



# Annual Activity Report

## 2019

[www.helplink.ie](http://www.helplink.ie)

Head Office: 1st Floor, The Plaza, Headford Road, Galway City

&

1st Floor, Enterprise House, Kiltimagh, County Mayo

CRO No: 546355 CRA No: 20143237 CHY No: 21366

 @helplinksupport     /helplinkmentalhealth

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chairperson's Message .....	3
CEO's Message .....	4
Our Mission/Vision/Values .....	5
Organisation Chart/Governance .....	6
Services/Impact .....	7-13
Financial Year Outcomes .....	14

# Chairperson's Message



Dear Friends,

Ireland has one of the highest rates of mental health illness in Europe, ranking joint third out of the 36 countries surveyed in the annual Health at a Glance report (1): with 18.5 per cent of the Irish population recorded as having a mental health disorder, such as anxiety, bipolar, schizophrenia, depression, or alcohol or drug use, in 2016. While the suicide rate is below average, the rates of depression are well above the European average for both men and women in Ireland.

Organisations such as Helplink are at the forefront of this battle, supporting people with their mental health needs accessibly, 7 days a week locally, nationally and internationally.

Now more than ever we and our clients need all the support you can give, from referring a friend or a family member that needs support to simply following us on social media and donating if you can.

Helplink has been serving our communities since 2012, during this time our organisation has been growing steadily year-on-year. Over this time we have gained a lot of learning, as a result we have used this learning and experience to build a more comprehensive, client needs based and sustainable organisation.

2018 was the year of the new governance code, keeping boards of trustees busier than ever. We have set up a subcommittee actively working on compliance and reporting progress dutifully at each board meeting.

It is always sad to see dedicated, voluntary board members leaving, even though board renewal is an essential element of good governance: I would like to very much thank, for their contributions, departing board members Georgina Kearney, Jennifer Conroy, and Nial O'Reilly, and welcome Brenda Fallon, Clodna McGuire and Gerry Mackey.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who make Helplink the wonderful organisation it is today: Our CEO Lochlann Scott with his formidable drive, our counsellors and therapists, our team of mediators, the admin staff, our funders and partners.

Kind regards,

Gilles Varette  
Chair of Helplink Support Services Board of Directors/Trustees

(1) [https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/2018\\_healthatglance\\_rep\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/2018_healthatglance_rep_en.pdf)

# Message from our CEO



Dear Supporters, Partners, Clients, interested Parties,

I am proud to say that in 2019, here in Helplink Support Services (now trading as Helplink Mental Health), we had our most productive year to date.

## Some significant developments for Helplink during 2019 include:

- Our **local** and **national** counselling **services** appointments **rose by 43%** in comparison to 2018 - we provided these counselling appointments in **12 counties across Ireland**.
- Internationally, in the **Irish Abroad** Counselling Service appointments **rose by 175%**. We provided this service to Irish citizens in **20 countries (28 cities) worldwide**. Helplink also **expanded the reach** of the service further by providing counselling for **Irish emigrants that are returning to Ireland** - in partnership with the Crosscare Migrant Project, Safe Home Ireland and the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas.
- Furthermore, we had a total of **112% increase in the number of new clients** in 2019.
- Helplink **opened up a second office** as part of our mission to provide our services in person in the West of Ireland. This office is located in Kiltimagh **County Mayo**. The opening of this new office increase our Counsellors/Therapists to 21 in total in 2019.
- We provided three **Counsellors/Therapists to 10 schools across Connemara** as mentors under the School Completion Programme.
- Our **radio show/podcast The Helplink Show**, where we talk with individuals and organisations that are supporting our communities mental health and emotional wellbeing was the **GOLD award winner** in the 'Social Benefit' section of the national, CRAOL Community Radio awards. In 2019 the show was hosted on 5 community radio stations and as a podcast on Spotify/YouTube.
- On top of the **partnerships** forged with the Irish Abroad service mentioned above we also forged partnerships with other charities/NGOs. As a result we are now providing counselling services to clients referred from the Galway Traveller Movement, Hand in Hand, GAP and many more. Furthermore, our partnership with **TUSLA** (Galway/Roscommon) providing a alcohol dependency counselling service continued into its third year in 2019.
- We also were successful in partnering with the charity the **Gambling Awareness Trust** where they will fund a **new gambling addiction counselling services** that was released in 2020 - see below for more.

