

ALONE Annual Report 2010

ALONE, the independent charity which provides support to older persons in need, today published its Annual Report for 2010

Charity recorded a 50% surge in demand for its services during 2010, with continued increases in 2011

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Dublin, October 19th 2011

ALONE, the charity which provides support to older persons in need, today published its annual report for 2010, detailing a 50% surge in demand for its services in that year. The rate of increase in calls for assistance to ALONE has continued to escalate throughout 2011 and is a consistent strain on the charity's limited resources. The charity receives no state funding for day-to-day services. Despite this, the report reiterates ALONE's commitment to maintaining a consistent quality of service for marginalised older people, and to extending these services where necessary.

The ALONE Befriending Service ensures weekly visits for 200 older people who would otherwise be isolated and lonely. ALONE Housing provides maintained homes for life, with dedicated staff support, for 100 older people who would otherwise face homelessness. The charity's Community Response Service carries out 30 emergency interventions every month for older people in crisis

The report details how ALONE staff and volunteers weekly encounter older people living in sub-standard housing conditions; suffering with physical ill-health or disability and mental health issues; in debt or poverty, struggling to make ends meet on reducing state.

The Annual Report highlights the challenges faced by older persons as a result of levels of reduction in State services and general cutbacks, but stresses that ALONE will always strive to ensure that it meets the needs of older persons who use its services. The full report is available for download from the charity's website at www.alone.ie.

Speaking at today's publication of the report, ALONE CEO, Seán Moynihan commented that, "On any average day our small number of staff and dedicated volunteers provide direct services to 330 older people in need. ALONE works with the one in ten of older people classed as vulnerable, and

our resources are fully stretched as a result of a significant increase in demand for services.”

He continued, “We are a grass-roots organisation that believes everyone has a role to play in making Ireland a great place to grow old. We are determined to maintain a professional level of service to those in need. Today is not just about reporting on what has been achieved. It is also about how we see the future for the organisation and how we deliver our services, and how we can prepare ourselves for the inevitable continuing surge in demand for our services.”

“Every day we face the reality that there are a significant number of older people living on the State pension who are reliant on social transfers which are reducing and leaving them in poverty and in need of our assistance. We are concerned about the possibility of continued cutbacks impacting older people, in particular where they are applied as blanket measures without regard for the personal circumstances of individuals already in need,” concluded Seán Moynihan.

Michael Kelly, Chairman of ALONE stated that the charity’s strategic plan recommits the organisation to helping the most marginalised and forgotten older people in our community.

“2010 was a special year for ALONE, marking the 20th anniversary of the untimely death of our founder, Willie Bermingham. Our small, dedicated staff and volunteers have spent much time developing new structures through which we can better achieve our strategic aims. I would like to thank all of our volunteers and staff for their dedication in defining more effective models of service delivery for ALONE.”

He continued, “I must also thank our individual and corporate supporters. I hope that this report gives a good insight into the difference that ALONE makes in the lives of so many older people who have nowhere else to turn to. We hope that you will continue to support us and value our work.”

Older people with concerns about their wellbeing can contact ALONE on (01) 679 1032.

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For further information please contact Glenn Hogarty, 087 790 9670