



ACQUIRED  
BRAIN INJURY  
IRELAND

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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







## CONTENTS

Introduction from our Chief Executive	pg 4
Message from our Chair	pg 6
About Us	pg 8
Rebuilding Lives: Conor's Story	pg 10
What We Do	pg 14
2022: A Report on Services	pg 24
Our people	pg 26
Speaking up for brain injury	pg 29
Fundraising	pg 35
Finances and accounts	pg 38
Company information	pg 40





## INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We are pleased to present this Annual Report 2022 as we exit the Covid-19 emergency, and as we settle into a 'new normal' in terms of service delivery. Our highest priority for the past two years has been the safety of our staff and the brain injury survivors we serve. It is energising to be able to broaden our horizons again, to plan for development and to continue our campaign for better outcomes for all those impacted by brain injury in Ireland.

In that spirit, we began preparations to host the 14th biennial World Congress on Brain Injury next year – a major landmark for our organisation – taking our place as an international leader in brain injury services. We look forward to welcoming many of the world's leading clinicians, researchers and healthcare professionals to Dublin in March 2023, and to showcasing our gold standard neuro rehabilitation practices on a global stage.

Earlier this year we also announced the launch of creATe, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's new Digital Assistive Technology service. This project, which will support survivors of brain injury in achieving their goals through access to assistive technology, is a significant achievement for the organisation and an area we intend to grow into the future.

Last year, the Ombudsman's Wasted Lives report shone a light on the systemic misplacement of too many young people living with brain injuries in nursing homes in Ireland. Included in the report was the recommendation to develop more transitional and assisted living houses to support the needs of this hidden group in society.

Therefore, in 2022, we scaled up this area of our work and a new full time Head of Housing and Development was appointed to the Senior Management Team. Already there are 16 Assisted Living Houses within our property portfolio, with development of a further service in County Kerry underway.

We know that we can play a significant role in addressing the problem of Wasted Lives, so that all those capable of living a more independent life – with choice and autonomy – may have the opportunity. We continue to work to that end every day across all of our services nationwide, in our Clubhouses and Community Rehabilitation settings, through our Step Ahead Plus vocational rehabilitation programme, as well as our On With Life Programme for Families and Carers.

Altogether, in 2022, we were able to support some 1,100 survivors and family members to rebuild their lives after brain injury. This would not happen without the work of our world-class team of creative, solution-focused brain injury experts. Across all areas of the organisation our staff embody our values with passion and purpose. I would like to thank each and every one for their commitment to ensuring that brain injury survivors can live their lives with dignity and choice, making a real contribution to the communities of which they are a part.

I would also like to thank the funders, supporters, volunteers and partners who continue to stand with us as we pursue the mission that unites us all: to passionately serve and relentlessly advocate to empower and support people impacted by brain injury to rebuild their lives.

I very much look forward to what more we can achieve together in the year to come.

Barbara O'Connell  
Chief Executive  
Acquired Brain Injury Ireland



## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

This year Acquired Brain Injury Ireland delivered its 22nd year of service – continuing the development of its neuro rehabilitation services nationally. From case management and family support to vocational assessment and in-home bespoke rehabilitation, our expert teams empower those recovering from the trauma of brain injury to live their everyday lives with confidence.

The organisation is proud to be able to evidence the effectiveness of its approach, through the publication of its first Clinical Outcomes Measurement Report, produced earlier this year. The report presents and analyses the trends from referrals in residential and community services.

The outcome measurement data clearly demonstrates that individuals accessing rehabilitation services can expect to lessen their disability, and therefore reduce their support needs, over the course of their rehabilitation journey. We found clear evidence that outcomes for individuals who receive rehabilitation earlier exceeds those who wait longer for input. There is also a notable reduction in caregiver burden. All of which reduces the ongoing cost of care to the state and the HSE.

By understanding and learning more about brain injury in Ireland we can advocate for better services and give those impacted a voice.

The reality is, that despite the significant need, there remain significant inequalities in the provision of neuro rehabilitation across the country. Our top priority is to make access to vital brain injury services more equitable, regardless of geography or financial circumstances. This will only be possible with adequate resourcing, joined-up thinking and appropriate levels of investment.

In the coming year, we will persist in our efforts to close the sizeable gap along the rehabilitation pathway, from hospital to home, and to advocate for the realisation of the human right to rehabilitation.

The major impact of the work of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is driven by strong leadership and an intrinsic, value-led culture. I wish to commend our Chief Executive, Barbara O'Connell and her management team for steering the organisation through a very challenging period. As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, we are even more finely attuned to the strength, courage and creativity of the people at the centre of the organisation.

I would also like to acknowledge the important contribution, guidance and safekeeping of our dedicated Board of Directors.

We are also grateful for the funding provided by the HSE, and for the generosity of our donors and supporters who give of their time and money to help us work, step-by-step, towards our goals.

*Clair Cullinan*

Clair Cullinan  
Chair of the Board  
Acquired Brain Injury Ireland





## ABOUT US

A brain injury can happen to anyone, at any time. It could be your mother. It could be your brother. It could even be you. We believe every brain injury survivor should have the chance to rebuild their life and live it to the fullest, and we will never stop campaigning to make that belief a reality.

Established in 2000 with a single Assisted Living House in Dublin, our services have grown to support some 1,100 brain injury survivors every year.

# OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES



## OUR VISION

A society where brain injury is understood and all those impacted receive world-class, personalised rehabilitation and support, as and when they need it.



## OUR MISSION

To passionately serve and relentlessly advocate to empower and support those impacted by brain injury to rebuild their lives.

## OUR VALUES



### DIGNITY & RESPECT

We treat each other with the utmost dignity and respect in our interactions

### CHOICES

We empower each other through choices to manage and direct our lives within our capabilities

### RELATIONSHIPS

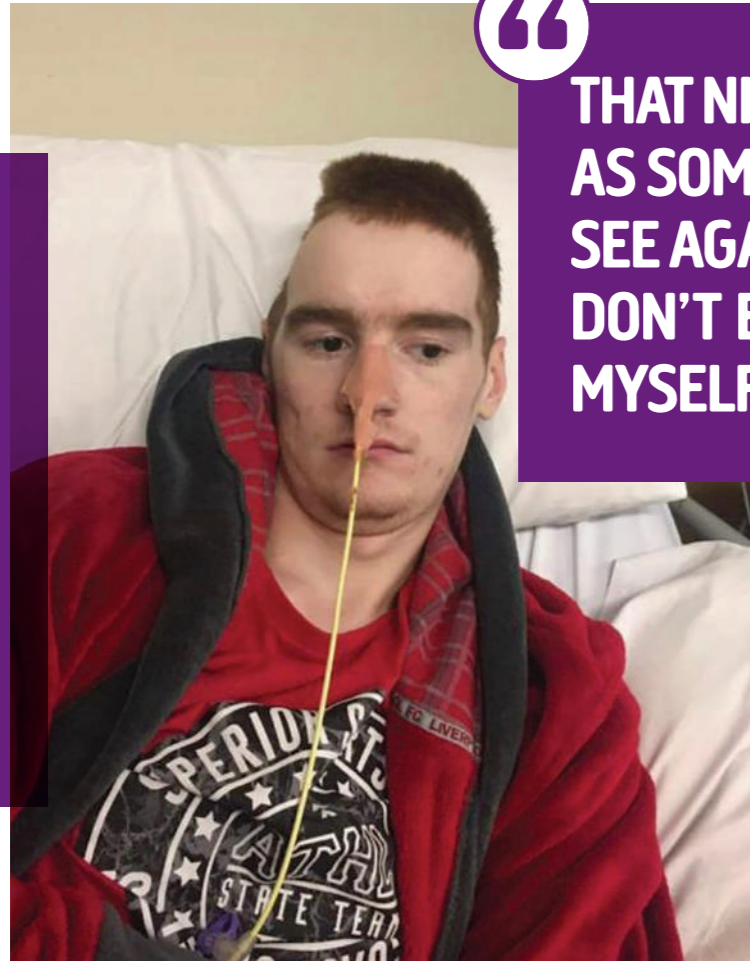
We engage meaningfully with each other with honesty, integrity and kindness

