

## Statement on behalf of Caranua

In response to questions received from Brian O'Connell, RTE

10<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Caranua puts the needs of survivors at the heart of everything we do.

1. As you are aware given the nature of our work, we must be very strict regarding confidentiality and we are precluded from discussing or identifying any survivor who has contacted us or has applied for support funding therefore we cannot comment on individual cases and as such it is difficult to address the issues you have raised.

Relevant statistics in respect of survivors who have applied to Caranua for support funding can be found on our website here: <http://caranua.ie/e74-million-spent-on-services/>

Additional information on our 2017 work can be found on our recently published annual report <http://caranua.ie/caranua-publishes-2017-annual-report/>

Since 2017 we have received feedback from 764 individuals, 634 were positive, 48 made recommendations on how the service or process could be improved and there were 82 complaints.

2. We have a dedicated team of advisors and support staff at Caranua who try to ensure the engagement process for survivors is as straightforward as possible. Our aim is to identify the needs of survivors as quickly as possible and support them through the application process.

We welcome input and collaboration from survivors' groups and met with the Christine Buckley Centre for Education and Support (Aislinn Centre) on two occasions this year. We valued their input in the written communication that we received following our meeting. We were also delighted to work with them to facilitate individual meetings between survivors and application advisors in both their office and the Caranua office.

3. When Caranua was established in 2013, the Office of Public Works (OPW) were requested by the Department of Education and Skills to provide accommodation for

staff operations. At the time, the OPW were able to offer accommodation in a leased property portfolio as a temporary measure. The OPW's lease for this premise in North Frederick Street expired in May 2017. As the building owner wished to use the premises for other purposes, the OPW were unable to renew the lease. Consequently, all tenants were informed they needed to relocate to alternative premises. The new premises was sourced and leased by the OPW and is sublet to Caranua.

The move to the alternative new premises occurred in September 2017. The total amount of rent paid for both Frederick Street and James Joyce Street in 2017 was €114,019.34.

Section 30 of the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act 2012 provides that all expenses incurred by Caranua under the Act shall, subject to the approval of the board, be charged to an investment account to the benefit of Caranua. That is why it is expected to meet its own accommodation needs and pay the rent.<sup>4</sup> I am attaching the most current publicly available financial information. <http://caranua.ie/e74-million-spent-on-services/> updated information is provided on [www.caranua.ie](http://www.caranua.ie) following Board meetings.

At the end of August 2018, there were 2, 654 individual survivors working with 15 advisors on their applications. In addition, 334 survivors were waiting to be assigned to an advisor for the first time.

5. On 31st May 2018, the Board of Caranua announced their decision to cease accepting new or repeat applications from 1st August 2018. This decision was made after careful consideration of the following;

- The total amount of the fund spent to date
- The total number of survivors who have availed of funding supports,
- The number of survivors who are currently working with Caranua on their application for funding supports
- The amount remaining in the limited fund

- The need to ensure that there is sufficient funding available for those who have made applications.

Whilst Caranua cannot provide financial supports for any new applicants after the August 1st deadline we are working with survivors, survivor's organisations and health and social care agencies to put in place advocacy and support for those who need continued support.

We care deeply about the wellbeing of those we have helped to support since January 2014 and are working with the Department of Education & Skills to ensure continuing supports are available.

The following link <http://caranua.ie/note-from-the-board-of-caranua-following-publication-of-review-of-eligibility-to-apply-to-caranua-by-the-department-of-education/> provides a detailed explanation as to why the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline was enacted.

6. The Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act, 2012 sets out the role and functions of the Board as well as its composition, selection and the length of term of Board members.

There are nine members, including an independent Chair, all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Education. Four members are former residents. The remainder are selected for relevant skills and experience in areas of relevance to RISF including financial management and service delivery.

Currently there are 2 survivors on the Board and their input is integral to our decision making; we look forward to the appointment of the 2 new survivor Board members by the Minister of Education and we would like to thank all former Board members for the contribution they made to the running of Caranua during their time with us.

**ENDS**

**For further information please contact:**

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## **Further Information:**

Further information may be found under the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Caranua website here: <http://caranua.ie/faqs/application-deadline-frequently-asked-questions/>

The Review of eligibility for access to the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund was an undertaking given by the then Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairí Quinn T.D., during the passage of the legislation through the Houses of the Oireachtas that Caranua was established under, the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act 2012. The text of the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act, 2012 can be viewed here: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/35/enacted/en/html>

## **Caranua (the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund)**

Caranua (the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund) is an independent State body, established by the Minister for Education and Skills which operates under the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund (RISF) Act 2012.

