



## A Note from our Chair, Vivian Geiran

As we come towards the end of the year, I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year and hope you enjoy the approaching holiday period. Reflecting on 2023 and how productive a year it has been again for the Association, I am conscious of the recent deaths of two former IASW Presidents and stalwart social work colleagues, Ineke Durville and Margaret Horne, both of whom were pioneering social work leaders and gave so much, to so many, during their full lives. Margaret and Ineke both passed away, within a few days of each other, during the first Social Work Awareness Week, when the profession focused on a range of initiatives celebrating social work and striving to inform the wider public about what it means to be a social worker, what we do and why we do it, a fitting time to celebrate Margaret's and Ineke's lives and contributions too.



Once again, I am pleased to welcome a significant number of new IASW members this year, as membership has grown to an all-time high. I also send a huge thanks, on all our behalf, to our Board, SIGs Network, Committees, individual volunteers and members of various IASW groups, as well as our fantastic staff team, for all their ongoing energy and commitment, including for our CPD programme, which has enriched the professional development of social workers across the country. We have continued to implement changes recommended in the Governance and Structures Review, and will continue to do so in the coming year. Given funding commitments so far from the Probation Service and the HSE, we are very close now to advertising to recruit a Chief Operations Officer, to lead our staff team and manage the day-to-day delivery of our strategic plan on behalf of the Board and the Association. I also invite you to consider how you might get more involved in IASW activities in 2024. While

acknowledging all that our active volunteers already do, and the competing demands on all our time, vacancies will arise on our Board of Directors in 2024, as well as in SIGs and various Committees and Working Groups of the Association. When these come up, please consider them, if you can.

Following publication of our 2022 report on Training, Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers in Ireland, a range of issues highlighted in that report are now being addressed in a coordinated way, via the Social Work Employers Forum. Several meetings were held in 2023 with the main social work employing organisations and the six Irish universities providing social work education (the SWEPT group). These are focused on increasing the numbers of social workers in the country, as well as maintaining the quality and accessibility of social work training, and addressing issues of retention across the sector. Specifically, IASW is a key partner in the planned social work apprenticeship programme, currently in development, and we are leading an exploratory project to identify how to increase and coordinate the availability of social work practice placements nationally. Our profile and influence among the legislature, policymakers and other relevant stakeholder groups, continue to grow, as we seek to create and build positive social impact. Plans are well advanced for more initiatives in 2024: among others, a new Anti-Racism Strategy is to be launched; and there will be a North-South Conference on domestic violence and abuse, both early in the New Year. As we face towards 2024 and all its opportunities and challenges, I look forward again to continuing to work with you all, to represent the social work profession and social workers – stronger together for social change.

Vivian Geiran  
IASW Chair, SW00319

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### Membership Fees 2024

Your IASW membership **renews automatically**. Your payment method on file will be charged on your renewal date. Annual paying members, a **payment reminder** is issued via email **30 days prior to the payment being deducted** from your account.

If there has been a change to your employment circumstances, please let us know at the earliest opportunity.

**Refer a Member- Be  
in with a chance to  
Win a €100 Voucher**

We can update your account to ensure that you are availing of the appropriate Membership Benefits, especially Fitness to Practise insurance coverage.



### Fitness to Practise Insurance with the Irish Association of Social Workers

The IASW is offering a superior insurance coverage, summarised as follows:

- The IASW policy is a legal contract that is binding and enforceable in a court of law, the same as any other insurance policy.
- We specify the amount the insurance provider is prepared to make available to a member to defend a FTP situation.
- IASW insurers are also very experienced in this area both here in Ireland and in the UK.
- The IASW policy is per member on an individual basis. Most importantly each member has a ring fenced legal expenses limit of €250,000 that is unique to them and is not being provided on a discretionary basis.

The IASW includes Fitness to Practise Legal Expenses cover to the 'working' membership categories: Full-Time, Part-Time (20hrs or less) and First Year Post Qualify members.

**76%**

of CORU complaints are against Social Workers\*

#### How to make a claim

As soon as you have a legal problem that you may require assistance with under this insurance (Fitness to Practise Letter of Complaint only) you should telephone the IASW office on **086 024 1055** or [officemanager@iasw.ie](mailto:officemanager@iasw.ie)

#### Did you know?

Fitness to Practise Legal Protection Cover is **NOT** provided by your employer.

