



the koram centre
changing lives

Annual Report 2024/25

www.koramcentre.com

12 Railway Street, Strabane BT82 8EF

t 028 7188 6181 **e** admin@koramcentre.com



A Message from our Chairman

Another very busy and successful year for the Koram Centre . It has been my pleasure and a privilege to serve as Chair during what has been a very exciting time for the organisation. It is clear from the statistics below that the services provided by and at the Koram Centre are needed as much as ever. It is also clear that we work in an ever challenging and uncertain social, political and financial environment. Over this period, we have managed the continuing cost of living pressures, the fallout and legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic and an ever-increasingly stretched health service. This has resulted in increased demand for emotional health & wellbeing services and support at a time when it is more difficult to access services when needed.

It is within this context that we at the Koram Centre acknowledge the support given and trust shown in us by the Department for Communities, National Lottery Community Fund and all our funders which has enabled us to purchase, refurbish and complete the relocation to new premises at Railway Street. These premises now provide us with additional capacity to meet increasing need and provide service users with an improved welcoming and nurturing environment. We give thanks to all those that made the relocation possible and we are rightly proud of our new home.

To all our funders, local companies, colleagues and all those who donated, no matter how much, thank you so much for your on-going support for the Koram Centre initiatives. This help allows us to serve the residents of Strabane and District in a way that makes a difference to their mental wellbeing and daily lives.

A special word of thanks to the Carlin Family for their support and partnership in establishing the Rory Carlin Memorial Fund Project designed to meet the emotional and wellbeing needs of younger members of our society.

I acknowledge and very much appreciate the time, effort and the support of my fellow Trustees on the Board of Management of the Koram Centre. Without the dedication of these committed members, who give up so much of their time, for no reward other than the satisfaction of giving back to the community, the Koram Centre would neither exist, nor flourish.

Thank you so much to Adrian our Centre Manager and his team, sessional therapists, and volunteers..
- you are at the cold face of our service provision where it is your diligence and care for those

you work with that makes the difference in people's lives. Your professionalism and commitment are the hallmarks of the Koram Centre.

I also acknowledge those Board members and staff who have stood down or moved on in their employment from the Centre, thank you.

Thank you Paul Brady for your patronage. It is a great honour to have Paul as our patron and is testimony to the work of the Centre.

This annual report provides an overview of the Koram Centre as a community based and community-led organisation. It highlights our work on the ground, our successes and plans for the future. This report will provide the statistical data to evidence the work carried out at the centre and the Tulacorr Allotment project. No matter how positive data may appear, no report can quantify the dedication and determination of those who work to achieve the outcomes documented.

I continue to be proud of the work carried out by the Koram Centre. The need for the services provided is increasing- more and more individuals of all ages and entire families are finding everyday living and associated stress so difficult to manage.

Finally there are many ways to measure success. These include positive indicators of expansion of services, increased jobs created, specialised training provided for staff and public, increased financial reserves and more individuals supported.

However, for me success is quite simply 'Has the services provided made a difference?'

I am confident that the Koram Centres work has resulted in many positive outcomes which have made a difference to all of service users and families and will continue to do that with the goodwill of its' beneficiaries and benefactors.

I commend this report and trust you will have as much pleasure in reading it as we did in providing the services.

Kind Regards

Gerard Harkin

Gerard Harkin

Chair

Koram Centre

Introduction

Our vision:

Mental health and wellbeing for all.

Our values:

- We provide a high quality professional service.
- We enable positive outcomes for people who use our services.
- We act with integrity and compassion.
- We engage with and inspire each other.

Our mission statement is:

'To offer therapeutic support to those in pain and despair and to promote positive mental health.'

In furtherance of this mission, the Trustees are committed to the provision of high quality services and supporting people in emotional distress or with mental illness including their families and carers.

Objectives and Activities:

The objectives for which the Koram Centre is established are to act as a non-party-political charitable organisation for the relief and support of sufferers and the families of sufferers from emotional distress or mental health conditions.

In pursuance of these objectives, the Koram Centre has regard to the guidance from the Charity Commission on the provision of public benefit.