The **plan for 2020** is for us to **consolidate our current services** and at the same time **expand** where these service offerings are available - for example our aim in 2020 is to open a **third new office** for 7 day a week and out-of-hours, face-to-face services in the **County Roscommon** in the West of Ireland and release our mental health **information and education online platform** entitled **Mind Hacks**.

Thank you to all our supporters and clients from 2019!

Lochlann Scott  
CEO @ Helplink Support Services



# Our Mission, Vision & Values

**Mission:** Helplink Mental Health's (Helplink Support Services CLG) mission is to provide accessible, free or low cost mental health services; locally (West of Ireland), nationally and internationally, 7 days a week and out-of-hours. The three types of mental health services that Helplink provides are: Counselling, Information Provision and Education.

**Vision:** Helplink Mental Health's vision is to be Ireland's leading provider of accessible mental health services locally (West of Ireland), nationally and internationally. We aim to achieve this vision through partnership with other organisations and by providing our services accessibly through the utilisation of traditional face-to-face service provision structures in the West of Ireland, coupled with online technologies for service provision nationally and internationally.

**Values:** we value **Innovation** in service delivery and we work on an ongoing basis with our funding partners and clients to ensure that we are providing the best service possible; in a way that meets our clients' needs. Innovation in technology is one of these examples as we provide most of our services online, as well as face-to-face, which enables people in rural areas, people with physical disabilities and others to receive the support they need in a way that suits them.

We as an organisation value **Partnership** with other agencies/organisations in local, national and international communities. It is our belief that non-profit organisations can accomplish more if we work to complement the existing resources available in these communities rather than duplicate them. An example of our partnerships on a local level is providing appointments in local health centres and community centres in order to bring our much needed services to the people where they need them. Our work with Irish support organisations on the ground in the USA and Australia to promote our Irish Abroad Counselling Service and to help facilitate client referrals is an example of our work with international partners.

As a charitable organisation, that provides mental health and conflict resolution services, **Transparency** is of paramount importance to us. Helplink operates in a way that is honest, transparent and ethical. Our accounts are available to the public for viewing, upon request, as are our annual reports.

**Confidentiality** is a key value for our organisation due to the work we carry out in the mental health and conflict resolution sectors. We go above and beyond the industry standards when it comes to confidentiality – one of the ways we achieve this value is by not storing client contact information/session notes in the cloud and by not keeping any paper based files for clients. All client information and session notes are kept on encrypted documents on external hard drives. We also have client contracts where confidentiality is discussed with the client for transparency. Furthermore, all staff, volunteers, board members, contractors sign up to our code of conduct which is available in our HR policies and procedure document.

Helplink believes in the philosophy of **Good Stewardship**. As a result we endeavour to have a Board that has a diverse range of skills, expertise, genders and personal qualities in order to provide robust and effective stewardship. We are compliant with the Good Governance Code of Ireland, we are a registered charity with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) (Ireland) and we have charitable (CHY) status with the Revenue Commissioners. Furthermore, we have systems and processes that are regularly reviewed, to ensure that we can achieve and sustain our objectives with integrity.

# Current Members of Helplink's Voluntary Board of Directors/Trustees & Organisation's CEO

**Gilles Varette:** Product Support Manager Americas – EMEA CSG International  
(Chair of Helplink Board)

**Sam O'Neill:** Marketing Executive and former President of GMIT Student's Union  
(Organisation Secretary)

**Tamar Scott:** Counselling Psychologist and Clinical Supervisor

**Brenda Fallon:** HR Specialist, currently HR business partner at NUI Galway

**Clodna McGuire:** Consultant Solicitor at O'Connor Johnson Solicitors

**Gerry Mackey:** Mentor – Investor and Financing Readiness

**Helplink's CEO Lochlann Scott:** former assistant psychologist, social care worker and held multiple management roles in retail and the hospitality sectors.

