



Donegal Centre of Independent Living

Strategic Plan 2021-2024

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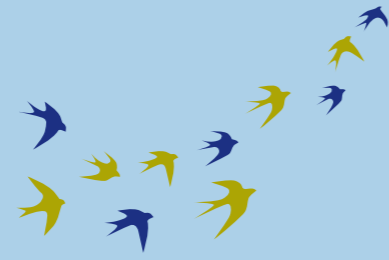


Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



etb
donegal





DCIL's mission is to support and *empower people* with **DISABILITIES** in Donegal

to achieve

independent living

and to **actively** participate as = **equal citizens** = in **sociiiiiiety**

by having choice and control over their own lives.

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A message from our CEO



It is with the greatest enthusiasm and honour that I bring to you the DCIL Strategic Plan for the coming years. This plan has had its delays in being completed and published, however the delay has ensured that we have had adequate time for reviewing, updating and given us confidence in being totally current in responding to the needs within the disability sector at present.

Our mission has always been to support people with disabilities in Donegal to achieve Independent Living and to actively participate as equal citizens in society by having choice and control over their own lives enabling people with disabilities to live a life of their own choosing in a truly inclusive society.

DCIL have been a leading provider of services that promote Independent Living and choice amongst people since our establishment as an organisation in 1999. The notion that peoples with disabilities could be and should be in control of their own lives was very much a new concept, we are proud to have been instrumental in that change in thinking from the medical model of disability to the social model throughout the years within the disability sector and within local authorities.

Our persistence and commitment have increasingly informed change and we are delighted that disability services are evolving and reforming in line with Ireland's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This ratification means a commitment "to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity".

The HSE in its Corporate Plan 2021-24 has stated that one of its objectives is to work to "reimagine disability services", to be the most responsive, person-centred model achievable with greater flexibility and choice for the service user. Reform of Disability services are due to be undertaken in collaboration with government departments and agencies and disability services stakeholders.

DCIL are one of the best placed organisations in the Northwest to be part of this change. As an organisation we have the versatility and autonomy to respond to actual and individual need that is not always afforded to national organisations. The next chapter for DCIL will see us increase our service offerings within Donegal through the expansion of our training facility, ensuring that the public have a greater awareness of our vision and values and the services we provide.

DCIL aims to open its doors wider within this Strategic Plan, ensuring that we not only continue with the great work that we do but we adapt to current need and we are beyond excited to finally launch our plans for the future with the confidence that our plan is informed by the people that really matter – people with disabilities.

We are fortunate to have a very dedicated and competent Core Staff team who we can have every confidence in implementing this strategic plan as well as having the benefit of a truly committed Board of Directors whose direct lived experience of disability has been invaluable in terms of both the development of the plan and in guiding its implementation over the coming years.

We invite you to support our plans for the future and welcome you to become part of it.

Regards,
Rosaleen Doherty
CEO Donegal Centre for
Independent Living

Foreword from our Chairperson

It gives me great pleasure and privilege as Chairperson to be a part of the DCIL Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 Launch. DCIL is a unique organisation, it is wholly owned and directed by its members, fully committed to strive to provide a high quality of service. It is an exciting time to be involved and supported by DCIL, showing great ambition as a service, and understanding of the continually evolving support needs of people with disabilities.

DCIL's Strategic Plan has been developed in close consultation with members, staff and all associated stakeholders. I am proud to say we will drive the development of DCIL Priority Areas in line with members' needs into the future. The involvement of members at every stage is integral to the strategic planning process, it is a clear testament to the vision, ethos, and mission of DCIL.

The Board of DCIL recognises the benefits of a united voice that seeks to advocate for disability services and supports the needs of people with a disability. We are passionate about the rights of people with disabilities to live a life of choice and independence. We understand that these are different for everyone, and we are proud that there remains a strong

grass roots representation on our Board of Management and can bring the service users' voice to the table.

It is my hope that the DCIL Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 will provide clear goals to increase our capacity to support people with Disabilities in Donegal. I look forward to us all achieving the objectives outlined within under the guidance of CEO, Rosaleen Doherty and the wonderfully dedicated core-staff team that we are privileged to have.

