

03

ANNUAL REPORT

working together

nda

NATIONAL DISABILITY AUTHORITY
ÚDARÁS NÁISIÚNTA MÍCHUMAIS

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MEETING OUR STATUTORY OBLIGATION

"The Authority shall, not later than the 30th day of September in each year, make a report to the Minister in such form as the Minister may approve, on the performance of its functions and activities during the preceding year and the Minister shall cause copies of each annual report to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas."

**National Disability Authority Act (1999)
Section 15 (1)**

FOREWORD



Foreword by Dr. Angela Kerins, Chairperson NDA

2003 was an extraordinary year! Never before has Ireland experienced a year during which there was so much emphasis on the rights of, and the contribution made to society by, people with disabilities.

The European Commission designated 2003 as the European Year of People with Disabilities. In Ireland the NDA established a National Co-ordinating Committee, representing all sectors of Irish society, to manage the hundreds of events and initiatives that took place to mark the year. Thousands of people with disabilities and members of the general public from all walks of life participated in activities through four themes; awareness raising; rights, responsibilities and partnership;

employment; and youth and disability. The enthusiasm and commitment from all sectors of society, along with the high levels of awareness noted in Ireland by the European survey '*Eurobarometer*' indicated the great success of the year in meeting the European wide goals of raising awareness of the rights of people with disabilities along with their skills and abilities.

In February 2003 the Disability Sector proved that we are stronger when we work together, as was evident when the document *Equal Citizens: Proposals for Core Elements of Disability Legislation*, was presented to Government. *Equal Citizens* puts forward proposals for the key components that need to be included in legislation, which have been agreed unanimously by the representative bodies of stakeholders in the Disability Sector. This was the culmination of long months of work by the Disability Legislation Consultation Group (DLCG), of which I was immensely proud to act as chairperson. The need for comprehensive legislation that addresses the needs of people with disabilities in Ireland has long been recognised here. The last decade has seen a broader recognition of

need, which has been developed and strengthened through active debate. The Disability Legislation Consultation Group (DLCG) worked through debate and consultation to clarify and consult on the core elements that need to be addressed in comprehensive disability legislation in this country. This historic process and consensus document are strong indicators of the necessity for increased co-operation amongst all stakeholders to ensure the best possible outcome for people with disabilities. Indeed, this document has subsequently achieved international recognition.

Publication of the long-awaited Disability Bill had been promised for 2003. Unfortunately this did not happen and this has caused frustration for the many people for whom this legislation is so important. I, like all those who contributed views, opinions and experiences during the DLCG consultation process, look forward to the speedy publication of legislation that comprehensively addresses the needs, aspirations and realities of the lives of people with disabilities in Ireland today.

One vital step towards comprehensive rights-based disability legislation was taken when the Government published the Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill, (2003). While the Authority welcomed many aspects of the Bill, in particular the proposed establishment of the National Council for Special Education and the Appeals Board as major developments it continued to stress the need for sufficient specialist places. It also recommended an independent system for assessment and review of needs.

Ireland also hosted the Special Olympics World Summer Games – the first time the Games had been held outside the United States. Who can ever forget the tremendous goodwill that swept the country for those wonderful weeks in June when communities around Ireland opened their arms to teams from around the world and when the entire country was focussed on the achievements of the games' competitors?

We all lived, breathed and shared the feeling. However, the two weeks were short-lived. After the euphoria of the Games, the daily challenges faced by people with disabilities became the reality again. This emphasised to us all that changing attitudes towards and about people with disabilities, which would ensure that they have rights to basic necessities such as employment, housing and income; take a long time to achieve and must be underpinned by legislation.

It is clear however that legislation alone cannot improve the lives of people with disabilities and their families unless adequate resources are also put in place to allow people to access their rights. The Authority continued to make this key point in its many submissions and presentations throughout 2003.

Recognised national standards in the design of services and environments are also central to ensuring that people with disabilities can participate in life fully, regardless of where they live. I was delighted with the progress made

through 2003 on the development of National Standards for Disability Services, designed to ensure that services are provided to an agreed level of quality are consistent throughout the country.

During 2003 the Authority particularly focused its attention on people with an intellectual disability who were being denied access to appropriate psychiatric services. The National Disability Authority carried out a comprehensive review which indicated that the absence of services for this group of people is discriminatory and may be in contravention of the Equal Status Act (2000), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the UN Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

The NDA recommendation for a comprehensive mental health service for this group, underpinned by legislation and integrated into mainstream service, should be implemented as a matter of urgency and as a matter of basic rights.

I would like to thank my fellow Authority members for their initiative and support on issues such as this throughout the year. I would also like to thank the members of the Advisory Committees who provided valuable guidance and multi-disciplinary advice in the areas of Mental Health, Research and Standards specifically.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Director and staff of the NDA for their work. As a team, they were unstinting in their drive towards realising a fully inclusive Ireland. I would also like to thank the National Co-ordinating Committee of EYPD and the project management team for their creativity and commitment in fulfilling the aims of the year, An Taoiseach, Mr Bertie Ahern, T.D., for acting as Patron of the Year and the hundreds of organisations and thousands of people who participated in the Year. I would like to thank the hundreds of organisations and individuals who took the time to prepare submissions for key policy and framework documents. Finally, I would like to gratefully acknowledge

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the support of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, in particular Mr. Willie O’Dea, Minister of State with particular responsibility for Disability.

The Authority’s first Strategic Plan came to an end in 2003 and work for the next Strategic Plan began. I am glad to see that feedback on the effectiveness of the first plan showed that the core vision and mission of the NDA should remain central to the new plan.

Over the coming years the National Disability Authority will continue to view disability as a matter of rights. It will continue to promote and secure the rights of people with disabilities by influencing public policy and legislation and by working to ensure that services are of the highest standards and quality. Only by doing so can we effect real change for people with disabilities.

Dr. Angela Kerins
Chairperson

Members of the NDA

Dr. Angela Kerins (Chairperson)

Helen Caesar

Paula Carey

Jim Casey

Matt Connor

John Dolan

Maisie Dooley

John Finnerty

Noreen Gildea

Robert Grier

Brendan Ingoldsby

Gene Lambert

Sylda Langford

Christy Lynch

John O’Gorman

Betty O’Leary B.L.

Muiris O’Donoghue

Donie O’Shea (Worker Director)

Diarmuid Ring

Sadie Tierney

INTRODUCTION



**Introduction by M. Claire O'Connor,
Director NDA**

Equal Citizens All

2003 was a productive and consolidating year for the National Disability Authority. It was the final year of our first Strategic Plan, 2000-2003, *A Matter of Rights*, and so saw the culmination of many of the activities set out in our first ambitious road map for the Authority. It was also a transition year as we commenced work on the second Strategic Plan, which will guide the Authority through the 2004-2006 period. Throughout the year the Statutory Advisory Committees have continued to contribute strongly to the work plan of the NDA.

Critically, in 2003, the NDA made significant advances on the policy front, spearheaded perhaps by our facilitation of the Disability Sector's submission to Government on the anticipated Disability Bill.

The Authority also made a significant submission to the Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003) drawing particular attention to the need to integrate the health-funded services and supports around the proposed Individual Education Plan.

Midway through 2003, we presented a paper to policy makers on *The Requirement of Needs Assessment and Service Co-ordination System in Ireland*.

International Influence

On the international front, the NDA continued to support the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the drafting of the International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignities of Persons with Disabilities, and will make its views known through *Rehabilitation International Europe*. In June 2003, the Mexican

Ambassador to the UN, His Excellency Luis Alfonso de Alba Gongora, made an address entitled *Towards a UN Treaty on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities* at University College Dublin (UCD) as part of the European Year of People with Disabilities (EYPD).

Consultative Process

Meanwhile, the NDA continued to make submissions to all formal consultative processes to ensure that the perspective of people with disabilities is heard and that Government departments and agencies are alerted to the impact of any discriminatory measures. (See Appendices I, II and III for submissions, external representations and presentations made.) The submission on the Criminal Law Insanity Bill (2002), for example, was well received by all commentators as a valuable contribution to that debate. In addition, the NDA Policy team supported the work of the Research team in the publication of the *Towards Best Practice* series by bringing forward policy recommendations in each of the areas covered.