The principal activities of the Charity are to:

Provide counselling, psychotherapy, psychosocial support and services of a high standard to service users for those wishing to maintain good mental health, people experiencing emotional distress/and or mental illness, their families and carers.

Structure, Governance and Management.

A Board of Trustees that comprises a Chair and 6 other Trustees, governs the Koram Centre. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall direction and control of the activities of the Koram Centre. The Board has held 12 formally constituted meetings in this year.

Risk Assessment

In relation to the overall financial control procedures, the Charity has in place a comprehensive strategic plan supplemented by an annual budget approved by the Board of Trustees. Monthly actual results are reported against budget and provided to the Board of Trustees. The Charity's day-to-day financial processes are governed by financial regulations approved by the Board. The Finance Committee oversees assurance around compliance with the financial regulations.

The Board currently operates an ongoing programme of risk management, monitoring and reporting in all areas including governance, operational, environmental and external factors, financial and compliance risk which includes ownership of these risks. This includes reporting on risks identified, taking account of internal controls and systems as well as other actions taken to mitigate them.

Risk Register

The key risks currently facing the Koram Centre are considered to be:

Governance

Trustee body requires skills relevant to strategic planning

Trustee commitment

Succession planning

Operational

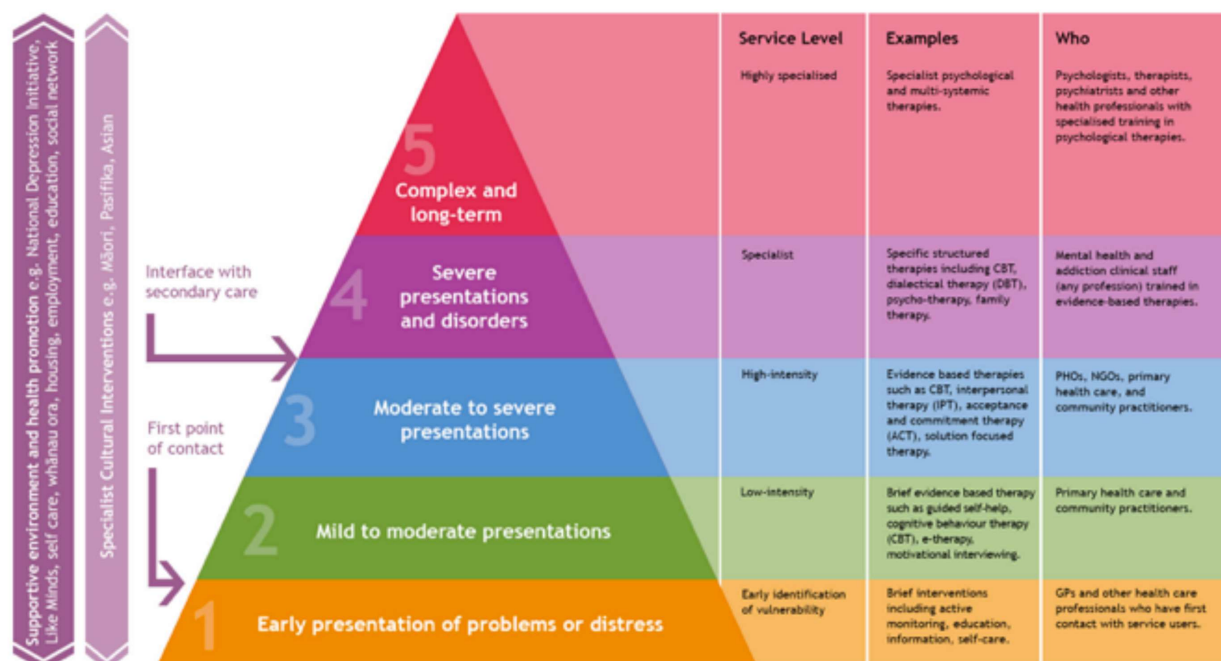
Short-term funding contract (year-to-year) - lack of certainty/sustainability

Relevant contract pricing - full cost recovery

Loss of key personnel - contingency and succession planning

The Charity has provided a wide range of therapeutic interventions namely: person centred counselling, integrative counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy, Eye Movement Desensitising and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, child and adolescent therapy, art therapy, music therapy and complementary therapy. In addition it has delivered a range of social support initiatives.