### CONTRIBUTION

We encourage everyone to play their part no matter how small

### SHARING EVERYDAY PLACES

We value inclusion for all in our communities and sharing everyday experiences



**THAT NIGHT I LEFT HOME AS SOMEONE I'LL NEVER SEE AGAIN. SOMETIMES I DON'T EVEN RECOGNISE MYSELF.**

## REBUILDING LIVES - CONOR'S STORY

Two years ago, Conor was ringing in the New Year with his friends at a pub when a devastating assault changed his life forever.

In an unprovoked attack, a man struck Conor with a punch and kick to the head. The two had encountered one another in the restroom and engaged in friendly conversation while washing their hands. They had never met before that evening.

Things took a tragic turn when the man pushed Conor backwards and hit him with his elbow, causing Conor to fall to the ground. He was kicked in the head before his attacker left the scene. Conor was left unresponsive with a large gash on his head.

Conor acquired severe injuries, including a traumatic brain injury.

He was rushed to Beaumont Hospital, where a CT scan revealed brain haemorrhaging and a fracture. Conor required immediate surgery, had a portion of his skull removed, and spent 18 days in intensive care and high dependency units. He underwent four surgeries before his release in February,

receiving further care from the National Rehabilitation Hospital.

Overnight, Conor's life path was dramatically altered. He had just turned 21: a lively young man who played football, GAA, and was working towards a career as a qualified plumber. The youngest of four children, his whole life was ahead of him.

**"EVERYONE WAS SAYING I WAS PERFECT. AND I DIDN'T FEEL PERFECT."**

Conor's traumatic brain injury led to ongoing challenges and a sense of identity crisis. Activities he once enjoyed, such as playing sports and pursuing his plumbing apprenticeship, sometimes felt impossible.

He struggled with severe pain, often facing debilitating, cluster headaches up to three times a week. The simple act of waking up with a headache could derail his plans for the day, forcing him to rest and not be able to do anything either professionally or socially.

The impact of these headaches extended into his work and studies, and at times he has had no choice but to take days off. This delay, caused by his brain injury, added another year on his path towards completing his plumbing qualification.

This past Christmas was incredibly challenging for Conor. He was not able to keep up with his friend's festive outings and he was also dealing with looming court dates due to the assault. He felt constantly unwell, and at rock bottom in terms of recovery.

He was receiving so many compliments about how amazing he was doing. But deep down, he didn't feel fine. There was an internal battle.

At the heart of Conor's story is the unwavering support of his family and friends, and the love of Nadine, his girlfriend. Together, they stood by his side and provided strength when Conor needed it most.

Dealing with the many effects of the brain injury has not been easy. Amid the adversity, Conor found a lifeline and additional support system at Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.



**IT WAS JUST A VERY UNEASY CHRISTMAS.**



Our Step Ahead Plus programme has been instrumental to Conor's recovery and his return to work. This free, national vocational assessment and rehabilitation service helps adults with acquired brain injuries who wish to get back to employment, training, or education.

It helped Conor to regain his confidence, rebuild his strength, and prepare for a return to his trade. By working with the Step Ahead Plus team of Occupational Therapists and Rehabilitation Assistants, Conor was able to bridge the gap between where he was and where he wanted to be.



**“Conor's determination and positive attitude were evident right away. He was highly committed to his personalised work rehabilitation programme. This included managing fatigue, learning how to improve his focus and how to process information. He wanted to get back to what he loved.”**

- Emer Duffy, Programme Manager and Senior Occupational Therapist

Together, the team worked closely with Dublin City Council's Head of Apprentices and HR department (where Conor works). They were informed of the accommodations Conor would need when he returned. Dublin City Council was very supportive and willing to help with Conor's Return to Work Plan.

**“It was evident that Conor was a valued member of the team.”**

There are many others like Conor who are still grappling with the immense challenges of life after a brain injury. Every day in Ireland, fifty-two more people and their families join them on this difficult path.

Conor continues to pursue his apprenticeship, working towards becoming a fully qualified plumber. His is a story of perseverance, resilience, and strength. We are so proud of what he has achieved.





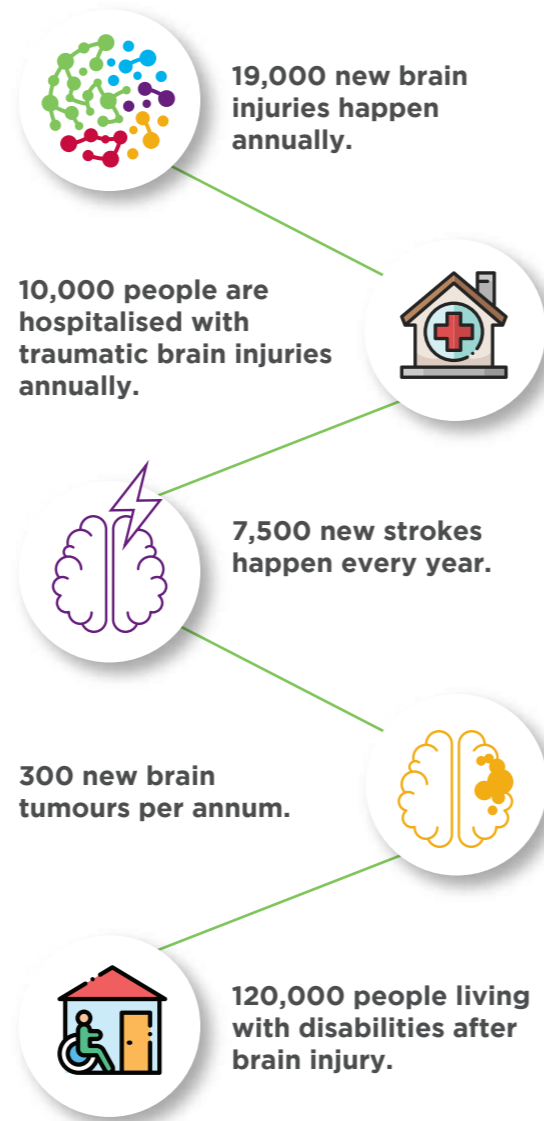
## WHAT WE DO

It is estimated that 19,000 people in Ireland acquire a brain injury every year. This includes 10,000 people hospitalised with traumatic brain injuries and 7,500 individuals impacted by stroke. We also know that 120,000 people in Ireland are living with a disability after brain injury.

