

Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan



Annual Report 2018

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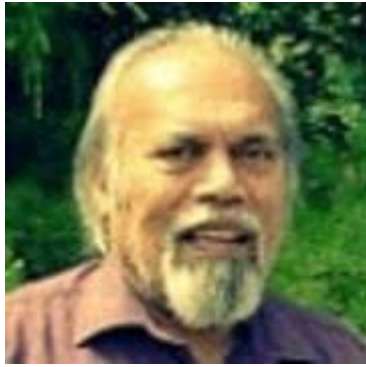
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CHAIRMANS'S REPORT 2018

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Annual Report for The Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre Sligo, Leitrim & West Cavan. This report reflects our work and activities for the year 2018, another successful and eventful year for us in terms of development.

I firstly wish to recognise the valuable resource that are our committed volunteers and staff, without whom we would not be in any position to deliver our much needed support services for survivors of Sexual Violence in Sligo Leitrim and West Cavan.

2018 saw the continued growth and development of the organisation. We continued to implement our strategic objectives which focused on the further extension of our counselling service throughout our catchment area, with a focus on outreach work firstly in Leitrim, namely in the Beepark Centre in Manorhamilton and also in Carrick on Shannon. We hope to extend services on a more permanent basis in Leitrim in 2019, and in Cavan in 2020. We continued to strengthen our governance systems and the employment of a full-time CEO (Trish Flynn) in 2017 has allowed us to plan ahead with a view to developing the service for the future. 2018 also saw two major fundraisers take place including the Vintage Tea Party in February, closely followed by the inaugural Gatsby Ball in September. This brought much colour to the social scene of Sligo and raised thousands of euro for our volunteer counselling service. My gratitude goes to our hard working fundraising volunteers who sold the tickets and equally to the generosity of the general public in the region who attended our events and made them such a success. A thank you also to the six members of the Band **"Fields"** who performed on the night without charge at the Gatsby Ball.

I also want to take the opportunity to express our gratitude to our partners in TUSLA for the continued support that they have provided for our work. They funded additional counselling hours in our region in 2018 and are committed to continuing this support going forward. We will continue to campaign to them to support our clients with improved funding and resources which enables us in turn to improve services for those people who look to us for support.

I sincerely wish to thank all of our counsellors, staff and volunteers, as well as our other team members for the spirit with which they all execute the work of the organisation. I extend my thanks to our Board members both new and longstanding

for their support and commitment to the organisation and I wish to welcome Helen Barr and Bernie Linnane to the Board.

Dr. Parvez A. Butt

Introduction and Context

There are adults everywhere who have experienced some form of sexual violence either as a child or adult. The unacceptability of sexual violence and the devastating effects of such traumatic experiences have long been recognised by the Rape Crisis Movement, resulting in Rape Crisis Centres being set up to address both the needs of survivors of sexual violence and the causes of sexual violence in our society.

The Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre was originally established in Sligo in 1996 as a local response to sexual violence within the region. Our geographical remit is essentially the regions of Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan. However, people do not have to live in these areas to access our services. The Centre is a member of the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland, and remains dedicated to the ethos of the network and the supportive environment it creates for members.

How we work

The Centre provides a safe and confidential space for survivors of child sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault. Here, adults and young people can explore and access help with the legacy of issues resulting from their traumatic experiences. The centre provides a non-directive service where survivors are treated with respect and empowered throughout their counselling process. This process is underpinned by the belief that everyone has the inner capacity and resources to move towards change and well being. We believe that no matter what the circumstances sexual violence is never the survivor's fault, the perpetrator is always solely responsible for their actions. All of our counselling and support services are also available to survivor's families, friends and concerned others.

Our Vision

Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre will tackle the hurt, heal the trauma, and ensure justice for victims of sexual violence in its catchment area.

Our Mission

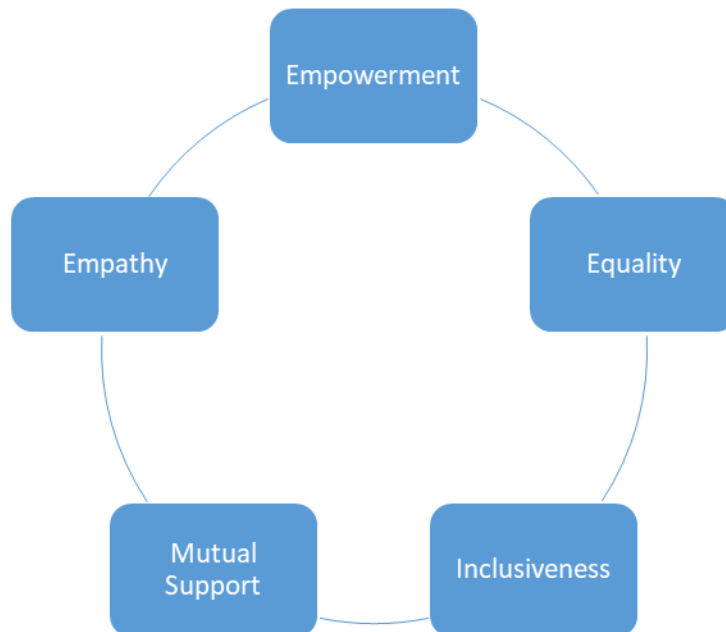
Our purpose is to create a safe place for those who have experienced sexual violence, recently or in the past, through providing a fully resourced professional counselling and advocacy service.