Research and Standards

The NDA Research team commissioned research on the quantum and quality of services in three key areas: Health; Further Education Training and Employment; and Transport. Work, commenced in 2002, was completed in December 2003 with publication due in January 2004. The Research team also commissioned a key report on *Psychiatric Services for People with Intellectual Disabilities* and made recommendations to Government on the level of service provision required to meet international standards. Another seminal piece of work was a report commissioned by the NDA for the interdepartmental working group addressing the Cost of Disability.

National Disability Study

The pilot work towards the National Disability Study, which involved the design and piloting of an Irish Disability Research Instrument based on WHO ICF, concluded with a recommendation to the Minister with responsibility for Disability, Mr. Willie O’Dea TD, for a National Disability Survey.

The second annual Disability Research Conference achieved record attendance and focussed on an Ethical Framework for Disability Research.

The Public Service accessibility team kicked off an active programme to promote the existing guidelines in accessible technology (www.accessit.nda.ie) and sister publications *Building for Everyone* and *Ask Me* consultation guidelines.

Affecting Everyday Lives

Work continued for the second year on the *National Standards for Disability Services* in partnership with the Department of Health and Children. The first Draft standards were launched in Tullamore in January 2003 by the Minister of State for the Department of Health and Children, Tim O’Malley TD. The second Draft followed in May 2003, following a very broad consultation. The pilot testing of the Draft National Standards was then carried out in the last quarter and was independently evaluated.

It is estimated that the National Standards will affect the lives of over 60,000 service users, comprising economic activity in excess of €1.2bn.

Hosting European Year of People with Disabilities

Throughout 2003, our Corporate Services Department continued to hire and invest in our staff through training and project-based information sharing. The department also continued to improve our facilities, making them as accessible as possible to the disability sector. 2003 was, of course, the European Year of People with Disabilities (EYPD), and the NDA, as the designated National Co-ordinating body for the EYPD, hosted many of the meetings of its National Co-ordinating Committee during the year. This provided a great opportunity for people with disabilities to see what a valuable resource the meeting rooms have become for the sector in the development of the statutory remit of the NDA.

Not There Yet

As we stand at the crossroads of Strategic Plans, it is evident that some aspects of our work have proceeded at a different pace to that which we might have first envisaged. However, through our continuous work with the sector and our active commitment to consultation, we feel that all stakeholders now have a fuller understanding of the realistic timeframes required to make goods and services fully accessible. To rob a line from *Iarnród Éireann* – We're not there yet, but we're getting there ... together.

THE ROLE OF THE NDA

Her Excellency, Mrs. Mary McAleese, signed the National Disability Authority Act into law in the year 1999.

The establishment of the NDA was first recommended in the 1996 *Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities*, which also signalled that people with disabilities wanted to see the introduction of "mainstreaming" so that services for them were provided through the same distribution channels as those provided for the general public.

The Government's policy of mainstreaming took effect on June 12, 2000 with the dissolution of the National Rehabilitation Board and the transfer of many of its services to the relevant Government bodies, including the Department of Education and Science, Comhairle, FÁS and the health boards. The NDA was also launched on this day as an important part of the Government's commitment to equality and full participation in society for all.

The NDA's headquarters are located at 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. Dr. Angela Kerins is the Chairperson of the 21-member Authority.

Realising Our Mission and Vision

One of the NDA's first tasks was to draft the Strategic Plan, 2000-2003, *A Matter of Rights*.

This first Strategic Plan identified the mission of the Authority to promote and help to secure the rights of people with disabilities. The Authority set out to achieve this by:

- influencing public policy and legislation;
- working to ensure that services to people with disabilities are of the highest standards and quality.

The NDA decided that it would adopt a civil and human rights-based approach as the vision underpinning its work. Specifically, the NDA decided to strive to:

- ensure that the needs and rights of people with disabilities are enshrined in all aspects of Irish life;

- promote the empowerment of people with disabilities and their participation in decisions that affect their lives;
- underpin the promotion of an inclusive vision among all constituencies in Irish society.

Strategic Priorities

The NDA's strategic priorities for 2003 continued to be to:

- develop policies that promote the equal status of people with disabilities;
- support and monitor implementation of the programme to make public services accessible to people with disabilities;
- work to influence attitudes in Irish society;
- assure best practice in services for people with disabilities.

This report outlines how our work during 2003 has contributed to realising our mission and vision.

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**2003 IN SNAPSHOT –
MILESTONES
THROUGH THE YEAR**

CHAPTER 1

Education and Awareness

The year 2003 is likely to be remembered as a year during which there was a particular focus on education and disability awareness at national, European and international levels. In Ireland, the Oireachtas published the Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill, (2003). Europe designated the year as The European Year of People with Disabilities (EYPD) and the Special Olympics Summer Games were successfully hosted by Ireland. The combined impact of these developments highlighted disability issues across many dimensions of life. These events had, and continue to have, an educational role in, influencing attitudes towards persons with disabilities in Irish society and, importantly, influencing activities in schools and within the education sector directly.

Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill 2003

The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill 2003 was published in July 2003, representing a significant development in education legislation. Following publication, the NDA prepared a written submission for the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science and followed that with an oral presentation.

A New Departure

The Bill acknowledges that persons with disabilities will have the same right to education as their peers without disabilities. Education is to be 'inclusive' and 'integrated' unless there are specific reasons why a specialised placement is required for a child with special educational needs. Importantly, the proposed legislation aims to enable persons with disabilities to leave school with the skills necessary to participate, to the level of their ability, in society and to live independent lives. The Bill also highlights the role of parents in the education of their children with disabilities. Parents must be consulted about their child's education, kept informed of the child's progress and involved on the team for preparing an education plan.

The Bill assigns the principal of a school a central role in the education of children with disabilities. Schools and students will be entitled to additional resources and supports to assist in implementing the education plan for the student. The plan is to be reviewed regularly and the parents are to receive reports about the child's progress. Disputes which arise may be submitted to the Appeals Board for determination.

Ministers for Education and Science, for Health and Children and for Finance have roles under the Bill. Much of the work currently undertaken by the Department of Education will be transferred to the National Council for Special Education, which will deal with children who are attending schools. The Health Boards will deal with children who are not in schools. The Bill envisages that there will be co-ordination and consistency of approach across the agencies and provides for the role of Liaison Officers to ensure that this actually happens.

Promises and Pitfalls

While the Bill has many strong points, the NDA is concerned about some of its weaknesses and omissions.

One of the key difficulties of the Bill relates to the promise of additional supports. The Bill guarantees that resources will be provided to a school for the education of the relevant student, subject to available resources (de facto money). Appeals concerning the level of additional supports for the child may be referred to the Appeals Board. However, the Board must have regard to the available resources in determining an appeal.

Another of the key difficulties of the Bill concerns the timing of the planning for the further education/ training of the person after s/he leaves second level system. It stipulates that planning for future educational needs must occur not later than 12 months before the child reaches 18. Many students depart from second level before reaching 17 years. Some, if not many, will be students with a disability and any provision to deal with future

education should commence at an earlier stage, and no later than a year before the child has reached the end of the compulsory education cycle.

Another development is the change of definition of disability used previously in education legislation. The Education Act 1998 includes a wide-ranging definition, which is also used in the Employment Equality legislation. The definition of 'disability' in the Education Act 1998 is to be repealed and the definition of 'educational disability' is to be inserted into the Education Act. During consultations on the Bill many submissions criticised this change.

Finally, the timeframe for the anticipated change is too long. An implementation group will make recommendations and after that the provisions should be in place within five years. In practical terms this means that the provisions of the bill are at least six years away from becoming a reality. In these circumstances the delays that have bedevilled special education provision to date are likely to continue for several years to come.

Equal Citizens

Throughout the year the NDA continued to facilitate the Disability Legislation Consultation Group (DLCG). The DLCG was established solely to formulate proposals as core elements of disability legislation. The publication, *Equal Citizens*, was presented to Government in February 2003.