The Koram Centre operates a tiered model of services, providing support to individuals with tier 1 to tier 3 presentations. *(Please see stepped care model for more information)*



(Stepped Care Model of Support)

Staff and Sessional Team

The current staff team is made up of 2 full time posts and 6 part time posts. These include:

Centre Manager (1xFT) - Adrian Loughrey
Office Administrator (1xFT, 1xPT) - Aidan Burns, Rachel Hamilton
Clinical Coordinator (2xPT) - Catherine McLaughlin, Roisin McLaughlin
Finance Officer (1xPT) - Terry Conway
Project Coordinator - Koram Wellbeing (1xPT) - Unamarie Maxwell
Allotment Project Worker (1xPT) - William McMenamin

In addition the Koram Centre is currently supported by a team of 21 sessional counsellors/psychotherapists and 1 complementary therapist. All therapists are accredited with relevant professional bodies. Our clinical team includes;

Caroline Gallagher
Roisin McLaughlin
Dale Mitchell
Michelle Leonard
Shane McCaul
Sharon Laird
Tony Bradley (Student Counsellor)
Jacqueline Toal
Zarhada Elmurray
Lynn Wylie
Rachel Hamilton (Counselling Student)
Nicola Cole
Aisling Goodison
Rachael McGettigan
Catherine McLaughlin
Dayle Armstrong
Fiona Magill
Francesca Pagliaro
Elizabeth Stevenson (Complementary Therapist)
Angela Keaveney
Martin McMonagle
Stefan O'Neil (Counselling Student)

Project Outputs - 2024/2025

2066 service users supported



698 referrals to the service for
counselling/psychotherapy support
(a 4% increase in referrals this year)

5057 counselling/psychotherapy &
complementary therapy sessions
delivered (686 participants)
(19% increase in sessions delivered)



650 participants supported through
social support programmes
(a 91% increase in participants supported)

32 individuals engaged in volunteering



Outcomes during the year

As a result of this work we have supported service users to achieve a range of positive outcomes.

These include:

- Elimination of suicidal thoughts and self-harm.
- Rebuilding relationships,
- Reduction in medications,
- Re-engagement in employment/education,
- Addressing abuse,
- Controlling anger,
- Overcoming addiction,
- Increase in self worth,
- Improved sleep,
- Life focus,
- Improved psychological awareness,
- Elimination of situational emotional distress,
- Adaption of new healthy coping mechanisms,
- Changing maladaptive rules for living,
- Learning to give alternative response to irrational thoughts,
- Trauma and PTSD.

These outcomes have contributed to improved mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Counselling & Psychotherapy - Case Studies

Case Study I

Client S is a 25 year old female who presented to the Koram Centre for counselling support. The client was experiencing increased low mood/depression and stress/anxiety which was having a significant impact on her. This included problems with her eating, sleeping and caring for her children in the way she wanted. The client was also receiving support from Social Services in relation to this.

The client was supported for a total of 14 sessions. These sessions provided a safe and supportive space for the client to discuss and process issues and develop techniques and strategies to manage her mood more effectively. This included exploring a number of very difficult experiences including a background in foster care, domestic abuse and issues related to substance misuse (prescription medication)

During the course of the counselling intervention the client was supported to reduce her levels of substance misuse, increase feelings of self-esteem and to leave the relationship in which she experienced domestic abuse, reconnecting with family and friends.

Analysis of the CORE-10 monitoring tool that was completed at the beginning and end of the counselling intervention shows a final score of 14/40 points compared with the beginning score of 24/40. This represents significant improvement in emotional health and wellbeing from 'moderately severe psychological distress' to 'mild psychological distress.'

Feedback from Client:

'Caroline (client's counsellor) has helped me in so many ways. When I felt I had no one she was there. She saved my life. I'm so thankful for coming to the Koram Centre.'