Our Principles

- We believe that sexual violence in all its forms is an abuse of human rights and should never be accepted.
- We guarantee professionalism and ethical practice in our centre and for our clients.

- Our systems and practices demonstrate integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- We ensure clients, volunteers and staff are treated with respect and dignity.
- We take a proactive approach in the area of sexual violence; providing education on the dynamics behind sexual violence, the effects upon survivors and society's reactions.

Our Values



What we do

We provide the following services:

- Crisis counselling
- Ongoing face to face counselling
- Outreach counselling
- Free phone helpline
- Support, advocacy and information for survivors.
- Relationship counselling
- Survivors support group
- Group work and self development
- Counselling, support and information for supporters of survivors
- Hospital, court, GP, Garda accompaniment
- Education, training and awareness-raising
- Lobbying and influencing policy on relevant issues through the Rape Crisis Network Ireland
- Networking, experience and information sharing with other relevant voluntary and statutory organisations.

Who we are

Directors

The following members were appointed and retained as Directors during 2018

Parvez Butt (Chair)
Sharon Conway (Secretary)
Kate Duke (Treasurer)
Suzanne Donnelly
Helen Barr
Bernie Linnane

The following members resigned as directors in 2018:

Karen O'Shea, Laura Freeman and Anne Farrington.

Volunteers

Margaret Thermes
Suzanne Connolly
Cathy Ham
Josephine Duffy
Rosemary McWeeney
Sharon Conway
Paul Harte
Aideen Laverty
Andrea Best
Josette Newman
Syliva Farkasovska
Nneka Cummings

Staff

CEO	:	Trish Flynn
Counselling Coordinator	:	Gilla Cornelius
Administrator/Counsellor	:	Elaine Hanson
Counsellor	:	Tina Horton
Outreach counsellor	:	Ursula Devaney

CEO Report

The centre delivered over xxxxxx hours of face to face counselling as well as a host of other client and supporter services. The centre is core funded by TUSLA and more than 50% of our counselling services in 2018 were delivered by unpaid volunteers.

The counselling output of the centre continued to increase during 2018 as a whole and has enabled us to consider the further future development of our counselling outreach services in south Sligo, West Cavan and County Leitrim.

Our Strategic Plan 2017-2020 is currently operational. We are committed to continuously reviewing and refining our service provision and operation.

All of our staff have undergone the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland Training and the vast majority of our counsellors have further training, many with post graduate qualifications.

Almost all of our counsellors are accredited with IACP, BACP or IHIP or equivalent. In addition all of them are trained with RCNI and hold their accreditation.

The Centre is a member of the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The Centre is committed to providing regular continuing professional development training to its counsellors in order to continue to provide a competent, professional service.

By 2020, all counsellors working in the centre will be fully accredited and all trainees will be under the supervision of fully accredited counsellors.

Outreach Counselling Centres

In 2018 we continued our provision of Face to Face Outreach Counselling in Carrick-on-Shannon. The Outreach service gives service users access to all of the counselling and support services offered from our main centre in Sligo.

During 2018 we provided approximately four appointments in Carrick on Shannon every week, and two in Manorhamilton, This represents a significant step towards providing counselling and support services throughout our catchment area of Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan. Additional investment by TUSLA will enable us to improve our outreach facilities and is an important part of our development plan for 2019.

Volunteer Activity

Volunteer involvement ranges from provision of face to face therapy, helpline cover, directorship, fundraising, awareness raising, training and education. We have a number of volunteers with different skills, including client support, office skills and fundraising. These people contribute important skills and time to our operations and we are enormously grateful to them all. In 2018 we extended our volunteer services to our helpline and this has enabled us to provide additional support services via the phone to our service users.

Interagency Work

The Rape Crisis Network continues to act as a source of support, information, training and development to member rape crisis centres and is a medium through which we as a Rape Crisis Centre can influence policy and lobby for change on a national level.

We are also members of the Managers Forum which meets monthly in Dublin. We network also at a local level and are keenly aware of the importance of local connections and networks in relation to referrals and awareness raising.

We plan to extend our relationship with DVAS in 2019 through the extension of our outreach facilities in Carrick on Shannon. This is a very positive move for us, due to the high number of referrals we receive from services like DVAS.

TUSLA

In 2017 we continued our positive relationship with TUSLA the Child and Family Agency, who are our core funders. TUSLA continues to support our development and growth as a service provider.

In line with our service level agreement, a number of monitoring meetings with TUSLA were attended by us during 2018, and we are involved in ongoing consultation meetings with TUSLA around commissioning and development within the Sexual Violence sector.

