

Annual Report 2024

The Whole Way

turas



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Chairperson's Statement

2024 has been a year of deep commitment, continued challenge, and important work for Turas. As Chairperson, I am proud to reflect on a year where, despite financial constraints and rising demand, our team once again demonstrated their resilience, compassion, and innovation in supporting those on the path to recovery.

Across our services, we witnessed a significant increase in demand, a clear sign of both the depth of need in our community and the trust people place in Turas. Meeting this demand has not been without its difficulties. Like many in the sector, we have faced ongoing funding challenges—trying to do more with less, while ensuring that our quality of care remains at the heart of everything we do.

One of those key developments has been the introduction of **new therapeutic approaches**, including *Somatic Experiencing* and *EMDR*, now delivered across our work. This marks a vital evolution in our work—recognising that recovery is not only about addressing the mind but also about reconnecting with the body. This holistic approach is already making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we support, and we look forward to deepening this work in the year ahead.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the incredible staff, volunteers, and supporters who are the beating heart of Turas. Their empathy, professionalism, and dedication continue to inspire.

As we move into 2025, we do so with hope, determination, and a clear focus on sustainability, innovation, and above all, the people who rely on us.

Thank you.

Mary McDonald

Turas Chairperson

“Across our services, while numbers remained constant, we saw a significant increase in the complexity of issues our clients present with.”

Vision, Mission & Values

Who are we?

Turas is a community based addiction service supporting people with addiction to grow and be themselves by providing a warm, trustful and non-judgemental environment where they can feel safe, understood and listened to.

turas

“The question is not why the addiction, but why the pain.”

– Gabor Maté, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*



Mission

Offer a tailored pathway towards personal recovery, by providing a confidential and non-judgmental service for individuals to recover from addiction.

Vision

A society where people overcoming addiction can live fulfilling, healthy and substance free lives.



Values

Acceptance – we understand the unique challenges and experiences of each individual

Compassion – we provide a welcoming, compassionate and trusting environment

Dignity – we respect and support people to develop their own potential

Health – we promote health and well-being as part of a substance free lifestyle



Manager's Reflection



In 2024, we've continued to listen, learn, and grow. We introduced new therapeutic approaches, including Somatic Experiencing and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), which have been powerful additions to our therapeutic toolkit, especially in supporting clients with deep-rooted trauma.

We also placed a strong emphasis on learning and collaboration. Our Cocaine Symposium brought together professionals to deepen understanding of cocaine use and its impacts for our client group.

Meanwhile, our Social Care Pathway Symposium opened up important conversations about supporting people who experience both mental health and addiction. We explored how we can better integrate care and meet people's wider social needs – it was heartening to see so many groups come together to share knowledge and build solutions.

We had our first foray into the sporting world and established a recovery Football Team. This further developed our recovery capital offering expanding into the physical activity sphere which adds physical health benefits to the social and emotional benefits of the programme.

“In 2024, we've continued to listen, learn, and grow.”

Every day, we see more people reaching out for help so we offered our services in new locations including Ardee and Carlingford to make support more accessible. We continue to do what we do best: offer a safe, compassionate, and non-judgmental space where people feel heard and supported.

Many of those who come to Turas carry the weight of adverse childhood experiences – addiction, poverty, neglect, loss – and arrive feeling broken and overwhelmed. Here, they find acceptance, the opportunity to think differently, to develop self-compassion, and to start imagining a future free from addiction.

As we mark our 19th year, the financial pressures remain a very real challenge. State funding continues to fall short of what's needed and fundraising is a continued challenge. That said, thank you to all those who did, we were able to continue delivering services at a high standard. Thank you to everyone who organised, donated to, or attended one of our events – we couldn't do this without you.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to the entire team at Turas. Your empathy, resilience, and dedication make all the difference. Thank you to our board for your steadfast guidance, and to our clients – thank you for your trust, your courage, and for choosing to walk this path with us. We remain inspired by your strength and committed to walking alongside you every step of the way.

Nicki Jordan

Manager

2024 in Numbers

35

individuals engaged in medical detox consultations with our GP, receiving tailored care and support

550

people were supported in 2024 to achieve life changing outcomes

24

individuals benefited from Social Care support and had a range of outcomes including a permanent home, children returned to their care, reduced presentation at A and E.