The client has been referred to the local WHSCT Drug & Alcohol Service to continue support in relation to substance misuse

Counselling & Psychotherapy - Case Studies

Case Study 2

Client C is a 9 year male who was referred for counselling support by his parents. The client presented with high levels of anxiety and excessive worry. This related to a number of issues including with friendships at school, with the child feeling different and that 'he has no friends at school.' This was having a significant impact on his emotional health & wellbeing, with the client's parents also reporting some suicidal ideation with the client saying 'I don't want to be alive' and 'what's the point in living' and self-harming behaviour with the client choking himself on occasion when distressed.

The client received 14 sessions in total with 2 additional sessions delivered to parents. Creative therapies involved using art/drawing and the use of props to help the client identify, understand and manage emotions more fully. This included exploring anger and sadness, the trigger for these, what they meant and how they could be dealt with. During sessions the client was resourced using techniques such as breathing exercises, as well as developing awareness of support systems and how he could ask for support when distressed. Sessions were also used to increase self-esteem and confidence exploring interests and friendships and how these could be developed.

Sessions with parents were used to review progress made and how the client could be supported more effectively. This included discussion around boundaries to support increased independence and healthier structures and routines around sleep and the use of technology.

As a result of the support provided, the client has experienced improved emotional health & well. Feedback from the parents confirmed that the client has been more 'settled' with reduced stress/anxiety and improved sleep. Evaluation tools illustrate the progress made with Child Session Rating Scale (CSRS) showing that sessions met the needs of the client i.e. that the client felt listened to, what was covered in sessions was important to him and he found the sessions useful. The Child Outcome Rating Scale (CORS) was completed at the end of the counselling intervention. Again, this confirms the progress made with improved self-esteem, family and school relationships

Feedback from parents: *'We appreciate the support received. Our son is now less anxious and is doing better with his feelings and at school. His sleeping has improved'*

Social Support Programmes

This year we have delivered a range of social support programmes. These programmes aim to support clients to increase knowledge, understanding & skills around a range of emotional health & wellbeing issues. They have provided opportunities for participants to come together in supportive groups to increase connection leading to improved emotional health & wellbeing

The following programmes have been delivered:

| Project | Programme |
|--|--|
| <i>Koram Wellbeing Project (National Lottery Community Fund)</i> | Understanding Anger |
| | Rest & Restore |
| | Self Compassion |
| | Music / Dance |
| | Meditation (2 programmes) |
| | Xmas Crafts |
| | Chair Based Exercise |
| | Creative Mindfulness |
| | Anxiety Management |
| | Women Together Support Group |
| <i>Neighbourhood Health Improvement Project (Department for Communities)</i> | Meditation (2 programmes) |
| | Filling My Wellness Toolbox (2 programmes) |
| | Understanding Grief |
| | Creative Writing |
| | Neuroskills |
| | Understanding Autism |
| | Self Compassion |

Social Support Programmes

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Consensual Grant Fund (DCSDC)</i> | Creative Mindfulness (Strabane Controlled PS) 2 programmes |
| | Creative Mindfulness (Gaelscoil Úi Dhochartaigh) |
| | Creative Mindfulness (St. Catherines PS) |
| | Creative Mindfulness (Knocavoe Special Education) |
| <i>Talk & Connect Project (Henry Smith Charity)</i> | Arts & Crafts (2 programmes) |
| | Mindfulness |
| | Dance/Music |
| <i>CLEAR Project (Public Health Agency)</i> | Woodworking |
| | Gardening |
| <i>Rory Carlin Memorial Fund</i> | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Holy Cross College - Year 9) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Holy Cross College - Year 10) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Craft Training) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Holy Cross College - EA Youth Group) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Strabane Sigersons GAC) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Owen Roes GAC) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Lifford FC) |
| | Emotional Health & Wellbeing/Substance Misuse (Clann na nGael GAC) |
| <i>Emotional Health & Wellbeing (Workplace)</i> | 21 Training |
| | North West Regional College |
| <i>Bereaved by Suicide Support Group (Public Health Agency)</i> | Monthly Support Group |

Rory Carlin Memorial Fund Project

This year we have commenced the delivery of the Rory Carlin Memorial Fund Project. This has been done following extensive funding by the Carlin Family, following the tragic death of their son Rory by suicide in May 2023, following a battle with substance misuse and emotional health & wellbeing issues. We are truly grateful to the Carlin family for thinking of us during a time of intense grief and loss and to all who have supported the campaign. Since fundraising began in November 2023, the campaign has raised an impressive total of £132,858.