Education and Awareness Raising

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Authority committed €5,800 to us for 2018 projects in the area of sexual violence training and support. We are extremely grateful for this kind of funding which enables us to training and awareness raising work. We ran two excellent courses of workshops which were well attended.

Fundraising

In 2018 we held two successful new events including a Vintage Tea Party on St. Valentines Day and our Gatsby Ball, a great Gatsby themed dinner dance attended by almost 200 people.

It was an inspirational night of very fancy dress with amazing electro-swing music, which we held in the Clayton Hotel. Joanne Neary, our chief organiser did an amazing job and we look forward to working with her again in the near future.

Evaluation

During 2018 the Board and executive continued a process of self appraisal around our role, responsibilities and effectiveness including training in the area of GDPR, Governance and Commissioning. We are fully compliant with the Governance Code, We are continuously reviewing our policies and updating them according to best practice. We are registered with the Charity Regulatory Authority (CRA) and are regularly submitting our annual reports which will bring welcome developments in accountability and governance to the charity sector.

Helpline

The free phone help line has been extended to almost full office opening hours Monday to Friday and we have trained a number of supporters to answer the calls. In 2018 TUSLA agreed to pay for an up-grade to our communications system which will streamline our phone and IT service.

Future Development

In 2018 in particular the centre would like to build stronger links through the media and social media to raise the profile of the work we do and the help that is available for people affected by sexual violence, and also to develop our community engagement strategy.

We also want to extend our outreach services into Leitrim and Cavan and to ensure that both counties get a fair share of accessible services.

Statistical Information 2018

The information in this report is compiled using the RCNI Database. The RCNI Database equips RCCs to extract data regarding use of their own local service and simultaneously equips RCNI to deliver comparable national data.

Face to Face Client Information (survivor and supporter)

The following figures refer to information about the survivors and supporters who use our face to face counselling and support services.

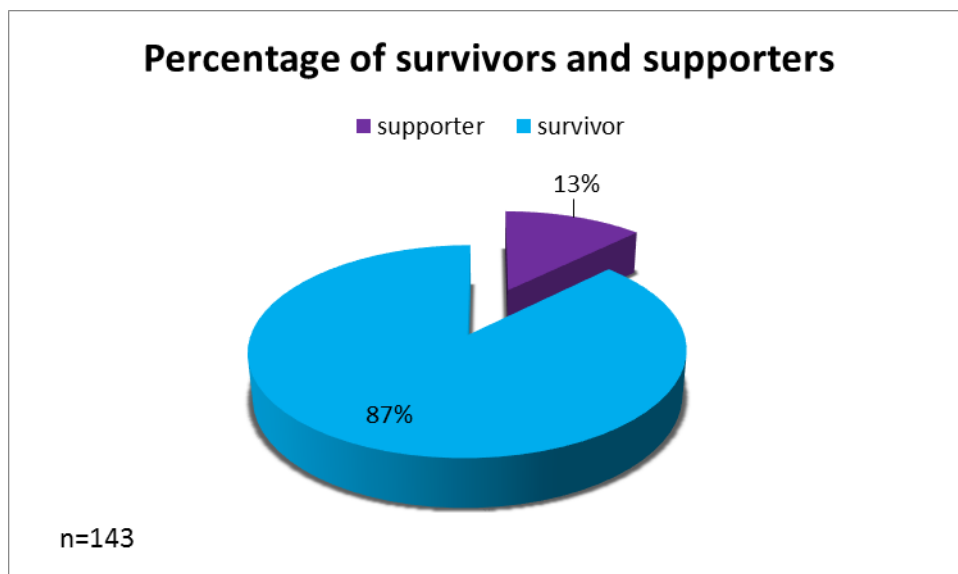


Figure 1.1 The percentage of Supporters has remained almost the same at 13% in 2018 compared with 15% in 2017

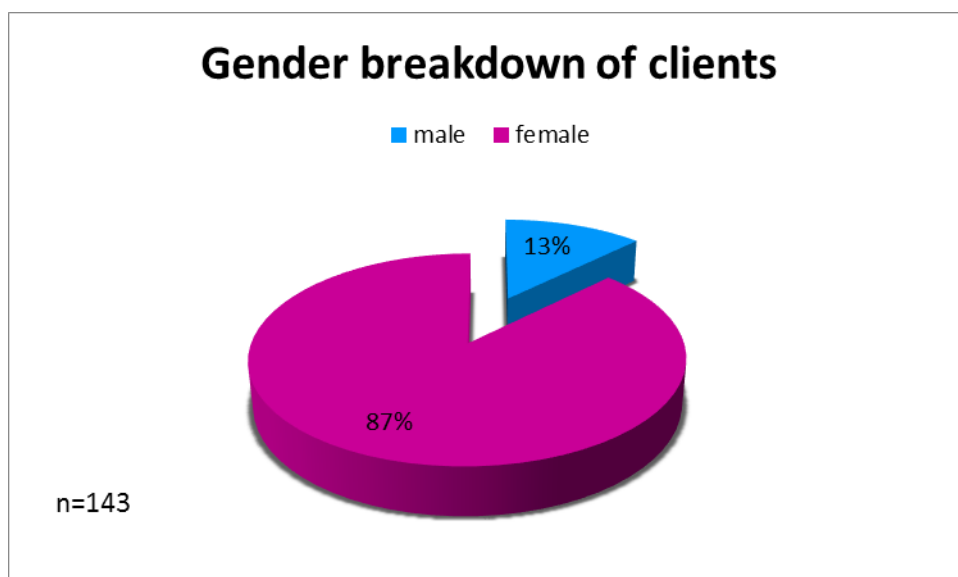


Figure 1.2. There has been a slight decrease in the number of men availing of our service from 14% in 2017 to 13% in 2018.