8

individuals generously volunteered over 700 hours to improve our clients lives

3

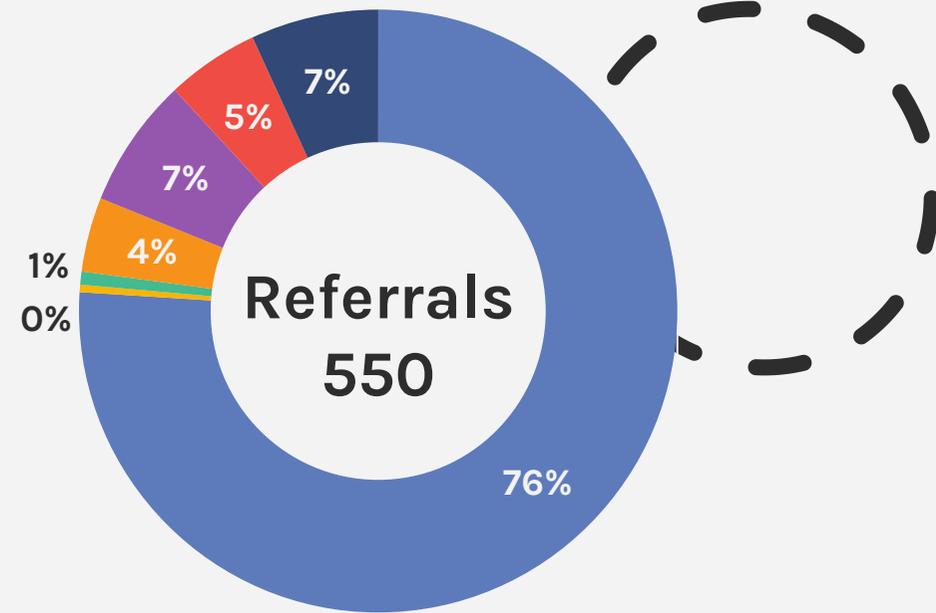
people returned to volunteer with us instead of give back to the community

2

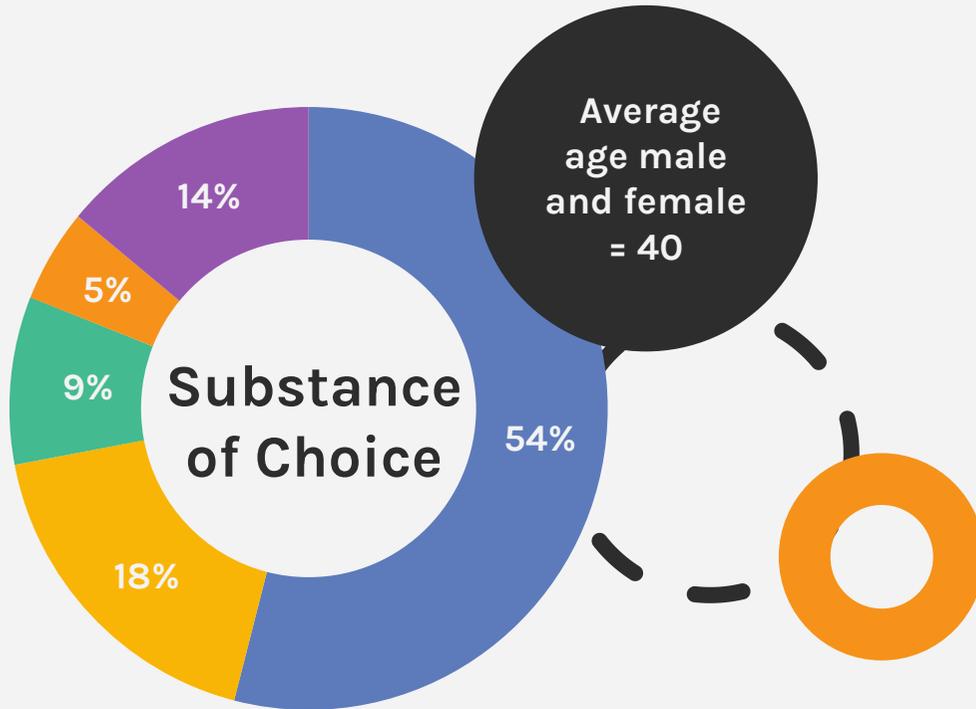
women were supported to overcome gambling addiction - a 100% increase on 2023

Our Impact

We continued our core work in 2024 supporting people through groups, one-to-ones our Recovery Capital supports and our Community Alcohol Detox.