**At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, through our community-based rehabilitation services, we help as many of them as we can to return to leading independent lives.**

We do this by providing a range of expert clinical services and supports specific to the needs of each person with a brain injury, with individually-designed rehabilitation plans that assist them in reaching their goals.

We provide information, training and practical help to those living with an acquired brain injury, as well as to their carers and healthcare professionals. We also give people impacted by brain injury a voice so that their rehabilitation needs may be clearly heard, understood and answered by decision makers.



## IN 2022

73

73 survivors of brain injury received specialised rehabilitation in our Assisted Living services

337

337 brain injury survivors were supported through our Home and Community services

367

367 people were supported by our Case Managers

290

290 individuals with brain injury participated in our Clubhouse and Day Resource services



Our On With Life programme delivered support services to family members and carers countrywide

100

100 people were supported by our Step Ahead Plus vocational rehabilitation programme

## COMMON CAUSES OF BRAIN INJURY IN OUR SERVICES



Stroke (50%)



RTA's (9%)



Falls (11%)



Tumour (10%)



Assault (5%)



## Our Services

Our expert teams support individuals and their families recovering from the impacts of brain injury with services and tools that help them rehabilitate, adapt and return to their everyday lives with confidence.

### Assisted Living

For some survivors of brain injury, returning home after a stay in hospital is not an option straight away. Our Assisted Living services offer those individuals a home from home, where they can benefit from long-term tailored brain injury rehabilitation. In this setting, residents can work on rehabilitation goals related to personal care, cookery, home management and household finances, ultimately maximising their independence in a safe environment with 24/7 support. Community integration is a key focus throughout all our services, and our residents are encouraged to access local amenities such as libraries and leisure facilities.

### Home and Community Rehabilitation

Often people have experienced some rehabilitation in hospital, but further skills may need to be re-learned at home after discharge. This might include support to build and maintain a daily routine, or manage household activities such as cooking, laundry and personal finance. Our one-to-one Home and Community Rehabilitation services encourage integration back into community and family life, ensure survivors continue to make progress on their recovery and maximise their potential after brain injury.

### Clubhouses

Our Clubhouses create a space for survivors of brain injury to socialise and develop new relationships, as well as helping them to explore new interests that build on their strengths and capabilities. Attendees benefit from group and cognitive rehabilitation in a supportive and welcoming environment. These services are particularly important to support individuals working on goals such as building self-esteem, independence, community involvement and personal growth. They are first and foremost a community, run by and for members with the support of expert staff.

### Transitional Rehabilitation

Our Transitional Living service bridges the gap for brain injury survivors as they prepare to return to independent living at home. The service provides intensive rehabilitation and support in an assisted living setting Monday to Friday, for a period from six weeks up to six months, depending on a person's

needs. Currently we operate one Transitional Living Unit in Sligo and we continue to seek funding to grow this much needed service.

### Family Support Services

At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, we understand that a brain injury doesn't just happen to the individual – it happens to the whole family – and delivering support to families is integral to the work we do. Our Case Managers and Social Workers help them navigate the services and resources that may be available to them. We also provide training, practical help, listening support and peer-to-peer support through our free, national 'On With Life Programme for Families and Carers'. A new 'On With Life' network was launched in 2021 to provide particular support to those caring for a child or young person living with an acquired brain injury.

### Return to Work and Education

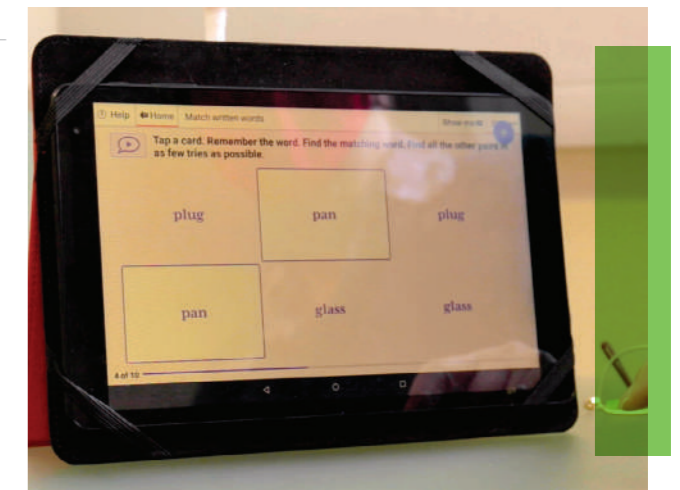
Step Ahead Plus is our free, national vocational assessment and rehabilitation service for adults with an acquired brain injury. Led by a skilled team of Occupational Therapists and specialist Rehabilitation Assistants, the service works with each survivor to identify their abilities, strengths, and challenges. It also sets out a personalised plan with recommendations and strategies to help each individual on their route back to work, training or education.

### Case Management

When a brain injury happens, survivors and their families often feel overwhelmed and don't know where to turn. The role of our Case Managers is designed for these times of distress. Our Case Managers are brain injury experts who act as a single point of contact, listening to the families' needs and identifying resources to support their situation. They help to provide a clear pathway to support the survivor's transition from hospital to home, linking them to the variety of services they need.

### Digital Assistive Technology

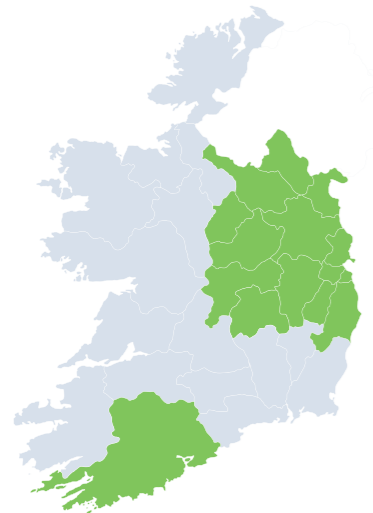
For some brain injury survivors, technology and digital tools can play a useful role in overcoming challenges and increasing independence. We provide support to those in our services to access technology to meet their needs through our new creATE digital assistive technology programme.



### Rehabilitation services provided by Acquired Brain Injury Ireland



**Case Management**  
Number of clients: 367

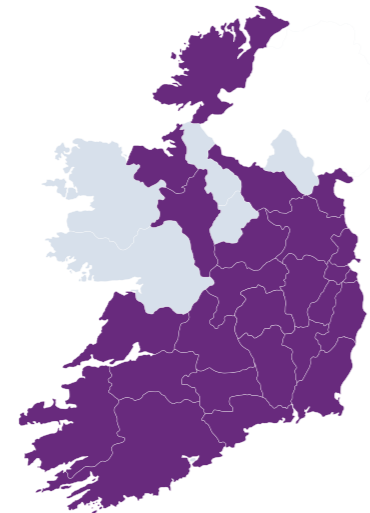


Our Case Managers are brain injury experts who act as a single point of contact providing a clear pathway and linkages to the variety of services to support a person's transition from hospital to home.