1.3 The percentage of clients seen by staff and volunteers remains similar to 2017.

Survivor Information

The following figures provide demographic information on the survivors accessing our face to face Services

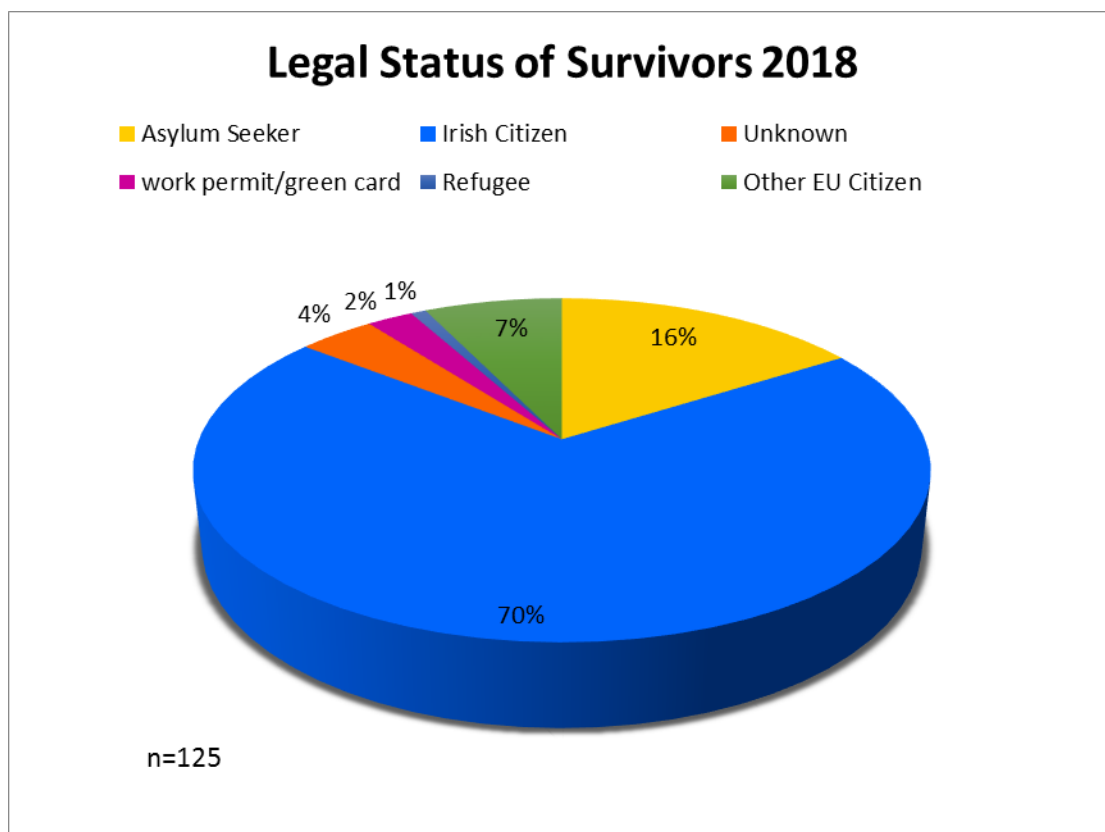


Figure 2.1 The main difference in 2018 is that the number of asylum seekers using our service has increased from 4% to 16% due to our specifically targeted group work programme during 2018