To be eligible to apply to Caranua survivors must have received an award through settlement, Court or the Residential Institutions Redress Board in relation to their time in an institution. The institutions were run by religious congregations and funded and regulated by the State. To date, Caranua has been provided with €102.97M of the committed €110M contributions from the religious congregations to support survivors of institutional abuse.

Caranua was established under the RISF Fund Act, 2012 and is responsible for managing these funds to support people who, as children, experienced abuse in institutions in Ireland. \*The legislation that Caranua was established under, the RISF Fund Act, 2012 (Section 30), states that all costs (includes staff costings, office accommodation, ICT, postage, printing, telephone costs, utilities, postage, outreach events, external audit, independent Appeal Officers costs etc) must be paid out of the Fund.

Caranua can offer support, information, advice and advocacy to survivors. The help we provide will depend on the needs and circumstances of each survivor but the areas we can help with are:

- Health and Wellbeing;
- Housing Support;
- Education, Learning and Development;
- Socially Active & Connected.

Working in partnership with public services and adding value to, rather than duplicating the services they provide, is an important element of our legislation and since Caranua was established we have expanded the range of organisations that we have worked with and through.

During the planning stages in 2013 Caranua reviewed available research and individual testimonies from survivors on the effects of institutional abuse. We also consulted with survivors in Ireland and the UK, meeting around 200 individuals concerning their needs and how the Fund should operate, as well as survivor support groups, Irish Welfare and other relevant services. Consultation and attention to feedback has continued to be a cornerstone of our work. We actively encourage applicants to give us feedback, directly and through our website and meetings are

held in Ireland and the UK with survivor support groups and other relevant bodies. Our aims and values are designed to inform and underpin all our activities and to ensure that we are as flexible and open as possible in meeting needs of survivors who apply to Caranua.

The first set of approved services and criteria were published in January 2014. Based on feedback received from survivors and other stakeholders these were simplified in May 2014.

The criteria were reviewed again in 2015, taking into account the views and feedback received from applicants, survivor support groups and patterns of expenditure. The key questions were how to make the Fund sustainable and more responsive to the expressed needs and preferences of survivors. It was found that spending on home improvements (i.e. installation of new windows & doors) was very high, that home owners were benefiting disproportionately and that many survivors wanted services that were not currently included. It was clear that if existing patterns of expenditure were to continue that the Fund would not be distributed fairly and would not be available for all the survivors who were eligible to benefit from it. As a result, the Board extended the range of services and a maximum allocation on the value of services that a survivor could receive was introduced. The changes came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016 and applied to all new and reapplications received after that date. The changes were developed in consultation with officials in the Department of Education and Skills and were in keeping with the broad aims of Caranua; the range of services indicated in the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act; and the authority of the Board to determine criteria, and the range of approved services under Section 9 of the RISF Act 2012.

**The Executive Summary of the Final Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2009 can be viewed via this link:**

<http://www.childabusecommission.ie/rpt/pdfs/CICA-Executive%20Summary.pdf>

**Draft Terms of Reference for Review of Eligibility to access funding support from the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund published by the Minister for Education & Skills.**

On 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 the Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton T.D., announced a three-week consultation period in relation to the proposed draft terms of reference of a review of eligibility to access funding support from Caranua (the Residential institutions Statutory Fund). The draft terms of reference are available on the Department for Education and Skills website at the following links:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2017-Press-Releases/PR2017-15-01.html> and

<http://www.education.ie/en/Learners/Information/Former-Residents-of-Industrial-Schools/Caranua-Review-of-Eligibility-Draft-Terms-of-Reference.pdf>

**Review of Eligibility of Persons to access the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund (“Caranua”)**

The Review of Eligibility of Persons to access the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund (“Caranua”) was published (Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018) and can be viewed on the Department of Education and Skills website here:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/review-of-eligibility-of-persons-to-access-the-residential-institutions-statutory-fund-caranua.pdf>

The Department of Education and Skills Press Release can also be viewed on their website here: <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2018-press-releases/PR18-05-29.html>