

Ballymena Substance User Support Group
(Working Name P.A.U.S.E.)

Chairpersons Annual Report For The Year 2023/2024
on behalf of the Trustees

I am pleased to say that this year has been another both busy and positive year for the PAUSE group. In the aftermath of the pandemic we have seen our attendances start to increase significantly, and extend a warm welcome all new members of the group. Of course the down side of this increase of activity may be reflective in some way of the increase of addiction problems throughout the community. It does for us however mean that more and more people are engaging in treatment and support. That can only be a good thing.

The group tends to be demographically older and so life's age related health issues continue to be dealt with. As always we place a great deal of emphasis on treating the whole person, not just the addiction. We spend a lot of time looking at health related issues with particular attention to the mental health aspect of addiction. We try to promote and create a different mindset about quality of life and personal happiness.

Our volunteers have as always, been enthusiastic, energetic and generous with their time and patience. I thank them once more for all their hard work. It seems as the pandemic recedes and statutory services resources are stretched, as mentioned before, the demand we are experiencing has increased quite significantly. Referrals to our group have increased sharply and we see each week the effects perhaps that the last few years have had on the whole issue of addiction.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Lottery Community Fund, for their continued support of our projects. Without their support we would find it extremely difficult to continue the work we do within the community and indeed at the level we provide. I would also like to thank the North Area Community Network who also provides fantastic support, both through information and signposting to various community issues and events that are relevant to our program of support. I would like to also extend the gratitude of all our group members who have regained their health and their place back in the community family as a result of this support.

As long as we treat each other with patience, respect and understanding and we continue to see each other as people with huge potential and talent which deserves to be appreciated, I think we can look forward to another year of growth and learning under these difficult times.

Thank you all,

John Keenan

(Chair PAUSE - Ballymena Substance User's Support Group)
on behalf of the Trustees)