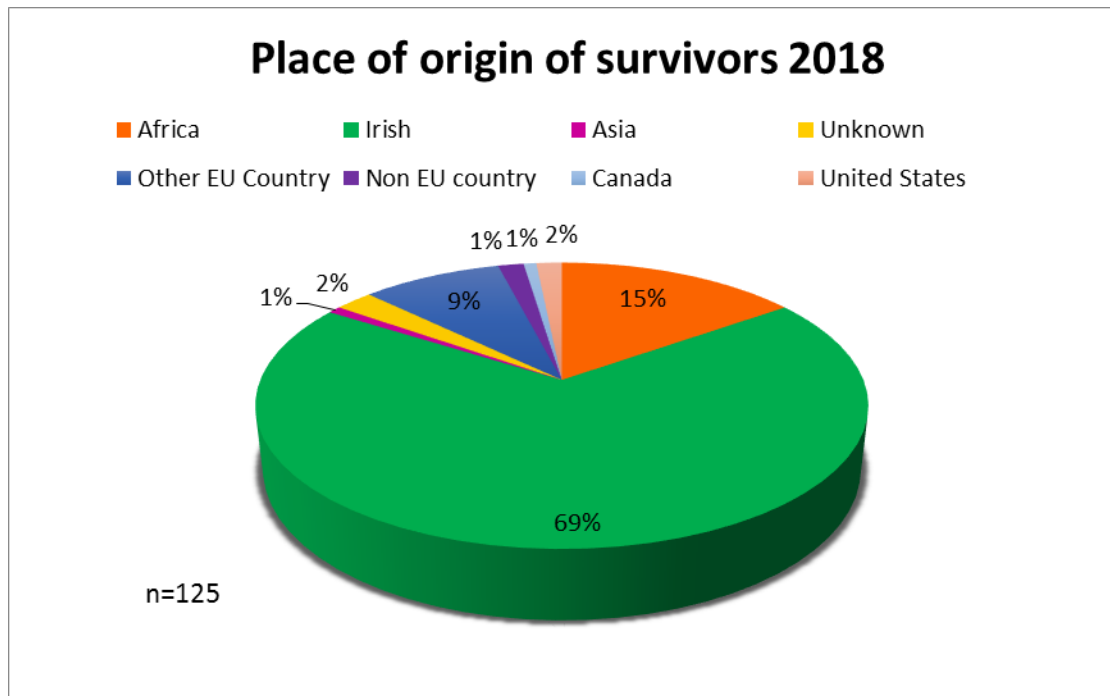


Figure 2.2 The percentage of people engaging with the service from African and Non-EU countries has increased due to our specifically targeted group work programme during 2018

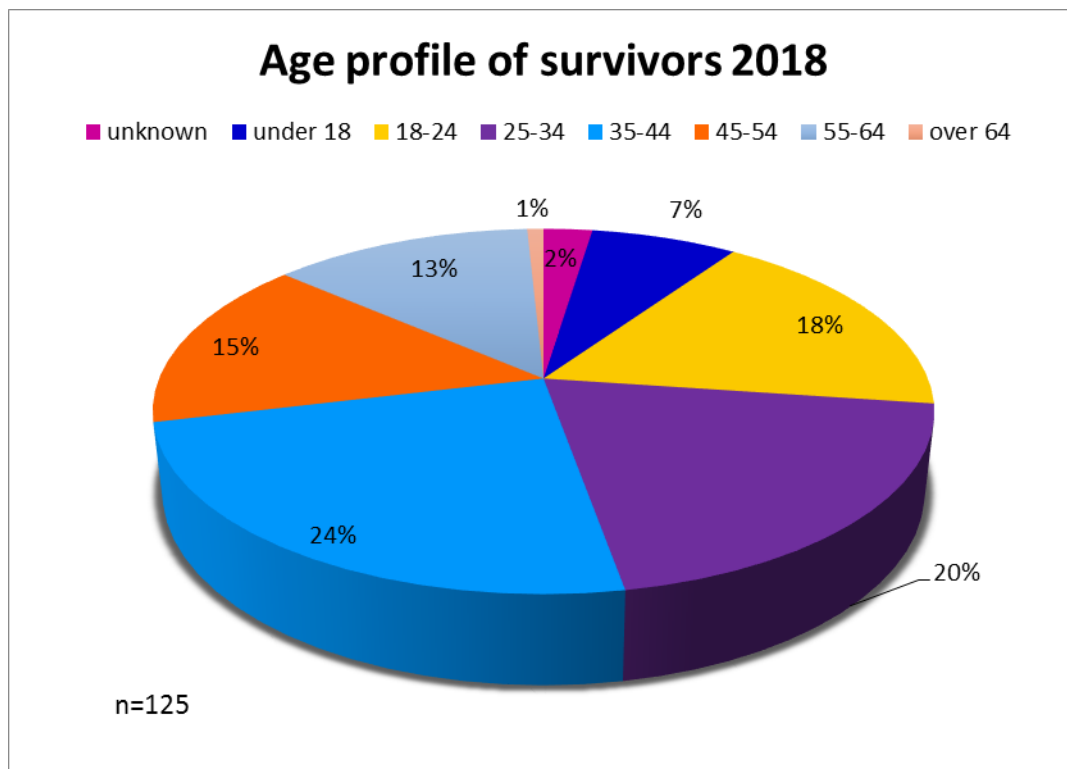


Figure 2.3 In 2018 25 % of our clients were under 24, similar to previous years.