Over the year the DLCG initiated a number of meetings with members of the Oireachtas, including An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Disabilities Willie O’Dea TD, and An Tánaiste, Mary Harney TD.

In association with EYPD, the Consultation Group carried out a series of four capacity building workshops in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Portlaoise. It also undertook an awareness campaign aimed specifically at the media.

The DLCG held a public seminar on December 16th, 2003 entitled *Rights, Entitlements and Legislation – The Challenge for Disability Legislation in Ireland*, which was hosted by the NDA. A report on proceedings from this seminar will be available in 2004.

National Standards for Disability Services

In partnership with the Department of Health and Children, the process of developing National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) began with the presentation of Draft Standards at a national conference in January 2003. This was followed by seven regional consultation meetings, resulting in a second draft set of standards which were issued in April 2003.

The National Standards for Disability Services are being developed to ensure that health services are provided to an agreed level of quality and that the level of quality is consistent nationally. This means that people with disabilities can expect to have the same standard of service whether they live in Dublin or Donegal.

The Department of Health and Children also established a new Working Group to provide advice on the continued development of the standards, and importantly, the practical implication for service provision.

Disability Law Reform

In September 2003 the NDA, the Human Rights Commission and the Law Society jointly organised a public conference on global trends in disability law. The conference gathered leading figures from the disability, human rights and legal sectors to set a context for the current reform in Irish disability law.

In the opening session, *Global Trends in Disability Law Reform*, Mr. Stefano Sensi, Human Rights Officer at the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva, discussed the preparation of a UN treaty on human rights for the disabled in his address *The UN – Anchoring Disability as a Human Rights Issue*. Ms. Barbara Nolan of the European Commission provided an EU perspective with her paper *The EU – Advancing the Equality Agenda in Europe* while Ms. Caroline Gooding of the Disability Rights Commission UK gave an account of the experience of the British Courts in applying the European Convention on Human Rights to disability issues.

The Enforceability Debate; the Challenges Ahead was the theme when Dr. Gerard Quinn, Professor of Law at NUI Galway and member of the Human Rights Commission of Ireland, delivered his paper *Effective Remedies and Other Challenges*. The final paper of the conference was delivered by Dr. Rory O'Donnell of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) on the theme *Beyond Justiciable Rights – Standard and Quality*.

Measuring Up

As the lifespan of the first Strategic Plan, *A Matter of Rights*, drew to an end, the NDA invited submissions from interested organisations and individuals on three topics:

1. the achievements and successes of the Authority since its establishment;
2. areas of work where the Authority could improve;
3. priorities for actions, which the Authority should take to achieve its key objectives.

Critically, the respondents reaffirmed the Mission and Core Values of the Authority, as set out in the first plan. In addition, the respondents felt the NDA had made significant achievements in producing guidelines; raising awareness of issues affecting people with disabilities; consultation with people with disabilities and key stakeholders; influencing policy and legislation; and developing national standards for disability services. Challenging attitudes towards people with disabilities and undertaking research were also identified as successes.

Respondents mentioned a number of areas which could be improved upon, including the profile of the NDA, particularly at local level, and the need to make consultation more meaningful.

When asked what the priorities for the next strategic plan should be, the most prominent responses were promoting public awareness of disability issues, raising the public profile of the NDA, and overseeing the improvement and development of appropriate services for people with disabilities.

All relevant responses received will be taken into account in the new Strategic Plan, 2004-2006.

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DEVELOPING POLICIES THROUGH RESEARCH

CHAPTER 2

Strategic Priority 1: Develop policies that promote the equal status of people with disabilities.

The NDA considers that the primary way to deliver on its first strategic priority is to contribute to, and influence, national policy and legislation and to raise awareness of relevant European and international legislation. Much of the work carried out during 2003 centred on this priority. The NDA continued to focus on five key areas for much of its policy work; health, education, transport, income adequacy and issues concerning to employment and training.

Some of the highlights of work in policy have been outlined in the previous chapter. Other policy work is outlined in this chapter and all policy submissions made through the year are outlined in Appendix I.

Research – the lever for policy

In order to develop workable policy, the NDA must first gather data or evidence which can then be used as fact-based levers to guide policy and influence change. The NDA Policy Department worked hand in glove with Research to ensure that all policy submissions and recommendations were grounded in the reality of experience.

Equality – A Core Value

The NDA is committed to equality and full participation of people with disabilities in Irish society. Disability is an integral part of the equality agenda.

Equality Proofing

Throughout 2003, the NDA continued to work with the Inter-Departmental Group on Equality Proofing, contributing to development of:

- an Equality Impact Assessment for city and county development boards;
- investigating Integrated Proofing as a way forward;

- investigating Appropriate Models for a statutory duty;
- piloting of a number of Equality Proofing Projects within the public sector.

Health and Well-Being

During 2003 the NDA continued to work with colleagues in the health, disability and equality sectors to support the development and implementation of health legislation and policy.

Mental Health Advisory Committee

The Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC) is drawn from people with experience in mental health difficulties, carers/family members, non-statutory organisations, professional bodies, statutory and non-statutory service providers, and the Department of Health and Children. See Appendix IV for members.

During 2003, the MHAC met in full committee four times. It established three sub-committees on Advocacy, Attitudes and the Mental Health Act. Sub-groups of the MHAC met to

advise on the NDA's study *Review of Access to Mental Health Services for People with Intellectual Disability* and to comment on the draft of the Disability Legislation Consultation Group's document *Equal Citizens: Proposals for Core Elements of Disability Legislation*.

Violence against Women with Disabilities

The NDA and Women's Aid published *Responding to Violence Against Women with Disabilities* based on the proceedings of joint seminar held in 2002. The publication was widely disseminated in the disability, women's and health sectors. Presentations on the project were also made to the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women and to the National Women's Council Disability Panel.

Education

As already outlined, 2003 is likely to be remembered as a year during which there was a focus on education at national, European level and international levels.

Education Presentations

During the year the NDA gave a number of presentations at education conferences, including an Association of Secondary School Teachers in Ireland (ASTI) Special Education seminar, the plenary session of the Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education (IATSE) conference, and the opening session of the Irish Learning Support Association (ILSE) conference.

Other presentations were made to the Directors of Education Centres, to teachers working in special education and to delegates of the Midland Health Board.

Teacher Education

The NDA recognises the central role played by teachers in the education of persons with disabilities and so contributed to an analysis of the school training requirements at second level. The NDA was also involved in the launch of the Graduate Diploma and Masters Degree in Special Education at Mary Immaculate College in September 2003.

Draft Guidelines for Teachers Students with General Learning Difficulties

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the body charged with curriculum development, has produced a suite of 23 draft curriculum guidelines for use by teachers of students with general learning difficulties. The NDA hosted a seminar at which a representative of the NCCA outlined the format, range and use of these documents in schools and then made a detailed submission towards the finalisation of these guidelines.

Employment

Developing Employment Policy

Statistics show that the rate of unemployment among disabled people is just under 60%. In real terms this means that over 130,000 people with disabilities are dependent on some form of inadequate social welfare payment. This means that disabled persons as a group have less disposable income and consequently a lower standard of living than their non-disabled peers. Improving rates of employment among disabled persons is a significant national issue.

Throughout 2003, the NDA was involved in *Make the Difference Through Employment*, a series of conferences for employers promoting the employment of people with disabilities which was funded under the European Year of People with Disabilities.

Submission on NAPs

The NDA made a written submission on the development of the National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion, 2003-2005. The submission stressed that poverty experienced by people with disabilities must be reduced and suggested a range of indicators to equality proof public services.

Income Adequacy

In its evaluation, the NDA stressed that people with disabilities should receive income maintenance support at least equivalent to that of people on other income maintenance schemes. It also recommended that supplementary supports are required to offset the additional costs of disability, stressing the need for access to employment and the removal "benefit traps" as

disincentives to employment. In addition, the NDA recommended that payments should be made directly to the person to whom it is assigned and that s/he should have the right to advocacy and advice on how to utilise those payments.

In addition, in research on a Costs of Disability payment, the NDA contracted Indecon International Economic Consultants to examine the additional spending needs of people with disabilities and to discuss policy options in the light of existing provision. The report is expected to be published in Spring 2004 (see Chapter 3 for more details).

