

## **Peter McVerry Trust European Solidarity Corps Organisation Overview**

Fr Peter McVerry has been working with young people experiencing homelessness for more than 30 years. In 1974, Fr McVerry moved to Summerhill in Dublin's north inner-city where he witnessed first-hand the problems of homelessness and deprivation. In 1979, he opened a small hostel to provide accommodation for homeless boys between the ages of 12-16. Four years later in 1983, he officially founded The Arrupe Society, a charity to provide housing and support for young people experiencing homelessness as a response to the growing numbers of individuals becoming homeless in Dublin. In 2005 the name of the charity changed from the Arrupe Society to Peter McVerry Trust.

Peter McVerry Trust (PMVT) is committed to reducing homelessness, drug misuse and social disadvantage through its provision of housing and support services. PMVT provides services which are tailored to the needs of the individual, within a framework of equal opportunities, dignity and respect. During 2018 we supported 5,841 individuals. 72 per cent of the people we work with require support in relation to family, while 81 per cent require support in respect to substance use and 60 per cent require support in relation to mental health. PMVT engages with the Housing First Model, a service user-centred approach that focuses on ending homelessness for people who have been homeless for many years or who are particularly vulnerable. It is based on two factors: providing both housing and intensive case management simultaneously. The goal is for service users to re-integrate into their local community.

PMVT currently maintains 50 different services, including; prevention, housing, homelessness, drug treatment and Under 18s residential. As well as hosting Erasmus Solidarity Corps volunteers, we also host third level students during college placement and offer a volunteer programme. Also, PMVT has a well-structured Transition Year Social Engagement Programme, whereby secondary school students take part in a structured one week programme within PMVT services. The purpose of the Transition Year Social Engagement Programme is to raise awareness on social issues such as homelessness and social exclusion through engagement with our service users, services and staff. Additionally, PMVT works mostly with young persons, who have complex needs and are homeless or at risk of homelessness, we applied for the Strategic EVS programme to send service users on two week placements. Disadvantaged communities typically have reduced access to travel and other cultures, for example, being less likely to holiday abroad (Hughes, 1991) or avail study abroad programmes

(Simon and Ainsworth, 2012). This is an invaluable opportunity for service users to travel and access new cultures, something normally prevented by their limited economic resources.

Our Erasmus Plus programme has successfully impacted our organisation thus far in terms of providing an inter-cultural influence to our work giving the young people we work with a more diverse experience of engaging with different cultures and volunteers of other nationalities. Furthermore, by introducing international volunteers to our organisation, we are able to create a cooperation, which in the short term gives our service users a chance to focus on their individual needs. The long term outcome of that cooperation is for our service users to gain enough independence that they can move away from homelessness.

In 2016 PMVT launched their strategic plan for years 2016 -2020. The plan sets out seven high level strategic objectives, each supported by three key drivers. The seven high level strategic objectives identified in the plan have been chosen to keep the organisation clearly focused on service users' needs, prevention, increased access to housing, leadership and collaboration, organisational sustainability, best practice in service delivery, and effective communications and advocacy. In Services we will look to provide high quality, effective, streamlined services that are service users centred by adopting new performance management systems to drive consistency and quality across services. PMVT will look into creating enhanced mechanisms for service users input and using primary data to inform and adapt service provision in line with the changing needs of service users. All of our strategic plan goals, are in line with relevant National Standards, however all of our short term goals are service user focused therefore they are constantly changing to meet the needs of service users.

PMVT believes that goals of our organisation aligned with the principles and mission of European Solidarity Corps to create inclusive society, where people dignity and human rights are respected. As in ESC, in PMVT we understand importance of building supportive community, which is based on tolerance and non- discrimination.

## **Vision**

An Ireland that supports all those on the margins and upholds their rights to full inclusion in society.

## **Mission**

Peter McVerry Trust is committed to reducing homelessness, the harm caused by substance misuse and social disadvantage. Peter McVerry Trust provides low-threshold entry services, primarily to younger people and vulnerable adults with complex needs, and offers pathways out of homelessness based on the principles of the Housing First model.

## **Aims**

To target those most marginalised in society and offer a safe, challenging and supportive environment through our service provision.