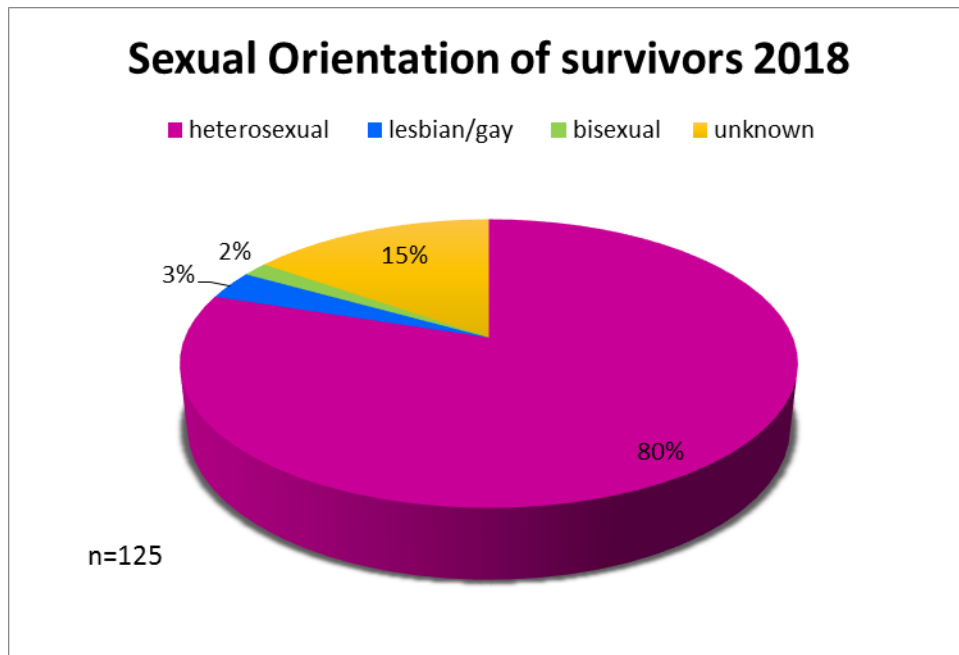


Figure 2.4 There was no substantial change in figures for 2018

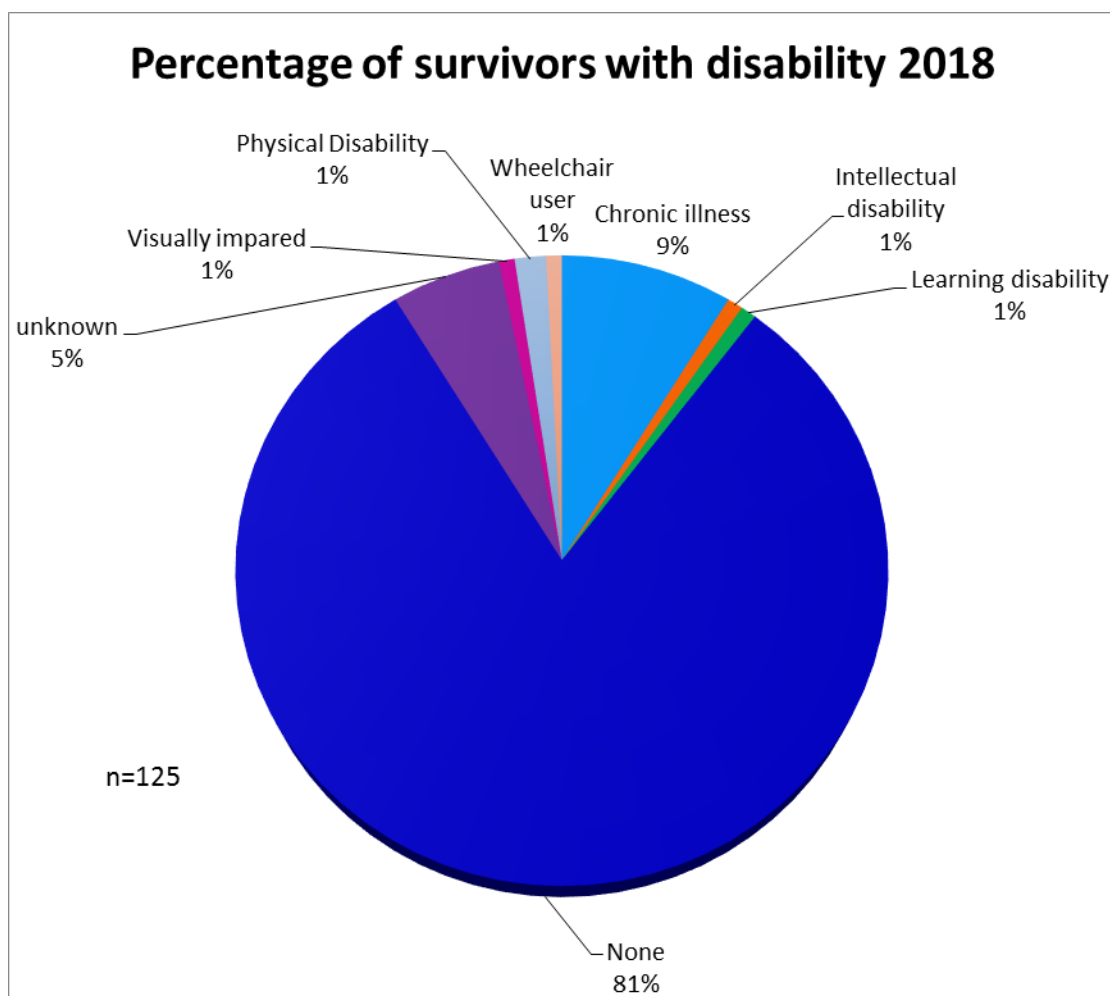


Figure 2.5 There was no substantial change in figures for 2018