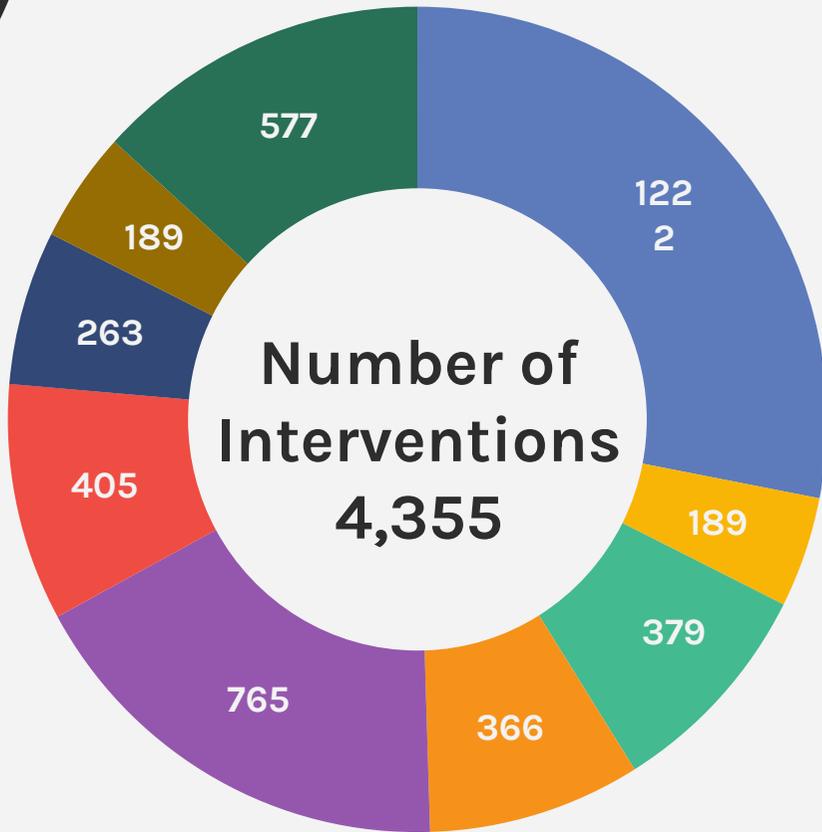


- Self
- GP
- Community
- Family
- A and E
- Probation

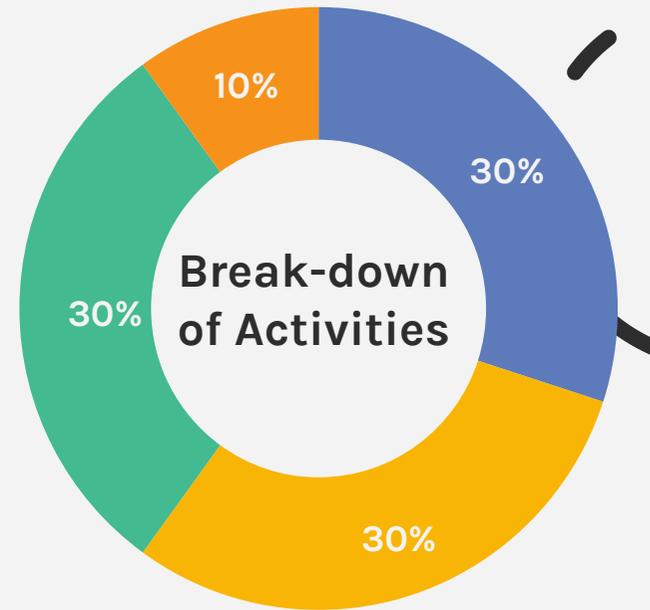


- Alcohol
- Cocaine
- Cannabis
- Benzo
- Other

"Not everything that counts can be counted."
 — Albert Einstein



- 1-2-1 Counselling
- Alcohol detox
- Case Management
- Individual assesment
- Motivational
- Phone
- Prep Work
- Relapse Prevention



■ CAD

Client perspectives

" I entered the door of Turas recently, sick and tired of being sick and tired with addictions and mental health struggles and felt so alone. From there everything changed and I feel like I am part of a family, not just a client. The support of staff and everyone attending the group sessions is amazing and encouraging I am so grateful to feel a part of Turas and best decision I made for my recovery in years I am no longer alone"

Gemma's Story

Starting this journey, I promised myself that I would not lie to myself or anyone else and in the end I was only lying to myself.

40 plus years of drinking and 50 plus years gambling are what I defined myself by, what I believed I was, I was disgusted and ashamed of what I had become. I didn't need anyone to beat me with a stick, I didn't need a bully to stand over me and shut me down. I've done it for years to myself and continued to do so until I started at Turas at the Monday night meeting and later in the CAD programme. Many times, I have been able to give up drinking but not for long. I was relapsing and didn't realize I was doing so. I finally admitted to myself that I need help.