- Cavan
- Cork
- Dublin
- Kildare
- Laois
- Longford
- Louth
- Meath
- Monaghan
- Offaly
- Westmeath
- Wicklow



**Home and Community Rehabilitation**  
Number of clients: 337

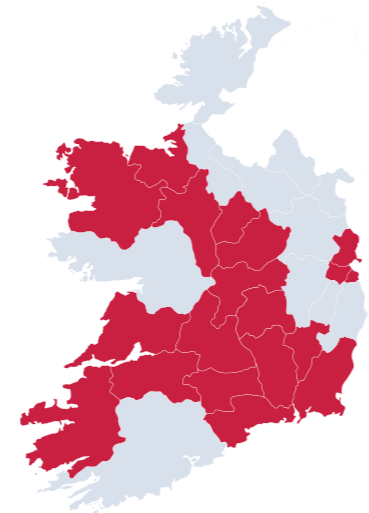


Our Rehabilitation Assistants deliver one-to-one neuro-rehabilitation to support individuals with their rehabilitation goals at home and integrate back into their community and family life.

- Carlow
- Cavan
- Clare
- Cork
- Donegal
- Dublin
- Kerry
- Kildare
- Kilkenny
- Laois
- Limerick
- Louth
- Meath
- Offaly
- Roscommon
- Sligo
- Tipperary
- Waterford
- Westmeath
- Wexford
- Wicklow



**Clubhouses**  
Number of clients: 290

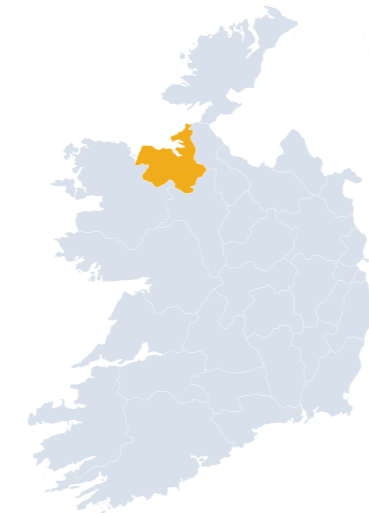


Our Clubhouses provide vital peer support, group rehabilitation and cognitive rehabilitation to enhance independence and encourage learning new skills.

- Carlow
- Clare
- Dublin
- Kerry
- Kilkenny
- Laois
- Limerick
- Longford
- Mayo
- Offaly
- Roscommon
- Sligo
- Tipperary
- Waterford
- Westmeath
- Wexford



**Transitional Living Services**  
Number of beds: 4

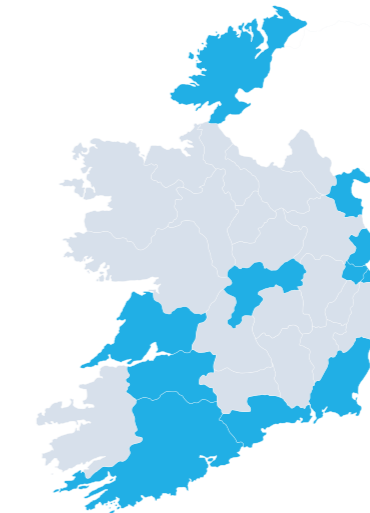


Our transitional living service is a bridge for brain injury survivors to prepare to return to independent living. It provides intensive rehabilitation and support in an assisted living setting from Monday to Friday from six weeks up to six months.

- Sligo



**Assisted Living**  
Number of beds: 73

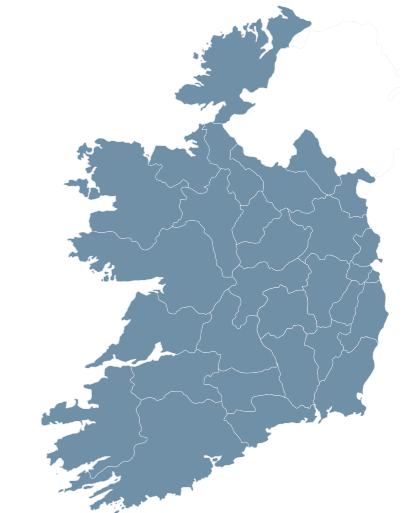


Our unique neuro-rehabilitation assisted living services provide long-term, tailored rehabilitation and support to 4-5 residents in a house to maximise their independence in a safe and homely place on a 24/7 basis.

- Clare
- Cork
- Donegal
- Dublin
- Limerick
- Louth
- Offaly
- Waterford
- Wexford



**Family Services**  
Nationwide



Our family services deliver support nationally through case management and, through the On With Life programme, through family therapy, parenting skills training, carer training and peer support groups.

- Case management
- Parenting skills training
- Family and carer training
- Peer support groups
- Nationwide



## OUR MODEL OF REHABILITATION

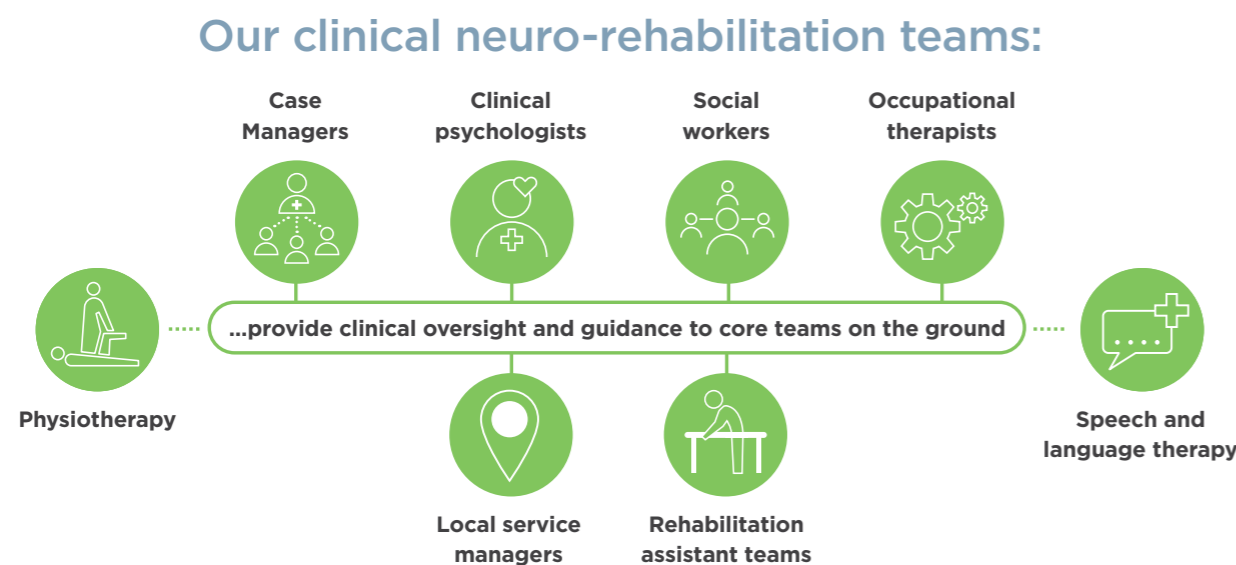
### A Person-Centred Approach

Every brain is different, unique to the individual affected. At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland we look at the whole person. We take account of their environment, their ability and support needs. We look at the life they had before their brain injury. We support them and their families through a bio-psychosocial model which takes account of biological, psychological and social aspects of rehabilitation.

