuation contributions in the year they become payable. Up until the end of 2015 no staff came within the Single Public Services Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”), which is a defined benefit scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013.

Pension costs reflect pension benefits earned by employees and former NRB employees where appropriate, and are shown net of staff pension contributions which are remitted to the Department of Justice and Equality. An amount corresponding to the pension charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable, and offset by grants received in the year to discharge pension payment lump sums.

Actuarial gains or losses arising on scheme liabilities are reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Income, and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from the Department of Justice and Equality.

The financial statements reflect, at fair value, the assets and liabilities arising from the NDA’s pension obligations and any related funding, and recognise the costs of providing pension benefits in the accounting periods in which they are earned by employees. Retirement benefit scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method.

i) Critical Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following judgements have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Depreciation and Residual Values

The Directors have reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes, and in particular, the useful economic life and residual values of fixtures and fittings, and have concluded that asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

Capital Accounting Policy

The Capital Account represents the unamortised value of income used for capital purposes (i.e. acquisitions).

Retirement Benefit Obligation

The assumptions underlying the actuarial valuations for which the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determined (including discount rates, rates of increase in future compensation levels, mortality rates and healthcare cost trend rates) are updated annually based on current economic conditions, and for any relevant changes to the terms and conditions of the pension and post-retirement plans.

The assumptions can be affected by:

- (i) the discount rate, changes in the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds;
- (ii) future compensation levels, future labour market conditions;
- (iii) health care cost trend rates, the rate of medical cost inflation in the relevant regions.

2. Oireachtas Grants

The Oireachtas Grants voted to the National Disability Authority from Department of Justice and Equality as shown in the financial statements consists of:

	Note	2015 €	2014 €
Grants for current expenditure	Vote 24 Subhead D10	3,798,647	3,240,600
		3,798,647	3,240,600

3. Other Revenue

	2015 €	2014 €
Social Welfare	2,631	7,082
EU Project Funding	-	15,275
Rental Income	29,322	-
	31,953	22,357

Rental income relates to rent of €19,677 from FR Kelly European and Trademark Attorneys in relation to property rented to them at 25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4. The remaining €9,645 relates to the charge for services provided at 25 Clyde Road.

4. Projects and Commissioned Works Payable

	2015	2014
	€	€
Research	320,137	158,584
Information Resources	9,093	58,676
Universal Design Promotion	50,129	52,063
Corporate Services	57,749	51,941
Standards and Guidelines	4,052	25,942
Conference and seminars	63,991	18,560
Consultation	28,994	6,780
Translation	492	2,374
	534,637	374,920

5. Administration and Operations Costs

		2015 €	2014 €
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	5(a)	1,984,863	1,904,132
Building overheads		119,973	87,819
Rates		51,993	52,197
Cleaning and domestic services		51,280	52,013
Authority Fees and expenses	5(c)	71,277	35,193
Postage and telecoms		23,277	22,446
Office costs		46,580	26,831
Library		35,097	7,869
IT costs		94,070	95,669
Professional fees		49,955	12,787
Audit fees		12,000	16,600
Building repairs		86,528	39,914
		2,626,893	2,353,470

(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs

	2015	2014
	€	€
Staff salaries	1,938,041	1,869,847
Agency staff pay	1,295	3,644
Staff training and development	26,902	16,704
Staff travel and subsistence costs	18,625	13,937
	1,984,863	1,904,132

(b) Employee benefits breakdown**Range of total employee benefits Number of Employees**

From-To	2015	2014
Less than €59,999	18	21
€60,000–€69,999	4	4
€70,000–€79,999	6	5
€80,000–€89,999	-	-
€90,000–€99,999	3	3
Greater than €100,000	-	-
Total number employed	31	33

(c) Authority Members' Emoluments

Board member	Board fees	Incurred expenses	Meetings attended
Ms .Helen Guinan (Chairperson)	8,978	4,600	7/7
Ms. Orla Barry	-	-	6/7

Mr. Frank Cunneen	5,985	-	7/7
Mr. Des Kenny	5,985	-	7/7
Ms. Ruthann La Malfa	5,985	-	7/7
Ms. Mary Lavelle	5,985	-	6/7
Ms. Teresa McDonnell	5,985	29	5/7
Mr. Deaglán O'Briain	-	-	6/7
Ms. Deirdre O'Connor	5,663	-	6/7
Mr. James O'Grady	5,985	-	7/7
Mr. Donie O'Leary	5,985	1,005	7/7
Ms. Alison Ryan	5,985	83	5/7
Mr. Donal Rice	-	-	6/7
Audit Committee Mr. Donal Lawlor	1,282	-	4/4
	63,803	5,717	

Authority Members Fees and Expenses

Authority fees shown in note 5 are exclusive of accruals of (€1,891) and €134 for 2014 and 2015 respectively.

