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## **MARY COUGHLAN APPOINTS STAFF MEMBER TO FAMILY SUPPORT AGENCY BOARD**

The final Member of the Family Support Agency Board was appointed today by Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Social and Family Affairs.

The Family Support Agency was formally established by Minister Coughlan on 6 May 2003. The main aim of the Agency is to support families, promote continuity and stability in family life, prevent marital breakdown, and to foster a supportive community environment for families at local level.

On the establishment day 11 members were appointed to the Agency Board by the Minister, leaving one remaining position for a staff member to be elected by secret ballot of the staff of the Agency.

Ms Margaret Farrell, a Clerical Officer with the Family Mediation Service, has been elected by the staff to the



membership of the Agency. Ms Farrell is 24 years in the Civil Service and has worked for the Family Mediation Service in Athlone since 2000.

Announcing the appointment, Minister Coughlan said, “I am delighted to appoint Margaret to the Board. She will bring practical experience of the day to day business of the Agency to the Board table which will enhance the development of successful family policies and services”.

Mr Pat Bennett, Chief Executive Officer of the Family Support Agency today welcomed Margaret to the Board of the Agency. Acknowledging the importance of the staff representative on the Board, Mr Bennett said: “I think that having a staff representative on the Board is the way forward for organisations and I am happy that the Family Support Agency has now completed the process of electing a member to that position.”

**ENDS 14th August 2003**



## **Note for News Editors:**

The Family Support Agency will:

- provide a family mediation service
- support, promote and develop the provision of marriage and relationship counselling and other family supports and
- support, promote and develop the Family and Community Services Resource Centres programme.

The Agency will also undertake research, provide and disseminate information about parenting and family issues and provide advice to the Minister on matters relating to its functions.

## **Members of the Family Support Agency Board**

### *Chairperson*

Mr Michael O'Kennedy: Senior Counsel & Former Government Minister and EU Commissioner.

### *Members*

Ms Clare Cashman: Youth and Community worker. Resource Centre Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary.

Ms Paddie Connellan: Chairperson of Prison Visiting Committee, Nurse, Aromatherapist and Reflexologist

Ms Sinead Hanly: Counsellor and Consultant, Dublin.

Mr Dick Hickey: Director, St Brigids Family Resource Centre, Waterford

Mr Gerry Mangan Department of Social and Family Affairs

Mr Brendan Murphy: Psychologist and member the Mediators Institute of Ireland, Dublin.



Dr Colm O'Connor: Clinical Psychologist and Director, Cork  
Marriage Counselling Centre.

Ms Dilly O'Brien: Department of Health and Children

Ms Muriel Walls: Solicitor and family law specialist, Dublin

Brid Rocks: Remedial teacher and Psycho-therapist,  
Cooley Co. Louth