For this reason, we champion the ‘Individual Rehabilitation Plan’ (IRP). The plan is developed with the individual, their family and our Inter-Disciplinary Team with a focus on achieving specific goals related to the individual’s need and personalised rehabilitation. This bespoke person-centred approach to neuro rehabilitation is at the core of everything we do.

### Clinically Led Services and Measurement

All the support we provide to brain injury survivors and their families is overseen by clinical experts, informed by research and best practice. Our Psychologists, Social Workers and Occupational Therapists work as part of a team to help each person in our services to identify their personal goals and set out their IRP. Our skilled Local Services Managers, Team Leaders and Rehabilitation Assistants work with survivors on a day-to-day basis to progress these goals. They are supported by Speech and Language Therapists and Physiotherapists when required.



During 2022, the newly established Clinical Programme Manager role bedded in to review clinical resources, policies and procedures, and to keep them up-to-date and in line with international best practice.

In 2022, we produced our first Clinical Outcomes Report, presenting the trends evident from referrals and in residential and community services.

## QUALITY SERVICE

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is committed to providing services at an internationally recognised standard. We deliver on this goal through regular CARF accreditation (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) – a prestigious and internationally recognised quality mark which signals that the services we provide meet or exceed international best practice. Our organisation has been successfully accredited every three years since 2003.

In 2022, a newly established role of Quality, Safety and Practice Development Manager offered significantly greater capacity to maintain oversight and continuous improvement across all aspects of quality and safety.

A Quality Improvement Plan was submitted to CARF, following the CARF Accreditation Inspection in November 2021 which saw successful gold standard accreditation across:

- Home and Community Services (Adults)
- Home and Community Services (Children)
- Residential Rehabilitation Programmes (Adults)
- Governance Standards
- Case Management

This plan set out how the organisation will respond to recommendations received during the survey ahead of the next survey in late 2024.

### Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA)

All Acquired Brain Injury Ireland’s neuro rehabilitation Assisted Living services are fully registered with HIQA and monitored under the Health Act 2007 (Care and support of residents in designated centres for persons (children and adults) with disabilities) regulations 2013.

There were several inspections across services in 2022, all with excellent outcomes and positive feedback regarding the work of staff teams and our person-centred practice. Issues that arose were invariably legacy-based and premises-related, due to the establishment of many of our Assisted Living services in ordinary houses well in advance of regulation in 2013.





## THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, our day-to-day work is built on transparency and two-way communication with those we serve. Every year we run an independent customer satisfaction survey with those in our services, using the internationally benchmarked USPEQ model. We believe it is of the utmost importance to measure the quality of what we do through the feedback of the survivors in our services. This ensures our standards are maintained and that they are continually empowered to achieve their rehabilitation goals.

The USPEQ survey provides feedback in relation to five key areas: service responsiveness, informed choice, respect, participation, and overall value. This feedback informs the organisation of any areas of concern, so we can respond to reported issues or needs. It's also a source of motivation and positively drives our person-centred culture so we can continuously improve and grow our services.

### USPEQ findings 2022

- 100% said *'I feel safe when receiving services'*
- 95.5% said *'I feel respected as a person'*
- 85% said *'I'm able to do things I want to do now'*
- 93.5% said *'I'm doing better in social situations'*
- 95.8% said *'I have the opportunity to make important choices'*





## 2022: A REPORT ON OUR SERVICES

During 2022, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (ABI Ireland) continued to work creatively to respond to the identified and often complex needs of a significant acquired brain injury population. Throughout the year, the organisation maintained a range of essential, national clinically-led and outcome-focussed services. A blended approach to service delivery became the new normal, with face-to-face rehabilitation complemented by remote rehabilitation (telerehabilitation) across the country.

### Key achievements in service development in 2022 included:

- Full HIQA registration in all Assisted Living services, with all mandatory three-year re-registrations successful.
- HSE commitment to ongoing funding of the newly piloted Case Management service in CHO4.
- Additional clinical resources were funded by the HSE in CHO8 and in CHO1, providing invaluable clinical support for those areas.
- Additional equipment sourced and additional groups and activities run through grant funding for community services, led by the Fundraising Department
- Additional funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund secured to enable the continuation of the Step Ahead Plus vocational rehabilitation programme. This service experienced unprecedented demand with a year-long waitlist for service.
- Continued growth of the On With Life Family and Carer's Programme with a well-established network of face-to-face and online peer support groups held nationally throughout 2022. In addition, the programme curated a range of education seminars, workshops and events to provide increased support to family members and carers in the context of the pandemic.
- Growth of the On With Life support programme for parents and carers of children under 18 with an acquired brain injury. This programme was facilitated by the On With Life team through funding from the Community Foundation for Ireland and the Late Late Toy Show Appeal. A national Family Fun Day was hosted by the programme team this year.
- Development of the creATe Digital Assistive Technology programme to enable individuals to access technology to support and increase their ability to live independently. This programme, funded by the HSE, allowed the organisation to increase its Occupational Therapy staffing levels but also to employ its first Speech and Language Therapist.

- Continued growth in each of ABI Ireland's nine Clubhouse services. However, as in previous years, these developments were mainly possible due to the generosity of private grant funders and the support of community fundraising activities.

As of 2022, ABI Ireland has 16 Assisted Living rehabilitation services in Dublin (six), Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Clare (two), Sligo, Donegal, Louth and Offaly. Development of a further Assisted Living rehabilitation service is underway in Tralee. As vacancies did arise from time to time when individuals transitioned into the community, we were able to secure new residents to fill these vacancies within the services.

Our Home and Community rehabilitation services and supports continued to be a significant and strong area for the organisation, with 15 services in operation nationally. Developments in this outreach service are largely due to the HSE's funding response to local identified acquired brain injury needs.

### Responses to Covid-19

Our services, support and management functions continued to respond in specific ways to align with public health guidance on Covid-19, but also on infection controls more generally.

Established protocols and guidance used to keep services and persons served as safe as possible were widened to include a broader infection control approach. Management of Covid-19 locally was devolved to Local Service Managers with support available from senior management as required.



## Housing and Development

In 2022, a new full-time Head of Housing and Development was appointed to the Senior Management Team. This new role has overall responsibility for all housing and development, including new property acquisition and optimisation of the existing property portfolio.

The Wasted Lives Report supports the acquisition of additional properties in strategic target growth areas where there has been an identified need for both Transitional Living and Assisted Living housing. There is an active focus on CHO3, CHO4, and CHO5 areas.

The viability of such services has full support from the HSE and the Local Authorities. An emphasis on sustainability is also a key driver for the property portfolio whereby we are actively carrying out refurbishments of older properties to align with our overall property strategy.

In 2022, the Housing and Development Department agreed the purchase of a 5-bed Assisted Living service in Tralee, County Kerry and the acquisition of a 5-bed Assisted Living service in Tullamore, County Offaly.

