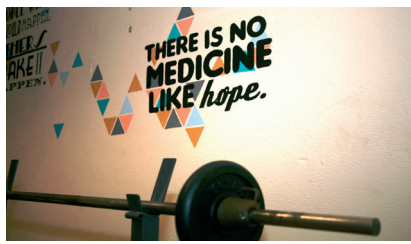


Simon Clients Race to the Finish Line

Dublin Simon Community clients were delighted to be invited to take part in RTE's Operation Transformation 5km run in Cork on Saturday 2nd February. After an early start at 6am, the group all successfully completed the run and were very proud of their achievement. The run was the culmination of the journey Simon Rehabilitation clients had undergone since January, taking part in nutrition and fitness programmes organised by the Health and Wellbeing service which coincided with the airing of the show on RTÉ One.

Continuing their fitness journey, on Sunday 6th April a team of six runners from Simon took part in the Great Ireland 10km Run in the Phoenix Park. The team consisted of runners from Rehabilitation, Aftercare, Property Development and Health and Wellbeing. Following on from the success of the 5km run in Cork, the participants had trained hard to increase their endurance in order to tackle this testing 10km course. The team were amongst 8,000 others tackling the difficult mix of hills and winding roads towards a finish of cheering crowds. The weeks of hard training and preparation paid off as all six runners completed the course with impressive times.



Sam's Welcome



"There is no medicine like hope, no incentive so great and no tonic so powerful as the expectation of something better tomorrow.*"

For many people who end up sleeping on our streets, in emergency accommodation or have lost their home, before they know it their existence is defined by the situation they have found themselves in. Homelessness makes you sick, both in body and in mind. Passers-by turn their heads away, nobody will make eye contact, until one day this "homeless person" has lost their identity, with little or no sense of self worth or link to what makes them who they are. They are just another statistic or another sleeping bag.

Our job at Simon is to repair and rebuild the person – someone's brother or sister, daughter or son, mother or father.

There are many things that define who we are in our community. Our relationships and connections with family or friends play a huge part, as do our passions, interests and talents that are unique and special.

We support people down the long road out of homelessness. It is our challenge and pleasure to

help people rediscover themselves and their talents, re-engaging who they were before life's struggles left them without an identity and a place to call home.

The Simon Community empower people to find their way back. While we provide housing, support and recovery we also treat those feelings of worthlessness, loneliness and isolation. Our personal development programmes play a crucial part in this. Initiatives like Learning and Development, Client Involvement and Health and Wellbeing give people the opportunities and knowledge, and for some, re-ignite passions that they had long forgotten.

Having the skills to take care of body and mind is such a crucial first step to move on from homelessness and feelings of uselessness for good. Together with your generosity, we can continue to support the people who rely on our services, helping them secure and retain a home of their own and establish their place in the community.

Thank you for your belief and dedication to us. Your support continues to give the people who we serve belief and hope for the future and a place to belong.

*The above by Orison Swett Marden is one of many inspiring quotes that decorate the gym in our treatment services.

Simon News

Since we last updated you there have been plenty of developments across our services:

- **Our Visiting Tenancy Support service opened a Tenancy Advice Clinic in partnership with Dublin 2,4,6 Citizen's Information Service. Our Support to Live Independently service successfully moved 523 people onto independent living in 2013.**
- **We opened two new services adding 59 units to our accommodation. These included Riversdale House, providing high support housing for people who are unable to live independently, and Kilmantin Hill in Wicklow providing temporary accommodation to people currently experiencing homelessness from County Wicklow.**
- **We will soon be opening another accommodation on Clanbrassil Street which will provide seven independent housing units.**

For more information and updates on what is happening in our services please follow us on:

Health and Wellbeing Service

Dublin Simon Community's Health and Wellbeing service was established in 2012 and aims to promote and encourage healthy practices in the fields of exercise, nutrition and relaxation amongst those who access our services.

The service is also involved in supporting client participation in Dublin Simon Community events throughout the year and during 2013 was involved in the Simon Cycleathon, Simon Walkathon, Community Day, Client Sports Day, the Simon Fun Run and the Simon Football Cup.