Regards,
Cath Waugh
Chairperson of
Donegal Centre for
Independent Living



About us

Donegal Centre for Independent Living (DCIL) was established on 01 October 1999. It is a company limited by guarantee, number 352126 and registered with the Charities Regulator, charity number 16580.

DCIL's objectives are to promote, support and encourage Independent Living for people with disabilities living in Donegal by:

01

Providing a self-directed Personal Assistant (PA) service, which gives Leaders (service users) choice and control over their service enabling them to live a life of their choosing

02

Financing and administering a centre which provide premises for a range of services for people with disabilities in Donegal.

DCIL is the leading provider of Personal Assistant Services in Donegal, and the organisation is enshrined by the philosophy of independent living. "Independent Living" means that people with a disability want the same life opportunities and choices as everyone else. That includes growing up with their families, attending the local school, using the same bus, gaining employment in line with their education and abilities, having equal access to the same services and establishments of social life, culture, and leisure.

Our approach to Service Delivery is:



History of DCIL



Berkeley, California

The Independent Living Movement grew out of the disability rights movement, which began in the 1960s. The first Centre for Independent Living was established in Berkeley, California in 1972. Its establishment was motivated by individuals seeking to leave residential care and live independently in the community, as part of the community.



Dublin, Ireland

In Ireland the first Independent Living seed was planted in Dublin in 1992. The movement was brought to Dublin by a core group of individuals with disabilities. The first Centre for Independent Living was incorporated as CIL Carmichael House in March 1992. Our CEO, Rosaleen Doherty, commenced work with the initial group in 1993.



DCIL established in Donegal

DCIL was first established on 01 October 1999 through the operation of a Community Employment Scheme. The scheme originally obtained funding of £25,000 for 1 year and commenced with 14 Leaders. Rosaleen Doherty, at this time, resigned her post in Dublin to develop the organisation here in Donegal.



The Growth of DCIL

The Donegal Centre for Independent living (DCIL) was incorporated on 15th January 2002. From its humble beginnings the organisation began to quickly grow and were soon providing PAs services throughout Donegal. The positive impact of independent living on people's lives was quickly evident. Numerous people who had only ever experienced residential care, were for the first time afforded the opportunity to participate in real independent living.

History of DCIL



DCIL opens its new premises

In the earlier years DCIL moved from various rented accommodation as the organisation continued to grow. In 2015, DCIL moved into its own purpose-built facility in Ballymacool Letterkenny. The main training room is called the Berkeley suite in honour of the original independent living movement from 1972. The building was officially opened by Irish football legend Shay Given and Martin Naughton, one of the founding members of the Irish independent living movement.

DCIL Today

Today DCIL provide PA services to over 100 Leaders with disabilities across Donegal working with various departments within the HSE, such as:

- HSE Older People Services - HSE Physical and Sensory Service Dept.
- SOAR & DCI-LIFE programmes with HSE Occupational Guidance and Support unit
- HSE Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services (DCITS)

DCIL has also expanded to provide several other important services including:

- DCIL Educational Support Workers in LYIT - Direct Payment Services
- School Disability Awareness Training in Schools - Donegal ETB
- DCIL Accessible Vehicle Service - Personalised Budget Project

Additional Organisation Items:

- DCIL Opportunity Fund - DCIL Hardship Fund - DCIL Scholarship Fund

Our Facilities:

We intend to increase our profile within Donegal by expanding our premises to include a training facility and ensuring that the public have a greater access, awareness of our vision, service values and the services we can provide.