Progressing Housing Policy

The Authority identified the critical need for the provision of a range of accessible housing and accommodation options for people with disabilities, highlighting key issues in the national media.

The NDA called for increased funding of the Disabled Person's Grant, in a joint submission with Comhairle to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

The NDA also called for secured funding for the Personal Assistant Scheme and a defined funding scheme for management and support services in social housing projects that would increase accommodation options for people with disabilities.

Delays in securing adaptations to houses means people with acquired disabilities often cannot be discharged from hospital or are transferred into unsuitable interim accommodation, at a substantial cost to the State.

An increase in defined funding for adaptations would help ensure that people on waiting lists would have their claims met faster, allowing them to live independently or with support in suitable housing.

Research – The Essential Backbone for Policy

As outlined above, research was the essential support for NDA policy throughout 2003. The NDA concentrated on both gathering new research and data based on international best practices and experience as well as developing a research capacity within Ireland.

Gathering Research and Data

Research Advisory Committee

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) met on three occasions in 2003 (See Appendix IV for committee members). It reviewed the work of the Research Unit and oversaw the selection of research scholars as well as projects funded under the Research Promotion Scheme. It also advised the NDA Board on research priorities to improve baseline data for the coming strategic plan, including the proposed National Disability Study and efforts to maximise administrative databases as an information source.

Defining Disability Internationally

The NDA decided in 2002 that it would investigate the benefits of using the International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF) as the framework for Irish disability statistics and data collection, including the proposed National Disability Study. Two seminars were organised at which the ICF was discussed by a broad range of stakeholders.

Continuing the work, Dr. Anne Good presented two further conference papers on the issue in Ireland. Another paper, co-authored by Dr. Good and Dr. Donal McAnaney of Rehab International, was presented to Rehab International's Africa meeting in Durban, South Africa.

Finally, during 2003 the NDA liaised with the UN Washington City Group who are developing a global disability indicator for use in collecting data and statistics nationally and internationally. This work is also being informed by the ICF model.

Towards a National Disability Study

A pilot project to inform a National Disability Study was designed in 2002 and carried out during 2002-3 by a team consisting of the ESRI and the Centre for Disability Studies, UCD. This team was advised by a disability expert consultant, Ms. Jacqui Browne of the Kerry Network of People with Disabilities, along with a Research Advisory Committee, with representation from a range of disability organisations as well as the Central Statistics Office and the NDA.

The team used the World Health Organisation's International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF) as the research instrument to ensure that results could be comparable internationally.

The findings from the pilot project were presented to the Authority in December with conclusions drawn regarding the advantages or otherwise of using the ICF. In light of these findings, the NDA's 2002 proposal to the Government for a National Disability Study was rewritten.

Second Disability Research Conference

Given that many concerns have been raised with the NDA about research practice in the disability field, it was decided to undertake work on ethics in disability research. A draft set of ethical guidelines for research work with people with disabilities was prepared in 2002, aimed at forming the basis of a voluntary code of practice covering the conduct of socio-economic research in the EU.

These draft guidelines were then presented for discussion at the NDA's second annual Research Conference, entitled *Towards Ethical Guidelines for Disability Research*, held on December 2nd, 2003.

Keynote speakers at the conference included Dr. Ron Iphofen and Dr. Sally Dench, who are involved in the RESPECT project, an EU-funded exercise to develop professional and ethical guidelines for socio-economic research across the EU. Also presenting were Dr. Gillian McColgan of Stirling University, who has carried out research with people with dementia; Dr. Jean Whyte, Director of the Children's Research centre, TCD; and Dr. Anne Good, Senior Research Officer, NDA, who drafted the ethical guidelines for disability research in Ireland. There was a large attendance of about 170, and lively participation in the workshop sessions, which were organised around four central themes in the draft guidelines as a consultative exercise towards the development of the document.

Children and disability

The NDA funded a project by the Children's Research Centre in Trinity College Dublin during 2003 to develop a discussion paper, guidelines and a checklist for researchers undertaking research on children with disabilities. Presentations on this project were made to the Measuring Child Well-Being conference, the Psychological Society of Ireland and the NDA's Second National Disability Research Conference.

The NDA part-funded and supported the research carried out by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) for the National Rehabilitation Hospital on the experiences of Irish children with acquired brain injury. The report was launched in June 2003 by Mr. Micheál Martin, Minister for Health.

Disability within National Statistics

The Research Unit was in discussion with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) through 2003 about including revised questions on disability in the 2006 Census, and about the inclusion of questions on disability in other

mainstream socio-economic statistics. A submission was also made to the CSO regarding the content of its *Disability and Caring* report based on the 2002 Census data.

Best Practice – Services for People with Disabilities

In 2003, the NDA prepared a paper for the Department of Health and Children which examined international models of personal assistance services. NDA research staff will continue to provide input to the Working Group on Personal Assistance Services chaired by the Department in 2004.

Research into advocacy, commissioned by the Authority and undertaken by the Centre for Disability Studies, UCD, was completed during 2003. This research examined what systems or models of advocacy would best serve people with a range of disabilities in Ireland today. The report also looked at what advocacy means and the different forms it may take as well as examining advocacy in operation both here and internationally.

Recommendations for the development of advocacy provision in Ireland and areas for further research were then identified.

Cost of Disability

Following a commitment in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, an interdepartmental Working Group was set up to examine the feasibility of a Cost of Disability payment, which asked the NDA to commission research in this area.

Indecon International Economic Consultants were contracted to do the research after a tendering process and were asked to examine the additional spending needs of people with disabilities and to discuss policy options in the light of existing provision. The report is expected to be published in Spring 2004.

Informing and Challenging Attitudes

The NDA supported the Irish element of a multinational study aimed at determining the attitudinal barriers to the inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities worldwide.

The communications and social marketing group, Ogilvy Consultants, was commissioned to examine strategies towards influencing public attitudes towards people with disabilities, including a review of good practice internationally. This project was funded under the European Year of People with Disabilities and was undertaken in partnership with Rehab.

Building Research Capacity

In order to build unique Irish data on a wide range of disability issues, the NDA must continue to encourage people and organisations to carry out research both locally and nationally.

The register of people with experience in disability research was further developed during the year. The register provides the names of Irish-based practitioners in disability research and forms the basis for a circulation list for restricted tenders for research work commissioned by the NDA.

In addition, the Research Unit launched the Disability Research Database on the NDA website. Users can now search over 400 entries of disability research undertaken in Ireland since 1996, including books, journal articles, theses, reports and other relevant material.

The NDA also supported a number of specific schemes aimed at building research capacity.

NDA Research Promotion Scheme

The NDA Research Promotion Scheme was established in 2003 to facilitate disability groups and community & voluntary organisations working on disability issues to undertake research. The scheme aims to broaden and deepen knowledge of specific disability issues and to inform policy makers and service deliverers of disability needs and issues at a local level, particularly. Nine out of the 47 applicant projects were selected for funding. See Appendix VI for the list of successful organisations.

Research scholarship scheme

The NDA research scholarship scheme encourages research on disability in universities, generally at Ph.D. level, through a small number of annual awards. The following students were awarded NDA scholarships in October 2003:

1. Máire Bergin (Dublin City University) – *Examination of the Role, Function, Definition and Training Needs of Classroom and Special Needs Assistants in Primary and Secondary Education Settings in Ireland*
2. Gabriella Hanrahan (University of Limerick) – *Ireland's Supported Employment Services: Realistic or Idealistic*
3. Sheelah Flatman Watson (NUI Maynooth) – *Access to Mainstream Education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities*

Work is also continuing on scholarship research projects awarded in 2002.

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MAKING PUBLIC SERVICES ACCESSIBLE

CHAPTER 3

Strategic Priority 2: Guide and monitor implementation of the programme to make public services accessible to people with disabilities within five years.

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness committed the Government to making public services accessible to people with disabilities. As part of this programme, the NDA was given responsibility for issuing guidelines in accordance with international norms to facilitate effective action and acceptable standards and to award a symbol of accessibility to compliant public offices.