## OUR PEOPLE

Just as every brain injury is unique, at Acquired Brain Injury Ireland our people are unique. Our teams are highly skilled and qualified in their area and extremely passionate about the work they do. Rebuilding lives through rehabilitation takes time. In addition to key skills, it requires the ability to see things differently and think outside the box. That's why we hire problem-solvers who have an ability to drive everyday solutions to help those in our services adapt to life after their brain injury.

Providing choice is at the heart of what we do, and our teams thrive on finding creative solutions to preserve the rights of those we serve to choose. Our approach to service delivery is about partnership and collaboration with the people in our services. Building positive relationships between them and our Rehabilitation Assistants is essential to achieving personalised goals.

During 2022, our average employee headcount was 352 to meet the requirements of the organisation (2021: 346).

“ I HAVE EXPERIENCED A CULTURE HERE AT ABI IRELAND THAT I HAVE NOT SEEN ELSEWHERE TO DATE AND I HAVE A SENSE OF PRIDE IN THE ORGANISATION'S COMMITMENT TO THE PROVISION OF QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE AND PERSON-CENTRED NEURO REHABILITATION SERVICES.

“ ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IRELAND IS A VERY PROGRESSIVE, INCLUSIVE AND REWARDING PLACE TO WORK. STAFF FEEL VALUED AND HAVE WONDERFUL AUTONOMY TO DELIVER PERSON-CENTRED PROGRAMMES TO SUPPORT THEIR CLIENTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.

“ I FEEL PRIVILEGED TO BE ABLE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR CLIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND REALLY DO BELIEVE THAT IT IS A VERY SPECIALIST AND VALUED ROLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

## Human Resources

Recruitment was a key focus of 2022, ensuring adequate staffing in light of an increasingly competitive marketplace. 180 roles were filled during the year. A recruitment project succeeded in reducing the average time to hire from 90 days to 38 days, resulting in a 60% increase in job offers being accepted.

Employee Communications and Engagement also remained at the forefront in 2022. An Employee Feedback Survey was carried out in conjunction with CARF. A committee was set up to produce an action plan which will form the basis of the People Plan for 2023. Rehabilitation Assistants account for over 70% of our staff. A Rehabilitation Assistant Engagement Forum was established to promote engagement with this staff group.

A Wellbeing Committee was set up this year to look at all aspects of workplace wellbeing. The organisation now offers a holistic total mental health service to staff, with 110 members accessing the service during the year. 12 members were trained as Mental Health First Aid Responders and are now actively engaging as peer-to-peer Mental Health Champions across the organisation.

The Data Protection role was moved in-house, including the appointment of a Data Protection Officer and completion of relevant accredited data protection training.

### Staff Feedback 2022 –

- 90% of staff said our organisation is a great place to work
- 94% of staff said that our organisation values diversity
- 97% of our colleagues said they work well with their co-workers
- 92% of staff said they are treated with dignity and respect
- 97% of our team would recommend the organisation to family and friends





### Learning and Development

Throughout 2022 we continued to invest in staff by offering learning and development opportunities in a blended format, including through the use of an online learning platform. Mandatory and organisation-specific training was completed in accordance with legislative and regulatory compliance and best practice. This continued to enhance our standards in line with CARF.

A key achievement of the Learning and Development team in 2022 was the creation and launch of a new internal staff digital hub, branded 'GO2'. The site includes online induction pathways for new joiners, contact details for staff, service information, training and learning resources, organisational news, and links to relevant third-party systems.

### Information Technology (IT)

An IT Manager was recruited in 2022 to manage the strategic and operational IT requirements for the organisation. The IT Department was restructured, and an IT Support Officer was also recruited. The department began implementation of Office 365 and, by the end of the year, 55% of staff had migrated to MS Teams and SharePoint.

The Department also introduced a new Call Management System and responded to 2,459 IT issues during 2022. A programme to enhance cybersecurity was commenced and funding has been sought from the HSE to complete implementation.

## SPEAKING UP FOR BRAIN INJURY

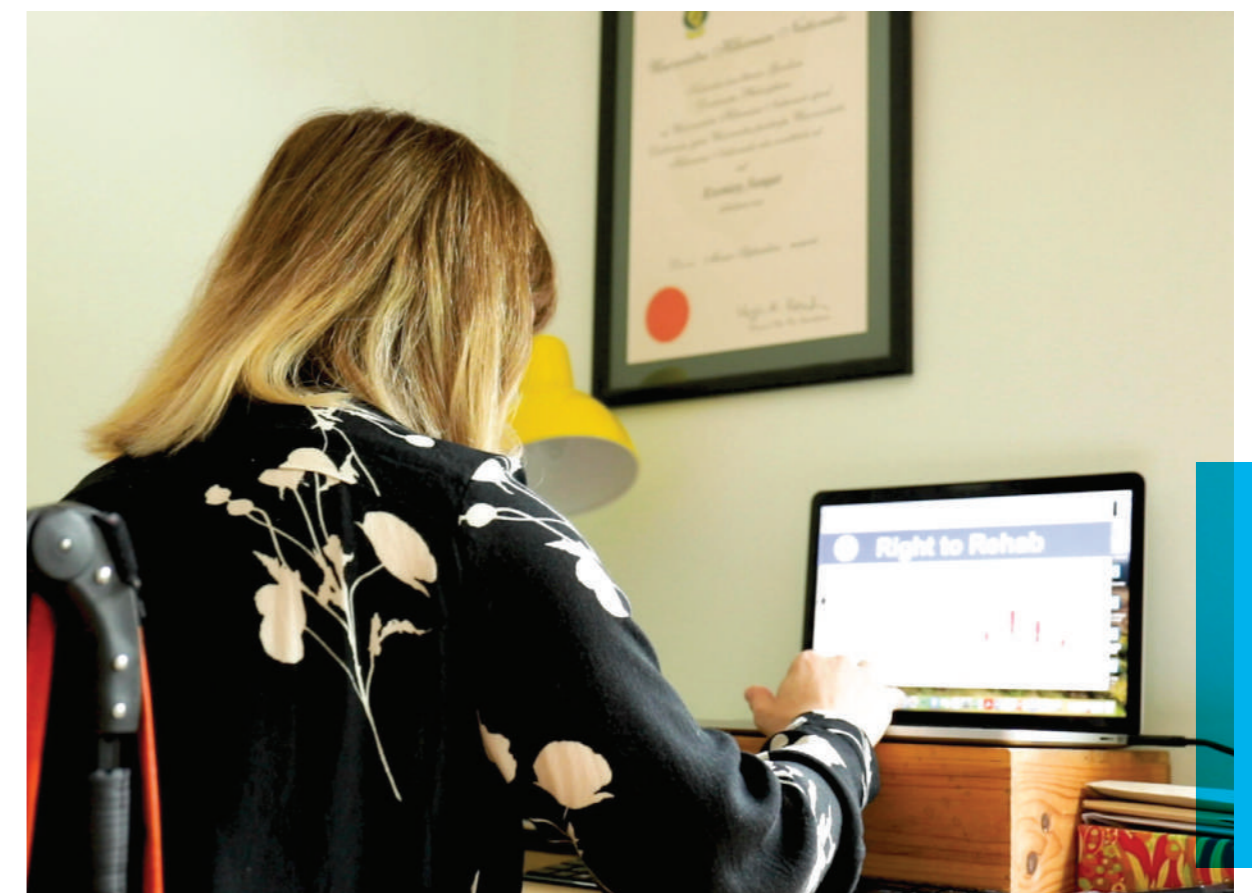
Brain injury is a hidden phenomenon in Irish society. Nobody ever thinks it will happen to them. Yet each year, as many as 19,000 lives are turned upside down from newly acquired brain injuries.

