



# CoAction

S U M M A R Y O F  
Five-Year Strategic Development Plan  
**2010-2015**



# CoAction

## Summary of Five-Year Strategic Development Plan

2010-2015

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements . . . . .	2
Introduction . . . . .	3
Context . . . . .	4
Statistical and Statutory Information . . . . .	4
Process . . . . .	8
Priorities and Goals . . . . .	10
Children's Services . . . . .	10
Building Projects . . . . .	11
Adult Day Services and Supports . . . . .	12
Building Projects . . . . .	13
Residential and Respite Services . . . . .	14
Children's Respite Services and Supports . . . . .	14
Building Projects . . . . .	15
Human Resources . . . . .	16
Priorities. . . . .	16
Information Technology . . . . .	17
Priorities. . . . .	17
Financial Management. . . . .	19

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We would like to sincerely thank our service users, families, friends, Tom Hogan, the Board of Directors, Heads of Service, Area Managers, staff, Sheila Cotter and Laura O'Donovan who contributed invaluable information in the development of this plan.

We would also like to take this opportunity to genuinely thank the Development Plan Core Group for their time, hard work and commitment in completing this document. The group includes:

- Louise Casey, Board of Directors
- Ellen Heimbeck, Director of Services
- Siobhan Higgins, Area Manager
- Jean Morgan, Residential Manager
- Mary O'Donovan, Financial Controller
- Deirdre Ryan, Human Resources Manager
- Hazel Trudgill, Children's Services Clinical Leader and Head of Service - Speech and Language
- Maurice Walsh, Chief Executive Officer

## SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CoAction would like to acknowledge the significant contribution made by Ellen Heimbeck, Director of Services who passed away suddenly on the 14th February 2010. Ellen's work was always driven by her true vision of person centredness, which is evident throughout this plan. Ellen dedicated a great deal of time and effort to the development plan, and through this, her vision for CoAction will continue.

## INTRODUCTION

CoAction West Cork is a voluntary organisation, which provides a wide range of services and supports to children and adults with intellectual disabilities, and children with autism throughout West Cork.

### **The Mission of CoAction is:**

CoAction West Cork provides quality services to support children and adults with an intellectual disability, and children with autism. This is achieved by helping each service user reach their full potential, working in partnership with their families and carers within the community.

### **The Vision of CoAction is:**

We in CoAction see a world where people with a disability participate fully in all aspects of life as equal citizens.

CoAction recognises service users as individuals with abilities. We aim to support people to live a full life as part of their local community by:

- Promoting dignity and respect for the individual.
- Developing and delivering person and family centred supports based on the needs and wishes of service users and their families in line with best practice.
- Working in partnership with service users, their families, staff, relevant agencies and the wider community.
- Making the best use of our resources for the benefit of our service users, in an environment of openness and accountability.
- Raising awareness of intellectual disability and autism within the community.

The Development Plan has been completed using information gained from the CoAction Strategic Plan Questionnaire sent out to families, board members, branch members and staff. A user friendly Service User Questionnaire(s) was facilitated by the advocacy officer to ensure the service users had a true voice in the process. The information gained from the questionnaires is the foundation and driving force of the Development Plan. Data from the National Intellectual Disability Database was used for the projected numbers of service users over the five-year period. The Development Plan has incorporated requirements from current legislation.

Whilst it is intended that the Development Plan will provide direction and a framework for the future development of CoAction's services, any such development will be dependant on the availability of appropriate funding and resources.

## CONTEXT

The Development Plan has been completed in consultation with service users, family members, HSE, staff and volunteers. The Plan covers the years 2010 to 2015 and has been developed taking into account the significant developments within Irish society, as well as change and reform within health and personal social services nationally. Current legislation and government policy regarding health services guided the preparation of the Plan. The Plan reflects increasing service needs and our intent to provide person centred services based on best practice. The following is an outline of the main factors that influenced the development of the Plan.

The Development Plan is based on the principle of “person centredness”. Being person centred means placing the person at the centre and developing supports and services based upon what is important to them from their own perspective and which contribute to their full inclusion in the community. This approach places an emphasis on using mainstream community services and infrastructure wherever possible, assisted by CoAction’s services and supports. CoAction is committed to this principle, and aided by the Development Plan will endeavour to provide person centred supports throughout the organisation and the wider community.