The NDA identified three core areas of public service delivery, which should be made fully accessible and established initiatives towards achieving this. These areas were:

- physical premises and external environment;
- electronically delivered services;
- quality customer service.

Physical Premises and External Environment Barcelona Declaration Project

In Spring 2001, the NDA was asked by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to establish a process for promoting the Barcelona Declaration among all local authorities (county and town councils) in Ireland. This project is aimed at facilitating local authorities to create a more inclusive society.

The Declaration was the main outcome of a European Congress entitled *The City and the Disabled*, which took place in March 1995 in Barcelona. The Declaration advocates the right of disabled people to equal opportunities and recognises their contribution to the society and the environment in which they live. Between 1995 and 2000, six local authorities had signed up to the Declaration. However, since the NDA's involvement in 2001, a total of 85 councils in Ireland have now adopted the Barcelona Declaration.

A Disability Proofing Template is currently being piloted with a number of local authorities. This will facilitate them

to proof their policies, practices and public services from their conception and development. See Appendix V for the Barcelona Declaration Project Steering Committee.

Building for Everyone

In July 2003 a major promotional drive was launched to increase sales of the NDA publication, *Building for Everyone*; an essential source book and guide for architects, designers, building developers and managers, building control and planning personnel, local authorities, environmental activists and everyone concerned with inclusion and access in Ireland today. It reflects the updating in 2000 of the Building Regulations and Technical Guidance Document M and best practice in the external environment.

The book, which includes over 200 pages of text, checklists, drawings and illustrations, expanded and updated a previous publication, *Buildings for Everyone*, which was produced in 1998 by the National Rehabilitation Board.

Access All Areas

During 2003, the NDA compiled a review of the current access of the built environment in the context of Universal Accessibility. The review also included an overview of current policies, standards, legislations, and treaties.

It is planned that monitoring of the built environment will be integrated within the Public Services Accessibility Award system (PSA), which was initiated to recognise the achievement of the highest level of accessibility in public services, in accordance with the commitment outlined in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF). As a public service, the NDA ran an access audit of its own building on Clyde Road in August 2003.

The NDA continued its involvement with the Departments of Transport and Marine and Natural Resources to develop and issue accessibility guidelines for air, rail, bus, coach and sea transport. Throughout 2003, links were also forged with the Office of Public Works (OPW), which has developed an audit tool based on the Part M Building Regulations.

The E-Environment

IT Guidelines

The NDA IT Guidelines, developed by Frontend Usability Engineering Ltd., continued to be updated throughout 2003.

The guidelines are provided as a resource for producers and procurers of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) products and services. They aim to give guidance on how to ensure that these products and services are accessible to as wide an audience as possible, including people with disabilities.

The specific technologies covered by these guidelines are:

- websites and online applications;
- public access terminals, such as ATMs, information kiosks, ticket vending machines, information displays, and card readers;
- telecommunication devices and services, such as desktop telephones, mobile phones and Interactive Voice Response services;
- computer application software.

The guidelines website www.accessit.nda.ie was promoted at the Irish Internet Association (IIA) Annual Conference. In addition, the NDA made presentations to an IIA Accessibility Workshop on Web Accessibility and a presentation at the AAATE Conference (Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe).

E-Accessibility

The NDA took part in an overview of the initiatives of EU member states in relation to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Accessibility, including the development of standards, monitoring compliance and awarding best practice.

In addition, the NDA carried out a review of planning, procurement, design, development, testing and maintenance practices of public service websites. In February 2003, the NDA updated its own and AccessIT websites, changing image and content, converting inaccessible documents to HTML and reviewing the navigation and design structure.

The NDA made a keynote address on the development of *Standards for Services for People with Disabilities* at the European Conference of the Association for Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe, which took place in Dublin from August 31st-September 3rd.

Quality Customer Services

Guidelines and Code of Practice on Disability

Equality Training

Development of guidelines for purchasers of disability equality training got underway, outlining clearly what should be covered in disability equality training. A proposed code of practice will be produced in the context of mainstreaming and will be aligned to national qualifications for training programme validation.

Customer Action Plan

As part of its commitment to customer care, the NDA developed a Customer Action Plan (CAP), based on feedback from a Quality Customer Service Questionnaire, a comment box, formal complaints and the views of a customer panel.

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INFLUENCING ATTITUDES

CHAPTER 4

Strategic Priority 3: Influence attitudes in Irish society.

One of the key aims of the NDA is to identify and develop public awareness of disability issues and attitudes towards people with disabilities and mobilise support within Irish society for inclusive policies and practices.

The Authority aims to inform the public on the positive aspects of disability and address prejudice and lack of knowledge. The NDA is constantly delivering its messages at creative events, in speeches and presentations, through information materials and, of course, through the media.

Publications

Shared the Feeling! Now Let's Share the Future

One of the major projects during the year involved collaboration between the NDA, as the designated National Co-ordinating body for the EYPD, the Equality Authority and the Department of Education and Science in the production of *Shared the Feeling! Now Let's Share the Future*, a publication for all schools highlighting issues about disability. The booklet was launched on Network 2's The Den and over 50,000 copies were distributed throughout the country. A school focus week was held during November 2003, during which schools were invited to take action to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Disability and Children's Literature

The NDA collaborated with the Children's Books Ireland Festival to highlight the theme of disability in children's literature. An invited audience of children from nearby schools, including children with special needs, came to the NDA Pavilion to meet, hear and question author Jane Mitchell about her work. Froebel College of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education provided book displays for the seminar.

Encouraging Voices

Senator David Norris launched a publication called *Encouraging Voices* in June 2003 as part of the Encouraging Voices Project, which the NDA has facilitated in partnership with Dr. Michael Shevlin (Trinity College Dublin) and Professor Richard Rose (University College Northampton). The book was launched following the very successful conference of the same name held by the NDA in 2002.

Presentations and Speeches

Defining Rights

In March Chairperson Dr. Angela Kerins delivered a speech to the European Movement Conference on the Charter of Fundamental Rights and its relevance for people with disabilities in Ireland.

In addition, the NDA prepared a submission welcoming the proposed introduction of an all-Ireland Charter of Rights for the island of Ireland to the Joint Committee of Representatives to the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

Getting the Word Out

NDA staff made a variety of presentations and speeches at conferences, launches and meetings throughout the year, thereby communicating key NDA messages to a wide-ranging variety of audiences. Some of the conferences addressed were the annual conference of the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, the People with Disabilities in Ireland (PWDI) Conference on National Standards for Disability Services and the Dublin Employment Pact conference Reconstructing a Strategic Vision, at which the NDA delivered a speech on *The Democratic City – Towards Full Inclusion*.

Making Representation

The NDA is also represented on 26 bodies working on the development of policy and standards in a variety of areas, ranging from early childhood development and education to the development of the first national standards for disability services. Some of the bodies on which the NDA is permanently represented include the Women's Health Council, committees of the EQUAL Programme, the Dublin Transportation Office, the National Standards Authority of Ireland, as well as many working groups and subcommittees established by government departments.

The NDA in the Media

"Disability Standards Set to Improve Care", "Mental Health Difficulties Stigmatised", "Disability Research Needs to Follow Ethical Principals", "Plea on Play for Disabled". These are just some of the major headlines made by the National Disability Authority in Ireland's broadsheets during 2003.

Along with Special Olympics World Summer Games, the European Year of People with Disabilities and Disability Legislation stand out as the major events/issues on the disability agenda for 2003, and the NDA was publicly involved in each. In May, Dr. Angela Kerins expressed her deep concern at the Department of Health Expert Group's decision to ask Special Olympics athletes from SARS-infected countries not to travel to Ireland for the World Games in June. On July 23rd the Chair wrote an opinion piece in the Irish Times headlined "Spirit of Special Olympics Reflected in Commitments Made to Disabled" as a response to the extra €50m granted to services for people with intellectual disabilities. The profile of the NDA was raised through its lead role in the hugely successful

European Year of People with Disabilities. On September 25th, the NDA urged Independent Assessment of Need to be included in the new Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill.