Brain injuries can happen suddenly and are often traumatic. The biggest causes of brain injury that we see in our services are stroke, road traffic accidents, assaults, falls and brain tumours.

Too often, people who acquire brain injuries are young and, due to the lack of services available at the time of their injury, these young people are often left in inappropriate settings such as nursing homes, community hospitals or at home where families are unable to cope.

This highlights a greater need for awareness around brain injury. The more people who understand acquired brain injury at political level, in the health system and widely in the public, the easier it is to push for the services needed to support individuals and their families.

Currently there is little Irish epidemiological research to show the actual incidence or prevalence of acquired brain injury. Without this research it is difficult to secure the additional financial resources required to ensure people have access to vital, specialist neuro-rehabilitation services like ours.







## Campaigning for Change

We give people impacted by brain injury a voice so that their rehabilitation needs may be clearly heard, understood and answered by decision makers. We do this by:

- Making submissions and policy briefings based on the real experiences of brain injury survivors and their families
- Partnering with other organisations who respond to the rehabilitation needs of brain injury survivors
- Putting those with lived experience of brain injury front and centre of our public campaigns for change
- Supporting research that provides strong evidence, improves services, ensures best practice, and helps us to better campaign for policy change

Despite some service development during 2022, many national acquired brain injury service gaps remain unaddressed. In particular, there is insufficient investment in Home and Community Rehabilitation services, Assisted Living services and Case Management, leading to significant waiting lists, delayed discharges from acute and rehabilitation hospitals, and the inappropriate placement in nursing homes of young people with an acquired brain injury. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland has been a strong voice throughout the year, supporting the recommendations made as part of the Ombudsman's Wasted Lives report, which places responsibility on the HSE to cease these misplacements and transition those impacted to more suitable living within the community.

In 2022 Acquired Brain Injury Ireland also coordinated and participated in a variety of local, regional and national communication, policy and research activities. These events and activities helped to raise awareness of acquired brain injury as a condition, our work as the leading national service provider, and the need for increased service provision to support survivors of brain injury and their families.



**GLOBALLY, AN ESTIMATED 10 MILLION PEOPLE ARE IMPACTED BY A TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY EACH YEAR. BY 2020, BRAIN INJURY WILL SURPASS MANY DISEASES AS THE MAJOR CAUSES OF DEATH AND DISABILITY WORLDWIDE.**

- Burke S, et al. (2020)





### Influencing Policy

We continued to campaign and advocate for the implementation of the recommendations of the Ombudsman's Wasted Lives report. High level meetings were held with the Tánaiste, Minister for Disabilities and senior HSE representatives.

Additionally, our Pre-budget Submission 2023 called for investment to establish three National Assessment Teams to begin to transition 90 people under 65 inappropriately placed in nursing homes back to community living.

Core principles and values were agreed by representatives of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland and Anvers Housing (the Future Housing Group), setting out a vision for the housing needs of people living with an acquired brain injury.

ABI Ireland was represented on several national fora including the Disability Federation of Ireland, the Neurological Alliance of Ireland, HSE Consent to Research Policy Working Group, and the Managed Clinical Rehabilitation Network Working Group.

### Supporting Brain Injury Research

The research landscape flourished in 2022 with numerous research partnerships and projects adding to the tapestry of brain injury knowledge in Ireland. With our partners at the Global Brain Health Institute (Trinity College Dublin), a paper was published on The Value of Nonpharmacological Interventions for People With an Acquired Brain Injury: A Systematic Review of Economic Evaluations.

Our annual #BrainPower research seminar took place in May to showcase brain injury research in Ireland and build the research network. 100 delegates attended the event with six key speakers presenting on the theme: Brain Injury Research in Ireland - using evidence to rebuild lives.

Planning continued with our partners at the International Brain Injury Association in preparation for the 14th World Congress on Brain Injury to be hosted by Acquired Brain Injury Ireland in Dublin in March 2023.

In-house research commenced by our Research Project Officers as part of the Clinical Programme looking at the cost effectiveness of community-based Assisted Living services, as well as rehabilitation outcomes.

We supported a range of researchers and research projects in terms of recruitment. This included a research project completed by an NUI Galway MsC student focusing on brain injury as a hidden disability. Four further research projects were reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee, and all were supported in their recruitment of individuals living with brain injury, staff and family members,

Seed funding was granted by the UCD Ignite Programme to undertake a Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) project, including development of a PPI panel to ensure the person with lived experience of brain injury is heard at all stages in the research journey. This is an underpinning principle of our Research Priorities 2021-2024.





## The Economic Value of Rehabilitation

This chart shows the proportion of studies reviewed and what they are telling us about rehabilitation:



## Raising Awareness

We achieved national and local media coverage including news reports in key broadsheets, an extensive feature on RTÉ Nationwide, and features across print, broadcast and online platforms that raised the voice of brain injury survivors.

Funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, a multimedia campaign and video series was commissioned under the title Right to Rehabilitation. The campaign championed the voice of persons served and supported their advocacy for equal access to rehabilitation nationwide under the UNCRPD.

We continued to drive engagement across our social media platforms and launched a new TikTok channel which experienced steady growth. A new online resource hub, Rehabilitation Anywhere was also launched on the Acquired Brain Injury Ireland website, featuring videos, podcasts and tip sheets to support those living with a brain injury, their families and healthcare professionals.

## FUNDRAISING

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's work goes so much further through the generous donations and fundraising of hundreds of individuals, groups, and businesses. We are also supported by grants from many agencies around the country.

Combined, this support allows us to progress local and national projects that would not otherwise be possible, as well as enabling us to respond quickly and effectively when challenges arise. It allows us to purchase essential equipment, resources and activities required by those we serve and supports us to engage essential specialist services on a contract basis.

We are extremely grateful to all our Donors, Funders and Grant Agencies for their support which truly makes a life-changing difference for survivors of acquired brain injury.

2022 was our most successful fundraising year to date, with income increasing by €57.8k (17.8%) to €382.1k.

## Community Fundraising

During 2022, we built on events established during the pandemic including Step Up for Brain Injury in January. Other events organised by Acquired Brain Injury Ireland included Bake for Brain Injury in March, Woof Walkers campaign in April, Sky Dive in July, and our third annual Paul McGrath Golf Classic. Many registered their support for Acquired Brain Injury Ireland in running the Dublin Marathon and Women's Mini Marathon. Third-party community fundraisers also began to re-emerge in the latter half of the year as we exited the Covid-19 pandemic.