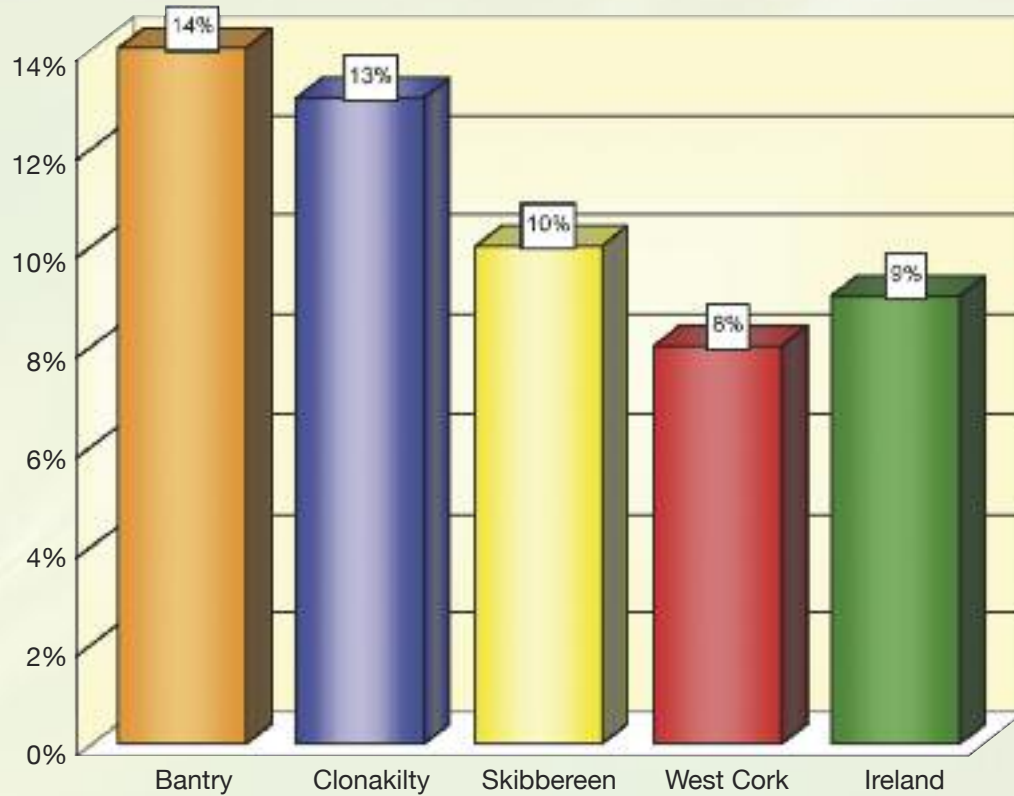
CoAction West Cork was founded in Bantry in 1974 by a group of parents who wanted to ensure that their children, who had intellectual disabilities, would be educated in their own community. We recognise and acknowledge the contribution volunteers have made and continue to make for services and supports of CoAction. The driving vision of the organisation since then has been to enable people with intellectual disabilities to reach their full potential through the provision of local service in their locality. In the years since its foundation, CoAction West Cork has grown from a small, Bantry based group to one representative of communities all over West Cork. At present CoAction caters for 114 adults and 220 children.

