

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

GENERAL

- The Board of ACCORD Dublin met five times during the year under the Chairpersonship of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin. One new Director was appointed, Joan O'Connor.
- At the end of 2018 a review of ACCORD Dublin was undertaken, and it continued into early 2019. The work of the review focused on the relevance of ACCORD Dublin and its services in a changing society. It was a very positive exercise with much interaction between members and stakeholders of the organisation - creating a lot of positive energy and enthusiasm for the future. The review concluded 'that ACCORD Dublin is a professional, relationship services charity which is unique in providing services on the basis of need rather than ability to pay and remains as relevant in society as ever.' There are challenges ahead but the review concluded we have the capacity to address these challenges and to explore opportunities that the future may hold.
- It was with great sadness to all of us when our dear friend and colleague Mary Richardson died suddenly in August of this year. Mary joined ACCORD Dublin 2009 and worked with hundreds of couples preparing for marriage. Mary was also a valued member of the school's team sharing her wisdom with many young people. Mary's spirit remains very much alive in the organisation, but she is deeply missed. May she rest in peace.
- 2019 was also the year that some of our members decided to bring their time with ACCORD Dublin to an end. To all of these people we give our sincere thanks for the time they spent with us and for the friendship and experience they shared. We wish them every happiness in the future.
- During the year we were very pleased to appoint Margaret Norman as the new Schools Programme Coordinator and Karen Murphy our new Financial Controller. We wish them well in their new roles.
- The work of ACCORD Dublin is dependent on the generosity of our counsellors, facilitators and night receptionists all of whom provide a substantial amount of their time on a voluntary basis, the Archbishop and priests of the Diocese who work with us and manage the Annual Collection on our behalf and TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, who part fund our counselling services through an annual grant. To all of our supporters we offer our sincere thanks and look forward to working together in the future.

- From an all-island perspective, ACCORD Dublin CLG along with its sister companies Accord Northern Ireland and Accord clg - all of which are autonomous registered charities and companies limited by guarantee - have provided the following level of service across Ireland:
 - 14,894 individuals (7,447 couples) attended 647 Accord Sacramental Marriage preparation courses.
 - 24,006 counselling sessions were provided by Accord counsellors to 6,162 individuals of whom 4,884 attended as couples.
 - In the RoI a total of 39,722 students attended Accord Schools' programmes and over 2,800 attended parent talks.

Marriage and Relationship Counselling

- In 2019 the ACCORD Dublin team of counsellors, supervisors, centre chairpersons and administrative secretaries provided the necessary work, effort and support that enabled people from every sector in society to avail of the counselling service. Individuals and couples attend ACCORD Dublin for marriage and relationship counselling, which is provided diligently, effectively and in a professional manner on a non-discriminatory basis.
- In 2019 a total of 11,065 counselling hours were delivered by ACCORD Dublin to 1282 new clients, comprising 256 individuals and 512 couples. While this represents a decrease of 10% in attendance on the previous year it is less than the decrease in 2018.
- Statistical analysis of anonymised data collated throughout the year indicate that couples and individuals attended the ACCORD Dublin counselling service to gain support in dealing with the following issues:

○ Communication: Criticisms and Insults	47%
○ Communication: Not listening/Ignoring	53%
○ Emotional abuse	25%
○ Alcohol	16%
○ Drugs	5%
○ Internet	19%
○ Gambling	2%
○ Phone/Texting	22%
○ Infidelity	16%
○ Sexual Issues	40%
○ Intimacy Issues	47%
○ Childcare and Home Duties	26%
○ Extended Family	26%
○ Grief/Loss	28%
○ Culture/Beliefs	9%
○ Finance	30%
○ Separation	34%
○ Conflict	53%
○ Physical abuse	8%
○ Anxiety/Stress	46%
○ Depression	20%

- There were 64 counsellors working in ACCORD Dublin in 2019. All counsellors are required to hold the relevant professional and academic qualifications in order that they are competently trained to work on a wide range of issues that may present in marriage and family relationships. Three counsellors completed the Certificate in Marriage and Relationship Counselling at St. Patrick's Pontifical College in NUI Maynooth in 2019 and commenced their clinical placements in Dublin centres in June. They are a welcome addition to the counselling team and contribute greatly to the volunteer ethos that continues to afford vulnerable couples and individuals the opportunity to avail of a professional counselling service at a low or no cost.
- In 2019 all counsellors completed mandatory training on the new Needs Assessment which was officially rolled out in November. We are optimistic that the organisation can continue to innovate in creative ways. ACCORD Dublin has a very positive relationship with TUSLA, and bi-annual meetings enhance our professional status with them.
- Based on counsellor requests ACCORD Dublin ran its own CPD event in April 2019 with very positive feedback. This is an initiative that is partly fuelled by the division of the organisation into three separate companies and the need for ACCORD Dublin to become more autonomous in its service deliverables. Other topics have been suggested and will be developed for CPD delivery in 2020.
- There were 24 Child Safeguarding and Retrospective Abuse Reports made in 2019 (a decrease of 8 from 2018).