Funding raised is being used to deliver an education programme on substance misuse and emotional health & wellbeing issues to local children and young people, engaging with schools, youth groups, sports clubs, community/voluntary organisations and other. This year we have delivered the following programmes.

| Project | Group |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Rory Carlin Memorial Fund Project | Holy Cross College - Year 9 - 12 classes |
| | Holy Cross College - Year 10 |
| | Craft Training |
| | EA Youth Group |
| | Sigersons GAC |
| | Owen Roes GAC |
| | Lifford FC |
| | Clan Na Ngael GAC |

In total we have engaged with 320 participants to date


In the coming year we plan to deliver programmes for parents/carers, an health fair event to promote local services for children/young people as well as continued engagement with schools, youth and community sector.

Project Impact

It is clear that the project is having a significant positive impact in reaching in outcomes. Analysis of outcomes shows the following:

- 92% of participants reported that they 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' that the information provided was relevant
- 86% reported that they felt that the facilitator was 'Excellent' or 'Good'
- 84% reported that the workshops had changed their attitudes towards drugs
- 96% reported that their knowledge and understanding of substance misuse issues had improved


Rory Carlin Memorial Fund Project



Understanding Emotional Wellbeing & Substance Misuse

Week 2- What did you learn?

How drugs and alcohol affect us and what's in them
 The classes of drugs and their side effects
 How much caffeine is in drinks
 How to identify different drugs
 Alcohol takes a while to break down and leave your system
 Not all drugs are illegal Drugs are bad don't take them
 Drugs can be addictive Too much caffeine isn't good for you
 What it looks and feels like with drugs in your system
 (Cannabis simulation goggles)
 There's a lot of different types of drugs
 I learned about drugs and what they do to your body





Understanding Emotional Wellbeing & Substance Misuse

Week 4 - What did you learn?

How to put someone in the recovery position.
 How to help someone having a panic attack.
 How to help someone under the influence of drugs.
 What to do if someone overdoses.
 Different ways to reduce harm. Signs of an overdose.
 Signs someone might be using drugs.
 If I come across someone who has taken a drug, I now know how I can help.
 Don't take drugs because it doesn't just affect you but your friends and family too.
 Don't record people in vulnerable situations..
 Different stages of drug use.





Official Opening - 12 Railway Street - September, 2024

The Koram Centre's new premises at 12 Railway Street were officially opened on 17th September 2024. The relocation to new premises represents the achievement of a major strategic goal for the Centre and allows us to continue to expand services delivered. The move was made possible due to significant investment, totalling approximately £800,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund, Department for Communities and others.

The official opening event brought together Koram Centre staff and sessional team with local community/voluntary groups, schools, funding organisations and others to celebrate what has been achieved and hear more about our future plans. We thank everyone who attended and the support that made it possible. A special words of thanks to Paul Brady for his support in attending the event



Tulacorr Allotments & Community Gardens

This year we have continued to deliver services at the Tulacorr Allotments & Community Gardens Project. This project currently supports 35 members to undertake gardening and growing activities. In addition members have access to other programmes to support them to have improved emotional health & wellbeing.

Monthly members meetings are facilitated by the Centre Manager. These provide the opportunity for updates on the project and discuss future activities that members would like to see take place.

This year members have increased their knowledge and skills attending training on a variety of horticultural issues. In addition the annual Allotment Open day was held on 18th June. This was well attended by the local community and provided the opportunity for flowers, fruit and veg produce to be sold with funds raised invested back into the Koram Centre.