## STATISTICAL AND STATUTORY INFORMATION

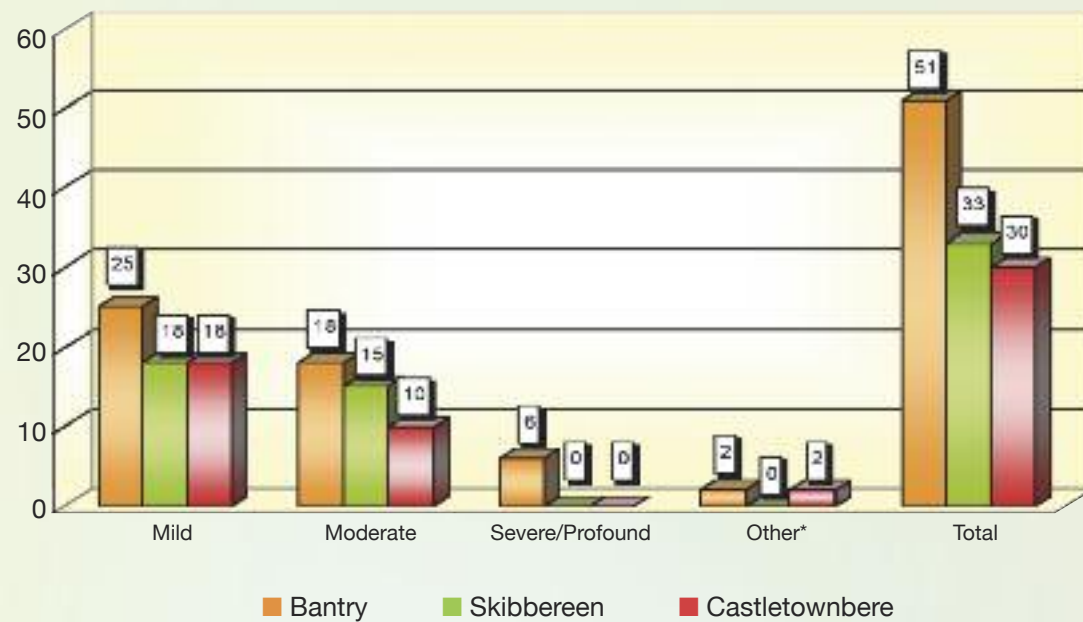
With the increased demand for services, many changes continue to take place in the Department of Health and Children as well as the Health Service Executive (HSE). The HSE has published their Corporate Plan 2008-2011 and their National Service Plan 2009. These incorporate the fundamental core principles of equity, quality, accountability and people-centredness. CoAction will pursue ways to collaborate with other organisations to enhance supports, services and working relationships. By embracing these principles, CoAction will reach the goals set out in the Development Plan by building on the strong working relationship with the HSE and other organisations.

According to the Central Statistics Office the population of Cork County has increased by 12.6% over the 10-year period from 1996-2006. 29,777 people over the age of 15 in Cork County have a disability, of which 5,405 people have a learning or intellectual disability, which equates 8% of the county population. Further breakdown finds within the CoAction catchment area 219 persons over the age of 15 have learning or intellectual disability. The increasing numbers equates increasing demand for services within the CoAction catchment area. In communities with populations over 1,500 Bantry (14%), Clonakilty (13%) and Skibbereen (10%) have a higher percentage of people with disabilities than the county or national level (9%).

## Percentage of Population with a Disability (2006)



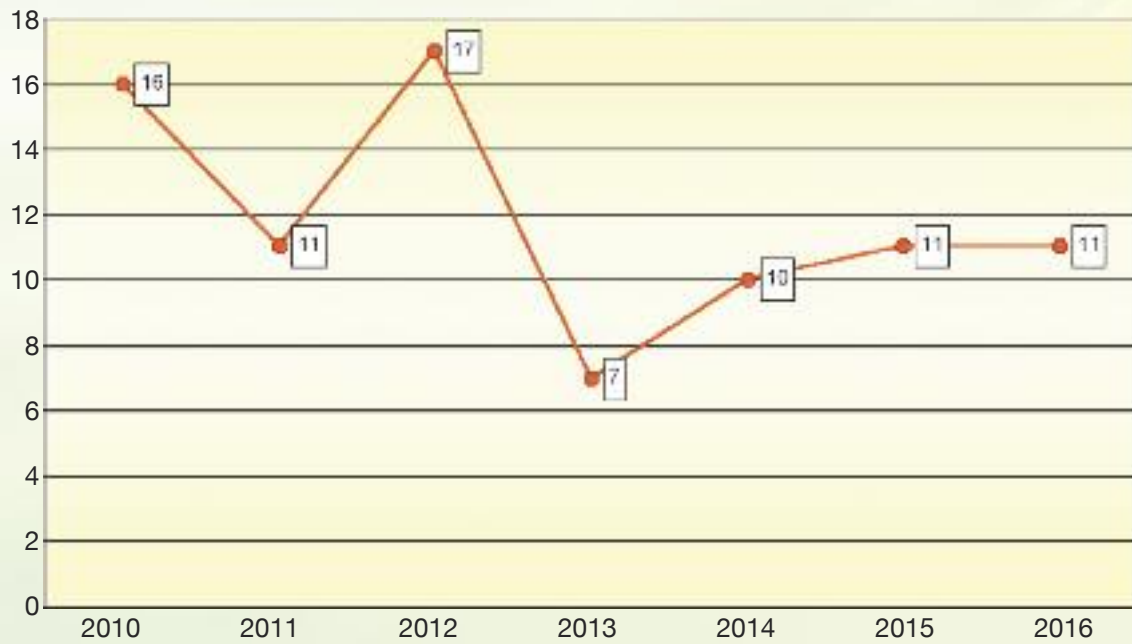
## Current Number of CoAction Service Users by Area and Level of ID