## Organisation Chart



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## Local & National Counselling/Therapy Services Info & Statistics for 2019

(7 Days a Week & Out-Of-Hours)

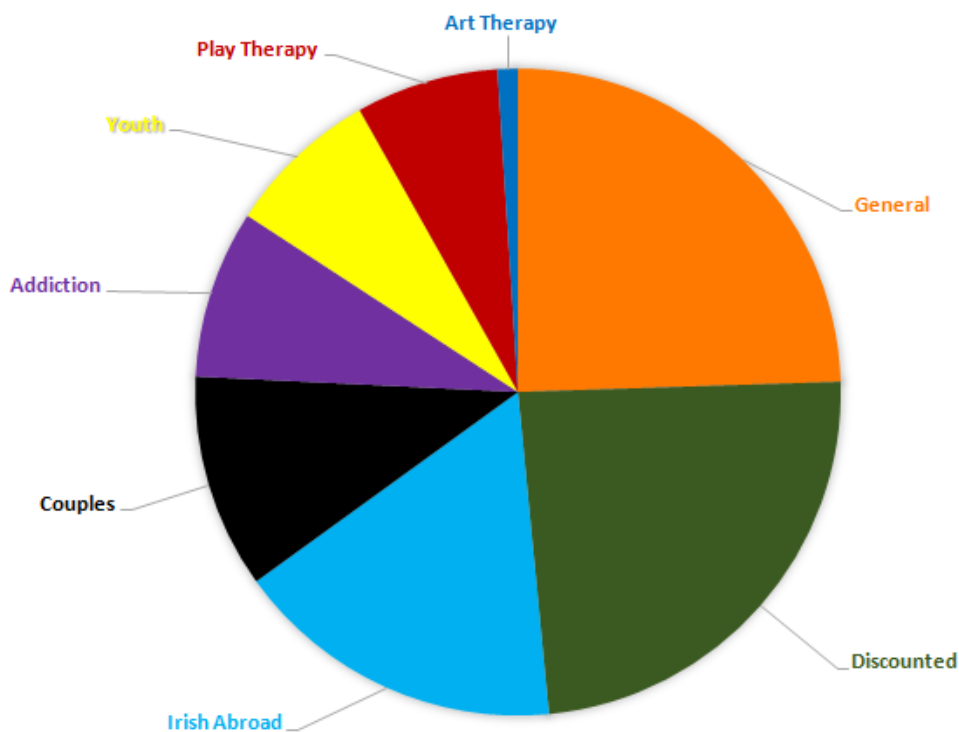
In 2019 Helplink provided 2188 counselling and therapy appointments locally (in person) in the West of Ireland, from our Galway and Mayo offices and online nationwide.

*The following are the counselling/therapy services we offered in 2019:*

- General Solution Focused Counselling
- Play Therapy (Galway & Mayo)
- Art Therapy (Galway & Mayo)
- Couples / Marriage Counselling
- Youth Counselling (including addiction)
- Addiction Counselling
- Bereavement Therapy

### Type of Counselling

General	Discounted	Irish Abroad	Couples	Addiction	Youth	Play Therapy	Art Therapy
24%	24%	17%	11%	8%	8%	7%	1%



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## CONTINUED: Local & National Counselling / Therapy Services Info & Statistics for 2019

### Some of Our Local & National Testimonials

#### General Counselling

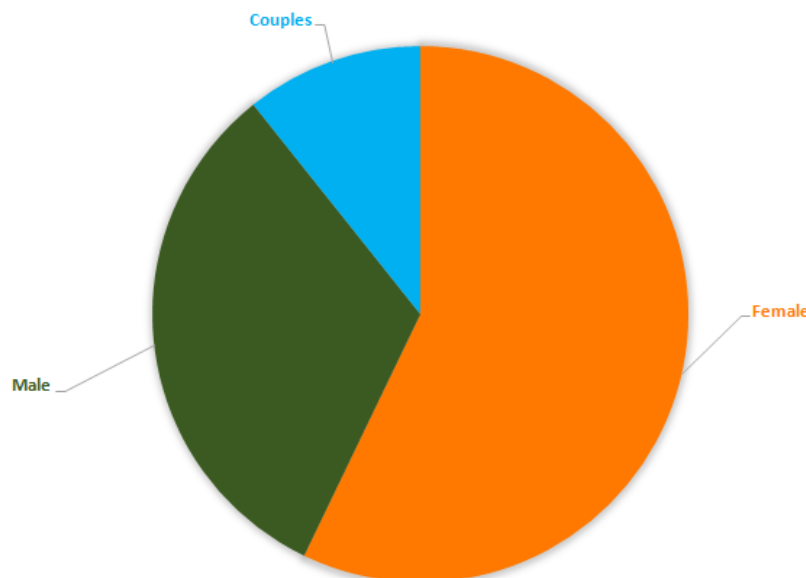
"When I first started counselling, I was going through a traumatic year and felt my life was a mess. Thanks to the support and help I received; I am able to see things in a total new perspective which I would have never been able to before. I feel this has really benefited me and will be very useful in the future. I cannot recommend Liam O'Grady and this organisation more highly as it allowed me to explore my ongoing feelings and thoughts in a safe, non-judgmental place. I found it extremely helpful as they would accommodate and facilitate me for any appointments I needed".