Schools Relationship and Sexuality Programme

- The Schools Team, comprising 12 members, delivered over 1094 programmes in 350 primary and secondary schools within the Archdiocese of Dublin in 2019.
- A total of 25,850 students attended the programmes.
- Over 2,400 parents attending parent talks.
- There was a 6% drop on programmes offered last year, the main decline was bookings for secondary schools. This occurred after the findings of the Oireachtas Committee Review of the Relationship and Sexuality Programme were published. Two new trainees were taken on during the year, they joined the team in the autumn. We are confident that we can reverse this decrease in the coming year.
- We thank the team for their commitment and support during this year and once again express our appreciation to the administrators of the O'Brien Diocesan Trust for their continued financial support which enables both children and young people to avail of the ACCORD Dublin programmes.

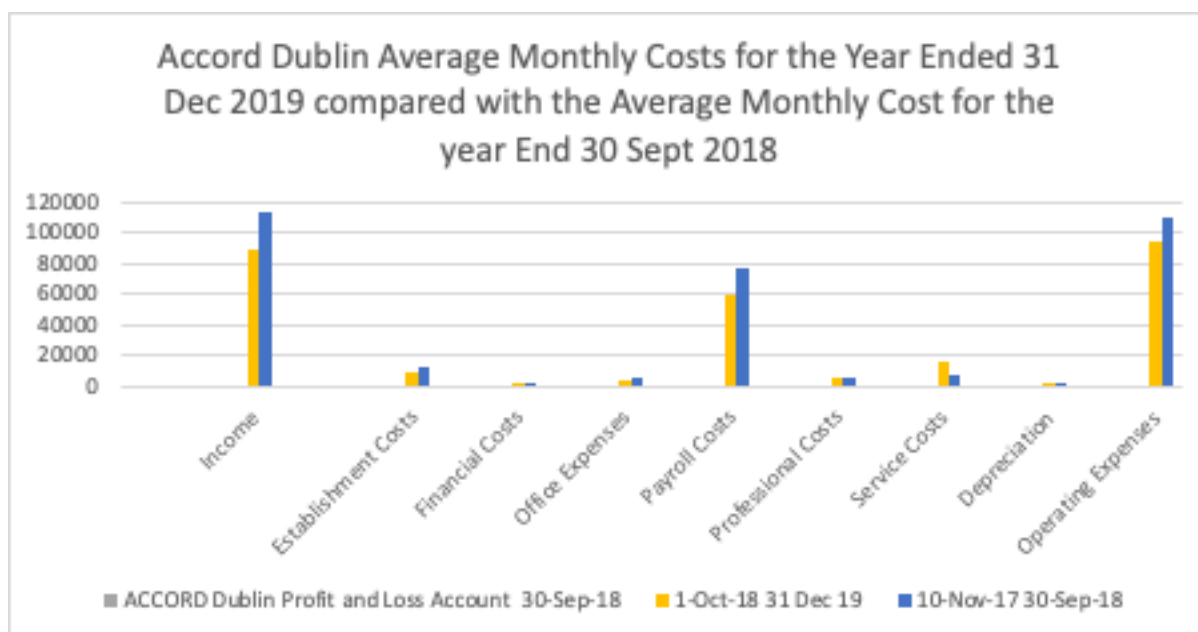
Marriage Education

- There continues to be high demand for ACCORD Dublin marriage preparation courses in the Archdiocese of Dublin.
- During 2019 we ran a total of 138 courses, assisting 2658 people with their preparation for sacramental marriage.
- 62 regular ACCORD pre-marriage courses catered for 1210 couples in 15 different pastoral centres.
- 34 individual courses provided preparation for Sacramental marriage for 66 people who had special requirements.

- Three regular inter-church courses, run in conjunction with the EMBRACE Inter-church Marriage Preparation Committee, prepared 47 couples for marriage, and an additional five individual courses were run for five further couples.
- We continue to work with the Parish of the Travelling People, and in 2019 provided 34 courses each specific to the couple.
- Two new trainees commenced their studies in September 2019, and three more began year two of their training. Two new facilitators graduated with a Certificate in Marriage Education from the Pontifical University and are now co-facilitating on courses.
- We express our grateful thanks to our committed team of facilitators, priests and administration staff who work hard throughout the year to maintain our high standard of delivery of courses and thanks too to our couples who come to us to prepare for their married lives together.

