

Submission
to
Government Green Paper
on
Pensions
May 2008

from

Clondalkin Women's Network

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Clondalkin Women's Network

Date of establishment: 1991

Legal status: Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status

AIM

Clondalkin Women's Network is a forum of Women's Groups working proactively to empower women through our individual and collective action to achieve equality.

CWN places a large emphasis on anti- poverty work and capacity building in its activities and supports to the seventeen women's groups affiliated. The women's groups are involved in anti-poverty work through the organisation of community based education and development activities. This work is aimed primarily at reducing isolation, enhancing the confidence and skills of local women to participate fully. The women's groups have voluntary management committees, composed of women who participate in the activities.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the changing needs of women in Clondalkin on an ongoing basis in order to inform the work of Women's Groups and CWN
- To promote ownership and active participation by Women's Groups in the Network
- To promote a Human Rights based approach to women's rights.
- To build the capacity of Women's Groups to respond to the needs of women in Clondalkin at either local, regional or national level
- To be a voice for women at local, regional and national level
- To disseminate information
- To participate in local research
- To promote participation of women
- To support development of women's groups
- To identify sources of funding, training, education
- To initiate research ,participation, innovation, integration and evaluation
- To organise workshops/ seminars/conferences to inform/ develop /evaluate
- To raise awareness of issues that impact on women's lives
- To support women to access, participate and progress in education & training
- To support women to access and progress in employment

Submission:

As women living in an area of disadvantage and from a diversity of experiences and backgrounds we raise the following concerns re Pensions and the discrimination and unequal treatment of women:

- **Lack of recognition of women as individuals, with own rights and entitlements – women should not have status of dependent adults. Women must be accorded full rights as full citizens of the State – whether engaged in unpaid care work or paid work.**
- **Lack of recognition of women’s work in the home as carers.**
- **Unequal participation of women in part time employment to meet the needs of family**
- **Non recognition of all forms of partnerships for Pension entitlement**
- **Non recognition of the breadth of ‘family’ in contemporary Ireland, thus excluding many citizens from Pension entitlements**
- **Increasing marriage break down**
- **The lack of direction/ responsibility in all areas of employment by employers to participate in pension schemes – this particularly impacts on women who are disproportionately represented in casual, part time employment.**
- **Private pension schemes where male is the paid worker and pension contributor – pension is halved upon death of contributor. This adversely affects women; pension is maintained at full level if wife dies first. Equality of pension entitlement must be built in. Gains only for private companies in current models.**
- **Social Welfare Pension levels maintained at poverty - inducing levels – many women state this is just a continuation of poverty for them.**
- **The lack of information re entitlements and responsibilities**
- **Need for awareness raising re Pensions**