



€6.8MILLION FOR MARRIAGE, CHILD AND BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING SERVICES –

Mary Coughlan Minister of Social and Family Affairs

Mary Coughlan T.D., Minister for Social and Family Affairs, today approved funding of €6.8million to over 450 voluntary and community groups nationwide providing marriage counselling, marriage preparation, child counselling in relation to parental separation and bereavement counselling support.

“This funding, which is more than six times the allocation in 1997, reflects our commitment to improved supports and services for families and their members, an important objective of this Government’s families first approach,” said Minister Coughlan.

“Families, in all their forms, are the bedrock of our society - and as such they are experiencing increased pressures arising from the recent unprecedented changes in Irish Society. The benefits of counselling in assisting families, and their members, with these and other pressures have been demonstrated time and again. The massively increased funding under the scheme since its inception reflects this effectiveness.

“Working in partnership, the Family Support Agency and the voluntary and community groups provide an essential service locally to families in need. I look forward to working with them in developing further improvements in these vital services“ added Minister Coughlan.



The Scheme of Grants focuses on the development of support services in the community for families to enhance stability in family life and to assist families and their members to deal with difficult periods, which they may experience. The aim is to achieve a larger and more accessible service and to ensure the highest level of service possible.

The policy objectives, which inform funding allocations, are - continued investment in the established major providers of services so that they can consolidate their lead role in the provision of high quality counselling services, the provision of a regional network of accessible support by investment in significant providers of services in key catchment areas throughout the country and additional support for organisations providing services in disadvantaged communities.

Discussions are underway with the voluntary organisations with a view to moving the current funding from an annual to a longer-term basis, with funding to be based on the organisations development plans over a three-year period, for example.

Continued investment will be provided in the allocation of grants for established major providers of services so that they may consolidate their lead role in the provision of high quality counselling services. This includes MRCS , Dublin which was granted €423,000 , ACCORD Dublin which is responsible for 10 – 12 centres serving the Dublin/Wicklow region and was granted €533,000 , ACCORD Headquarters Maynooth, Co Kildare €940,000.

ENDS

5th August, 2003

SEE FACT SHEET ATTACHED



Notes for News Editor

2003 Scheme of Grants for Marriage, Child and Bereavement Counselling Services	
County Breakdown	
	€
CARLOW	48,950
CAVAN	44,650
CLARE	82,700
CORK	553,830
DONEGAL	116,935
DUBLIN	2,787,960
GALWAY	254,250
KERRY	225,760
KILDARE	1,010,980
KILKENNY	20,380
LAOIS	21,460
LEITRIM	4,120
LIMERICK	160,920
LONGFORD	25,710
LOUTH	267,510
MAYO	217,930
MEATH	83,070
MONAGHAN	56,130
OFFALY	36,120
ROSCOMMON	226,330
SLIGO	62,900
TIPPERARY	138,985
WATERFORD	160,023
WESTMEATH	51,060
WEXFORD	64,190
WICKLOW	69,030
Total	6,791,883

The Family Support Agency

The Family Support Agency was formally launched by Minister Coughlan on May 15th last. Its main task is to protect the family, by supporting the stability of family life and addressing the effects of changing family formation.



The FSA provides a family mediation service, develops marriage and relationship counselling, undertakes research and advises the Minister on family issues and works in partnership with the community and voluntary sector. The Family Support Agency has been allocated a budget of €17.2m for 2003.

The Family Support Agency:

- Provides a family mediation service to help couples, who have decided to separate, negotiate their separation without acrimony. Over the last six years this service has expanded from two centres in Dublin and Limerick to 12 centres through out the country. This figure will increase to 14 by the end of this year.
- Supports, promotes and develops the provision of marriage and relationship counselling and other family support services.
- Supports, promotes and develops the Family and Community Services Resource Centres programme. The number of centres has increased from 10 to over 85 since 1997.
- Provides and disseminates information about these services and other family issues, and
- Provides financial assistance to voluntary organizations for these purposes.
- Undertakes or commissions research into matters related to its functions.