Starting with Patricia in CAD was a complete eye opener for me, to learn the extent of what I was doing to myself and my loved ones was embarrassing, but was also rewarding, because it has given me a chance to reflect on the damage is done over the years to both parties and a chance to repair the same damages. CAD taught me that what I believed in, wasn't exactly correct. Patricia's advice on being open with my loved ones, to be aware of my surroundings, to be prepared for the obvious and even the less obvious dangers and triggers has changed the way I live and look at my everyday life, her ability to open a person's mind to a whole new thought process has encouraged me to see and make choices to help in my everyday recovery.



"Patricia's ability to open a person's mind to a whole new thought process has encouraged me to see and make choices to help in my everyday recovery."

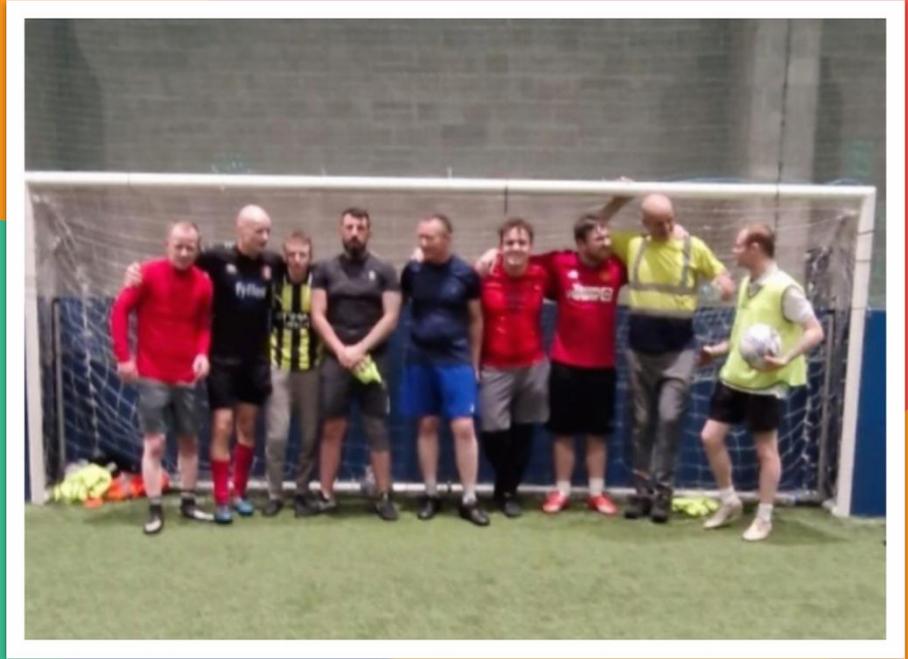
Today 10th April, I am 100 days clean, and that is because of a lot of help and guidance, so thank you! please don't misunderstand me, the entire CAD team of CAD have been brilliant. for Dr Cairns, who had about 90minutes with me, has had a massive impact on me, it is a seldom that you meet a doctor who smiles and chats and speaks to u like you're an equal, it is a rare thing, and you leave her with an air of confidence and a respect for yourself that only someone else can give you. with Chloe, each session seems to reinforce confidence in myself even though I ramble a bit, the outcome would be the same, how to prepare, manage and face what's ahead of me keeping me grounded. I believe I left her office with a new pep in my step as they say.

I was in the garden this morning looking at the cherry tree I pruned last year, looking at the new buds and growth and thought - 'that's me'.

New Initiatives in 2024

Soccer

The desire for a soccer team organically emerged from people attending our Recovery Café who were sporty and into fitness. With the help of volunteers and funding from Louth Sports Partnership and Dundalk FC we were able to establish a team and a regular training session towards the end of 2024. The programme is in its infancy but has plans to grown next year and become a regular social and fitness event in our weekly calendar.



“The experience reaffirmed just how valuable sport can be as a tool for personal growth and community healing.”

- Darren Recovery Volunteer

Outreach

With a view to expanding the reach of our work we trialled four outreach locations including Blackrock, Ardee, Carrickmacross and Carlingford. We held weekly Recovery Cafes in each location for a number of weeks after evaluating our impact. It is important to us that our services are accessible so we wanted to explore if there were people in these areas in need of support who were inhibited by transport. We found that the demand for our this was not massive and it was decided to focus our energies on our existing work from our Turas building.