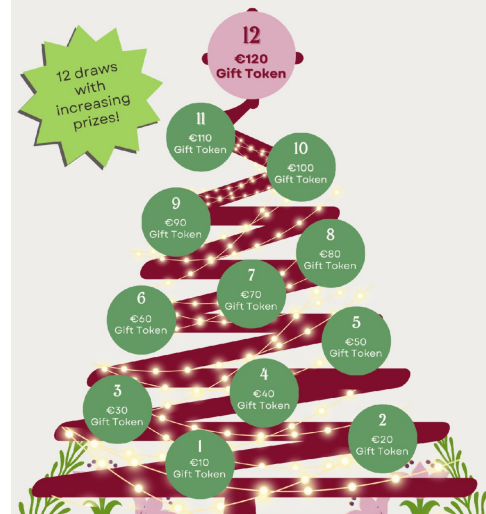
#### IASW Member Testimonial:

"I was at home on maternity leave when I received a letter from CORU which detailed that a former client of mine had made a complaint to the Fitness to Practise Committee. Because I was at home, I had no colleagues to talk to and no supervisor to seek support from. Nobody wishes to be in such a position and so I had no idea how this process worked or what I needed to do, from the outset, I was treated so well by IASW. Within a day, I was speaking to a solicitor who was going to deal with CORU on my behalf immediately, and until the process was complete. He was so efficient and courteous, he knew exactly what he was doing. He had also done it many times before, which filled me with confidence. He communicated with me so well and explained the legal aspects of the Preliminary Committee and CORU. After 5 months my Fitness to Practise complaint is at its end, thankfully, I am so grateful to the fantastic staff at the Insurance Brokers and the IASW for so efficiently and sensitively sorting this matter out for me. It was so important for me to bring this to a definite close. I can't recommend the IASW Fitness to Practise cover highly enough. It is definitely something I will never be without going forward." - IASW Member

[Visit our website](#)

## IASW's 12 DRAWS OF CHRISTMAS!

Join and Refer for your chance to win a voucher, every day, for up to 12 days!



There is still time to win in our Christmas giveaway!

There are two ways to be entered:

- Join the IASW
- Refer a new member

Referrers & New Members remain in the draw until their name is selected to win, or the giveaway ends.

Winners and prizes will be sent out at the conclusion of all 12 draws.

[Refer a member](#)

## IASW Special Interest Groups Closed to Non-Members on 31st December

At the heart of the IASW is its role in supporting, representing, protecting, and developing social workers and the profession. It has a long and successful relationship

## Update Your Account

with our **Special Interest Group (SIG) Network**, and we wish for that to continue. We are asking members to encourage all SIG members to Join the IASW by 31<sup>st</sup> December, after this date SIG's will no longer be open to non-members. Help us to continue growing our SIG's, we are stronger together

Our current SIGs are:

- Children and Families (C&F)
- Disability (SWID)
- Southern Region
- Foster Care (SWIFC)
- Adult Mental Health (SWAMH)
- Primary Care (SWIPC)
- Adult Safeguarding & Protection (ASaP)
- Anti-Racism Advisory Group (ARAG)
- Children & Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)

Want to start a SIG you don't see here? Reach out to us!

[See our SIGs here](#)



We are getting ready to print and mail out the much awaited Irish Social Worker Journal!

Don't miss out on receiving your membership exclusive copy of The Irish Social Worker Journal from the IASW.

Confirm your correct mailing address in your account by:

1. Logging in
2. Select **Edit Personal Details**
3. Update your address
4. Click **Save**

Done!

Contact us with any questions or issues at [administrator@iasw.ie](mailto:administrator@iasw.ie)

[Login here to update](#)

**Gift a Student with  
IASW Student  
Membership**

**Congrats, Winner of  
IASW Membership**



Calling all Practice Teachers!  
Consider gifting your students with an IASW student membership to our community, empowering them with networking opportunities, invaluable resources, and a supportive network. Together, let's inspire and equip our future professionals. Thank you for your generosity.

[Gift membership](#)

Congratulations  
Winner of 1-year FREE  
IASW Membership



To celebrate our 2023 social work grads, we held a draw for 1-year of free Full IASW membership.

Congratulations to winner of the draw, **Maria Flavin!**

And congrats to all the 2023 grads.

Learn more about our on going competitions and prizes here:

[Visit our website](#)

## Call for Abstracts



by 31 January 2024



### 2024 Irish Social Work Journal Abstracts Call

**The IASW Journal Committee** invites submissions for publication in the Irish Social Worker: original research papers, literature reviews, practice innovations, practice tools, book reviews, critical commentaries, policy analysis, updates on legislation and reflective practice pieces (not an exhaustive list). Authors are advised to use these guidelines to assist with the preparation and formatting of their submission.

#### Submission process

Interested authors should submit:

- a 300-word abstract
- a list of authors and affiliations
- a short bio for each author (no more than 100 words)

by **January 31, 2024**, to journal editor Gloria Kirwan ([journaleditor@iasw.ie](mailto:journaleditor@iasw.ie))

## 2024 Special Issue Abstracts Call

**Special Issue Title:** Working with families at the intersection of domestic violence and abuse and child protection and welfare: challenges and opportunities

Guest Editors: Stephanie Holt, Sonya Bruen and Lavina Temple

Given the established weight of evidence of concern for children's health, well-being and safety when living with domestic violence and abuse (DVA), it is not surprising that these children and their families represent a considerable percentage of child protection and welfare cases in many jurisdictions globally. While Child protection services play a critical role in assessing risk and ensuring child safety for children living with DVA, the existing research evidence highlights many challenges for effective child welfare and protection intervention with families experiencing DVA.