Financial Overview

All activities have been collectively funded by the following income streams:

| Income Stream | Amount Received (2024/25) (£) |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Victims & Survivors Service (VSS) NI | 99,057 |
| Department for Communities | 78,798 |
| Neighbourhood Health Improvement Programme (NHIP) | 4,500 |
| Derry Healthy Cities - Bereaved by Suicide Support Group (PHA) | 2,200 |
| National Lottery Community Fund | 74,301 |
| Children in Need | 13,580 |
| CLEAR Project (PHA) | 3,000 |
| Pieta House | 1,473 |
| Donations | 27,655 |
| Rory Carlin Memorial Fund | 74,881 |
| Henry Smith Charity | 64,700 |
| Allotment Income | 4,386 |
| Consensual Grant - Schools Project DCSDC | 3,500 |
| Western Rural Health Care | 4,845 |
| Talking Therapies Hub | 12,349 |
| Management Fees | 3,265 |
| Room Hire | 1,975 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 474,465 |

This represents a decrease of £3,468 from last year (2023/24: £477,933) a 1% decrease in income this year.

Income Analysis

| Source | Amount | %of Total Income |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Grants & Contacts | 360,829 | 76% |
| Fundraising & Donations | 104,009 | 22% |
| Other | 9,627 | 2% |
| TOTAL INCOME | 474,465 | 100% |

Expenditure

This year the following expenditure has been incurred:

| Expenses Stream | Amount Outgoing (2024/25) (£) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Wages & Salaries | 164,230 |
| Pension Costs | 4,646 |
| Rent | 2,167 |
| Heat & Light (Water) | 5,956 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | 3,953 |
| Insurance | 3,808 |
| Telephone/Broadband | 4,350 |
| Legal & Professional Fees | 1,353 |
| Postage, Stationary & Advertising | 9,197 |
| Accountancy Fees | 1,406 |
| Bank Fees | 98 |
| Sundries | 418 |
| Counselling Sessional Fees | 181,455 |
| Training | 1,480 |
| Programme Costs | 29,364 |
| General Organisational Costs | 2,797 |
| Management Fees | 11,305 |
| Supervision | 810 |
| Administration & Office Costs | 896 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 438,009 |

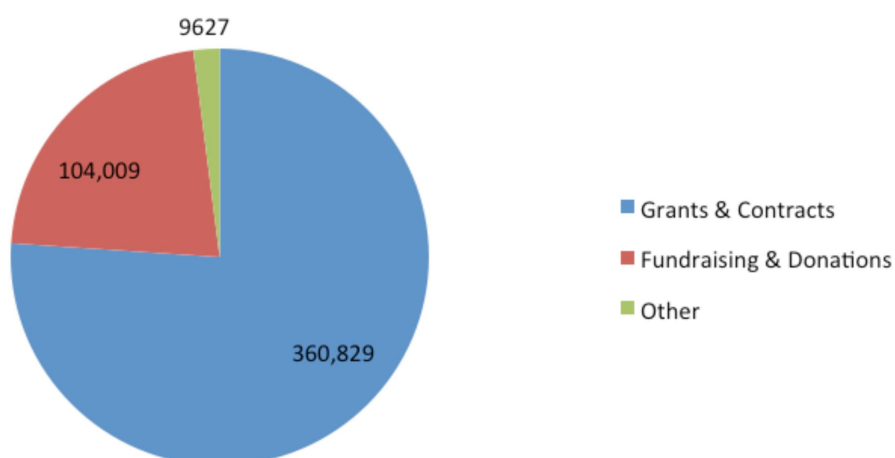
This represents a decrease in expenditure from last year of £212,420 (2023/24: £450,429) a 3% decrease in expenditure this year.

Expenditure Analysis

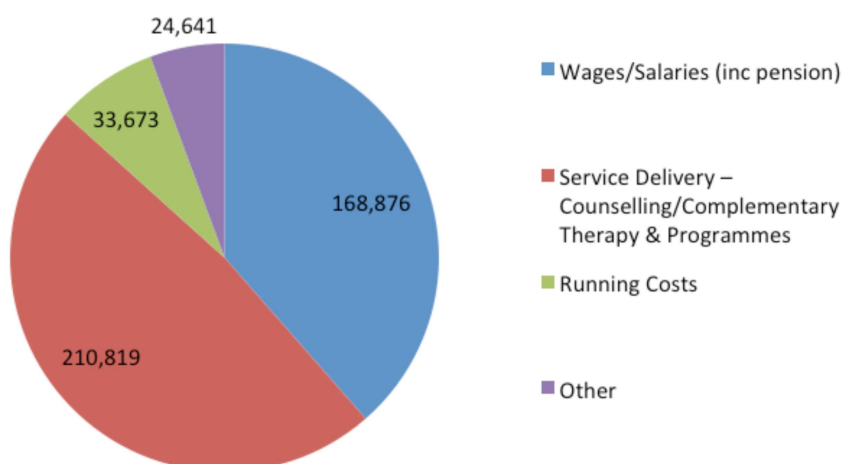
| Source | Amount | % of Total Expenditure |
|-------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Wages/Salaries (inc. pension) | 168,876 | 39% |
| Service Delivery | 210,819 | 48% |
| Running Costs | 33,673 | 8% |
| Other Costs | 24,641 | 5% |