It is a major benefit of being a local organisation that we can make changes and respond very quickly to new needs and we are proud of the work undertaken in 2024 in terms of expanding our reach and improving access to our services.

We also provided a number of talks and events at DKIT and LMETB where we shared our knowledge of addiction and the supports we provide.



Focus on Cocaine

In 2024, we delivered two somatic-based support groups specifically for individuals struggling with cocaine use. These groups offered a trauma-informed, body-focused approach that supported clients in developing greater awareness of their physical and emotional responses, helping them to better regulate cravings and manage distress. To further explore and share learning from this innovative work, we hosted a learning symposium with other addiction services. The event created a valuable space for exchange—our team shared insights from the somatic approach, while colleagues from other services presented their work with the Resonance Factor. It was a highly engaging and productive morning, highlighting key learnings and practical strategies for applying these approaches in direct client work.

Body and mind

In 2024, we strengthened our therapeutic offering by integrating Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Somatic Experiencing (SE) into our core services. These trauma-informed approaches allow us to respond more effectively to the needs of people who have experienced significant adversity, often underlying or compounding their struggles with addiction and mental health. By addressing trauma at both the cognitive and physiological levels, EMDR and SE provide additional pathways for healing that go beyond traditional talk therapy, helping clients to process distressing experiences and regulate their nervous systems in a safe and supported way.

These modalities have proven to be particularly valuable in our work with individuals facing complex trauma, offering new opportunities for stability, self-awareness, and resilience. Their introduction reflects our commitment to deepening the therapeutic impact of our work and meeting people where they are—recognising that trauma often resides in the body as much as in the mind. Early feedback from clients and staff alike has been very positive, and we see this development as a vital part of our ongoing journey toward more holistic, person-centred care. We hope to further develop this element of our service in 2025.

“Trauma has to be processed where it was stored – in the body.”

– Bessel van der Kolk

Recovery Week

To mark Recovery Week 2024, we hosted a powerful exhibition titled Images of Hope. This creative project invited clients to capture photographs from their daily lives that symbolised hope, resilience, and the often-overlooked moments of positivity in their recovery journeys. The resulting collection was thoughtfully curated and displayed at Creative Spark in the town centre, with a special launch event to celebrate the occasion.

Images of Hope offered a meaningful opportunity for reflection—for both clients and the wider community. It encouraged participants to pause and recognise the small but significant sources of strength and optimism in their lives, many of which can go unnoticed amidst the challenges of recovery. The exhibition not only highlighted the creativity and insight of those we support, but also reinforced the importance of hope as a sustaining force in the healing process.



"Projects like Images of Hope not only reflects the great untapped talents of people in recovery but also highlights the amazing ability for growth once someone is nurtured and encouraged"

- Alan Duff, Turas Clinical Manager

Gambling

Our gambling work continued with the support of Gambling Awareness Trust. We conducted research into “A Good Practice Audit for Integrating Supports for Problem Gambling into Turas’s Existing Services” and considered the recommendations in terms of how we are offering our services. It was great to see an increase in the number of women attending Turas for gambling support in 2024.

“10 out of 10 couldn't be any better I really find it so helpful I would be lost without the great service.”
(Gambling service)

- Olive

What our Clients Say

“My experience with Turas has been hugely positive. It’s given me a safe space to talk openly about my struggles and helps me understand my triggers. With their support, I’ve developed better coping skills and feel much more in control of my life and looking forward to a future without gambling.”

- Jane

“I personally think since I started attending the service it’s giving me hope not to give up which I wanted to do before I started going to you and because of your services I’ve blocked online gambling and hopefully on the way to a forever gambling free life because of you for that I’m so grateful.”

- Louise

Social Care Pathway



In 2024, our Social Care Pathway project continued to evolve as an innovative response to the complex realities of dual diagnosis, particularly within communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. At the heart of this work is a social care-led approach that seeks to integrate support for both addiction and mental health, while also addressing the broader social determinants that so often shape a person’s recovery journey—such as housing, income supports, and access to essential services.

Our stepped care model, underpinned by intensive one-to-one support, enables us to offer highly personalised interventions. This approach allows us to walk alongside people as they navigate systems like housing and welfare, while also supporting their therapeutic needs.