#### Play Therapy

"Our 8-year-old son attended play therapy with Denise Gordon for 8 sessions and starting week 3 we noticed changes in his confidence, self-esteem, and social skills. After every session he was skipping from happiness. He loved the sessions with Denise. He has lost all the anxiety he had before, has been able to establish more friendships and has learned to calm down much quicker. My son has formed better relationships with his little brothers too. In our opinion Denise has had a great influence on him and we would bring him back to her if an issues arises".

#### Gender Breakdown of Clients

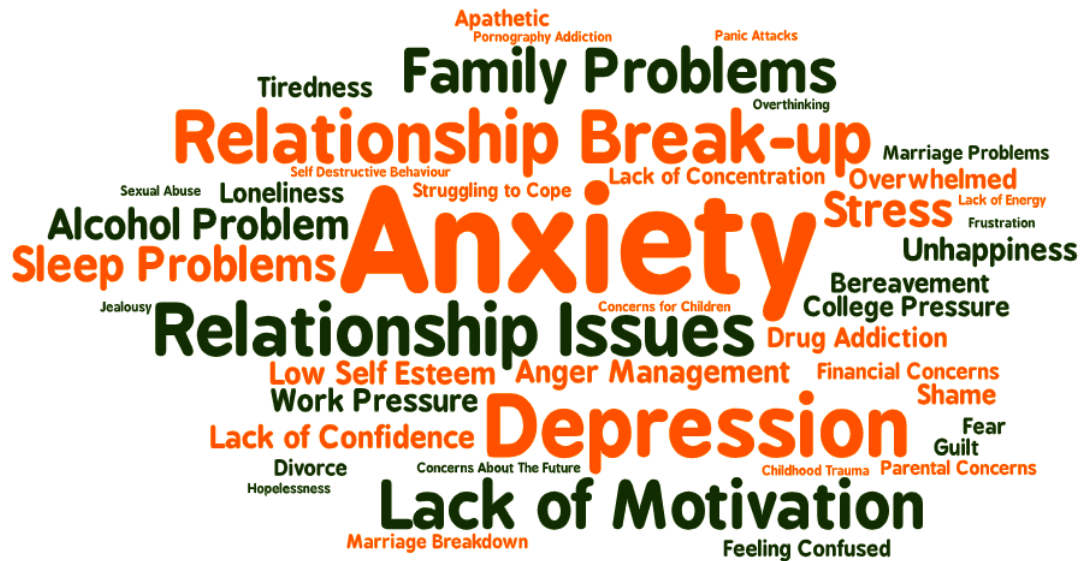
Female	Male	Other	Couples
57%	32%	0%	11%