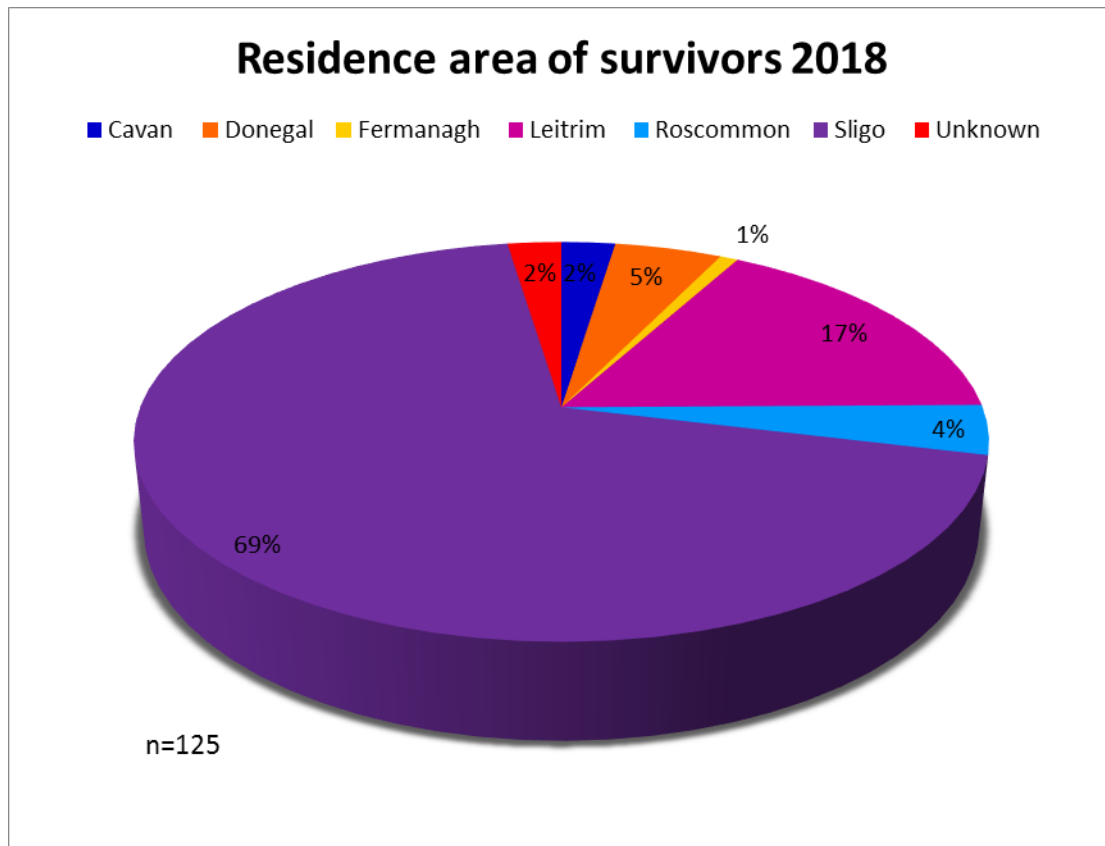


Figure 2.6 In 2018 the number of clients from Leitrim fell from 26% to 17%. However the number of counselling sessions attended in Leitrim increased by 30% in 2018.

