



Counselling All Nations Services Annual Report 19th November 2024

Charity no: NIC108200

Company number: NI679965

Address: Chinese Welfare Association,

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Belfast BT7 1GP

Since our last AGM in October 2023 CANS continues to develop apace and the Board wishes to acknowledge the hard work of our staff, sessional staff and volunteers.

We remain true to our mission to improve the mental health and quality of life of people from minority ethnic groups through talking therapies and other support and our vision of a future in a just, supportive and inclusive society, which recognises the importance of mental health. In everything we remember our values of respect, honesty, confidentiality, person centred care, and excellence.

Staff

Mr Lekan Ojo-Okiji Abasi and Ms Jurita Naumane continue as Clinical Coordinator and Assistant Clinical Coordinator respectively and are joined by part time administrative assistants Dasha Hanzharova.

Francesca A Dada continues as a salaried part time counsellor supported by sessional counsellors and interpreters.

Counsellors and therapists

Our counsellors and therapists are from BAME communities and are all trained to work with professional interpreters who are an integral part of our team. They are trained in EMDR and other psychological therapies e.g CBT. Our counsellors continue to deliver a professional, high quality service for people from the BAME community living in Northern Ireland with care and compassion.

We are also indebted to everyone who has supported cans in a voluntary capacity.

Fundraising

We would like to thank Nisha Tandon for her time as fundraiser and business development officer and to welcome back Mr Paul Atherton. Thanks to their expertise CANS is able to expand and reach more clients

Board

Dr Satish Kumar (Chair); Mrs Mac Mc Bride (Treasurer); Dr Linda Agnew (secretary); Dr Daniel Gboloo-Teye; Mrs Angela Martin, Mrs Pashmina Kashif,

We were sorry to say goodbye to Mr John Boddu as he relocated outside N Ireland and thank him for his dedication to and enthusiasm for CANS.

- Finance Committee: Mrs Mac Mc Bride, Dr Daniel Gboloo-Teye, Mr John Boddu
- Social Media committee: Mrs Angela Martin, Mrs Pashmina Kashif

Dr Daniel Gboloo-Teye provides supervision for the clinical coordinator.

We would like to thank all the Board members for freely giving their time and expertise.

Clinical Work

We are grateful to all our funders whose generosity supports our work:

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Tier 2 Talking Therapies £23,000 in this financial year

The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF): BAME Counselling Project £284,168.00 over 3 years from Sep 2022 to fund 1 part time Clinical Co-ordinator Salary · 2 part time Counsellors Salary · 1 parttime Book-Keeping & Admin Support salary. We are finalising an 'end of grant' report and have made it through to the final stages of a further application is for £302,472 over 3 years.

Evaluation for Big Lottery

Thank you to Alison Keenan from EOS who undertook this evaluation:

Summary: "Between September 2021 and March 2024, CANS provided support to 715 individuals. 58% clients were female and 45% were male Two thirds of clients were from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background, and many of the remainder although not from a BAME background were not native English speakers. 94% clients rate the counsellor / therapist's performance as very good or good"

Dormant Account (managed by TNLCF): £21,344 annually (50% of which we have received for this financial year) is for the part time Business Development role and some other costs. The funding runs to September 2025.

Henry Smith Trust: £40,000 over 2 years which pays for the Deputy Clinical Coordinator salary.

Grants: We have received £2500 from a joint project with Mindwise.

Children in Need: In June 2023 the Board, responding to a proposal from the clinical Coordinator and some counsellors agreed that there is recognised need to for specialist work with BAME young

people and their families. We are delighted that we have been successful in an application to CIN for £43,700 over 3 years for a pilot youth project.

Pending Applications

National Lottery Community Fund: as mentioned above. We await a decision in Dec 24

Halifax Foundation: We have applied for £40,000 over two years for core costs and await a decision in Dec 24.

Peaceplus: CANS is part of a consortium bidding for Belfast City Council Peace funding. We are applying for £45,000 over three years.

Belfast City Council and Health Trusts application for two smaller grants of £5,000 and await a decision in Dec 24.

Past income streams 2023-24

Starling Collective / Corrymeela – Community Foundation NI (CFNI) DoH MH Fund. £44,640.00 Dec 2021 – Apr 2024. CANS delivered 480 counselling sessions over 2.5 years with interpreting for 60 people

CFNi – Wesleyan Assurance Fund: £10,000.00 Nov 2022 – Oct 2023 CANS delivered 96 Mental Health Awareness Workshops for new entrants Children and Young People

Premises

Financial and IT updates

Recognising the importance of digitalisation CANS has almost completed the implementation of financial, clinical and office management IT systems. We believe this is essential to the development of CANS moving forward.

We are indebted to the finance committee, accountant, staff and everyone who continue to support these developments.

Thanks to the Social Media Committee who continue to develop and manage our website and social media platforms.

Events

In September 2024 in partnership with Belfast City council Health Development Unit CANS hosted the conference **Ethnic Minorities and Mental Health: Breaking Down the Barriers**. Expert academic speakers highlighted the mental health needs in N Ireland, evidence of effective interventions globally, and local research on clients from BAME communities experience of counselling services. This builds on the existing evidence for the benefits of a specialist service for people from BAME Communities. The PSNI speakers highlighted local data and ongoing challenges with regards to

policing hate crime and there was wide ranging facilitated conversations among the 100 plus attendees.

Residential in Corrymeela in October 2024 for Board members, staff, sessional counsellors and interpreters. This continued work on our strategic plan for the next phase of CANS. We would like to thank Alison Keenon from EOS who facilitated these sessions in such a deep and engaging manner which ensures that the voices of everyone involved in CANS are heard. This residential time together allowed all of us to meet those we did not know and build on existing relationships as we discussed, learned, walked and relaxed together.

CANS support for counsellors, staff and Board

The Board would like to pay tribute to the counsellors who work daily with clients.

Sadly, over the summer, racism which is so often unseen erupted into parades and violence which brought, in particular, racism and Islamophobia into plain sight. This deeply affects the mental well being of our clients, staff, counsellors, interpreters and many Board members and their families.

We remain convinced that CANS provides much needed unique client centred service. Our Board and counsellors see the need for CANS in their work and in their own communities.

As we look forward, we are embedding ongoing changes in structure and technology so we can build on the growth of the past years and continue to develop the work of CANS increasing the depth of psychological therapies we offer and the number of clients we can help.

Dr Satish Kumar (Chair) and Dr Linda Agnew (Secretary)

to the Board of Counselling All Nations Services