

Social Inclusion and Community Action Programme (SICAP)

Case Study

Community WRAP® (*Wellness Recovery Action Plan*)

Introduction

This paper presents a case study on a SICAP project delivered in 2018 by PAUL Partnership. While the case study primarily focuses on a specific SICAP-funded project, it also showcases an example of good practice in terms of Collaboration as the project was the result of a successful collaboration between PAUL Partnership and the Limerick Mental Health Association.

In the following sections, the rationale for the project is outlined, along with an overview of the project, its outputs and outcomes to date, challenges and learning, as well as the next steps and expected longer term outcomes from the project.

Rationale

In 2017, PAUL Partnership undertook a consultation process to inform the development of both its 5 year Strategic Plan and the plan for the implementation of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme¹ (SICAP) in the Limerick Urban area.

As part of this process, a series of facilitated focus groups and workshops with staff members, Board members and external stakeholders was held. To enable those who were unable to attend a facilitated consultation, a link to an online survey was also issued to staff, Board members and external stakeholders. Furthermore, a link to an online survey was also made available on the PAUL Partnership website and shared on Facebook and Twitter.

The focus groups and workshops explored, among other issues:

- Social inclusion needs and challenges in Limerick
- Local contextual factors

Among the many strategic issues identified during the process, 2 key areas emerged as important thematic areas:

- 1) Empowering Communities – *To develop the capacity of communities to develop and deliver responses to identified social inclusion challenges*
- 2) Health and Wellbeing – *To contribute to reducing health inequalities by supporting community-based health and wellbeing initiatives, with a specific focus on mental health*

¹ See our SICAP page on our website for further details about the overall programme.

Good mental health is recognised as being of utmost importance to overall wellbeing. Limerick City has the highest rate of suicide in Ireland². In addition, the self-harm rate for females in Limerick City is double the national average while the male rate was 68% higher than the national average³. People at risk of social exclusion are at a greater risk of mental ill-health. As such, it is vital to look at mental health within the context of supporting social inclusion. This, along with the need to support community capacity-building and leadership, informed our decision to focus on developing the skills and capacities of community representatives/organisations to deliver an international evidence-based mental health and wellbeing project – Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP[®]).

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP[®])

The Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP[®]) is a self-management tool for health and wellbeing. It can be used by individuals to address physical, mental health and life issues. It was developed in 1997 by people in recovery from mental illness and focuses on self-help, recovery, and long-term stability⁴. It is now used extensively by people in different circumstances, and by health care and mental health systems all over the world to address all kinds of physical, mental health and life issues. WRAP has been studied extensively in rigorous research projects and is listed in the US National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices⁵. It is also recognised as an evidence-based practice by the US Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA)⁶.

WRAP consists of three seminars: WRAP Seminar 1 (2 days), WRAP Seminar 2 (5 days), WRAP Seminar 3 (5 days). Seminar 1 is aimed at anyone who wishes to learn more about Wellness Recovery and developing their own WRAP. Seminar 2 is aimed at community members who have completed WRAP Seminar 1 and are interested in becoming WRAP Facilitators. Candidates who successfully complete WRAP seminar 2 become accredited facilitators and going forward they can deliver the programme to people and/or groups in their community. WRAP Seminar 3 is an advanced level facilitator training programme which accredits WRAP facilitators to train new facilitators. A 3 day refresher course required every two years in order to maintain advanced level accreditation.

Project Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of the SICAP Goal 1 WRAP project is to train and mentor a cohort of community-based WRAP facilitators who will have the qualifications and skills to deliver the WRAP Seminar 1 within their own community/community group.

The project contributes primarily towards the SICAP target outcome “*LCGs have a greater capacity to address the social inclusion needs of the communities they serve or represent*” under the SICAP Goal 1 Theme - *Capacity Build Local Community Groups*. However, as all participants must complete WRAP Seminar 1 first and learn the tools to self manage their own mental health, it also contributes

² National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) [online] Available at: <https://www.nsrff.ie/statistics/suicide/>

³ Griffin, E, et al. (2017) National Self-Harm Registry Ireland Annual Report 2016. National Suicide Research Foundation. Cork.