Director's Remuneration

The Director was paid a salary in 2015 of €99,501 (2014: €95,816) on the Civil Service Principal Officer Scale. The increase year on year relates to an additional pay date in 2015. The Director did not receive a pay increase and no other payment was made in the year to the Director in the nature of pay. The Director is a member of the Department of Justice and Equality superannuation scheme and her entitlements do not extend beyond the standard entitlements available under such a scheme.

The Director incurred with no direct benefit to the individual an amount of €366 (2014: €1,233) in respect of travel and subsistence.

Pension Levy Contributions

€112,798 (2014: €109,695) was deducted from staff by way of a pension levy and retained by the Department of Justice and Equality.

Authority Meetings

During 2015, seven Authority meetings were held. There were no appointments or resignations from the Board during the period.

6. Retirement Benefit Costs**(a) Analysis of total retirement benefit costs charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves**

	2015 €	2014 €
Current service costs	420,000	420,000
Interest on retirement benefit scheme liabilities	913,000	920,000
Employee Contributions	(104,000)	(103,790)
	1,229,000	1,236,210

(b) Movement in net retirement benefit obligations during the financial year

	2015 €	2014 €
Net retirement benefit obligation at 1 January	16,600,000	16,800,000
Current service costs	420,000	420,000
Interest costs	913,000	920,000
Actuarial gain/(loss)	6,055,550	(978,000)
Pensions paid in the year	(616,750)	(562,000)
Net retirement benefit obligation at 31 December	23,371,800	16,600,000

(c) Deferred funding for retirement benefits

The NDA recognises these amounts as an asset corresponding to the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of the set of assumptions described above and a number of past events.

These events include the statutory basis for the establishment of the retirement benefit scheme, and the policy and practice currently in place in relation to funding public service pensions including contributions by employees and the annual estimates process. The NDA has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet such sums in accordance with current practice.

The net deferred funding for retirement benefits recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves was as follows:

	2015 €	2014 €
Funding recoverable in respect of current year retirement benefit costs	1,333,000	1,340,000
State grant applied to pay retirement benefits	(616,750)	(562,000)
	716,250	778,000

The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits at 31 December 2015 amounts to €23.3m (2014: €16.6m).

(d) General description of the scheme

The retirement benefit scheme is a defined benefit final salary pension arrangement with benefits and contributions defined by reference to current “model” public sector scheme regulations. The scheme provides a pension (being 1/80 per year of service), a gratuity or lump sum (being 3/80 per year of service) and spouses and children’s pensions. Normal retirement age is a member’s 65th birthday, and pre-2004 members have an entitlement to retire without actuarial reduction from age 60. Pensions in payment (and deferment) normally increase in line with general public sector salary inflation.

The valuation used for FRS 102 disclosures has been based on a full actuarial valuation performed on 29 February 2015 by a qualified independent actuary, taking account of the requirements of the FRS in order to assess the scheme liabilities at 31 December 2015.

The principal actuarial assumptions were as follows:

	2015	2014
Rate of increase in salaries	3.50%	4.00%
Rate of increase in retirement benefits in payment	2.50%	4.00%
Discount rate	2.45%	5.50%
Inflation rate	1.50%	2.00%

Mortality

58% of ILT15 for males with improvements (see below).

62% of ILT15 for females with improvements (see below).

Annuity factors increase by 0.30% p.a. (Males not in Spouses and Children's Scheme) to 0.25% p.a. (Females not in Spouses and Children's Scheme and Members of Spouses and Children's Scheme) for each year between 2015 and the year of retirement.

The mortality basis explicitly allows for improvements in life expectancy over time, so that life expectancy at retirement will depend on the year in which a member attains retirement age.