The training facility will deliver enhanced disability supports and in collaboration with other organisations, a dedicated practical Independent Living skills training programme using purpose built independent living resources, such as:

- Training Kitchen
- Additional reception area.
- Occupational Room
- Sensory Room
- Family Room

Vision, Mission and Values



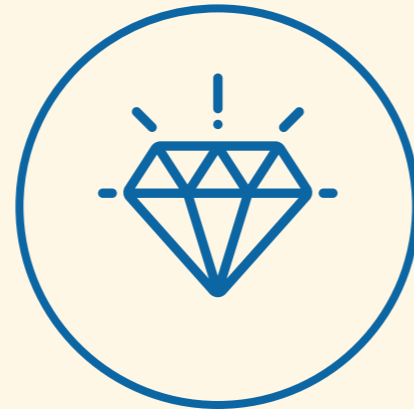
Our Vision

DCIL's vision is to enable people with disabilities in Donegal to live a life of their own choosing in a truly inclusive society.



Our Mission

DCIL's mission is to support and empower people with disabilities in Donegal to achieve Independent Living and to actively participate as equal citizens in society by having choice and control over their own lives.



Our Core Values

Our core values are underpinned by the philosophy of Independent Living and all activities are aimed towards promoting:

- Independence
- Options
- Rights
- Empowerment



Context of this Strategic Plan

We know that the world is evolving, and we will see change and encounter challenges that will call us to use our resources wisely and respond creatively. Therefore, as the organisation celebrated its 20th year in operation in 2019, it was agreed by the Board of Directors that a new strategic plan was required for the next three years to build on the organisations growth and success, whilst also taking into consideration the many challenges facing the disability sector.

The Development of this Strategic Plan

To form the organisations road map for the next three years the DCIL Board of Directors established a Strategic Plan Focus Group to oversee the creation of a new strategic plan.

The Focus Group made up of Leaders, Directors and Staff created a 12-step strategic plan development proposal which was approved by the Board. The 12-step plan was put into action, which included group meetings, consultation with staff, and 1-to-1 discussions with Leaders, PAs and stakeholders.

It was important for DCIL that there was maximum input from our members. A desktop review was then undertaken in which questionnaires were

issued to leaders, staff and stakeholders. The aim of the surveys was to capture a detailed picture of service need among people with disabilities in Donegal. The survey also allowed for honest feedback and opportunity to input into the future direction of DCIL.

All the questionnaire data was compiled and analysed, and this feedback formed the basis of several detailed strategic planning meetings in which the strategic priorities and specific actions were agreed. As part of this process the organisation's mission, vision and values were agreed upon and all the strategic priorities and actions within this plan are in keeping with them.

The draft priorities and actions were presented at the DCIL AGM in June 2019 and have been continually reviewed, updated, and improved upon with further development to the DCIL Building. Unfortunately, the finalised strategic plan launch was delayed due to Covid-19 Pandemic. It will be re-submitted, and approval sought by the DCIL board in September 2021.

Stakeholder Engagement

“ DCIL always puts the needs of the leaders first and strives to support people with disabilities to live independent lives within their own communities. DCIL input into HSE plans and strategies for people with disabilities in Donegal is always useful and welcome. They are always thinking of new and innovative ways to support people. DCIL are an organisation that will always try to find a way to help out in a crisis situation and will not let you down if they can help at all. ”

Denise Curran
General Manager – HSE Social Care Division

What DCIL means to me!

DCIL means not feeling like I m a total burden to my family. It means breathing more easily knowing I have a fantastic support network around me. It means living with dignity and independence.

Kathy Gillespie
DCIL Leader DCIL & DCIL Board Member

DCIL means a lot to me as I can live independently with the help of PA'S. I personally feel DCIL is a great service as it gives you the chance to live a normal lifestyle daily. Any problems big or small they are always at hand to assist and accommodate you in the best possible way they can.

Christopher Mc Brearty
40 - DCIL Leader

DCIL means being able to improve the quality of life of our leaders and allowing them to live independently in the familiar surroundings of their own home.

Michelle Ferguson
DCIL Personal Assistant

It means a lifeline, a way to be independent from my parents. I feel less of a burden to my parents who are 69 + 70 & those around me. I know I will need DCIL to the end of my days, I feel secure in the fact I'm not a name, a number or seen as disabled, I'm seen as a person.

Michelle Boyle
42 - DCIL Leader

In 2019, DCIL supported me to attend the ENIL Freedom Drive in Brussels where I was able to meet with Irish MEPs to advocate for more inclusion and support for people with disabilities of all ages and to ensure that disabled people's voices are included in all decision-making processes.