⁴ <https://www.copelandcenter.com/wellness-recovery-action-plan-wrap>

⁵ <https://knowledge.samhsa.gov/ta-centers/national-registry-evidence-based-programs-and-practices>

⁶ <https://www.samhsa.gov/>

to the achievement of the SICAP outcome “*SICAP clients have improved personal skills, wellbeing and capabilities*” under the SICAP Goal 2 Thematic Area ‘*Promote Personal Development and Wellbeing*’.

Project Implementation

The WRAP project was delivered as part of the PAUL Partnership 2018 Goal 1 SICAP Action *Mental Health Promotion in Communities*. The project was funded by SICAP, and planned and co-ordinated by SICAP staff. Each WRAP Seminar 1 was co-delivered by a SICAP staff member who is an Advanced Level WRAP Facilitator, and by a staff member of the Limerick Mental Health Association.

The first step to becoming a WRAP facilitator is to complete WRAP Seminar 1. Seminar 1, delivered over 2 days by accredited WRAP facilitators⁷, focuses on supporting people to develop skills and tools to manage their own mental health - referred to as ‘living WRAP’. Specifically, it enables people to:

- Gain more control over their lives and the way they feel
- Identify what works well in their lives
- Identify what mental health triggers they may have
- Create an action plan to respond to these triggers

It is underpinned by the 5 mental health recovery concepts:

1. Hope
2. Personal Responsibility
3. Education
4. Self Advocacy
5. Support

Once individuals are trained in WRAP Seminar 1, they can apply to complete WRAP Seminar 2 whereby they gain the qualifications to deliver WRAP Seminar 1 in their own communities.

Participant Recruitment

The programme was targeted at individuals who are part of the SICAP target groups or who volunteer or work in organisations supporting SICAP target groups. Participants were recruited via a variety of means including: advertising via social media, through local community groups, SICAP Goal 1 and 2 staff, the Local Employment Service, Jobs Club, distribution of flyers, word of mouth etc.

To secure a place on the programme, participants were required to complete an Expression of Interest, which required them to outline how they thought the programme would benefit them personally. It also required them to indicate if they would be interested in progressing to the WRAP Seminar 2 Facilitator Training.

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Project Delivery – WRAP Seminar 1

Wrap Seminar 1 was co-delivered 3 times in 2018 by accredited WRAP facilitators from the following project partner organisations:

- PAUL Partnership (SICAP Goal 1 staff member)
- Limerick Mental Health Association

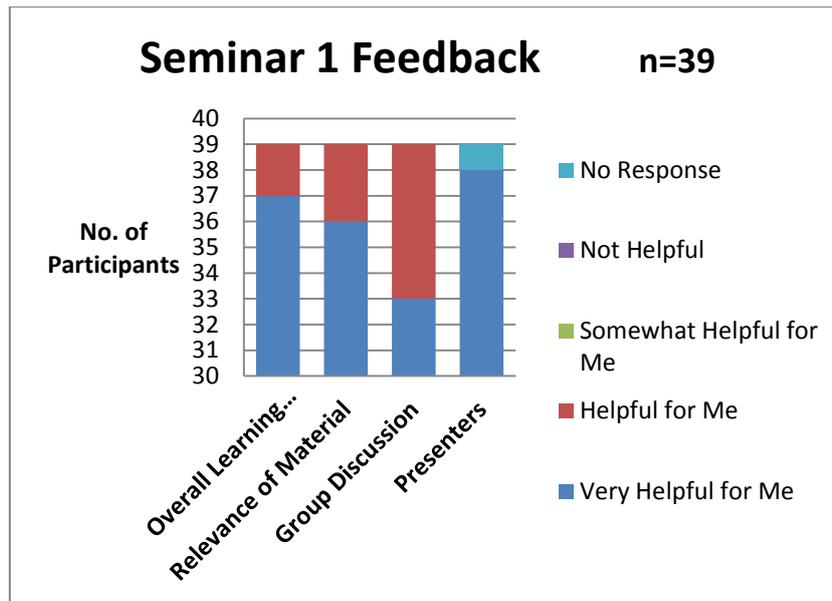
Table 1 provides an overview of the dates and numbers of people who attended each Seminar. Participants included a mixture of people working for/volunteering with organisations supporting SICAP target groups as well as individual members of SICAP target groups, some of whom had direct experience of mental health issues.