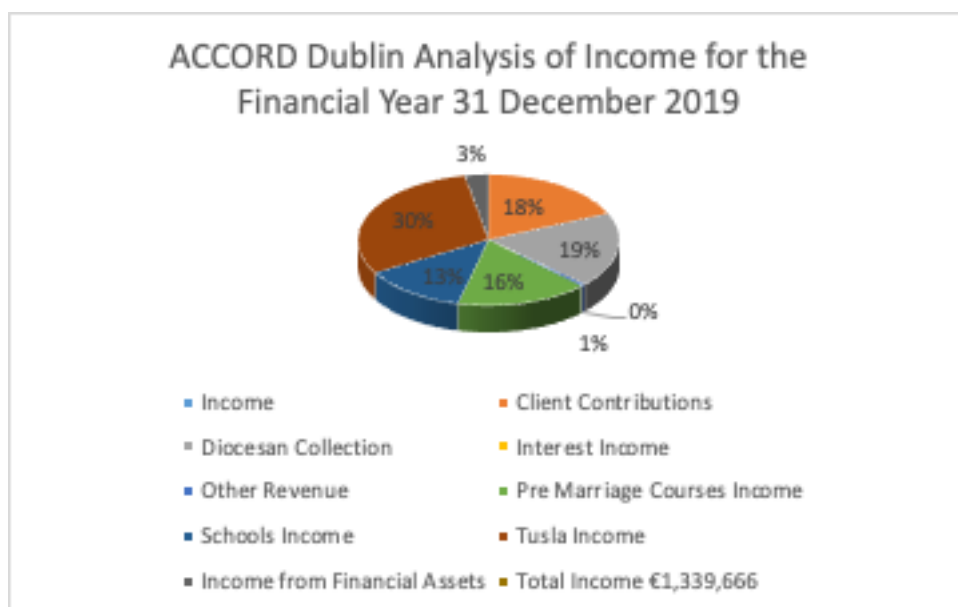
Financial

10th November 2017 ACCORD Dublin commenced trading as a separate legal entity. The companies first year of Accounts were for the period 10th Nov 2017 to 30th Sept 2018. (10.66 period). The next set of financial statements were for a 15-month period from Oct 2018 to Dec 2019. As both set of accounts are for different periods of time our expenditure comparison is based on an average monthly comparison for each year.

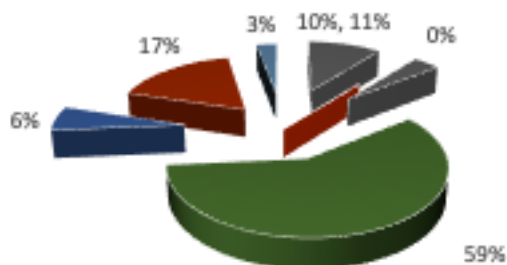


In the last report for 2017 ACCORD Dublin's financial results were reported from an income and expenditure basis rather than the statutory accruals basis. In 2019 ACCORD Dublin implemented an accounting system which ensures accurate reporting of information in a timely manner.

ACCORD Dublin's Income is comprised of the following:



ACCORD Dublin Analysis of Total Expenditure for the Financial Year 31 December 2019



Total Establishment Costs	10%
Total Financial Costs	0.20%
Total Office Expenses	4%
Total Payroll Costs	59%
Total Professional Costs	6.0%
Total Service Costs	17%
Total Depreciation	3%

Total Expenditure €1,266,147

During the period January to December 2019 there was a decrease in client contributions from the counselling centres of 18% based on the same period in January to December 2018

However, ACCORD Dublin's operational expenditure for the financial year December 2019 has decreased when you analyse the average months between both periods. Unfortunately, ACCORD Dublin had exceptional costs* in the Financial year ended December 2019 which have significantly contributed to the loss of €73,519. Otherwise the expenditure remained consistent between both years.

***Exceptional Costs:**

- 1) The training expenditure increased as a result of a number of 2-3-year courses being provided for Counselling, Facilitation and Supervision, which are expected to end in 2020.
- 2) There was a significant increase in professional fees as a result of policy reviews mainly within the Counselling area. These revisions were necessary to ensure ACCORD Dublin continues to remain compliant in an ever changing economic and social environment.
- 3) ACCORD Dublin felt it was prudent to accrue for legacy liabilities in relation to prior year expenditure which are currently under discussion.