**Projected Number of Children Requiring Adult Services by Level of Intellectual Disability 2010-2016**



**Projected Totals Entering Adult Services 2010-2016**



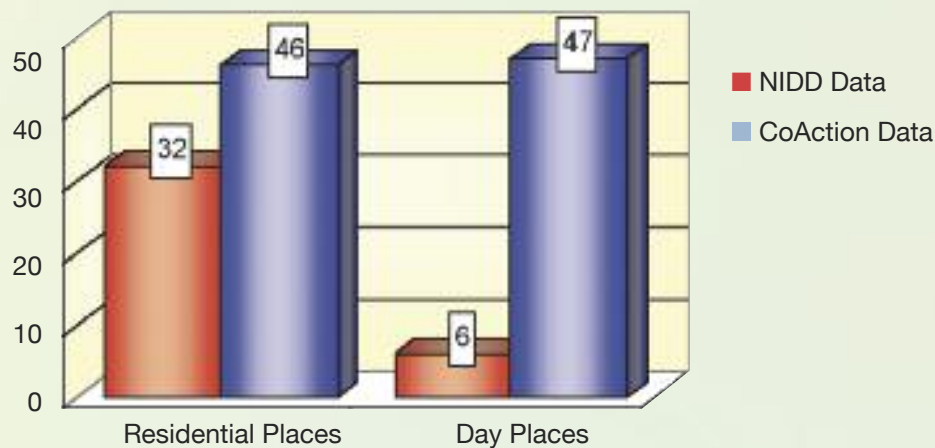
The Health Research Board (HRB) is the lead agency supporting and funding health research in Ireland; with a core role in maintaining health information systems and conducting research linked to national health priorities. The HRB is responsible for managing five national information systems, one of which is the National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD). This database is under the management of the Disability Database Unit (DDU) and was established in 1995. The NIDD was established to ensure that information would be available to enable the Department of Health and Children, the Health Services Executive and non-statutory agencies in Ireland to provide appropriate services to people with an intellectual disability and their families. There were 25,613 people registered on the NIDD in April 2007, including:

- 24,898 people with an intellectual disability (ID) in receipt of services, representing 97% of the total registered – this is the highest number of people recorded as in receipt of services since the establishment of the database.

There are 390 people with an intellectual disability registered on the NIDD in the West Cork area. Inclusion on the database is voluntary; therefore there are anomalies in the figures due to definitions of services (see graph below). Responsibility for providing information lies with service providers, the HSE and school principals. An individual's record is amended when there is a significant change in his or her circumstances. In addition to this, each individual's information is reviewed at least once a year.

According to the NIDD (2007), the following new places are required in West Cork for the period of 2008-2012:

## New Places Needed in West Cork



- 55 residential support places. It has not been possible to clarify the makeup of this figure.

Current Government policy on services for people with disabilities emphasises the importance of mainstreaming. The Disability Act of 2005 establishes rights for people with disabilities and their families and outlines the structure for the Assessment of Need for children 0-5 years 11 months and provision of services. The Assessment of Need process will be rolled out for the 6-18 age group in children's services as well as for adults. The Epsen Act 2004 is also due to be rolled out and will have an impact on how we deliver services in schools.

The Mental Health Act, 2001 provides for changes to certain aspects of Mental Health services in Ireland. The Act defines mental disorder as mental illness, severe dementia or significant intellectual disability. As a result the Act may have future implications within the intellectual disability sector.

The National Disability Authority published their Annual Report for 2007, which supports the implementation of the National Standards for Disability Services that have been drafted. They were submitted for approval in October 2004. The Annual Report supports the draft Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) standards for Residential Services for People with Disabilities. These standards complement the National Standards for Disability. It is intended that person centred services are established with the standards being the foundation for service providers to ensure they reach an agreed level of performance while enabling them to further improve the quality of service provision. CoAction welcomes the challenge of implementing and meeting the recognised standards, with continuous improvement remaining as an integral aspect of service development and provision.