Topics of discussion included accessible transport, cuts to disability services, banning of plastic straws which will impact disabled people who need them. DCIL continues to support me in my journey as a disability advocate both within and outside the organisation.

Vicky Matthew
DCIL Leader & DCIL Board Member

DCIL means to me to give a person with a disability the help needed for them to live a normal life as independently as possible.

Donna Furey
DCIL Personal Assistant

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority One: Support Our People

01



DCIL Core Staff - International Disability Day



DCIL Summer Gatherings



Disability Pride Day



DCIL Leader & PA

Our first strategic priority is to support our people. The cornerstone of the organisation is our people therefore we will continue to ensure our Leaders

receive the highest standard of service and that we are the employer of choice to Personal Assistants.

What we will do:

1. Invest in a member grant aid funds to support Leaders during difficult times
2. Create a member's opportunity fund to assist Leaders to fully participate in society
3. Create a DCIL Scholarship fund designed for students with disabilities in third level education.
4. Establish a dedicated Employee Support Programme for all our staff
5. Provide support and additional training to up skill our existing PA's
6. Establish an Emergency PA policy to ensure greater continuity of service to Leaders

How we will do it:

- Ring fence an agreed sum of money for a three-year period to fund the programme.
- Create a detailed terms of reference and user-friendly application form.
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- Ring fence an agreed sum of money for a three-year period to fund the scholarship.
- Create a detailed terms of reference and user-friendly application form.
- Partner with the LYIT in the establishment of the scholarship programme & including other education providers.
- Create promotional material and information on the scholarship.
- Obtain the services of an Employee Wellbeing support service that provides dedicated 24/7 support.
- The service is to include individual counselling & other services as required.
- A platform that provides fitness, nutrition, mental health, finance and legal advice.
- A support service that will be extended to DCIL staff family (over the age 16).
- DCIL employee handbook, to include important services available to all employees.
- Introduce a paid training policy for all mandatory DCIL PA training.
- Encourage existing employees to undertake the core QQI Healthcare Support models by paying their course fees.
- Provide existing employees the flexibility within their work schedule to undertake the QQI training.
- Create a training feedback sheet which will allow staff to provide input into future training programmes.
- Create a PA roster to cover last minute and emergency Leader visits & term of reference which explains the roster to both PAs and Leaders.
- Provide an incentivised rate for PAs to opt into the roster.

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority Two: Expand Our Service Offering



DCIL Inclusive Training Programmes

02

DCIL second strategic priority is to Grow its service offering, expanding existing premises, to meet the gaps in training and supports currently required by people with disabilities in Donegal.

Furthermore we want to develop an Indoor/Outdoor Sensory Garden which will also provide for raised accessible gardening for our Service Users.

What we will do:

1. Provide a dedicated practical Independent Living skills training programme which will evolve expanding our existing premises to create purpose built independent living rooms & Training Area.

Located in the heart of the community.

Within easy access of a range of community services. DCIL will maximise its inclusivity and integration to increase its effectiveness for all.

2. Run a programme of Health & Well-Being workshops to improve inclusion and further engagement between leaders.

Cater for the Four Paradigms of Health:

“Physical, Mental, Emotional & Spiritual Health”

Training kitchen, additional reception area, occupational room, sensory room, Family room.

3. Create an advocacy platform to provide support and guidance to our Leaders and people with disabilities across Donegal.

“Community Inclusion”

“Active Citizenship”

“Social Valorisation”

4. Further develop our Direct Payment Leader Service and Individualised budgeting service.

Assist People to experience Seamless Transitions between Supports provided by specialist and mainstream services and create new experiences.

How we will do it:

- Cost plan and obtain the necessary funding to construct the independent living training area.
- Work with relevant statutory authorities in the construction of the new build extension.
- Create a practical Independent Living skills curriculum.
- Obtain certification to provide accredited training programme.
- Seek similar organisations to network & share use/partner within the programme
- DCIL will seek funding opportunities to realise this dream and sanctuary for our people

- Create a dedicated workshop programme.