In this Special Issue we invite contributions that reflect on the challenges and opportunities for best practice at the intersection of DVA and child protection and welfare practice. We encourage research papers, practice commentary and reflection, and inter/multi-disciplinary dialogue. Submission are therefore, not restricted to those working in DVA and/or child protection and welfare. We welcome submissions from any area of practice where the focus of the paper meets the focus of the Special Issue.

### Submission process

Interested authors should submit:

- a 300-word abstract
- a list of authors and affiliations
- a short bio for each author (no more than 100 words)

by **January 31, 2024**, to the lead guest editor ([sholt@tcd.ie](mailto:sholt@tcd.ie))

The guest editors will review all submitted abstracts and invite potential authors to submit their manuscripts to the special issue for publication consideration by **April 30, 2024**.

[Learn more about IASW Journals here](#)

IASW CPD  
Events

Important Calendar  
Dates





### Dates for the Diary

#### Signs of Safety Approach - An Overview

- Wed, 17 Jan
- Online (free for members)

#### Building Connections: Reflections on Relationship- Based Practice When Working With Refugee Families

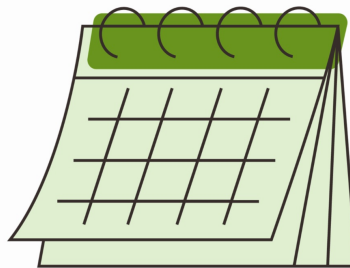
- Thurs, 8 Feb
- Online

#### IASW & BASW NI Joint Conference - Responding to Domestic Violence and Abuse in Ireland, North & South

- Thurs 29 Feb
- Fairways Hotel, Dundalk

We are thrilled we had in-person events this year in Dublin, Portlaoise, and Cork.

[Click here for more event info](#)



Important dates to save in the Social Worker's Diary:

#### December

- Sun, 10 - World Human Rights Day

#### February

- Sat 3 - Anniversary of IASW Anti-Racism Strategy
- Fri 16 - World Care Day

#### March

- Fri 8 - Int'l Women's Day
- Tues 19 - World Social Work Day
- Thurs 21 - Int'l Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

## Int'l Day of Persons with Disabilities - 3 Dec

On the 3rd of December 2023, we celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD); a UN day that is celebrated every year. The day is about promoting an understanding of disability issues and examining the well-being of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and to raise awareness of the inequalities that continue to exist for persons with disabilities in political, social, economic, and cultural life.

The theme for the IDPD this year is “*United in action to rescue and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for, with and by persons with disabilities*”.

To mark this day also, the Purple Lights campaign takes place where different Government buildings, companies, educational facilities and prominent

sites can light up in purple to raise awareness for this important day.

For social workers, this day allows us to stop and reflect on how we can contribute to improving the lives of the people we support, listen to understand their needs and work alongside them to address the barriers and inequalities that are present. At our recent Social Workers in Disability Conference, we reflected on our unique role with the disabled person and their support system.

One key message that I took away from the day was that although we can get caught up in advocating for resources, housing, respite and placements, our role goes beyond this. On the day, Dr. Erna O'Connor shared the insightful words on Maya Angelou *"people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*

With these words in mind, as Social Workers we need to utilise our unique toolkit and the importance of human relationships when people with disabilities allow us into their world. In the year of the full enactment of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act, we can build upon human rights and social justice for disabled people and seek to help to improve their lives, build connections, obtain their expressed will and preference, promote self-advocacy and continue to raise inequalities. When supporting children with disabilities, we need to promote the best interests of children with disabilities and to ensure that their voice is heard in decisions concerning them and this continues on throughout their lifespan.

Ciara Lynam  
SWID Chair



[Read more here](#)

**IASW Volunteer Weekly Round Up**

The IASW is an organisation run by members for members. We



wouldn't exist without our amazing volunteers and members like you! Let's see where the IASW was represented this week.



On the 9 November, the National University of Ireland conferred honorary degrees on IASW board member, Claire McGettrick. Congrats, Claire!

### **Mental Health Reform - Webinar on "Innovation in Youth Mental Health." - 5 Dec**

CAMHS Chair, Lisa Hurson represented. This webinar will platform the work of voluntary and community organisations who are finding innovative ways to communicate and assist children and young people who require mental health supports.

### **AGM for Social Workers in Disability (SWID) Special Interest Group (SIG) - 6 Dec**

The new committee was elected, the position of chair remains vacant. They have agreed to a new schedule of meetings to allow separate meetings relating to Adult Disability Services and Progressing Disability services as well as continuing with joint meetings throughout the year.

### **Mental Health Reform - Digital Accessibility & European Accessibility Act - 7 Dec**

Breffní Coffey & Eoin Barry represented. This was an opportunity to speak to experts in the area about how to produce and maintain accessible web content and ensure our resources and services are accessible to all. look at the requirements for accessibility of online content and services under the European Accessibility Act and pathways towards becoming digitally accessible.

Join a Special Interest Group (SIG) to see the opportunities by contacting us!

[See our Representations](#)

[View IASW SIGs here](#)



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