

Building capacity for excellence in service provision for people with disabilities

EPR European Pillar of Social Rights day: Inclusive Education

27th June 2019

Rehab Group, Dublin, Ireland

Report

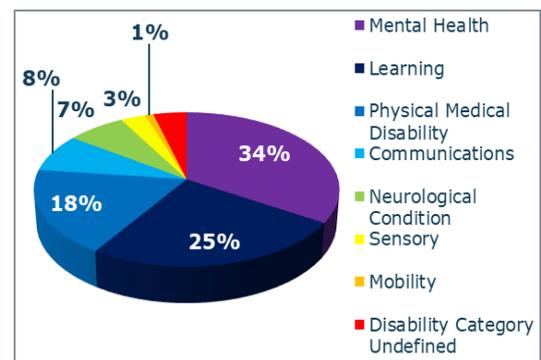
The day started with coffee tea and scones made by students at Roslyn Park College's Catering Training Course. Cathy Moore, Head of Public Affairs and Advocacy at Rehab, chaired the meeting.



Different representatives of Rehab Group then presented their Inclusive Education / VET services. Eoin Salley, Head of Business Foundation, Roslyn Park, National Learning Network (NLN) started.

First of all there was a general introduction to Rehab and its services across Ireland. Quality is important for them and they take an integrated approach, as well as using various optional certification systems, including EQUASS. They provide accredited courses.

They have their own e-learning system which helps students with different needs and learning styles follow and catch up on courses. They work with students with very varied needs; from the long-term unemployed to addiction recovery. It also supports their rolling induction process, with students being able to start at any time in the year. This was a hard model to implement initially but now works successfully, facilitating students' learning at any point in the year. He explained their process of induction and support for each student, which addresses many dimensions



Suzanne McCarthy, Senior Education Psychologist, NLN Introduced their Learning and Assessment Services. They support both learners and teachers in partnership with a growing number of mainstream colleges and universities in Ireland. Many students experience difficulties due to undiagnosed needs, and need more support than those with a diagnosis. They offer a test and support services to help students learn once needs are identified, using the concept of Universal Design for Learning. Empowerment and self-management are some of the outcomes of the service.

They participated in research about mental health support¹ and dyslexia support² among others [see PPT for more information]

Mr Salley then took participants on a Tour of Roslyn Park College, with the opportunity to speak to teachers and students. Participants heard about an upcoming Comicon organised at Rehab by the students, where hundreds of people were expected on the college premises.

Participants then had lunch in the college canteen, prepared by students.

EPSR members' exchange session



Astangu then presented their courses and support services to mainstream education; Piret Polly and Marju Manniksaar. They work with various disabilities and provide 6 pre-vocational courses with a special post-TBI course and 5 vocational training courses. They support students to find and sustain work on the open labour market. They also have cooperation agreements with mainstream education providers and basic schools.

Laura Jones from EPR presented firstly EPR and its activities, as many participants were new to EPR. She then explained the European Pillar of Social Rights and how it connected to the topics discussed during the day [PPT presentation available] and what EPR has done on the topic so far.

She explained that the Pillar should help bring social issues higher up the political agenda, and highlight the importance of support services. This can be useful for organisations in their political work. The EPSR states: *Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market.*

Participants were asked if they knew the pillar (none did) and what challenges they experience to implement the inclusive education principle & potential practice and policy solutions in the field of people with disabilities. Chair-Cathy Moore chaired the discussion.

Challenges

- Managing funds from many different sources for similar or interlinked services.
- Lack of specialist support staff
- Wrong or lack of diagnoses of disabilities
- Poor social skills of students
- Prejudices of society
- "Overprotective" parents, or family with low expectations



Recommendations

Funding support must be available for:

- Multidisciplinary teams
- Service providers to develop partnerships with companies
- Specialised services and staff to support students and teachers in mainstream settings, using the expertise of special schools
- Promoting entry into special needs support-related professions and their training
- Diagnosing all students with learning difficulties; services with expertise to support students with all kinds of needs



This event has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

¹ <https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/free/Mental-Health-Matters-%20Online.pdf>

² https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/journal/Issue2_journal.pdf