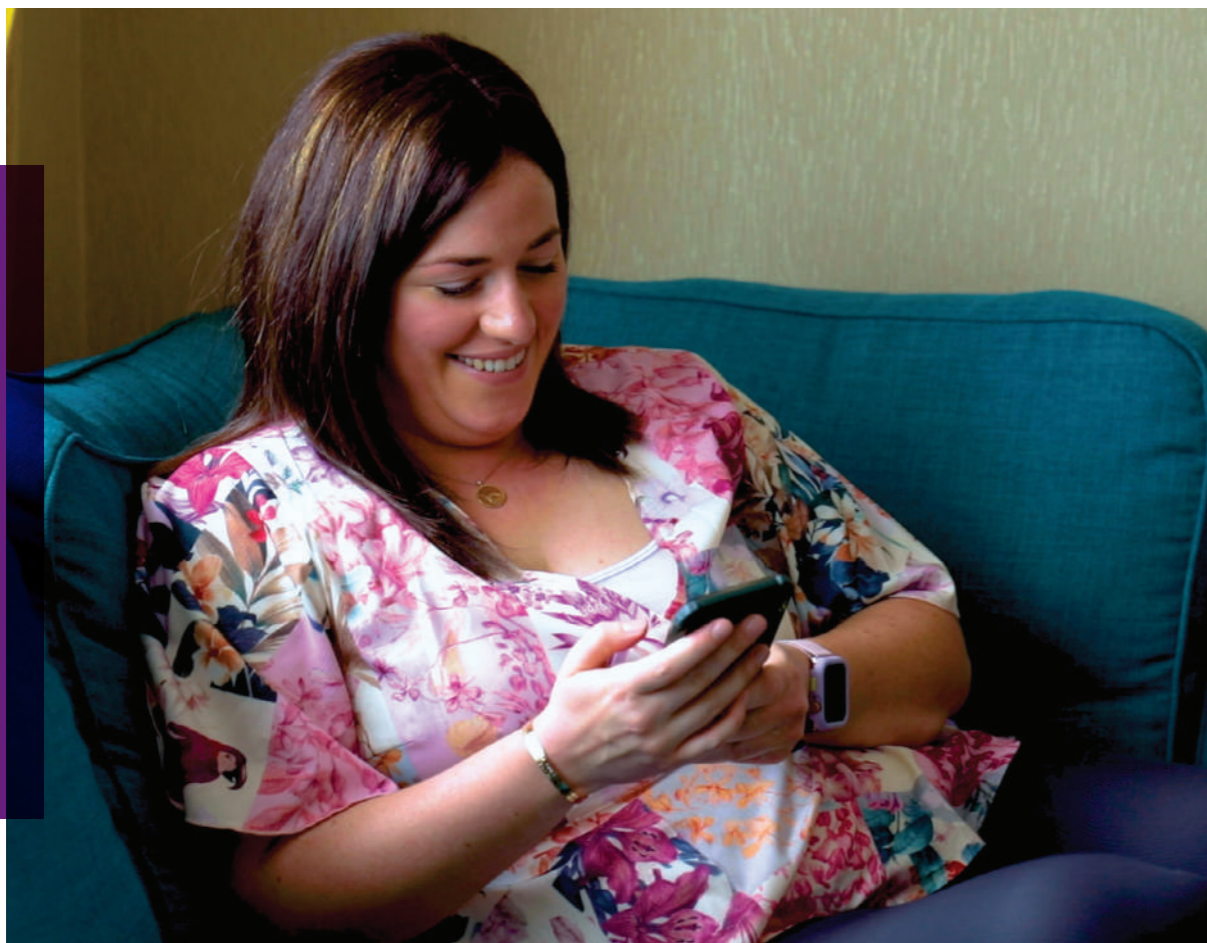
### Corporate, Major Donors, Trusts and Grants

We continued to grow relationships with private companies and public sector bodies through employee fundraising, corporate donations and project sponsorships, among other activities. Companies including Meta, Kirby Group, El Electronics, Bank of Ireland, Hyundai, MSS, IFL, Sainsburys/Argos and Tesco Ireland supported Acquired Brain Injury Ireland in 2022.

Additionally, we received grants from organisations including the Community Foundation for Ireland, Pobal, Rethink Ireland, Monkstown Hospital Foundation, Hospital Saturday Fund and several Local Authorities.

### Individual Giving

A key focus of the Fundraising Department in 2022 was to increase unrestricted and predictable sources of income for Acquired Brain Injury Ireland into the future. Income from our strategic direct mail activity, including newsletters and direct asks, grew by nearly 15%. We continue to grow our donor supporter base and implement a legacy campaign. All appeals and donation requests were integrated across postal mail, email and social networks. We launched our first campaign to increase regular monthly givers in 2022.





## FINANCES AND ACCOUNTS 2022

Total income for the year ended December 2022 at €18m represented an increase of €1.1m (6.7%) over 2021.

Expenditure for 2022 increased by 8.9%. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's financial results demonstrate a surplus of €2k for the year (2021: €255k surplus).

The majority (93%) of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's income can be attributed to the HSE and other statutory agencies. This is relatively consistent with 2021.

Direct service grants and other income increased by 6.4% year on year. Income of €77k was received in respect of a programme to support the employment of people with disabilities funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (Dormant Accounts Fund) in 2022.

Fundraising and events income increased by €57.8k (17.8 %) to €382.1k in 2022.

The Department of Social Protection also provided funding to support the employment of people with disabilities and this programme commenced in late 2021. Income declared was €176k.



## FINANCES AND ACCOUNTS 2022

### Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2022

	2022	2021
	€	€
Income	17,968,961	16,846,024
Expenditure	17,966,743	16,591,570
Surplus for the year	2,218	254,454

### Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2022

	2022	2021
	€	€
<b>Tangible Assets</b>	2,269,177	1,897,829
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	1,044,646	523,410
Cash at bank and in hand	1,764,609	2,148,313
	2,809,255	2,671,723
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2,553,630	2,330,011
Net Current Assets	255,625	341,712
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	2,524,802	2,239,541
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	193,361	263,683
<b>Net Assets</b>	2,331,441	1,975,858
<b>Total Reserves including Capital Reserves</b>	2,331,441	1,975,858

The accounts were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 23rd September 2023.

*Clair Cullinan*

**Clair Cullinan**  
Director

*Marzena Golinska*

**Marzena Golinska**  
Director



## COMPANY INFORMATION

**PETER BRADLEY FOUNDATION CLG  
T/A ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IRELAND  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**







<b>Directors</b>	Niamh Cahill Ann Coyle (appointed 29 August 2022) Clair Cullinan Colm Eustace (appointed 9 February 2022) Andy Heffernan Marzena Golinska Hugh O'Connor
<b>Company Secretary</b>	Barbara O'Connell
<b>Revenue Number</b>	14289
<b>Registered Number</b>	334659
<b>Charities Regulator Number</b>	20046200
<b>Trading name</b>	Acquired Brain Injury Ireland
<b>Independent Auditors</b>	Duignan earthy O'Neill Limited Chartered Accountants & Statutory Audit Firm 84 Northumberland Road Ballsbridge Dublin 4
<b>Bankers</b>	Allied Irish Bank Cornelscourt Dublin 18.
<b>Solicitors</b>	TP Robinson Solicitors 24 Fitzwilliam Street Upper Dublin 2.

## CONTACT US

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