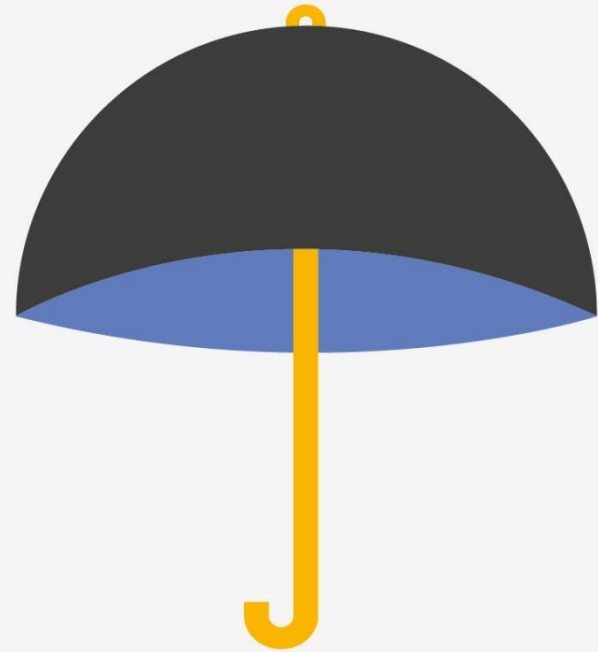


# Annual Report 2019



Whether it's the  
before,  
the during or the after.

We're here for you at  
every stage of your  
story.

# turas

# Olivia's Story

Life has been good and not so good to me.

I found myself last year unable to deal with a situation in my life. I knew that consuming too much alcohol was leaving me unable to cope with the problem: adding to it rather than solving it. I had reached my 'rock bottom'. Feeling totally broken mentally and emotionally. I reached out and finally found Turas.

In Turas I was treated with non-judgemental, kindly kid gloves. I was in a place where I felt safe.

Slowly, I began to realise that alcohol had crept into my life stealthily. First I used it to help me relax after a busy, stressful day...but of course as life became more stressful, my alcohol consumption increased until alcohol became the reason I couldn't deal with some difficulties.

In Turas, every day I had open access to support groups, one-to-ones and medical advice. I was given space and support and time to heal. After a year of learning to support myself without the use of alcohol, but with self-care, meditation and mindfulness and trust in those who care, I am building myself back up.

I am relearning how to stand on my own two feet and have the strength to deal with events, some recent, some long since past.

Turas has been there for me. I was sinking and they taught me how to swim and even how to enjoy swimming!

I will be eternally grateful for the compassion and knowledge offered to me at my lowest ebb by the kind, knowledgeable and non-judgemental staff in Turas.



**How we offered support to 470  
in 2019**

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# Chairperson's Statement

In 2019 addiction continued to be a very prevalent issue in Irish society with over 10,000 episodes of drug treatment offered nationally and 7,000 for alcoholism.

In Turas, we have focused on both harm reduction and abstinence models to ensure we offer support appropriate to each person's individual needs.

We also strove in 2019 to introduce a range of new and diverse programmes led by an interest from clients in engaging in new activities and pushing themselves to take on new challenges.

We facilitated this by obtaining new funding and forging links with the education, eco-therapy and holistic treatment arena.

The lack of support for clients with both fragile mental health and an addiction is both staggering and worrying.

We continue to work closely to build good relationships with local mental health services to alleviate this, however, clients remain on the periphery and lives are lost.

I would like to thank the HSE and the Regional Drugs Task Force for their help and support throughout the year.

However our funding remains precarious and we hope in 2020 to establish a solid fundraising platform to develop new funding streams and diversify our income to create a more sustainable foundation.

At this point I would also like to thank our staff and volunteers for their support in organising various fundraising events and the numerous organisations they supported us throughout the year.

In 2019 we concluded our Feasibility study which strongly reflected the value our clients gain from the support they receive in Turas.

It was a very positive reflection of the interventions we provide and the therapeutic model we offer.