This year the Koram Centre recorded a surplus of £36,456

Income Analysis



Expenditure Analysis



The Koram Centre continues to rely on fundraising and donations to meet some running costs, staffing and service delivery costs. This will continue to be monitored by the Board of Trustees with support for these costs being pursued through existing funders and new funding opportunities.

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all who have supported the Koram Centre through fundraising and donations in the past year. The level of support for the Koram Centre has been inspirational. This year we have received support from the following sources:

Strabane Walk of Hope

Darkness Into Light, Castlederg

North West ADHD Assessment Ltd.

SAGE Publications

Mourne Parish Church

Puddle Alley Reunion Event

Leon Corrigan - Half Marathon Event

Sonny Mullen & Family - Dog show event

Strictly Come Dancing, Strabane



A Message from Centre Manager

There are many challenges facing mental health services as we look to the future, not least those posed by the continuing cost of living crisis and other social and economic factors. This has led to a rise in reported mental health issues among the general population as well as leading to deterioration in wellbeing in many with pre-existing mental health conditions. Of course this is in the already challenging context of a ever stretched mental health system, dealing with ever increasing levels of complex needs. As such, we expect to see an increased demand for services in the future.

In order to meet this, we will continue to work with existing funders to sustain and grow services as well as seeking new funding opportunities. This will continue to include increased work on the delivery of prevention and education initiatives to promote positive mental health & wellbeing across all groups, with the aim of reducing the need for specialist support in the long term.

Heartfelt thanks are owed to our service users, staff, sessional workers, volunteers, Board of Trustees, funders, locally based services and supporters for their confidence and their loyalty. Because of you, the critical work of the Koram Centre continues to make a positive and significant difference to people who wish to maintain good mental health of all ages, to restore hope, develop resilience and facilitate positive change in people's lives.

The Koram Centre has immense support and the goodwill of the residents in the Strabane & District area. We understand that such a relationship cannot and must not be taken for granted, rather earned through partnership, hard work and respect for others. Should you wish to get involved as a volunteer please get in touch.

Future Plans

This year we have been commenced delivery of our 3 year Talk & Connect Project which is supported by funding from the Henry Smith Charity. In addition, next year will see funding support from the PEACEPLUS Programme, LFT Charitable Trust and St John of God Foundation. These funding streams will allow us to increase provision both in terms of therapeutic and social support services. This is

alongside current grants from a range of funders and we will continue to work hard to sustain and build these relationships. This will include a further application to National Lottery Community Fund to support our work. This year we have also completed our relocation to new premises at 12 Railway Street, Strabane. This is a significant achievement which allows us to continue to increase services for the local community. As explained, although our service provision has increased both in terms of services and numbers supported we are still falling short of meeting an ever increasing need.

Next year will also see the introduction of the EVIDE client management system. This cloud based system will improve the security and retention of the service user data we hold, as well as allow us to evidence more clearly the positive impact that our work has.

Mental ill health does not discriminate and neither does the Koram Centre. If you feel support, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Koram Centre by telephone, e-mail or just call in. I can assure you of a friendly welcome, a non-judgemental and confidential service at a level and pace that meets your needs.

Adrian Loughrey

Manager
Koram Centre

Our Funders & Supporters





www.koramcentre.com

12 Railway Street, Strabane BT82 8EF

t 028 7188 6181 **e** admin@koramcentre.com