In the context of training for people with disabilities, there are a number of national changes of relevance to the Development Plan. The national policy of mainstreaming continues to impact on the training and employment of people with disabilities. Most notably the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) was established in 2001 under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. FETAC has developed both a new policy and guidelines for Quality Assurance in Further Education and Training. Training programmes (Rehabilitation Training) are required to attain this quality assurance. Training programmes involving the preparation and service of food must comply with a food safety management system such as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).

Since the publication of Strategy for Equality – Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities (1996) with European legislation the national policy on employment for people with disabilities has changed substantially. This change has been expressed in successive programmes for government, which outline a commitment to full and equal access to mainstream services, including employment status for people with disabilities. This policy position has impacted directly on what were known as “Sheltered Workshops”. In January 2008 the HSE carried out a week long Census of activities in all Day Centres in order to determine the types of activities occurring in centres with the outcome to evaluate employment status of people with disabilities. The result of the census may result in a change in practice for Day Centres. The report of the outcome is awaited.

The health and safety of service users and staff is a priority to CoAction. As well as complying with the necessary legislative requirements, such as the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 1989-2005, CoAction has in place policies and guideline for service users and staff to ensure a safe workplace keeping person centredness at the forefront to maximise opportunities while minimising risks.

We recognise the increased expectations from service users and families to have more choice and flexibility in service provision and supports. We believe they are a result of the person centred process and the desire of the service users to reach their full potential.

The Development Plan outlines the service development as well as identifies gaps in service and areas for improvement while further enhancing our organisational capacity and regional presence.

## **PROCESS**

### **Step 1:**

To prepare and distribute a Strategic Plan Questionnaire(s) for all stakeholders.

### **Step 2:**

To collate the questionnaire(s) and present findings to the Heads of Service, Area Managers, Senior Management Team.

### **Step 3:**

To establish the Development Plan Core Group with members from the above mentioned teams as well as a member of the Board of Directors. Sub-groups were agreed and were tasked with writing draft plans with representatives from staff, family members, and board and/or branch members.

### **Step 4:**

To present draft plan to Development Plan Core Group and Senior Management for comment.

### **Step 5:**

To present draft plan to service users, families, staff, board members, branch members and other stakeholders, i.e. Health Services Executive – South for comment.

### **Step 6:**

To prepare final draft plan.

### **Step 7:**

To present the final draft for approval to the Senior Management Team and Board of Directors.

### **Step 8:**

To formally present the approved Development Plan to service users, families, staff, board members, branch members and other stakeholders.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### Priorities

1. To maintain our high standard of service and continue to develop new services in partnership with families and other stakeholders including the HSE and Department of Education.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To continually evaluate the quality and efficiency of the services to children	Ongoing
To develop a hydrotherapy service	Ongoing
To extend Orthotics service	Ongoing
To develop a sensory integration service	Ongoing
To continue to evaluate and carry out team assessments and further develop interdisciplinary teamwork	2010
To improve practices with respect to informing families of a child's disability	Ongoing

2. To support and empower parents within the local community.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To continue to develop good communication with families	Ongoing
To develop family-to-family supports and links by working with families, linking with local groups and facilitating parent support meetings	Ongoing
To include families at all levels of decision-making	Ongoing
To continue to support and empower parents through the Family Service Plan process, building support networks and involving parents in decision-making	Ongoing

3. To promote inclusion and wider choices for children.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To continue to offer choices of service provision for pre-school children	Ongoing
To continue to provide occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and physiotherapy support to all children in CoAction whether they are attending mainstream school or special classes	Ongoing
To promote inclusion and raise disability awareness within the community	Ongoing

4. To promote research in the organisation.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To develop a research policy	2011
To encourage staff to carry out research	Ongoing

5. To continue to provide Autism Spectrum Disorder assessments and develop new interventions for the children on the Autism Spectrum.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To organise an intranet service for parents of children enrolled with the West Cork Autism Spectrum Disorder Service to provide parent-to-parent links and support	2010
To develop more group interventions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, for example occupational therapy/speech and language therapy groups, Early Bird and More Than Words	Ongoing