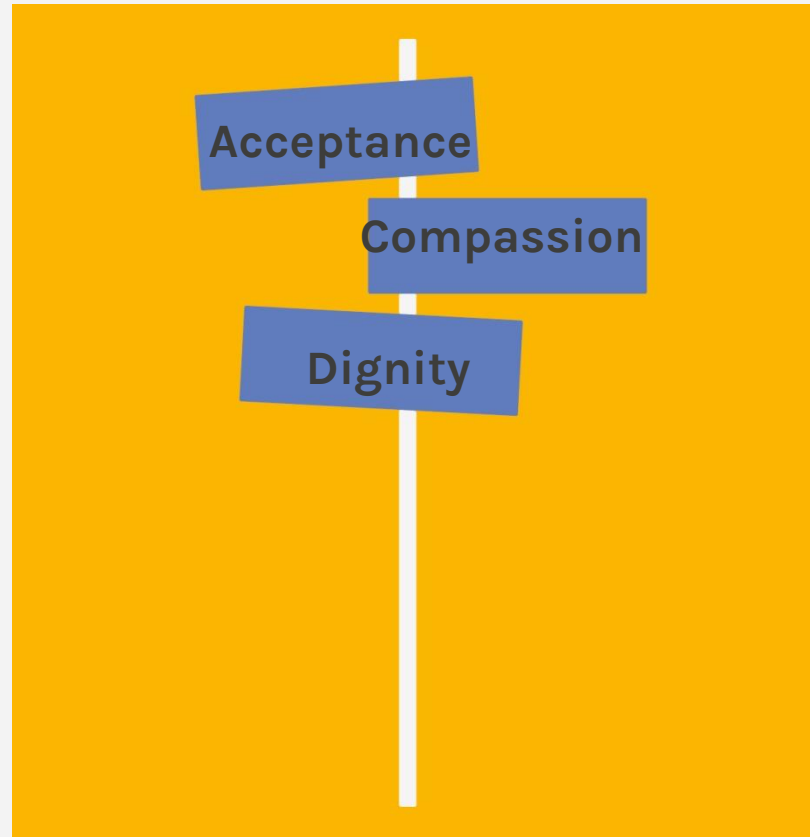
# Chairperson's Statement

I would like to extend a sincere thanks to Mark Dearey who stood down from the Board during the year. Mark has worked tirelessly since the foundation of the service and has been a past Chair of Turas for many years.

While our client group are some of the most marginalised and forgotten people we have endeavoured to ensure they are accepted and treated with dignity and compassion, in line with our values.

We hope in 2020 to build on our successes and continue to offer our warm, non-judgemental and emphatic approach to people from across the North East with drug and alcohol addiction.

**Peter McKeivitt**  
Chairperson



# OUR VISION

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

# OUR MISSION

Turas offers individuals a tailored pathway towards personal recovery from drugs and alcohol by providing a confidential and non-judgmental service for individuals and their families.

# OUR 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



# Our Story

Turas was founded in 2005 by Marian Sloane and Nora Donaghy. Marian and Nora were both studying to be psychotherapists in Belfast and would travel up and down together. It was on these journeys that they discussed the lack of supports for people with an addiction in Dundalk and decided to take action.

Both had previous experience working in addiction in Northern Ireland and saw the need for a community based addiction service in Dundalk. Nora and Marian set up Turas (the Irish for “journey”) to meet this need and in the last 15 years it has taken its own journey of endurance, persistence and change.

From the early days, the programme was about accepting people, supporting them and helping them to explore their potential, and these core values remain the same today. We now employ 16 people and offer 8 programmes to more than 350 people each year. But greater than Turas is the journey of the clients – the people using our service for help and support.

Addiction is a long and winding road for many people with relapse and set-backs normal. Turas’ vision, mission and values ensure we have never closed the door on anyone, no matter how many times they relapsed or came back for help.

We pride ourselves now on offering a range of unique and exceptional services including our community alcohol detox, men’s and women’s SMART recovery groups. Most of all we are delighted to offer people a warm, supportive and non-judgemental space where they can feel accepted and cared for enough to look at the root of their addiction.

# 2019 in numbers

**248 new clients**

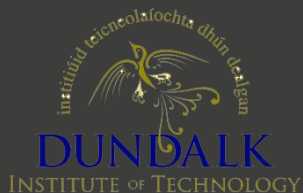
**300 Assessments completed**

**45 Medical detox's undertaken**

**1440 Counselling interventions**

**17 Structured Day Programme participants**

# 2019 Interventions



**1 week of  
healthy living  
interventions  
@ DKIT**



**33 Social  
farming  
days**



**36 Preparation  
for Christmas  
interventions**



**48 Sound  
Healing  
interventions**



**414 Empowering  
Women in Sobriety  
sessions**

**96 attendances  
at Self-defence  
classes**



# Client Experience's

**“Simply put, I would not be living the life I am without the help Turas have given me. The support and help from the staff have enabled me to stop drinking and live an alcohol- free life to the full.” – Jacinta**

**“I’d really lost myself, my joy, my identity to a certain degree and was using alcohol as a coping method to deal with all the stress in my life.**

**The counsellors are so kind, and when you are at your lowest kindness means so much. No judgement, listening without prejudice (to quote George Michael!), teaching me coping skills, I truly am indebted to all of them.**

**They are the most wonderful people doing a job that changes lives. Mine has changed so much and for that I am so grateful.” – Helen**

**“I couldn’t have don’t this myself and I couldn’t have stayed sober without the support and tools that I learned. I’m tearful today as I’ve just finished my last appointment with Patricia but I am also reassured. I know that I now have a strong foundation for recovery.” – Jason**

# Programme developments

Our **Community Alcohol detox** remains one of the only alcohol detox programmes offered in the community. With clinical governance from our detox nurse, overseen by our GP, it is a robust and comprehensive programme. It enables people to attend Turas for an intensive programme of medical and wrap around supports while staying at home. This means that daily triggers are addressed as they arise and makes it a very real and challenging programme.

The supply of **benzodiazepines** remains a challenge and people attending Turas struggle to detox from these street bought and prescription tablets. With 6 beds nationally for this it is largely community benzo detox that clients require, however, there is a reluctance from GP's to go on this journey with them.