- Programmes to include:

- » Mental Health & Well-being
- » Woman’s Day
- » Gardening workshop
- » Work Experience
- » Online – Social Connectivity
- » Nutrition workshop
- » IT Skills workshop
- » Confidence Capacity Building
- » Art/Drama/Writing/Music

- Create a community service audit.

- Community Mapping

- Exploring Options

DCIL will work with our Leaders to uncover their abilities, discover opportunities, and respond as a service into Transforming Lives.

“People will be empowered to explore their own creativity and find their own means of self-expression”

DCIL will incorporate and develop New Directions Framework in Line with the Interim Standards to expand our service.

- The Twelve Supports

- The 7 Themes

- Person-Centred planning - to assist individuals in achieving, maintaining and maximising their potential in accordance with the core values of person centredness

“Doing Ordinary things in Ordinary Places”

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority Three: Promotion & Engagement

03



DCIL Leaders & PA's



DCIL Schools Awareness Programme



The third strategic priority is to increase our profile within Donegal so that the public have a greater awareness of our vision and values and the services we provide. We will also actively engage with our

partners within the independent Living Network Ireland to promote a right based social model of disability, working towards an inclusive Irish Society.

What we will do:

How we will do it:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Increase public awareness of DCIL & its activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in the creation of a new user-friendly accessible website which showcases DCIL and its services. Increase DCIL's presence on social media platforms. Produce interactive videos showcasing our services. Implement a system that allows us to track our social media engagement. |
| 2. Increase networking and collaboration with other CIL's and partners within the Independent Living Movement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase stakeholder engagement with likeminded organisations to promote the social model of disabilities. Share policies, processes, and ideas with our CIL partners to ensure greater cooperation Support ILMI and its partners in collective political campaigning for equality for people with disabilities. |
| 3. Improve our profile and service offering in rural areas of Donegal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide DCIL Family Room / Drop-in service at DCIL Offices at Ballymacool House. PA service co-ordinators / staff to increase connectivity amongst DCIL Leaders. |
| 4. Effectively communicate to key stakeholders our philosophy of Independent Living, to ensure they are fully aware of our values and vision. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training sessions to keyworkers and relevant stakeholders of the true meaning of a PA service and independent living. |
| 5. Host Lunch and Learn workshops, to improve inclusion and enhance collaboration between Leaders. | <p>DCIL will invite guest speakers to provide information sessions to our Leaders on different topics. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to manage your finances Online safety Rights and Entitlements Ways to reduce stress Conflict management |
| 6. Expand our range of services
This is an exciting time with DCIL's NEW Building development & range of services that meet the needs of people with disabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCIL's focus is on developing additional ranges of support & models of service that ensures services are needs based. Providing an improved and enhanced service experience to people with disabilities. |

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority Four: Accountability & Transparency

04

To ensure full accountability and compliance to our members and funders the fourth

Strategic priority is to advance our corporate governance standards to the highest level.



DCIL PA and Leader Awards



DCIL Quality and Assurance Group



DCC European Independence & Inclusion Site Visit



DCIL Annual General Meeting

What we will do:

1. With the Board and staff, ensure that the organisation fully complies with principals and the standards of the Charities Governance Code.
2. Obtain an independent Quality Assurance accreditation for corporate governance.
3. Support the DCIL board of Directors to meet all legal, financial & HR requirements.
4. Improve DCIL's financial policies and procedures by Implementing and Maintaining full compliance with the National Financial Regulations (NFR), under which the internal financial control system of the HSE operates and the Internal Financial Controls Guidelines for Charities by the Charities Regulator
5. Cost plan and seek appropriate resources to deliver all aspects of the strategic plan.
6. Building Extension Proposal

How we will do it:

- Obtain the services of an independent expert to advise the board on all aspects of the charity's governance code.
- Create a steering group to lead the QA accreditation process.
- Obtain the expert advice and guidance from Disability Federation Ireland's governance department.
- Apply for the Improving Quality (IQ) accreditation in 2020.
- Undertake a skills gap of the board of directors to identify any training requirement or factors that will strengthen the Board.
- Develop a guidebook on all applicable financial policies and procedures in line with the NFR and Charities Regulator. Main clauses: System of Control/Monitoring, GDPR 2018 guidelines, Keeping and Maintaining Records, Prevent and Detect Fraud, Define Roles, Document Policies, Safeguarding of Assets and Segregation of Duties.
- Implement new processes required to align process with policy.
- Conduct a periodic checklist to ensure awareness and compliance for both policy and procedure.
- Invest & Expand DCILs Financial Team
- Identify Suitable resources of expertise and funding to facilitate the proposed objectives.
- Create a business plan including timelines, keys to success and financial projections to ensure that the Strategic plan can be realised.
- Develop an action register to ensure constant progression.
- Create Business Plan & Timeline

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority Five: Infrastructure & Resources

05

DCIL Development Plans



Drafting Initial Extension Plans with Architect Barry McCullagh



Sensory Garden Dream

The fifth strategic priority is to invest in new technologies, infrastructure and to improve our communications with our members and increase the

efficiency of our services. We also aim to invest in our premises to improve our overall service offering.

What we will do:

How we will do it:

1. Invest in an app-based management system for staff timesheets and rostering.

- Purchase a timecard and people planner software to assist in the coordination of the PA service.
- Upgrade our IT system to run the app-based system.
- Communicate with all Leaders and PAs about the change from manual to app-based timesheets.
- Provide training to all PA staff on the new service.

2. Enhance the accessibility of our head office and training premises.

- Undertake an access review of the building
- Install new push button accessible doors
- Drop various windows in the building to improve visibility for all.
- Ensure all staff facilities are fully accessible.

3. Enhance our accessible transport service.

- DCIL will identify funds to ensure the quality transport services provided and expand its offering, by purchasing additional vehicles.

4. Occupational Training

- Specialised equipment - Training Personal Assistants in home support provision
- Ability to invite Equipment Specialists to provide demonstrations and training on new apparatus.
- DCIL to provide an accessible Sensory Room

5. Independent Living
 "Please refer to Priority Area 3.6
 Expansion of service offerings"

- DCIL to participate in the inter-departmental Steering Committee for Housing.
- To replicate Leader Home Environment & provide training for people in Donegal with additional needs to maximise independence.

6. Health & Well-Being Resources
 "Please refer to Priority Area 2"

- The training kitchen will enable individuals to receive training/guidance in nutrition/food prep, optimising independence, crucial to everyday living.
- DCIL commit to source and provide training H & WB workshops as identified by Leaders
- Indoor/outdoor Sensory Garden to be developed subject to availability of funding

Conclusion

DCIL's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 allows the organisation to continually monitor, evaluate and enhance the service over a 4-year period. To ensure DCIL Leaders and individuals with disabilities throughout Donegal are supported, empowered, to lead active and independent lives.

DCIL organisational culture aims to positively influence each component of our five Priority Areas through clear goal setting, strong core beliefs and philosophies that are at the foundation of good practice in service provision.

DCIL will work with our Leaders to uncover their capacities, discover opportunities, and respond as a service into Leader self-determination and control over their own life. By increasing service capacity DCIL Leaders and individuals will be empowered to explore their own creativity, finding their own means of self-expression and to actively participate as equal citizens in society.

DCIL would like to acknowledge the role of the Steering Group involved in setting this road map and mandate for the organisation over the coming years. Our many thanks and appreciation to Rosaleen Doherty, Jonathan McLaughlin, Donnacha Gallagher, Roisin Kavanagh, Kathy Gillespie, Cath Waugh and Marian O'Donnell all of which has contributed greatly.



Don't tell us
"the skys the limit"
whenever we
know there are
footprints on the
Moon



DCIL Leader Jennifer Doherty



Nothing about us without us

Visit www.donegalcil.com

ph: +(0)74 91 28945/ fax:+353(0)74 91 28589

Ballymacool House, Ballymacool, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Company No: 352126 - Charity No: CHY 16580