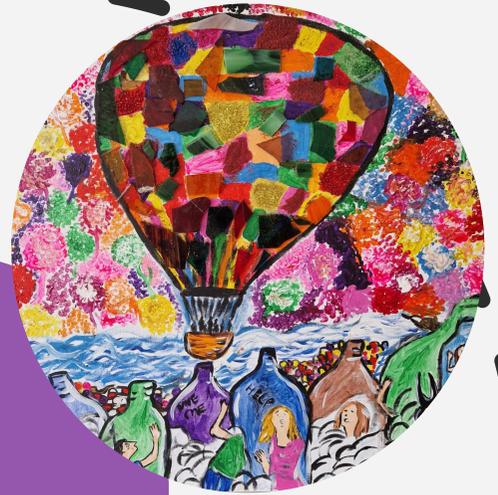
Strong collaboration has been a cornerstone of our progress. Our network of partnerships—including the HSE, local community agencies, and statutory services—has allowed for more coordinated and joined-up care, helping to reduce fragmentation and support continuity.

A key milestone in 2024 was our Social Care Pathway Learning Symposium, held in October. This event brought together a wide range of local and national practitioners to explore the project’s approach and early outcomes. The high level of engagement sparked valuable discussions about the role of social care in dual diagnosis and opened up important conversations about the potential for wider replication of our model at a national level.

Finally, our commitment to learning and accountability remains central as does our drive to obtain long term funding. Through ongoing evaluation and a data-informed approach, we are building a clearer picture of our impact and refining the model to better meet the needs of those we serve and to use this to leverage funding going forward.

2024 in Images





Fundraising

2024 was a challenging year in relation to fundraising. We held a very successful Pop-Up shop in the Long Walk with Friends of Dundalk and also a bucket collection in the Marshes. Recognising the work involved in fundraising events and the limited resources within Turas we focused instead to encourage people in the wider community to undertake challenges and events on our behalf which continues to be a work in progress. We are grateful to all of the individuals and businesses who have supported us in 2024 and to those who volunteered with us to raise money.



Thanks to all our funders and sponsors in 2024:

- ✓ Courts Service
- ✓ Dundalk Credit Union
- ✓ Gambling Awareness Trust
- ✓ HSE
- ✓ Louth County Council
- ✓ North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce (NERDATF)
- ✓ Individual donors
- ✓ Corporate Donors

Governance

Turas would like to extend our thanks to our statutory partners the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Forum and the HSE, Louth County Council, and to our main philanthropic donors including Gambling Awareness Trust.

Turas has very robust governance procedures and a range of policies to accompany this. We are fully compliant with the Charities Governance Code. We are also subject to external audit by our funders and in 2022 completed a full external audit by the HSE audit team.

prepare our audited accounts we employ an external auditor with a new one appointed last year to ensure to fulfil the best practice of moving auditor every few years. We have controls and procedures in place to ensure sound and robust financial management and have a finance and governance subcommittee of our board.

We demonstrate transparency and accountability at all levels of the organisation. We have a board of management with 9 people, 7 of whom are directors. We also have 2 sub-committees of our board and are working towards forming a fundraising sub-committee. We have an SLA with the HSE and other funders which set out the terms of the funding we receive and how we must adhere to these terms.

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors

- Mary McDonald (Chairperson)
- Peter McKeivitt (Director)
- Niall Weldon (Director)
- Nicholas Mc Shane (Director)
- Emma Caffrey (Director)
- Michéal O' Murchu (Director)
- Stewart Agnew (Director)
- Jane Fegan
- Sheena Quigley

Staff Team

- Nicki Jordan (Manager)
- Alan Duff (Clinical Manager)
- Maureen Zeltner (Administrator)
- Frank Fitzpatrick (Project Worker)
- Tiina Univer (Administrator)
- Patricia Kelly (Detox Nurse)
- Cian McCooley (Reception/Admin)
- Caroline Macken (Counsellor for Community Alcohol Detox)
- Deirdre Murphy (Counsellor)
- Sarah Duffy (Social Care Pathway Case Manager)
- Chloe Rowland (Project Worker)
- Orlagh McGuire (Reception/Admin)
- Maria Murtagh (Drug Court Liaison Worker)
- Margaret McNamee (Gambling Counsellor)



Legal and Administrative Details

Turas Counselling Services

Secretary	Peter McKeivitt
Registered Office	Security House 59 Clanbrassil Street Dundalk, Co. Louth
Registered Company Number	425887
Registered Charity Number	CHY22271
Auditors	O' Connor Martin and Company Blackthorn Business Park Coe's Road Dundalk, Co. Louth
Principal Bankers	Bank of Ireland Clanbrassil St. Dundalk, Co. Louth
Solicitors	Brian Berrills and Co. 18 Francis Street Dundalk, Co. Louth



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