The table below shows the life expectancy for members attaining age 65 in 2015.

Year of attaining age 65	2015
Male aged 60 at balance sheet date	25.3
Female aged 60 at balance sheet date	28.1
Male aged 65 at balance sheet date	21.1
Female aged 65 at balance sheet date	23.6
Male aged 65 in 10 years time	22.3

7. Capital Account

	2015 €	2014 €
Opening balance	2,807,709	2,869,467
Income applied to purchase of fixed assets	-	5,179
Amortised in year in line with asset depreciation	(78,468)	(73,963)
Transfers to/from Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves	(78,468)	(68,784)
Reclassification of Fixed Assets	-	7,026
Total movement	(78,468)	(61,758)
Closing balance	2,729,241	2,807,709

8. Property, Plant & Equipment

	Computer hardware and software €	Fixtures & Fittings, Equipment €	Freehold Premises €	Total €
Cost at 1 January	182,072	117,143	3,988,604	4,287,819
Additions	-	-	-	-
Disposals	(13,161)	-	-	(13,161)
At 31 December	168,911	117,143	3,988,604	4,274,658
Depreciation at 1 January	174,242	112,155	1,193,713	1,480,110
Charge for the year	3,728	4,868	69,872	78,468
Disposals	(13,161)	-	-	(13,161)
At 31 December	164,809	117,023	1,263,585	1,545,417
Net Book Value at 1 January	7,830	4,988	2,794,891	2,807,709
Net movement for the year	(3,728)	(4,868)	(69,872)	(78,468)
At 31 December	4,102	120	2,725,019	2,729,241

The Authority operates its business from premises at 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, which it owns. The Authority does not own or lease any other property.

9. Receivables

	2015 €	2014 €
Department of Justice and Equality	331,798	294,092
Prepayments	112,626	10,993
Rental Income	29,322	-
Other Debtors NDA	314	314
	474,060	305,399

The Authority remits all pension contributions deducted from staff to the Department. The Department provides funding to the Authority to fund pension payments on a pay as you go basis. This balance represents the net amount due from the Department in relation to pensions.

10. Payables

Amounts falling due within one year

	2015 €	2014 €
Other accruals	28,245	38,537
Holiday pay accrual	32,324	-
	60,569	38,537

11. Related Party Disclosures

Key management personnel comprises the Director and Senior Managers. Total remuneration paid to key management personnel, and Board member's fees and expenses, amounted to €169,387 (2014: €131,009). Please refer to Note 5 for a breakdown of the remuneration and benefits paid to key management and payments to Board members.

The National Disability Authority adopts procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform covering the personal interests of Authority members. In the normal course of business, NDA may approve grants or enter into other contractual arrangements with entities in which NDA Board members are employed or are otherwise interested. In cases of potential conflict of interest, Authority members do not receive Board documentation or otherwise participate in or attend discussions regarding these transactions. A register is maintained and available on request of all such instances.

There were no transactions in the year in relation to the Authority's activities in which Authority members had any beneficial interest.

12. Approval of the financial statements

The financial statements were approved by the Board of National Disability Authority on 21st June 2016.

Appendix 1:

Authority and other committees in 2015

- Ms. Helen Guinan (Chairperson)
- Ms. Orla Barry
- Mr. Frank Cunneen
- Mr. Des Kenny
- Ms. Ruthann La Malfa
- Ms. Mary Lavelle
- Ms. Teresa McDonnell
- Mr. Deaglán O'Briain
- Ms. Deirdre O'Connor
- Mr. James O'Grady
- Mr. Donie O'Leary
- Mr. Dónal Rice
- Ms. Alison Ryan

Finance Committee

- Frank Cunneen (Chairperson)
- Des Kenny
- Ruthann La Malfa
- Teresa McDonnell
- David Scott
- Pat Fitzsimons

Audit Committee

- Donal Lawlor (Chairperson)
- Frank Cunneen
- Des Kenny
- Alison Ryan

- Robert Cashell
- Lawrence Byrne

Risk Management Committee

- Robert Cashell (Chairperson) (NDA Audit Committee)
- Pat Fitzsimons (NDA Finance Committee)
- NDA Senior Management Group

Appendix 2:

Representation on external bodies in 2015

The NDA's representation on external bodies in 2015 included:

Government Departments

Children and Youth Affairs

- Disability Advisory Committee
- Interdepartmental working group on addressing the requirements of children with special needs in mainstream preschools
- Cross-sectoral implementation group and the project team group for supporting access to early childhood care and education programme for children with a disability

Tusla — Child and Family Agency

- Early Years Inspectorate Consultative Forum

Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

- Sectoral Plan and Part 5 Monitoring Committee

Commission for Communications Regulation

- Consumer Advisory Panel
- Industry Forum on Electronic Communications Services for People with Disabilities

Commission for Energy Regulation

- Consumer Advisory Forum

Education and Skills

- Disability Advisory Committee
- National Council for Special Education
- National Council for Special Education statutory Consultative Forum

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

- Consultative Forum

Environment, Community and Local Government

- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability Implementation Monitoring Group

Housing Agency

- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability Housing Subgroup
- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability Community Living Task Group

Irish Water

- Stakeholder Forum
- Water Meter Data Accessibility Group

Health

- Implementation Steering Group of Transforming Lives (implementing Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services)
- HSE Transforming Lives Working Groups 1, 2, 4, and 5
- Disability Advisory Committee
- National Intellectual and Physical and Sensory database steering committee
- National Consultative Forum

Health Research Board

- Joint National Intellectual Disability Database / National Physical and Sensory Disability Database Committee

Health Service Executive

- Disability residential services task force
- Universal Access Committee
- Working Group on Advocacy services in disability residential settings

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

National Standards Authority of Ireland

- Innovation Management Standards Consultative Committee
- Universal Design Standards Consultative Committee

Justice and Equality

- National Steering Committee on Violence against Women–Cosc
- Part 5 Monitoring Committee

Social Protection

- Disability Consultative Committee
- Cross Departmental Group regarding Disability Activation Project (Dact)

- National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities

Transport, Tourism and Sport

- Accessibility Consultative Committee

National Transport Authority

- Taxi Advisory Committee

Professional Bodies

- Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE)
- Irish Computer Society (ICS)
- Institute of Designers in Ireland (IDI)

RIAI (Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland)

- Universal Design Task Force

Appendix 3:

Publications in 2015

- 2014 Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act
- Annual Report 2014
- Case Studies: Better Tourism through Universal Design
- Children's Disability Services in Ireland
- Commissioning disability services – a discussion paper
- Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: An Analysis of the National Disability Survey
- Exploring the factors related to return to work after stroke
- Exploring the Impact of Fatigue on Work Ability of People with Rheumatic Diseases
- How Walkable is Your Town?
- Insights into the Lives of Children with Disabilities: Findings from the 2006 National Disability Survey
- Local Area Coordination: Briefing paper
- National Guidelines on Accessible Health and Social Care Services
- Preventing school bullying of children with special needs or disability
- Report on public consultation on the draft Interim Standards for New Directions, Services and Supports for Adults with Disabilities
- Report on Voting Trials
- Research and Recommendations on Universal Design of Dementia Friendly Dwellings for People with Dementia, their Families, and Carers
- Retaining employees who acquire a disability: A guide for employers
- Strategic Plan 2016–2018
- Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland
- Universal Design Guidelines, Dementia Friendly Dwellings for People with Dementia, their Families, and Carers

Appendix 4:

Policy advice papers in 2015

Policy advice papers in 2015 included:

- Commission for Communications Regulation: Submission on Measures for disabled end-users Accessibility Statement
- Commission for Communications Regulation: Terms and conditions of the universal postal service: Single Piece and Bulk Mail
- Commission for Communications Regulation: Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Addressing the requirements of children with special needs in mainstream preschools
- Department of Education and Skills: On NCSE and NEPS future working
- Department of Health: On the development of a national maternity strategy
- Department of Health: On the development of a policy on a trauma network for Ireland
- Department of Health: Report on the review of the implementation of regulations and inspections in residential services for adults and children with disabilities
- Health Service Executive: The use of CCTV in residential services for people with disabilities
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland: Submission on Strategy Statement 2016–2018
- Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection: The role of special needs assistants

National Disability Authority

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National Disability Authority is the independent state body providing expert advice on disability policy and practice to the Minister, and promoting Universal Design in Ireland.