Ongoing Publicity

On October 3rd, 2003, Dr. Kerins was interviewed on RTE 1's "Morning Ireland" about the launch of the first-ever National Standards of Disability Services pilot, which was followed by strong print coverage.

Significant coverage was also achieved for the Public Conference on Global Trends in Disability Law (September 15th); the Research Conference on Ethical Guidelines for Research involving Children with Disabilities (November 23rd); the joint submission with Comhairle to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government on increased funding for Disabled Persons

Grant; and the launch of the NDA Review on Access to Mental Health Services for People with Intellectual Disabilities (November 2nd).

Broadcast media responded well to the NDA, awarding €82,000 in scholarships for Disability Research on October 15th and to a seminar hosted by the NDA on November 4th entitled *Play for All: Providing Public Play for Children of All Abilities*.

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ENSURING HIGH STANDARDS

CHAPTER 5

Strategic Priority 4: Assure best practice in service for people with disabilities.

2003 saw the culmination of much of the NDA's work to identify and agree processes for establishing clear and enforceable standards with codes of practice in the provision of services for people with disabilities.

The process of developing draft National Standards for Disability Services continued this year in partnership with the Department of Health and Children.

Standards Advisory Committee

In order to work strategically with people with disabilities and other key stakeholders, the Standards Advisory Committee (SAC) was formally established in May 2002, under the Chairmanship of Professor Vincent Dodd (See Appendix IV for committee members).

The Standards Advisory Committee met on four occasions in 2003 and advised the NDA on the development of the National Standards for Disability Services and the Accessibility of Public Services Initiative.

Towards Best Practice

In 2003 the NDA commissioned three research projects to provide information on the current provision of services for people with disabilities in a number of key sectors: further education, employment and training, transport and health.

These projects also examined policies and legislation underpinning the provision of services in the identified sectors and explored the evidence of good practice internationally. Three *Towards Best Practice* reports will be published in early 2004.

National Standards for Disability Services

In the current Social Partnership Agreement, 2003-2005 *Sustaining Progress*, the Irish Government gave a commitment to ensure the completion of the development of the Standards for Disability Services, so that services are provided to an agreed level of consistent quality nationally.

The first-ever draft National Standards for Disability Services standards were presented at a national conference in January 2003, followed by seven regional consultation meetings. Following this, a second draft set of standards was issued in April 2003.

Pilot Project

The NDA and the Department of Health and Children agreed to undertake a pilot project to:

- evaluate the suitability and relevance of the audit tool
- evaluate the manpower requirement to carry out meaningful and effective assessments
- evaluate the efficiency of the monitoring process.

The primary aim of the Pilot Project was to evaluate the proposed monitoring process and tools rather than to assess how a service performed against the standards. It also provided a further opportunity for the NDA to engage with service providers in the further development of the Standards.

In January 2003, 20 service providers agreed to participate in the pilot project, involving more than 200 people with disabilities and their families along with more than 120 staff members. Following the advice from the Research Ethics Committee the NDA issued specific ethical guidelines to these pilot participants. The pilot project formally commenced in September 2003. It was assessed by Excellence Ireland and was then independently evaluated by Secta Consulting.

Based on the findings of the project, a time frame for the introduction of the standards and a monitoring system will be finalised in partnership with statutory monitoring bodies such as the Department of Health and Children, the Eastern Regional Health Authority, the Health Boards, the Social Services Inspectorate and all relevant stakeholders.

Working Group

In August 2003 the NDA met with health authorities and boards and the Department of Health and Children to exchange views and opinions on the development, implementation and monitoring of the standards. Following

this, the Department of Health and Children established a new Working Group to advise on the continued development of the standards and the practical implication for service provision. The Working Group met in October 2003.

Accessibility of Public Services

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, 2000, contains a commitment from Government that improvements will be made to make public services more accessible to people with disabilities within five years.

The NDA was given the task of issuing guidelines to monitor progress and to award compliant public offices.

NDA progress

In 2003, the NDA focused on accessibility of the built environment, information and communication technology, quality customer services and transport.

The Accessibility Team worked on the promotion and development of accessibility guidelines and review of current accessibility initiatives. At a strategic level the

team prepared a consultation paper entitled *Draft Guidelines for the Achievement of Improved Accessible Public Services*.

Throughout the year, the team made submissions to various Government Departments and their agencies, including FÁS, the Department of the Environment and Local Government, Dublin Transportation Office, the Railway Procurement Agency, the Department of Communications, Marine and the Natural Resources and the Tourism Policy Review Group. The team also held meetings with a variety of key construction, planning, transport and communications groups, as well as service providers representing people with disabilities.

Developing Quality in Services

Independent Needs Assessment

The NDA developed a report on Independent Needs Assessment and service co-ordination, answering a recommendation made by the Commission on the Status of People with Disability and reiterated by the Disability Legislation Consulting Group.

The NDA report identified the key principles and elements underpinning an independent system of needs assessment, as well as the structure and framework necessary to support such a system. A review of international practice in the area of needs assessment and service co-ordination was also undertaken.

Recommendations included the need for:

- a system of Single Shared Assessment (SSA), available as a right to all people with disabilities, covering social, economic, health and other needs;
- a regional, independent Disability Support Service (DSS) to implement the SSA, operated under the auspices of the Department of Social and Family Affairs;
- a comprehensive assessment process with specialist input where needed;
- prioritisation of needs for funding and service allocation;
- mechanisms for appeal, monitoring and review, guided by standards to ensure quality.

Evaluation of National Standards for Disability Services

An evaluation the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) got underway to assess the extent to which the proposed system ensures that services are provided to an agreed and consistent level of quality on a national basis. Recommendations for the future implementation and operation of the NSDS will be made following the completion of the evaluation.

Review of Access to Psychiatric Services

In April 2002, the NDA Board raised its concern that people with an intellectual disability were being denied access to appropriate psychiatric services because of their intellectual disability and asked the NDA executive to establish the facts on this issue.

In preliminary discussions with a range of stakeholders it was confirmed that the issue was a matter of concern to families, professionals in the service, service providers and service funding bodies.

The NDA sought to verify the extent and nature of the problem and commissioned Secta Consulting to conduct a review of the situation. The review was launched in November 2003 and found that about 8,000 persons in Ireland with an intellectual disability also have a psychiatric condition. Of these, 4,500 may require some sort of specialist assessment and treatment and between 900 and 2,400 people will exhibit challenging behaviours – up to two-thirds of which will have a psychiatric condition.

Throughout the consultation process concern was expressed over the ‘policy confusion’ regarding the provision of services for this client group. The researchers found a surprising lack of clarity on responsibility for psychiatric and behavioural services between Government departments. Families and carers spoke openly of the ‘nightmare’ that an acute psychiatric episode can bring when there is no clear pathway to support. Service professionals and intellectual disability service providers spoke of incoherence in national strategy.

The review stated that the absence of service for this client group is discriminatory and in contravention of the Equal Status Act (2000), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the UN Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

The NDA recommended that a comprehensive mental health service for this group should be provided urgently, underpinned by legislation and integrated into mainstream service. In addition, the service should be clarified in an agreed national strategy and resourced in line with international best practice.

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BUILDING THE ORGANISATION

CHAPTER 6

Organisational Structure of the National Disability Authority

The National Disability Authority is comprised of three departments, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the NDA's business:

Policy and Public Affairs

The core tasks of Policy and Public Affairs are to:

- lead development and implementation of programmes targeted at increasing awareness of disability issues;
- provide focus for achieving a shift in public awareness disability issues via promotional activities, educational tactics and direct intervention;
- develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure performance, productivity and value-for-money within the Policy and Public Affairs team;

- co-ordinate with the Corporate Services department to ensure that strategic, policy and budgetary requirements are met in all programme descriptions, developments and funding allocations;
- co-ordinate with all departments to define requirements and format of calls for proposals, evaluation criteria and awarding of grants, and also to ensure effectiveness of funding programmes and accuracy of reported details;
- co-ordinate with other departments to ensure effectiveness of funding programmes and accuracy of reported details;
- contribute to the development and revision of the National Disability Authority's strategy and policies relevant to disability awareness.