We do our best in Turas to provide harm reduction support to this group but it is challenging without any medical oversight.

Our **structured day programme** was offered twice last year with 20 people graduating.

We continue to be one of the few organisations over **free long-term counselling** to clients. Those that engage in the process have excellent outcomes

**Outreach** to Simon Barrack Street continued in 2019 with clients working on harm reduction techniques with our outreach worker.

We continued our **sober socialising** with 6 fantastic nights out. These nights highlight to people in recovery that socialising without alcohol or drugs is possible and that a good time can be had.

We had an impactful year with the help provided sought after and appreciated.

# New programmes

With the help of Healthy Ireland funding we were able to develop new programmes with a health and wellbeing focus.

We forged links with DKIT school of mental health nursing to offer a week long programme of activities which were engaging and rewarding for the 10 participants.

To provide a more holistic focus to our therapeutic interventions we ran a number of monthly Sound Baths which offer healing through sound.

These took place in Turas and the room was always filled to capacity with clients seeking the meditative state the sounds encourage.

We also integrated Ear Acupuncture into our sessions with clients. This is an ancient form of healing that helps with stress and anxiety in a calm and relaxing way.

Eco-therapy has profound benefits for people in recovery from addiction. With this in mind we linked with Social Farming Ireland to enable our clients to get our doors but also engage in meaningful work and develop skills that could lead to future employment.

3 clients spent 11 weeks on a farm and one client went to do further work in this area.

We hope to expand on these new interventions in 2020.



*Some talk to you in their free time, and some free their time to talk to you.*

# Journeying through Turas

In addiction many people begin their journey with ambivalence and if they receive motivational support to address their addiction they begin to set goals and see a different future.

In 2019 115 people moved through different stages of support in Turas.

This reflects the progress made in dealing with their addiction that enabled them to move on to supports where greater stability is required.



# Finances

## Income

HSE 160k

North East Regional Drug and  
Alcohol Task force 219k

Fundraising 29 k

## Expenditure

Staff costs -335k

Running costs - 80k





# Good Governance

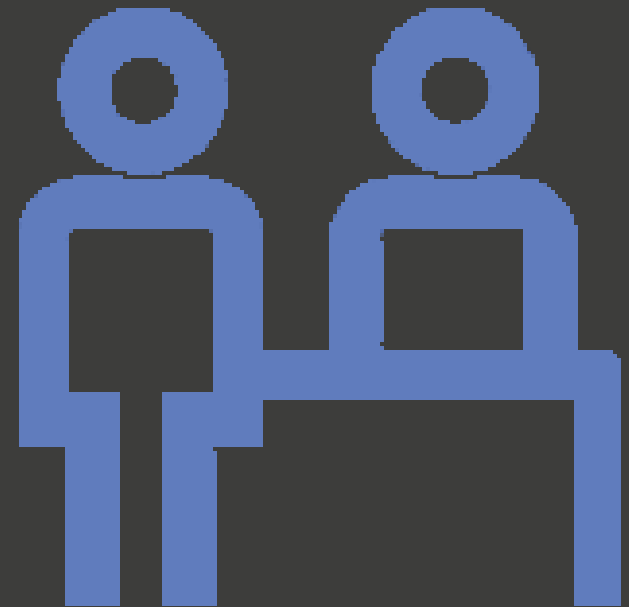
Turas believes in transparency and accountability. In 2019 we obtained charity status for the first time. This status registers us with the Charity Regulator as a not-for-profit and gives us credibility and the assurance that our set up is in accordance with what is required by the regulator.

We are mainly funded by the state and must return reports and accounts on a quarterly basis to report on the outputs of the funding received.

Our board has signed up to undertake the new Charities Governance Code which we are working towards completion by the end of 2020.

We have a full set of policies to cover a range of issues that arise in the course of our work.

Fulfilling all of the above ensures we meet the highest standards of Governance.



## Turas Counselling Services Legal and Administrative Details

<b>Board of Directors</b>	Peter Mc Kevitt Mark Dearey Jim Ryan Niall Weldon	(Chairperson) (Vice Chair) (Treasurer) (Director)	Nicholas Mc Shane Emma Caffery Michéal O' Murchu	(Director) (Director) (Director)
<b>Secretary</b>	Peter McKevitt	<b>Registered Company Number</b>	425887	
<b>Registered Office</b>	Security House 59 Clanbrassil Street Dundalk Co. Louth	<b>Registered Charity Number</b>	CHY22271	
<b>Auditors</b>	CMF 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Quayside Business Park Mill St. Dundalk Co. Louth	<b>Principal Bankers</b>	Bank of Ireland Clanbrassil St. Dundalk Co. Louth	
		<b>Solicitor:</b>	Brian Berrill and Co Dundalk Co. Louth	

## Contact:

Turas

59 Clanbrassil street

Dundalk

Co. Louth

Turascounselling.ie

[info@turascounselling.ie](mailto:info@turascounselling.ie)

FB: @turassupport

CHY: 22271

# turas