Date	Number of Participants	No. of Organisations Represented	No. of Individuals (community members)	Target Groups Represented/Supported
25th-26th January	13	7	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disadvantaged women• People with disabilities• People experiencing homelessness• The unemployed• Disadvantaged children and families• People living in disadvantaged communities
7th – 8th February	14	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The unemployed• People living in disadvantaged communities• Disadvantaged youth
13th – 14th June	17	2	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New communities• The unemployed• People living in disadvantaged communities• People with lived experiences of mental ill-health
	44	13	22	

Feedback from WRAP Seminar 1

End of Programme evaluation sheets were completed by 39 of the 44 participants. Chart 1 below shows that the response to the programme from the participants was overwhelmingly positive:

- 37 out of 39 reported that the overall learning experience was ‘Very Helpful for them’; 2 reported it to be ‘Helpful’
- 36 reported that the materials were ‘Very Helpful for them’; 3 reported them to be ‘Helpful’
- 33 reported that the group discussions were ‘Very Helpful for them’; 6 reported them to be ‘Helpful’
- 38 out of 39 participants stated that the Presenters/Facilitators were ‘Very Helpful for them’; one person did not answer this question.



Seminar 1 participants were also asked to state what they found most helpful from the programme, and the key learning that they took away from the 2 days. Among other key learning, participants identified the importance of understanding and being aware of personal mental health triggers and the tools for managing mental health on a day to day basis. The following comments illustrate some of the key messages and learning participants took from the programme:

“How important it is to identify and be aware of triggers”

“Being able to name the triggers and recognise early warning signs – knowing what to do to help myself in being well”

“I am in control of myself and my own Daily Maintenance Plan”

“Learning ways to support me and remembering we need ‘I’ time too”

“The importance of minding (your) self”

“How to cope and come back from a crisis”

“I am in charge of my own recovery”

“There is always someone out there that you can count on and you can always help someone too”

“Learning to cope with day to day and putting a plan into action”

“Daily maintenance is key to wellness”

The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive and many recommended the programme for others:

“Thoroughly enjoyed the training, informative, interesting and has helped me immensely”

“I am so hopeful now on leaving the workshop, armed with all the tool kit information”

“It was a very worthwhile experience and I feel that it will bring me benefit in the future”.

Project Delivery – WRAP Seminar 2

In September 2018, the 5 day WRAP Seminar 2 took place. The purpose of WRAP Seminar 2 is to train people, who have completed WRAP Seminar 1, to become WRAP facilitators so that they can deliver WRAP Seminar 1 in/with their own communities.

Seminar 2 was promoted to all who had previously completed Seminar 1 earlier in the year. Participants had to complete an Application Form in which they confirmed their commitment to delivering the programme to SICAP target groups after they gained the relevant qualifications.

18 people were accepted onto the programme representing 11 different community groups and the following SICAP target groups:

- Migrant communities
- People experiencing mental health difficulties
- People living in disadvantaged communities
- Families and children experiencing disadvantage

WRAP Seminar 2 equips new facilitators with the following skills and information:

- How to create a supportive learning environment
- The values and ethics of WRAP Facilitation
- Co-facilitation skills and facilitation structure
- Effective presentation of information
- Respecting participant needs and perspectives

The participants also completed 4 practical elements that included: presenting from a personal perspective and presenting and responding to questions on the curriculum.