Niall Barrett from Health and Wellbeing describes the benefits for people accessing Simon services and explains how he adapts the programmes depending on the type of service, clients or residents involved.

"As the services in Dublin Simon Community can be quite varied, I tailor my work to meet the differing requirements and take suggestions from clients, staff and volunteers."

Housing Services

"Each week I deliver boxing classes and relaxation groups to the clients in our Housing services, both in Emergency Accommodation and Supported Housing. As some of the residents in our Supported Housing are slightly older, we focus on relaxation

activities and lower impact exercise.

"Supported Housing offers long-term accommodation, so I have been able to build working relationships with clients. Weekly visits from Health and Wellbeing can have enormous benefits on a social level as well as for health, as many clients enjoy having a chat while they are exercising.

"As our Emergency Accommodation is short-term, for these clients the main goal is to ignite an interest in health and exercise that they can pursue once they move on."

Treatment Services

"In Treatment services we often encounter much younger clients who, when in recovery, have renewed energy and want to learn to spend their time in a productive way. After experiencing homelessness and addiction, many clients wish to find activities to move their lives forward and exercise is such a positive way to do this. For many of these people sport and higher intensity activities such as boxing and weight training are very popular.

"I also vary my approach for those who are going through our three week Detoxification programme, compared to clients who are further along the path to recovery in Rehabilitation. For many, the first week

or two in Detox is a time for much needed rest, so activities are lower in impact, like going for walks.

"Our bodies have remarkable recuperative powers so once they move onto the Rehab programme many of the clients wish to increase their level of exercise and theory classes to reflect their improved state of body and mind. If someone has just started in Rehab they have the opportunity to work with me for three months, so we put a plan in place to see their health, strength and fitness progress.

Training Sessions

"I hold group sessions each week in Detox, Rehab and the Stabilisation/Respite service. These groups vary between practical and theory, usually focussing on nutrition, anatomy, exercise, stress management and improving sleep.

"We also have a very well equipped gym in Ushers Island, where our Treatment services are based, so I do a large amount of personal training for residents as well as with those who visit for their Aftercare programmes.

"For many, exercise can become a hobby that can aid recovery. As well as relieving stress, exercise can also be an invaluable social outlet. Each week we play football in the park, something that many clients come back to join once they have completed their Treatment programmes."

Benefits

"The main benefit of the Health and Wellbeing service is developing confidence, a confidence that was sadly lost through years of addiction, relationship breakdown or whatever their reason for becoming homeless. There are also many, positive knock on effects of exercise and many people say they've cut down on smoking or they are eating much better. I think team activities really work and give people a chance to be part of something again.

"The service helps people regain and retain a positive attitude towards other things that are going on in their life. The Health and Wellbeing programme gives people the courage and self-belief to move forward."

Leave something behind for those society has left behind.

"The mark of a man's success is not the wealth he leaves behind him when he dies, it's what he bequeaths to society while he is alive."

By thinking of Dublin Simon Community in your will, you will make a vital difference to the thousands of vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. Bequests left to Dublin Simon Community have been enormously beneficial to providing all our services from housing to outreach, to our treatment services and make a lasting, personal difference to people who are homeless.

If you would like to remember us in your will or

would like further information about Dublin Simon Community and the people we help, please contact Carmel Dunne in confidence on **(01) 671 5551**. Alternatively you can write to Dublin Simon Community, 1-2 Cope Street, Dublin 2 or go to www.dubsimon.ie.

*Attributed to Tommy (RIP), client of Simon services.



Operation Transformation at Simon

To coincide with the airing of Operation Transformation on RTÉ One, Dublin Simon Community's Health and Wellbeing service promoted healthy habits amongst clients accessing the Residential Alcohol Treatment and Recovery services in Ushers Island. The aim of the programme was to encourage healthier eating habits and exercise routines so that these would continue throughout the year and contribute to successful recoveries from addiction.