## OUTSTANDING BUILDING PROJECTS

1. Child and Family Centre – Bantry

**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE – SEPTEMBER 2010**

2. Clonakilty Development - Child and Family Outreach Centre  
(as part of overall Clonakilty development)

**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE – SEPTEMBER 2012**

## ADULT DAY SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

### Priorities

1. We recognise that service users identify and develop their own futures. We aim to assist the service users to realise this by providing appropriate supports within local communities. Supports and services are provided on the basis of person centred plans. We aim to provide quality person centred supports in the area of supported employment, training, personal development, recreation and leisure creating a meaningful balance in the service users lives.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To promote and encourage the use of mainstream services	Ongoing
To develop two centres of excellence for Foundation Training	2011
To provide FETAC accredited courses through programmes in the day service, including Foundation Training	Ongoing
To provide a general information brochure for adult services	2010
To develop an information pack about adult services	2010
To make relevant information and documentation accessible to service users	Ongoing
To develop a service user handbook	2010

2. To promote, encourage and empower the service users to have full participation in all aspects of decision making within CoAction.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To ensure service users are involved in the preparation and review of relevant proposals and policies	Ongoing
To provide support and education regarding advocacy and self-advocacy	Ongoing
To establish a forum by which service users actively participate in decision making meetings, e.g. Management Team, Board of Directors, etc	Ongoing

3. To support our ageing population by developing an elder care programme in line with best practice.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide a high quality elder care service	Ongoing
To maintain and increase links with mainstream elder care services	Ongoing
To provide specific day activities for service users in response to individual needs	Ongoing
To develop and provide programmes to support service users to retain a good level of mental and physical well-being	Ongoing
To provide high quality service for service users who may experience early onset dementia through early screening via the CoAction multi-disciplinary team	Ongoing

4. To develop services to meet the needs of service users with significant disabilities. We recognise the potential vulnerability within this group of service users therefore we identify the need for a strong person centred ethos. We aim to provide this by ensuring robust circles of support and advocacy resources.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide high quality day services to service users with significant disabilities	Ongoing
To provide appropriate supports, resources and equipment to ensure high quality service based on the social model	Ongoing

5. To develop services to meet the needs of service users with autism or autism spectrum disorder.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide high quality day services to service users with intellectual disabilities and autism or autism spectrum disorder. This will be achieved by providing appropriate supports and resources as well as developing and implementing appropriate programmes	Ongoing
To ensure assessments for adults are completed as necessary	Ongoing
To encourage active participation in all appropriate areas of current services	Ongoing

6. To respond to identified needs within adult services for multidisciplinary supports.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide social work services	2014
To increase speech and language therapy services	2014
To increase physiotherapy services	2014
To increase occupational therapy services	2014
To increase psychology services	2014

7. To promote research in the organisation.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To develop a research policy	2011
To encourage staff to carry out research	Ongoing

## OUTSTANDING BUILDING PROJECTS

1. Clonakilty Development - (incorporating Children's Outreach Services) Centre of Excellence for Foundation Training, Supported Employment Training, Drop in Centre and Community Integration facilities.

**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE – SEPTEMBER 2012**

## RESIDENTIAL AND RESPITE SERVICES

### Priorities

1. To provide a high quality respite service in line with the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). This will be achieved in a person and family centred way by supporting individual choice.

### Children's Respite Services and Supports

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To offer respite to children in a family/person centred way.	Ongoing
To continue to develop social skills, personal developments, meaningful relationships and independence to children availing of respite	Ongoing
To develop alternative models of respite services for children, e.g. enhanced home support to include overnights, family based/home sharing.	2011

### Adult Respite Services and Supports

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide adult supported living in private/public accommodation	Ongoing
To develop alternative models of respite services for adults, e.g. buddy systems, shared housing, short respite breaks, and supported lodging.	2011

2. To provide a high quality adult residential service in line with the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). This will be achieved in a person centred way by supporting individual choice on where people want to live.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To continue to provide high quality services within local communities in CoAction residential homes as necessary	Ongoing
To ensure compliance with HIQA residential standards	Ongoing
To develop accessible information on all residential options	Ongoing

3. To support our ageing population by developing an elder care programme in line with best practice.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide support to ageing service users to remain in their own homes or group homes as long as possible	Ongoing
To establish an elder care programme in response to identified needs	Ongoing