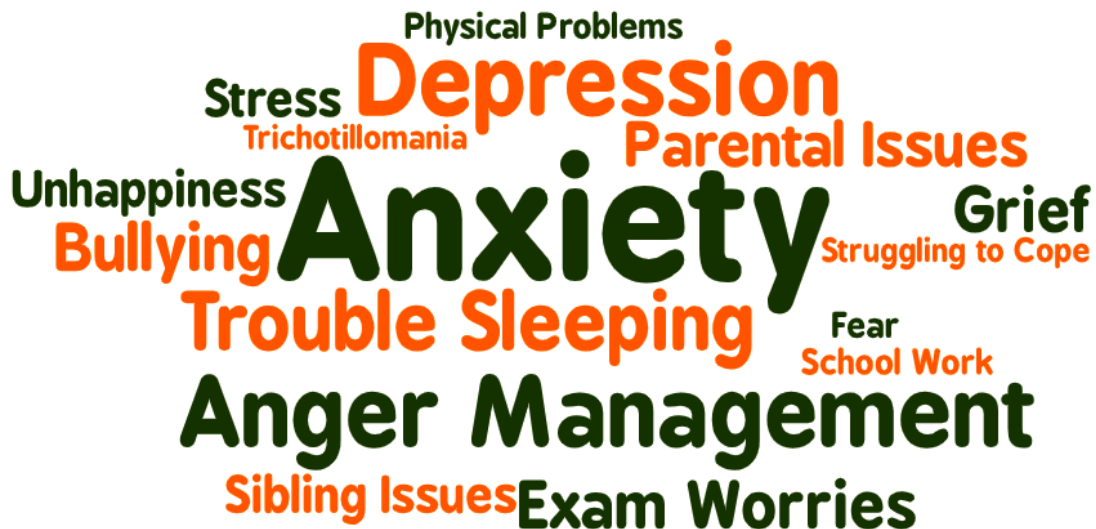


# SERVICES & IMPACT

## Reasons Why Adult Clients Attended Counselling



## Reasons Why Youth Clients Attended Counselling



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## Reasons for Couples Attending Counselling



## Reasons for Attending Counselling Play Therapy



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## **TUSLA: Alcohol Dependency Counselling Service Galway City & County**

In 2019 we renewed our free alcohol dependency counselling service for adults, referred through TUSLA. Since late 2017 we have provided 500+ counselling appointments to adults across Galway City and County.

## **EAP: Employee Counselling Service & Workshops**

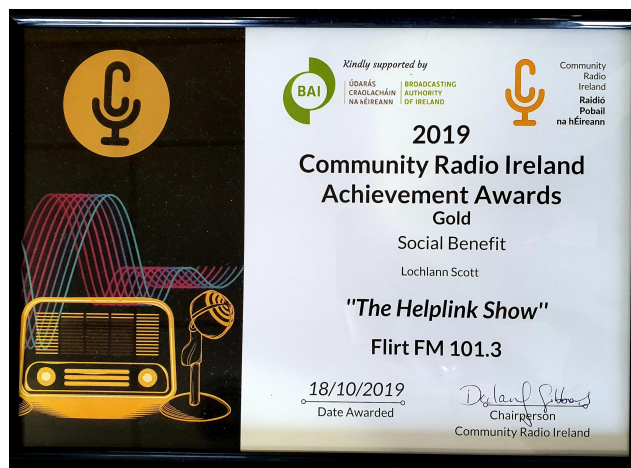
In 2019 Helplink continued its innovative pay-as-you-go employee counselling service to many small and medium sized businesses and community organisations across the nation. Furthermore, we continued to provide our Leadership and Employee workshops with multiple businesses and organisations; addressing topics such as supporting clients/staff in distress, mindfulness, stress/anxiety reduction and more.

## **School/Student Services: Student Emotional Wellbeing Workshops & Student Mentoring Service**

Over the course of 2019 Helplink provided ten 'Mind Hacks' workshops across six schools/colleges (primary, post-primary and third level) to 600 plus students in Galway City and County. Furthermore, Helplink continued to provide three qualified Counsellors /Therapists as Mentors (supporting primary and post-primary children/young people to stay in school) to 10 schools under the School Completion Programme; during this period.

## **Information Provision Service: The Helplink Show (Radio Show / Podcast)**

September 2019 our very own radio show/podcast won the GOLD award in the 'Social Benefit' category at the national CRAOL Community Radio Awards. Our CEO presents an hour long radio show once a month on topics such as mental health, emotional wellbeing, community services, etc. The show was available in 2019 live on six community radio stations every month i.e. Flirt FM (NUIG student radio), Connemara FM, Ros FM (Roscommon community radio) and CRC FM (Castlebar (Mayo) community radio station), ACR (Athlone Community Radio), Irish Radio Canada and on our YouTube/Spotify Channels.



