



Strategic Plan 2017-2019

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Introduction

Caranua is an independent State body and works to support survivors of institutional abuse. It does this by managing a Fund of €110 million provided by religious congregations in Ireland and paying for services that survivors may apply for and that will help improve their quality of life.

To be eligible to apply to Caranua survivors must have received an award from the Residential Institutions Redress Board, the Irish courts or settlement with a congregation. At the time of its establishment, there were an estimated 15,000 eligible applicants, 60% of them based in Ireland, 30% in the UK and the remainder throughout the rest of the world. Caranua began to accept applications from eligible applicants in January 2014 and at the end of 2016 had received applications from almost 6,000 individuals and spent almost €60 million of the Fund on services.

This plan covers the three years from 2017 to 2019. It is intended that by the end of this time Caranua will have fully spent the Fund and wound down its operations. It will also continue to deliver supports to survivors and measure the impact that it has had on their wellbeing. Finally, it will work with survivors to improve understanding of childhood abuse and its effects and to build the capacity of other services to respond to survivor needs into the future.

Governance and Structure

Caranua operates under the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act, 2012 and its role, functions and structure are determined by it. The Act defines three areas in which assistance can be considered – **health, housing** and **education** and specifies a range of functions for its Board.

The Board comprises nine people who are appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills. Four of these have experience of childhood institutionalisation. The Board oversees the operation of the organisation, sets strategic direction and holds staff to account. Specific functions of the organisation are to:

- Decide the range of “approved’ services”
- Design an application process
- Set criteria for decisions
- Ensure information on our supports for survivors is readily available
- Add to rather than duplicate existing public services
- Promote understanding of the effects of abuse
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our interventions
- Be consistent, fair, transparent and equitable
- Use the funds available efficiently.

In designing its services for survivors, Caranua consulted with survivors and reviewed available information and research on the impact of adverse childhood experiences. Our vision, aims, values and service delivery-model were based on the information gathered and deliberately designed to address the needs and situation of survivors, within the confines of the legislation.

Our service model is person-centred and needs-led, it brings people to us through outreach and offers a dedicated Advisor to each applicant to support them through their application, link them with other services and advocate as necessary. In 2015 we completed a review of our approach. As a result we broadened the range of services we can support and introduced a review limit on the value of support that individuals can receive.

Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision, mission and values guide and underpin all of our activities and interactions and help to determine the measurement of our success and impact.

Vision

Better lives for survivors now and better services in the future

Mission

Our purpose is to reach out, enable and support survivors to access services that will improve the quality of their lives now and into the future.

Values

Our strategy has been informed by the following values which we aim to uphold and practice in the course of all aspects of our work and in the implementation of this strategy:

- **Needs led:** We put the needs of survivors at the heart of everything we do
- **Compassion and respect:** We believe survivors are entitled to compassion, respect and dignity
- **Open and fair:** We will be open and fair in all our dealings
- **Authenticity:** We will be honest about what we can and cannot do and provide accurate, balanced and expert information
- **Equality:** We are impartial and offer equal access to anyone using our services
- **Confidentiality:** We respect and promote the right to privacy of anyone in contact with us
- **Excellence:** We will seek to achieve excellence and high quality in everything we do
- **Partnership:** We will build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including survivor support groups, and other voluntary and public bodies to ensure that survivors get services of real and lasting benefit and that we make the best use of the Fund.

Challenges and Opportunities

In developing this strategic plan and reflecting on its work over the last three years, Caranua has identified a number of limitations, challenges and opportunities within the organisation and its operating environment:

- **Reaching eligible survivors:** We are prohibited by our governing legislation from making direct contact with the people who are eligible to apply to us. We must strive to find creative ways of informing and encouraging them to make contact with us and will continue to do this.
- **Predicting level of demand:** As we are not able to contact survivors, we could not predict or control the level or pattern of applications. This made it difficult to project and manage applications. We have now set an evidence-based target for expenditure and the number of applicants to reach, providing a basis for planning and monitoring.
- **Single delivery model:** Our service to applicants has of necessity been largely over the telephone and there are clear limitations to this, particularly for people who are hard of hearing or not comfortable with the telephone. Offering more choice and implementing more diverse ways of delivery will be a key priority over the time span of this plan.
- **Being needs-led, flexible and consistent:** There is a challenge in addressing the individual needs of each applicant, being flexible interpreting our criteria and guidelines and at the same time being consistent in their application, and compliant with internal controls. This requires carefully designed assessment and monitoring procedures and an open and empathetic approach to each unique situation. We continually review our processes and practice to ensure fidelity to our values, service standards and survivor needs.
- **Quality and impact:** Since it began, Caranua has struggled to keep pace with the level of applications and contacts from survivors and maintain a good quality service. Applicant waiting times have been too long and other delays have also occurred. The level of applications being made has now reduced so that we can concentrate on improving the quality and impact of our interventions with survivors.
- **Fund and time limited:** Caranua can pay for home improvements and other services for applicants to improve their quality of life and help to prevent their return to institutional care in later life. But the Fund it

manages is finite and we must find ways to ensure these improvements continue after Caranua is gone, in particular by improving links with public and other service providers.

- **Building understanding and capacity:** The trauma of institutional abuse is profound and its effects can be lifelong, compromising wellbeing. We are required by legislation to build the capacity of service providers to become aware of survivor needs so that they can respond appropriately. In doing this we will draw on our baseline study completed in 2015 and on the views and experiences of survivors.
- **Survivors are dying:** It is a fact that nearly 90% of survivors eligible to apply to us are aged over 50 and 28% are over 70, and we are aware that sadly some have passed away, either before or in the course of making an application to us. This situation creates an urgency to reach out to eligible survivors so they can benefit from the Fund.
- **Survivors' stories are dying too:** The report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse recommended: *"the lessons of the past should be learned"* so that *"steps can be taken to reduce the risk of repeating them"*. The demise of survivors means that their experiences (of institutionalisation, abuse, redress, recovery) and the lessons from these could die with them. Caranua will work with survivors and others to ensure that their experiences are captured and shared for the good of the future.
- **Managing expectations:** Survivors are understandably suspicious of State bodies and doubtful of their positive intentions, and there are many different perceptions about the Fund and how it should work. At the same time, Caranua must work within the legislation and its own criteria. These factors create significant operational challenges and we will continue to work to disrupt negative expectations, foster trust and build confidence.
- **Skills and expertise:** As this is the final plan for Caranua, it may be necessary for staff to adapt and develop both their skills and their roles and this requires careful and respectful planning and management.
- **Regulation and compliance:** Regulation of State bodies becomes more stringent and both compliance and reporting can be onerous. A challenge for Caranua is to meet our compliance obligations while at the same time demonstrating that state bodies are capable of being person-centred and flexible in responding to needs.

Objectives and indicators

The following strategic objectives and supporting actions will enable us to achieve our vision.

1 Enhance the quality, reach and impact of our services to survivors

We will:

- Deliver services that are supportive, empowering and effective
- Intensify our communications, engagement and outreach activities
- Diversify our delivery model to improve quality and reach
- Broker access to services for survivors, particularly those with complex needs

2. Build understanding and capacity to care

We will:

- Create opportunities for the experiences and views of survivors to be collected
- Develop and deliver a programme to build awareness and capacity to respond to survivor needs

3. Maximise organisation capability, accountability and effectiveness

We will:

- Further develop Caranua as a learning organisation
- Ensure consistent adherence to governance, standards and values
- Manage the orderly, controlled and timely wind down of Caranua

The following indicators of success will be monitored throughout the period of the plan and used to inform its management, implementation and review:

- Impact of Caranua interventions on the quality of life of applicants
- Improvements in the capacity of other services to recognise and respond to the needs of survivors, against the baseline completed in 2015
- The number and percentage of targeted eligible survivors who make applications to Caranua
- The effectiveness of the Board in meeting its governance responsibilities
- Trends in satisfaction levels of applicants and other stakeholders
- Number and percentage of objectives completed on time, in full and on budget
- Trends in appeals, internal and external complaints and their outcomes.