Commitments and Goals

Commitments and goals were offered for clients to choose from. Once people signed up they were given extra help with their goals from Niall in Health and Wellbeing, and were assigned personalised gym programmes. Staff and volunteers throughout the organisation got behind the clients, with many taking on nutrition plans and healthy habits.

Activities

To compliment this, personal training sessions and group exercise classes were held each week as well as group walks and healthy eating workshops such as a smoothie making classes. The Simon Learning and Development service also held weekly self motivation classes with clients to work on their goals and evaluate their progress. Many of the participants said that the main motivating factor was taking part with other people and group spirit was encouraged to help everyone feel involved.

Success

Moving on from homelessness and going through treatment can be a very difficult time in people's lives and the opportunity to focus energies in a productive and positive way helps make the process easier, ultimately encouraging new habits that will help them establish a healthy lifestyle once they move on from Simon services into a place of their own. The programme was a great success, with clients indicating benefits such as an increase in confidence, more energy, sleeping better, more awareness of health and feeling more motivated and alert.

"It's changing the way I feel about myself and making me believe I can achieve better for myself."

"It has made a positive impact on my life and gave me the kick start to do something I have wanted to do for a long time."

"I think it's been really positive and eating fruit has now become a habit. It is empowering to make small changes and I will try to make further changes as a result."

"People who want to start a new life should start thinking about healthy food and exercise."



Daniel's Story

Daniel first came into contact with Dublin Simon Community when he accessed our treatment services. He has since become a volunteer with Health and Wellbeing and recently started a job as an assistant chef in our supported housing.

"I came to Dublin Simon Community two years ago when I went through the Detox programme. I struggled with addiction for many years and had gone through a lot in my personal life, so I decided it was time to move forward. Following the programme I went onto Rehab and Aftercare.

"Initially when I came to Detox I didn't know if I would get through it and then I met Niall from Health and Wellbeing. I did boxing years ago and Niall helped me get back into it. It gave me the confidence to think - "Yes, I can do this." When I moved onto Aftercare we made a plan for me to keep it up and come back every week."

Volunteering

"About nine months ago roles for volunteering came up and I was delighted to become a volunteer with Health and Wellbeing. It took off from there and has been one of the best things I've done in my life. I've organised football matches and our team won the annual Simon Community tournament. We have taken part in events, walks, runs and play football every Friday. I've learnt a lot working with Niall. I can facilitate my own groups and I also do classes on healthy eating".

Developing Motivation

"When going through treatment it is important to have motivation and that's what we focus on. We

give people that motivation and let them know they can do it. Health and Wellbeing gives you the ability to say - "I'm healthy, I'm strong." That's what it gave me. It's just great to feel the way I feel now, compared to two years ago. One of the main things that helped me is having the supports all the way through. I am still working with Niall, now focussing more on nutrition and I recently started as an assistant chef out in Riversdale House.

"If I can do it, anyone can! Especially after the things I've gone through in my life. I recently did my CV for the first time. I've never had one in my life and now it's full, front and back. I can't believe the amount of stuff I have done and all the training I've had - it's overwhelming! I couldn't have done it without the support of Simon and my keyworker. That's one thing that I'm able to do is speak about what I've come through. I'm loving it."

Make Your Donation Work Harder

Setting up a Direct Debit allows Dublin Simon Community to plan for the future. It enables us to start new projects and develop new initiatives with greater confidence and assist people experiencing homelessness. It is extremely valuable to us in terms of long-term provision and ultimately helps get more people out of homelessness.

To set up a Direct Debit is very simple. Contact us on (01) 671 5551 and we will send you a form to fill out and return to us. We'll do the rest. Please also note that setting up a monthly gift of €21 or more will

mean that Dublin Simon can also claim the tax back on your total donations for the year. If you are able to set up a Direct Debit or make any donation you can afford, we can put it to work where it is needed most. For further information please log onto www.dubsimon.ie.

88% of all our income goes directly towards our homeless services.

The remaining goes on raising funds and support services.



Simon Supper Challenge

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney, TD, joined key players from the food industry to celebrate the success of the Simon Community's 'Food for Simon' initiative. The event took place at, and was sponsored by, Zaragoza Restaurant, South William Street, in January.