Research Standards and Development

Within Research Standards and Development the core tasks are to:

- lead development and implementation of programmes and initiatives targeted at promoting consistent national standards for disability services;

- provide a focus for achieving a shift in public awareness of disability issues through:
 1. promotional activities, educational tactics and direct intervention;
 2. identification and promotion of new technologies, practices and knowledge in disability issues and promotion of the advantages associated with uptake of such initiatives.
- develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure performance, productivity and value-for-money;
- co-ordinate with the Policy and Public Affairs and Corporate Services departments to ensure that strategic and budgetary goals are met in programme descriptions, developments and funding allocations;
- contribute to the development and revision of the National Disability Authority's strategy and policies relevant to both private and public sectors.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services function carries out the following tasks:

- provides support to the Authority on issues relating to governance and control of the National Disability Authority;
- prepares, presents and reviews the National Disability Authority's budget and projections;
- prepares and presents financial information and reports;
- supports and provides assistance to the internal auditor (when appointed) as required;
- provides input to the National Disability Authority's policy development;
- manages funding and monetary aspects of grant programmes across all departments;
- manages the National Disability Authority's administrative, contractual and marketing requirements;
- manages the National Disability Authority's information technology systems requirements;
- manages human resource needs and training requirements;
- manages physical resources, needs and requirements;
- co-ordinates with other departments to ensure effective programme management, accurate reporting and effective lines of communication;
- develops and measures Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) covering financial aspects of the National Disability Authority's business, and supports other departments in identifying, measuring and recording relevant KPIs;
- ensures that relevant and accurate information is provided to the Authority in a timely and efficient manner.

An organisational chart, with NDA staff working within each of these areas, is attached as Appendix VII.

Staff Training and Developing

The National Disability Authority invested significantly in the development and training of its staff in 2003 to assist and facilitate the introduction of new technology and software systems, and to offer valuable and progressive development opportunities.

Throughout the year, the NDA remained committed to ensuring that only those of the highest calibre were recruited to join its existing pool of experienced and professional staff.

Internal communications

In 2003 ICT systems were fine-tuned, and complimented by further staff training. In addition, departmental, inter-departmental, and senior management group meetings embedded internal communications.

Financial Management and Accounting System

Policy and procedures concerning the financial affairs of the NDA were further developed in accordance with requirements of the Department of Finance. An accounting reporting format was established and agreed with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

Sustaining Progress – First Progress Report

In October 2003, the NDA submitted its first progress report on modernisation, which was endorsed by the Performance Verification Group, monitoring body for Sustaining Progress.

Freedom of Information

All requests for material received under the Freedom of Information Act (other than those which were withdrawn) were either partially or fully granted. The Freedom of Information Act has applied to the NDA since June 2002. Since then, the NDA has sought to ensure that information requests under that Act are dealt with efficiently and in line with the statutory requirements.

Vital Archives

In order to promote effective communication between the NDA and individuals and organisations both within and outside the disability sector, the NDA began to develop an up-to-date and comprehensive database of contacts.

2003 also saw the establishment of a dedicated space for the National Disability Archive, which houses all major Irish, European and international disability reports, research work and policy submissions dating as far back as the establishment of the National Rehabilitation Board in 1968.

Library

NDA Library was further developed through 2003, providing a fully accessible environment to all users. The library continued to supply books and journal articles and source loan material to users throughout the country. Finally, the new reading room was opened in 2003, accommodating up to 10 people for quiet study or collaborative project work.

FINANCE NOTE FOR 2003 ACCOUNTS

The Exchequer through the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform funds the National Disability Authority. It makes agency payments on behalf of the Department of Education and Science, and receives reimbursement of occupancy outlay from the Department of Health and Children.

In 2003 the NDA managed the finances of the European Year of People with Disabilities and hosted the National Co-ordinating Committee and theme subgroups; Rights Responsibilities and Partnership, Awareness, Youth and Disability, and Employment.

The NDA facilitated and funded the work of the Disability Legislation Consultation Group and promoted the document *Equal Citizens* which was published in February 2003.

The first draft of the National Standards for Disability Services was launched in January 2003, and the National

Standards continues as the largest area of expenditure in the non-pay category.

Independent researchers were commissioned to carry out the service mapping exercises. This was major area of expenditure in 2003, which culminated in the publication in January 2004 of the *Towards Best Practice* series of publications in the policy areas, Health, Transport, and Further Education and Employment.

Expenditure continued on the Barcelona Project with 2003 being the mid year of a three-year project.

Funds were expended on a piece of research in collaboration with the ESRI on the use of the World Health Organisation International Classification of Function for the proposed National Disability Study.

The NDA found itself liable for commercial rates for the first time in 2003.

Cash Expenditure for NDA was €4,347m for 2003, (€4,956M in 2002)

	NDA		EYPD
	2003	2002	2003
	€K	€K	€K
Payroll	2,070	1,593	138
Occupancy and Administration			
Costs	518	484	196
Recruitment costs			
travel and training	136	129	8
NEPS	351	322	0
Project and Commissioned work	1,001	1,146	1101
Capital Cost	271	1,282	2
Total	4,347	4,956	1,445

Please note that the accounts for 2002/3 have not been audited and are subject to change

Appendix I Policy Submissions

The NDA made submissions to the following:

1. Department of Health and Children Expert Group on Mental Health Policy;
2. Department of the Environment and Local Government, Review of Accessibility of Electronic Voting Machines (January);
3. Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) Consultation paper: *The Future Framework for the Regulation of Universal Service in the Irish Market* (February);
4. FÁS, Excellence through People Award (April), Railway Procurement Agency Integrated Ticketing (April);
5. Tourism Policy Review Group on Accessibility and Tourism (April);
6. Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Criminal Law (Insanity) Bill 2002 (May);
7. Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities (May);
8. Department of Community, Marine and Natural Resources, Review of Domestic Passenger Ship legislation (June);
9. Comments to the Joint Committee of Representatives of the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission on its pre-consultation paper on *A charter of rights for the Island of Ireland* (June);
10. Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Expert Group on Crime Statistics (May);
11. Human Rights commission (HRC) consultation document on *Older People in Long-Stay Care* (July);
12. Law Reform Commission's *Consultation Paper on Law and the Elderly* (August);
13. Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Science concerning Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill 2003 (September);
14. Oral Submission to Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Science on Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill 2003 (September).

Appendix II National Disability Authority External Representation

National Equal Mainstreaming Policy Group
Christine Whyte

Department of Health & Children – Cost of Disability
Working Group – DOHC – PPF commitment NDA nominee
Christine Whyte

Women’s Health Council – Chair Subcommittee Policy
Christine Whyte

FÁS – NAC Appeals sub committee
Donie O’Shea

National Disability Authority Worker Directors Group
Donie O’Shea

Department of J. E. & L.R. – PPF / Sustaining Progress
Working Group on Equality Proofing
Donie O’Shea

Strategic Management Initiative Equality/Diversity Sub
Group of Strategic Management Initiative
Paula Murphy

Dublin Transportation Office Advisory Group
Donie O’Shea

EQUAL Programme – EQUAL Monitoring Committee,
DETE/ESF Committee
Marion Wilkinson

Children’s Research Centre Research Advisory Committee
Dr. Anne Good

Advisory Committee Equality for Women Measure Project
Emer McCarthy

Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education
Consultative Committee
Erik Koornneef

NAC – Appeals Committee
Donie O’Shea

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National Accreditation Committee
Secretariat: FAS – QA 00/01 Accreditation of training
service for people with disabilities
Erik Koornneef

National Accreditation Committee
Secretariat: FAS – NAC Approvals sub committee
Erik Koornneef

Department of Health & Children Working Group on the
National Standards for Disability Services
Erik Koornneef

Excellence Ireland Q-Mark Approvals Board
Erik Koornneef

Strategic Management Initiative
Secretariat: Department of An Taoiseach – Quality
Customer Service (QCS) Working Group
Erik Koornneef

National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) Health Care
Standards Working Group
Erik Koornneef

Disability Consultative Forum – Department of Social and
Family Affairs Advisory Panel
Frances Bird