Implementation strategies and projects

The strategic objectives will be implemented through a number of strategies and projects. Progress will tracked through the review of indicators, based on analysis of our activity information, engagement with stakeholders and independent evaluation

Objective 1

Enhance the quality, reach and impact of our services to survivors

Strategies	Projects	Indicators
<p>Deliver services that are supportive, empowering and effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and monitor our practice to ensure it is consistently supportive of the specific needs and situations of applicants • Make changes as necessary to our services and other offerings based feedback from applicants and other stakeholders • Complete a review of experience with the new criteria introduced in June 2016 and make adjustments as indicated • Assess the extent to which our interventions have been supportive, empowering and effective, through external evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in the level of satisfaction with our services • Trends in levels of compliance with our quality standards and customer service standards • Number of meetings held with stakeholders • Satisfaction of stakeholders with Caranua consultation • The difference Caranua has made to the quality of lives of applicants
<p>Diversify our delivery model to improve quality and reach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities for face to face contact for applicants, through outreach, other events and direct service • Work with and through community based services to reach out to and respond to new applicants • Link applicants to supportive community based and specialist services • Provide reach-in services to prisons, homeless and other residential settings • Widely publicise a closing date for applications, to ensure no one misses the opportunity to apply • Reach our target of 6100 applicants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of new applications received, against targets • The number of working partnerships • Satisfaction of partners with Caranua • Trends in the number of face to face contacts • Satisfaction of applicants with service offerings

Strategies	Projects	Indicators
<p>Intensify our communications, engagement and outreach activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise and implement an engagement strategy to improve opportunities for feedback and consultation with applicants and deepen our engagement with them • Enhance our website as a source of information and support for survivors • Expand the range of accessible formats available on our website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in the number of outreach events, clinics and activities • Number of new elements and formats available on website • Number of new applications • Satisfaction levels among applicants and other stakeholders with information materials and formats
<p>Broker access to services for survivors, particularly those with complex needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with survivors, support groups and other support services to identify patterns of outstanding needs among survivors in Ireland • Establish an appropriate process of needs assessment and care planning for applicants with complex needs • Work with mainstream services to develop agreed referral pathways for survivors to access necessary services now and into the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of applicants linked to services • Number of needs assessments completed • Satisfaction of other services with Caranua referral practice and partnership working

Objective 2

Build understanding and capacity to care

Strategies	Projects	Indicators
<p>Create opportunities for the experiences and views of survivors to be collected</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a group of relevant experts, including survivors, to help Caranua design a programme of activities to capture and record experiences Implement and review the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction of participants with the consultation process and programme
<p>Develop and deliver a programme to build awareness and capacity to respond to survivor needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with survivors about the key elements of the awareness and capacity building programme Establish a working group of service commissioners and practitioners to inform the shape and scope of the programme Devise and implement the agreed programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in awareness among service providers, as measured against the Caranua baseline study in 2015 Changes in practice as a result of programme

Objective 3

Maximise organisation capability, accountability and effectiveness

Strategies	Projects	Indicators
Further develop Caranua as a learning organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement a programme of ongoing training, skills development and support for staff • Develop our trauma informed practice • Expand opportunities for reflection and discourse inside and outside the organisation, particularly with survivors and their support groups • Enhance our information systems to provide robust and timely data to inform reviews and decisions • Commission an independent evaluation of our impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in staff retention and turnover • Satisfaction of staff with working in Caranua • Career progress for staff immediately after leaving
Ensure consistent adherence to governance, standards and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise and implement a plan to promote and monitor quality assurance across all activities • Ensure consistent compliance with quality standards, procedures, regulations, legislation and other good practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in levels of compliance with PDA, financial, governance and other regulations • Trends in adherence to Caranua quality standards and values • Number of strategic and operational objectives met on time and on target • Trends in nature, number and type of feedback and complaints
Manage the orderly, controlled and timely wind-down of Caranua	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise and implement a plan for the wind down of the organisation • Spend the Fund fully, finalising all applications within time targets • Complete all financial, impact, audit, activity and other relevant reports • Complete relocation of the Caranua office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of objectives in wind down plan met on time and in full • Number of new applications received and processed, against targets



CARANUA

support for survivors of institutional abuse

How to contact us

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Charges may apply from some mobile networks
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Please note that we are unable to provide a freephone number outside Ireland and the United Kingdom, but if you call us we can call you back to reduce the cost of the call to you.
- Email: apply@caranua.ie

For more information

See our website www.caranua.ie