Master of ceremonies, RTÉ's Bryan Dobson, marked the impressive milestone of €1 million cost saving that the Food for Simon programme has generated for the Simon Community, since it was launched in 2009. The initiative encourages companies to donate food, services and other essential items, which would usually be purchased by the Simon Community to maintain and run its homeless services.

As part of the evening three participants were challenged to prepare meals using ingredients typically supplied through the Food for Simon programme in a master chef inspired 'Simon Supper Challenge'. Three Food for Simon supporters and novice chefs, Mairead Butler from Rabobank, Pádraig McKeon, Simon Board Member and Communications Consultant and Nigel Ward from Valeo Foods took up the challenge and cooked up a storm in the kitchen. Minister Coveney, Michael Carey, founder of Food for Simon and Kelly Crowley, Simon Fundraising Manager tasted each dish and awarded the winner, Mairead Butler, with the Simon Supper Challenge Trophy. Following the cook off, the floor was opened up to debate on the importance of the food sector being socially responsible with the three judges, Food for Simon companies and guests.



#BeyGood for Simon

Dublin Simon Community were delighted to be chosen again this year by Beyoncé as her charity partner for the Dublin dates of her Mrs Carter Show World Tour in March. Concert goers had the chance to be upgraded by donating clothing, toiletries and other items for Simon Services.

Beyoncé and her team also kindly donated VIP tickets to be auctioned. We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of support received and were delighted to raise over €13,000 and over 170 bags of clothing and other items. These donations are extremely important to the people who rely on us, as we always ensure that we can provide clothing and other essential items to help people accessing our services, from when they first arrive at the door; often with nothing.

Dublin Simon Community were also delighted to have Beyoncé's #BeyGood team visit Ushers Island and learn about Simon's Treatment, Recovery, Health and Wellbeing services.



To get your company involved contact details are as follows:

Web: www.dubsimon.ie

Tel: 1850 462 462

Email: corporate@dubsimon.ie

Fundraise for Simon

Simon Bag Pack

Thank you to everyone who took part in the nationwide Simon Bag Pack on April 4th! We were delighted to have dedicated teams of volunteers helping shoppers while raising much needed funds for our local services across Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. Thank you to everyone who made a donation with our volunteers on the day. With your help we strive to expand and develop our services to meet the ever increasing demand.

Dates for the Diary

June 2nd Flora Women's Mini Marathon

Sign Up For Simon! We are calling all ladies to join the Dublin Simon Community Women's Mini Marathon Team on June 2nd. By challenging yourself to take part this year you will help the people who rely on our services to reach their full potential and begin their journey out of homelessness.

October 4th Simon Fun Run

A Silly Run for a Serious Cause! The annual Simon Fun Run is the longest running charity event in the Phoenix Park and a fantastic opportunity to bring us together to support people who are homeless or at risk. The community's participation and support helps us to provide vital services to those most in need and enable them to move to a place they can call home.

October 27th Dublin Marathon

Challenge yourself to take part in aid of Dublin Simon Community in the 35th year of the Dublin Marathon. This year we are also looking for people to challenge themselves to take part in other running events or outdoor activities in aid of us. From walks, to cycles, to hikes, you are invited to take up the challenge and help stamp out homelessness with Dublin Simon Community.

For further information on the above activities contact details are as follows:

Web: www.dubsimon.ie

Tel: (01) 671 5551

Email: fundraising@dubsimon.ie

Sign your name to help us claim...

With your help we can reclaim the tax on your donations and continue to provide services to those who need it most.

If you are a PAYE or self-assessed tax payer and have given €250 or more in the course of a tax year, Dublin Simon Community can reclaim the tax paid on your donations. Claiming this tax back for Dublin Simon applies to one-off donations or separate instalments in a given tax year, such as monthly donations. If you have not yet received your tax form for 2013 please contact us and we can arrange this for you.

Tax relief on donations to Dublin Simon Community means that we can now make your generosity go even further to help people who are homeless.

Please call (01) 671 5551 for more information or email fundraising@dubsimon.ie