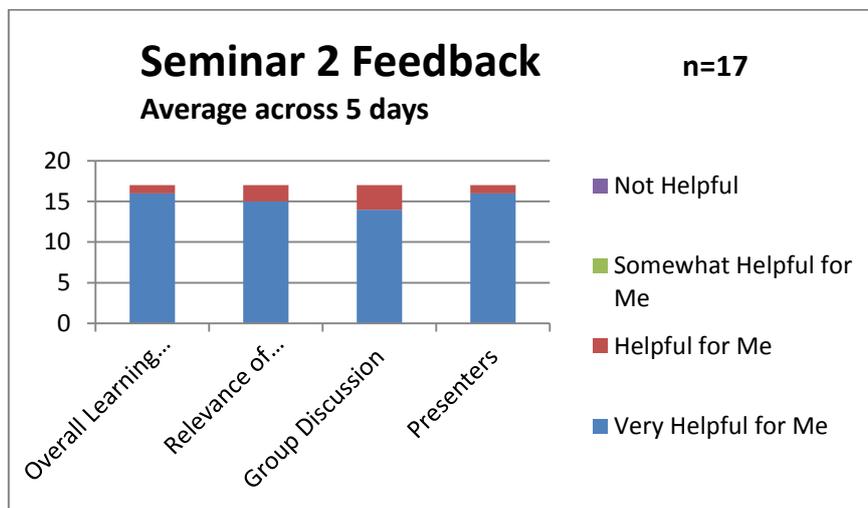


Lots of learning in evidence in the WRAP training room!

Feedback from WRAP Seminar 2

At the end of each day of Seminar 2, evaluation sheets were completed by 17 participants. Chart 2 below shows the feedback from the participants in relation to a number of areas, averaged across the 5 days:

- 16 out of 17 reported that the overall learning experience was 'Very Helpful for them'; 1 reported it to be 'Helpful'
- 15 reported that the materials were 'Very Helpful for them'; 2 reported them to be 'Helpful'
- 14 reported that the group discussions were 'Very Helpful for them'; 3 reported them to be 'Helpful'
- 16 out of 17 participants stated that the Presenters/Facilitators were 'Very Helpful for them'; 1 reported it to be 'Helpful'.



The following quotes also provide a flavour of the feedback participants provided about the specific skills they learned during the programme (in addition to the substantive content of WRAP):

"Developing skills of facilitation"

"Gaining confidence in public speaking"

"To be prepared for the sessions ...can't wing it ...need to know the material"

"[I learned] how important language is and ensuring how to exclude any bias based on experience"

"I gained confidence"

"It's ok to be myself and it's ok to be myself in the facilitation process"

"I can do it"

"[I learned] that with faith and courage in ability...will be able to do it"

"To trust in me, trust in the programme"

"This is achievable"

"Working hand in hand with my co-facilitator"

“The experience was nervous at the beginning but so rewarding at the finish”

“Delighted that I completed this course, can’t wait to move forward”

Challenges and Key Learning to-date

Some of the challenges, and learning, that emerged during the 2018 implementation of this project included:

- The important role of community outreach to ensure that the target groups of SICAP are aware of the programme and are supported to apply for a place.
- Once the programme was advertised, all seminars were over-subscribed highlighting the need for, and interest in, health and wellbeing supports among communities experiencing social exclusion. In particular, there was significant interest in WRAP Seminar 2 (facilitator training).
- It is essential to have a structured application process for WRAP Seminar 2 to ensure that those who complete the training are committed to delivering WRAP Seminar 1 among their own communities/groups. In the case of this project, this was successfully achieved.

Next Steps

Feedback received during, and at the end of the 2018 phase of the project, reinforced that this was a relevant and rewarding project for our target groups. Not only have 44 individuals acquired new tools to manage their own mental health, but 18 individuals are now preparing to deliver that same training among their own communities/community groups.

The 18 newly certified WRAP community facilitators will now be paired into 9 teams of co-facilitators. In 2019, they will receive mentoring from WRAP Advanced Level Facilitators as they plan and commence delivery of WRAP Seminar 1 in their own communities/target groups. Overtime, it is hoped that some of the newly accredited WRAP Facilitators will apply to do WRAP Seminar 3 and become accredited to train more community facilitators, thereby extending the reach and potential impact of this successful mental health support.



Newly accredited WRAP community facilitators