4. To provide appropriate housing for service users with significant disabilities.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide high quality services to service users with significant disabilities, by providing appropriate homes and equipment	Ongoing
To provide high quality supports and services to service users with intellectual disabilities and autism or autism spectrum disorder by providing appropriate supports and resources as well as developing and implementing appropriate programmes	Ongoing
To ensure staff working with service users with significant disabilities receive appropriate training	Ongoing
To develop appropriate multi-disciplinary supports within the residential setting	2014

## OUTSTANDING BUILDING PROJECTS

1. Residential Group Home – Bantry  
**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE – 2013-2015**
  
2. Residential Group Home for people who require a high level of care, Bantry  
**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE – 2013-2015**
  
3. Apartments for people who choose to live more independently (Skibbereen and Clonakilty)  
**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE – 2013-2015**

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Priorities

1. Planning and recruiting our workforce, including: workforce planning, recruitment and selection and exit interviews.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To ensure the right people are in the right place at the right time	Ongoing
To ensure there is sufficient staff of the right calibre, person centred ethos and skill set	Ongoing
To conduct exit interviews with all permanent staff leaving CoAction	Ongoing

2. Achieving through people, including: training and development, induction and probation, performance management, attendance management, leadership development.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To develop and implement a training and development strategy	Ongoing
To have in place a structured programme for induction and probation	2010
To maximise the effectiveness of a Development and Performance Review (DPR) system	Ongoing
To put in place an attendance management policy	2010
To build and enhance leadership capability	Ongoing

3. Creating an equitable, consultative and supportive working environment, including: Internal communications and culture change, equality and diversity and flexible working arrangements.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To support organisational change and the development of a performance and person centred culture	Ongoing
To foster a culture that seeks, respects, values and harnesses difference	Ongoing
To utilise more flexible working arrangements as appropriate	Ongoing

4. Creating a positive and safe working environment, including: employee relations, HR policies and procedures, health, safety and welfare.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To continue to create a positive climate of employee relations	Ongoing
To monitor HR policies and procedures on a regular basis	Ongoing
To provide safe workplaces and working methods	Ongoing

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### Priorities

1. To provide adult service users with appropriate training and access to information technology resources.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To encourage adult service users to avail of mainstream computer training wherever possible	Ongoing
To deliver appropriate computer training within CoAction for adult service users who chose to avail of same	Ongoing

2. To develop knowledge and expertise in the area of assistive technology.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide advice to service users, families and staff to maximise the benefits of assistive technology	2010
CoAction is unable to fund individual devices but will apply for relevant funding to the HSE if appropriate	Ongoing
To ensure optimum use of assistive technology resources	Ongoing

3. To utilise information technology resources as an efficient communication tool.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To redevelop the website to streamline and update layout and content	2010
To develop intranets (internal internet systems) to meet the needs of various stakeholder groups e.g. service users, families and staff	2010
To develop systems to ensure good practice in relation to uploading information, images, etc.	2010
To update website and intranets in a timely manner	Ongoing
To review website and intranet layout on an annual basis with a view to enhancing same	Ongoing
To continue current practice of centralised data processing/storage, optimising equipment and infrastructure to ensure optimum performance within budget	Ongoing
To ensure security of data via appropriate hardware, software, password systems, etc	Ongoing

4. To provide the most appropriate information technology tools in CoAction facilities.

GOAL	COMPLETION DATE
To provide the best quality equipment and resources possible within financial constraints	Ongoing
To promote and support the use of equipment and software etc. to improve efficiency and service delivery	Ongoing
To ensure efficient technical support is available to all computer users within CoAction	Ongoing
To support training for staff as appropriate via the internal appraisal system	Ongoing
To keep abreast of new technology developments which may benefit CoAction	Ongoing
To ensure best value for money in procurement of equipment/software etc.	Ongoing

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the organisation's financial matters. The financial controller is responsible for the operational financial management of CoAction and reports directly to the Board. An independent audit is conducted on an annual basis.

- CoAction will operate on a sound financial basis, in a transparent, cost-effective and accountable manner.
- We are committed to ongoing review and continuous improvement so that the maximum level of services can be provided, within available resources.
- We will seek to maximise the resources available to the organisation.
- We will continue to operate a zero based, ground-up budgeting system, this will ensure resources are constantly re-evaluated and targeted in the most person-centred and effective manner.