To treat participants with warmth and respect and actively encourage them to be involved in all aspects of their own support plan.

To offer a comprehensive prevention package of support to reduce the likelihood of homelessness to those leaving care, those leaving treatment, those leaving prison or other institutions and those whose accommodation is vulnerable.

To offer a comprehensive package of support that will provide the best opportunity possible for them and assist them in planning a pathway out of homelessness or drug use, or if they continue to use drugs, to assist them towards some level of stabilisation in order to live a life of dignity, with respect and opportunity.

To assist each person to re-establish himself or herself in the community and move towards greater independence.

## **Type of services we provide:**

### **Prevention Services**

Peter McVerry Trust has significantly increased its investment in prevention work in recent years. The charity is working to provide a targeted programme of services and activities that work to prevent people who are at risk of homelessness ever entering homeless services.

This work is aimed at those in immediate risk of becoming homeless, such as those living in the private rental sector, those exiting state care, hospitals or prisons. Our prevention work also takes a long-term strategic approach by targeting communities and areas which face significant economic and social challenges and where people may be more likely to access homeless services. Peter McVerry Trust is investing heavily in supporting programmes on education, social integration, and social enterprise projects in these communities. The charity is also scaling up its work on mental health supports and partnerships with groups like the Men's Shed Movement and community employment schemes.

### **Housing Services**

Peter McVerry Trust, is an approved housing body and a specialist provider of social housing and housing supports.

- **Housing with support**

Peter McVerry Trust's Housing with Support service helps those who have exited homelessness and are now living in their own home.

The Housing with Supports service offers intensive, visiting support to tenants who have and are available 24/7 365 days a year. The team helps people to develop life skills, build confidence and work towards independent living and social integration. Ultimately, the service helps people to sustain their tenancy and ensure that people do not re-enter homelessness.

- **Housing First**

The Housing First model aims to provide a person sleeping rough, or someone who has been long-term homeless, with their own secure accommodation as well as access to intensive and specialised support services. Housing First is a participant-centred model that focuses on ending homelessness for people who have been homeless for many years or who are particularly vulnerable.

Housing First focuses on providing participants with housing as well as intensive case management through, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Intensive Case Management (ICM).

Among the key principles of the Housing First model are:

- Housing as a basic human right
- Warmth, respect, and compassion
- Commitment to the participant
- Scattered site housing
- Separation of housing and services issues/requirements
- Self-determination and choice
- Recovery orientation
- Harm reduction

Housing First participants will have ready, time-unlimited access to support and treatment services, for as long as the participant requires. Even if a tenancy fails, Housing First continues to support the individual to another tenancy and the support service continues to engage with the participant.

### **Homeless Services**

Peter McVerry Trust provides residential homeless accommodation to individuals, couples and families. Our services are delivered under Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA), Temporary Emergency Accommodation (TEA) and Emergency Accommodation (EA) models. Cold weather provision is also made available on a seasonal basis. Peter McVerry Trust currently provides residential homeless accommodation to individuals, couples and families in Dublin, Kildare, Louth and Meath.

Peter McVerry Trust works in partnership with local authorities, the Dublin Region Homeless Executive and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government to deliver our homeless services. We also rely on funding from our donors to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of those in homelessness.

Our service is modelled on a six-month placement where places are prioritised for:

- Persons over 18 years of age and are homeless
- Persons who have complex low-threshold needs

### **Drug Treatment Services**

Our drug treatment services operate on a harm reduction model in keeping with our ethos and values.

We offer pragmatic, dignified responses to the needs of people engaging in drug misuse. At present, Peter McVerry Trust's Drug Treatment Services include a Drug Stabilisation and Recovery Service, a Residential Community Detox Service, and a Residential Drug-Free Aftercare Accommodation Service.

### **Under 18s Residential Services**

Peter McVerry Trust currently provides residential services for up to 18 young people under the age of 18 across four locations in the Dublin area.

The Registration & Inspection Service with the Child and Family Agency is a national service with the responsibility to inspect and register non-statutory children's residential centres. Each service is registered and inspected by Tusla Registration and Inspection Services.