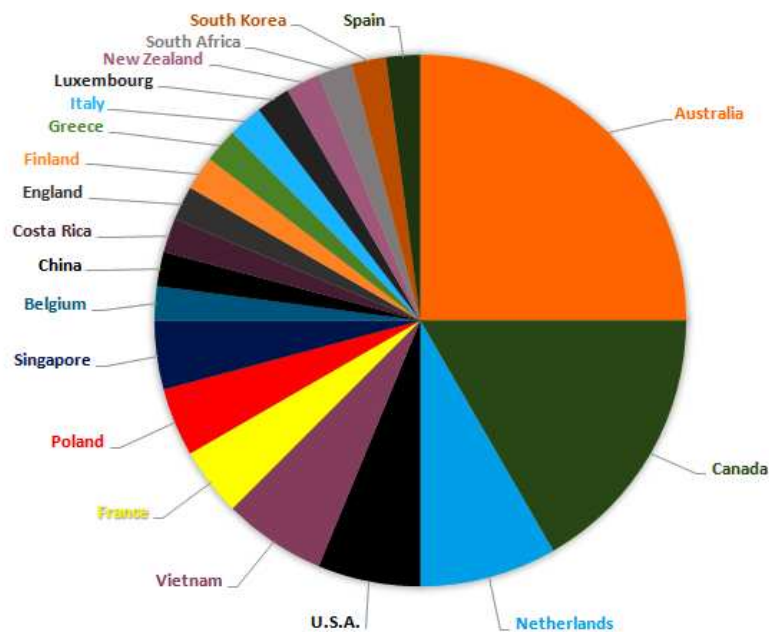
# SERVICES & IMPACT

## INTERNATIONAL Irish Abroad Counselling Service Info & Statistics for 2019

In 2019 we provided our free online counselling service to Irish citizens in 20 countries worldwide. We also expanded the reach of our online counselling service for Irish citizens living abroad from fully available worldwide to include Irish citizens returning home from living abroad as well!

**Countries Reached**

Australia	Canada	Netherlands	U.S.A.	Vietnam	France	Poland	Singapore	Luxembourg	New Zealand
25%	17%	8%	6%	6%	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%
Belgium	China	Costa Rica	England	Finland	Greece	Italy	South Africa	South Korea	Spain
2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%



## Client Testimonial From Our Irish Abroad Online Counselling Service

*"I recently finished my 6 counselling sessions with this service and just want to express my sincere gratitude for this service. Emma Tynan provided excellent support and I found the service very helpful as I navigate the emotional aspects of emigration. I emigrated to Canada over 6 years ago and found that many local support forums for Irish emigrants focus on the logistical and practical aspects of emigration but not the impact on mental health. So I'm very happy to see that this service is provided by your organisation and supported by the Irish government. Please pass on my sincere gratitude to all your team and project partners."*



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## Launch of National Gambling Addiction/Dependency Counselling Service

In November of 2019 Helplink was chosen by the Gambling Awareness Trust to provide a free-to-use Gambling Addiction/Dependency Counselling Service.

This service was launched in early 2020 and provides free gambling addiction counselling nationwide online and by phone 7 days a week and out-of-hours; not only to those with gambling problems/addictions but also for their loved ones that are affected by their loved ones gambling.





# Services & Impact



## Social Media Stats 2019



**Twitter**  
**1007+ Followers**  
**63.5k Impressions**



**Facebook**  
**1,511**  
**Followers/Likes**



**Google**  
**13.7k Page Views**  
**6.4k Site Users**



## Services Overview 2019

**21 Experienced  
Qualified  
Counsellors  
&  
Therapists**

**Global  
Counselling  
Service for  
Irish Abroad  
&  
Returning Irish**

**12 Therapeutic  
Services for  
Children  
Young People  
&  
Adults**

**5  
Workshops for  
Students  
Employees  
Business  
&  
Community  
Leaders**

**Information  
Provision Service  
Radio Show  
&  
Podcast**

**Two Offices  
Galway City  
&  
Kiltimagh, Mayo**



## Financial Year Outcomes 1st July 2019 to 30th June 2020

**Gross (total) Income: €165,317**

### Sources of Income

- **Grants:**

Gambling Awareness Trust	59,000
TUSLA Alcohol Service	12,000
Galway City Council Social Inclusion	200

- Donations & Sponsorship (public, corporate, philanthropic) 575
- Counselling Services Income 7,5961
- Other Income/Sales (e.g School Completion Programme) 17,581

**Gross (total) Expenditure: €143,572**

### Main Expenditure Items for Current Period

• CEO Salary	16,938
• Administrator Salary	12,597
• Contractor Fees (counselling services & workshop facilitation)	66,922
• Office Rent x 2	11,002
• Insurance	845
• Lighting & heating costs	1074
• Professional fees	2910
• Costs related to trading or commercial activities	31,344

**Net earnings for the period outline: 21,745**

# Thank you for reading

## Some of our Supporters / Partners / Memberships for 2018



1st Floor, The Plaza  
Headford Road, Galway City.



+353 (0) 91 759887



helplinksupport@helplink.ie



www.helplink.ie