Consortium for EYPD funded Employment Flagship Project
Frances Bird

Public Health Alliance, Ireland Council Member
Iris Elliott

Educational Disadvantage Forum
Marion Wilkinson

Quality Customer Service (QCS) Working Group
Paula Murphy

Accessibility Research Advisory Group
Paula Murphy

Public Transport Accessibility Committee
Sean Murphy

Appendix III Presentations Made by NDA Staff

Conferences, Launches and Stakeholder Groups

Disability Federation of Ireland, Core elements on disability legislation (January)

Rehab Council, The Research Agenda in the NDA (January)

Irish Council of Civil Liberties (February)

European Year of People with Disabilities (February)

PWDI, Cost of Disability (June)

Waterford Regional Seminar (August)

AAATE (August)

Disability Legislation in Ireland (August)

PWDI Conference in Dublin Castle, *National Standards for Disability Services* (September)

Public Launch of "*Psychiatric services for people with intellectual disabilities*" (November)

Violence Against Women with Disabilities: Joint presentation with Women's Aid to: National Steering on Violence Against Women with Disabilities (June), and National Women's Council of Ireland Disability Panel (September)

Local Authorities National Seminar, Portlaoise

Mid-Western Health Board, Disability Advisory Committee, Research and library role of the NDA, Tipperary (February)

Irish Union of Supported Employment Annual Conference, *Public Attitudes towards People with Disabilities*, Mayo (October)

Dublin Employment Pact conference, Reconstructing a Strategic Vision, entitled *The Democratic City – Towards Full Inclusion* (December)

Annual Conference of the Sociological Association of Ireland Paper Presentation on *Competing Paradigms in Studying Disability: the ICF as a way forward?* (May)

The National Disability Authority/Accessibility of the built environment – *An Overview Design for All Conference, County Leitrim Community Forum* (September)

Rehabilitation International Africa Regional Conference, Durban. Irish Disability Research and Data Collection Presentation on *Disability and the Environment using the ICF in Irish Disability Research and Data Collection* (October)

Appendix IV Advisory Committees

Mental Health Advisory Committee

Mr. Frank Flannery (Chair)

Dr. Mary Clarke-Finnegan

Ms. Phil Cotter

Ms. Patsy Doolin

Mr. Terence Farrell (new member 2003)

Ms. Noreen Fitzgibbon

Mr. Thomas Fox (resigned)

Ms. Joan Hamilton (resigned)

Ms. Frances Harvey

Ms. Mary Hodgins (resigned)

Mr. Brian Howard

Mr. Paul Howard

Mr. Seamus Hoyer

Dr. Verena Keane

Mr. Brendan Gerard Kenny (new member 2003)

Ms. Mary Keys

Mr. Mark Logan

Mr. Andrew Logue

Mr. Hugo Magee

Dr. Tom Moran
Mr. Thomas Noonan (new member 2003)
Mr. Dan O'Connor
Ms. Winifred O'Hanrahan
Ms. Fran Richards
Mr. Martin Rogan (resigned)
Mr. Mark Shields (resigned)
Ms. Laura Thompson
Mr. Richard Walsh (resigned)
Ms. Margaret Webb
Ms. Christine Whyte
Ms. Iris Elliott (Secretary to the Committee)

Research Advisory Committee

Prof. Ferdinand Von Prondzynki (Chairperson)
John Bosco Conama
Joseph Mullins
Liz Brosnan
Katherine O' Leary
Maria Walls
Ted O' Shea
Aine Kelly

Cliona Ni Chualain
Mary Van Lieshout
Prof. Robert Holton
Prof. Patricia Noonan Walsh
Gerry Brady
Lawrence Bond
Jim Walsh
Dr Donal Mc Ananey
Eileen Lavery
Prof. Brendan Whelan
Clare Dunne
Prof. Ian Brown

Standards Advisory Committee

Prof. Vincent Dodd (Chairperson)
Kevin Stanley
Maureen Breslin
Margaret O' Connor
Jim Dennehy
Eamon Eagan
Frieda Finlay
Tom Hughes

Shona Byrne
Karina Wallis
Anne Winslow
Patrick Gargan
Don Tallon
Brian O'Donnell
Niall Byrne
Mary Van Lieshout
Brian Abbot
Tony Lenehan
Priya Prendergast
Fionnuala Duffy
Michele Clarke
Stephen Mathews
Peter Humphreys
Brendan Coyle
Michael Ringrose
Sandra Smith
Margaret McDonnell
Erik Koornneef (Secretary to the Committee)

Appendix V Steering Committees

The Barcelona Declaration

Ms. Marie Lynch, Disability Federation of Ireland
Cllr. Enda Nolan, General Council of County Councils
Mr. Des Kenny, Not for Profit Association
Mr. Michael Killeen, City & County Managers Association
Mr. Michael Ringrose, People with Disabilities in Ireland Ltd
Mr. Donie O'Shea, (Chair) NDA
Mr. Jim Casey, Tipperary CIL
Mr. Donncha Ó Muineacháin, Department of Environment,
Heritage & Local Government

Appendix VI NDA Research Promotion Scheme

One project returned the funding as it was not in a position to proceed. The successful projects were:

Westgate Foundation, Ballincollig, Co. Cork

An exploratory study to identify the mental care needs of older people with physical or mental disability in Ballincollig.

AHEAD

The design and implementation of an Open Learning Staff Development Pack on Accessible Curriculum and Including Students with Disability for staff development of academic staff in third level education.

Northside Partnership

To identify policy blocks to local disabled people's participation in mainstream training and employment.

Irish Tinnitus Association

To determine the therapeutic and other support needs of people with tinnitus, and to influence public policy towards improved provision of services to meet those needs.

(Report published.)

Roscommon Disability Awareness Group

To highlight the needs and wants of people with disabilities in Roscommon.

Súgradh

To examine the existing public play provision for children with disabilities in Ireland. (Report published.)

Nigel Clare Network Trust (Irl)

To produce recommendations on what is best practice in relation to helping carers balance work and caring responsibilities.

Irish Deaf Society

To establish the relative poverty level of deaf people in Ireland, and to identify the causes of this poverty.

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Appendix VII</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Staff Organisational Chart December 2003</h3>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">National Disability Authority</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Director: M.Claire O'Connor</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Personal Assistant to Director: Bernadette Vella</p>
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Research & Standards Development (RSD)	
Head of Dept:	Standards Officers
Mary Van Lieshout	Erik Koorneef (Senior)
Personal Assistant	Vacant
Nora Smith	Information Officer
(Gaye O'Neill c.b)	Siobhan Dunne
Research Officers	Michael Williams (Assistant)
Dr. Anne Good (Senior)	(Michelle Bennet c.b.)
Eithne Fitzgerald (Senior)	Administration
Darren McCausland	Miriam Molloy
(Mary Murray c.b)	Barbara Collopy
Jim Winters (Assistant)	Emma Doyle

Project Team Leader:
Sean Murphy
Accessibility Co-ordinators
Vacant – Info & Comms
Vacant – Transport
Eoin O'Herlihy – Built Environment
Paula Murphy – Quality Customer Services
Administration
Michele Broad

Corporate Services
Corporate Services Manager:
Cliona Curley
Personal Assistants
Anne Broderick
Mary McNabola
Corporate Services Executives
Regina Mulligan
Richard Quinnn
Michael Foley
Administration
Gretta Flynn
Carmel Clarke
Reception
Heather O'Leary
Maintenance
Charlie Buckley
Paul Fox
Kathleen Gaynor
Paddy Power

Policy & Public Affairs (PPA)
Head of Dept:
Christine Whyte
Personal Assistant
Maighread Kelly
Senior PPA Advisors
Donie O'Shea
Iris Elliott
Mary Meaney
Frances Bird
PPA Advisors
Marion Wilkinson
Emer McCarthy
Administration
Catherine Kenny
Jacinta Byrne

We would like to thank the following staff who left during 2003, for their work with the National Disability Authority:

Brian McKean, Dr. Mike Timms, Brenda Delaney, Elaine Harris, Aoife O'Toole, Liz McGrath, Robert Reck, Andrea Frost



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