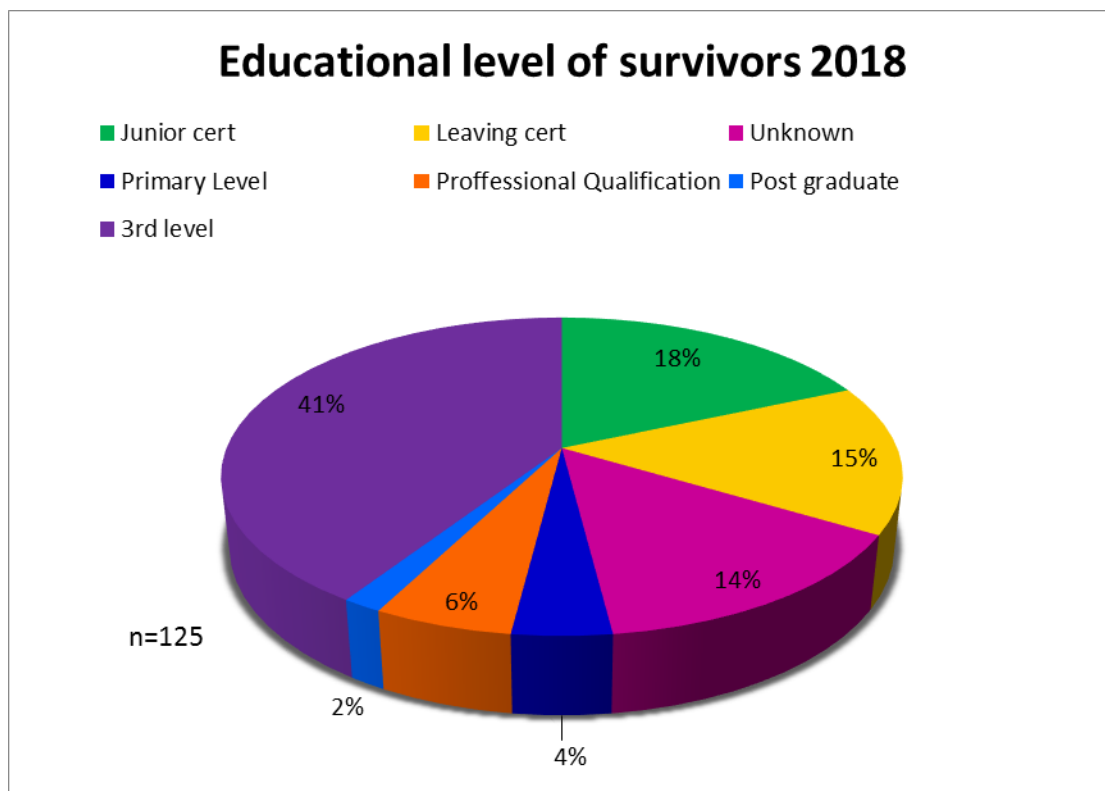


Figure 2.7

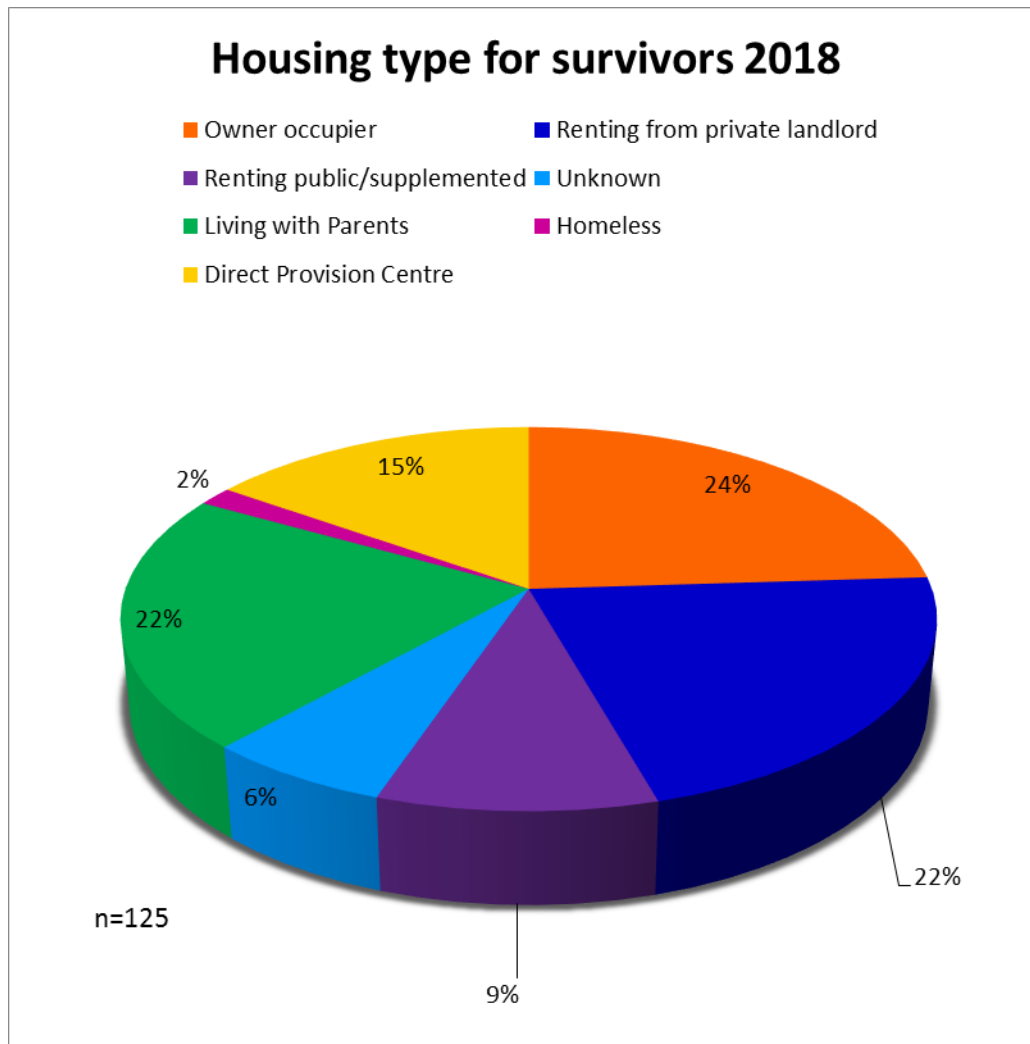


Figure 2.8 Figures 2.7 and 2.8 show that a wide cross section of our community uses our services from all educational and social economic backgrounds

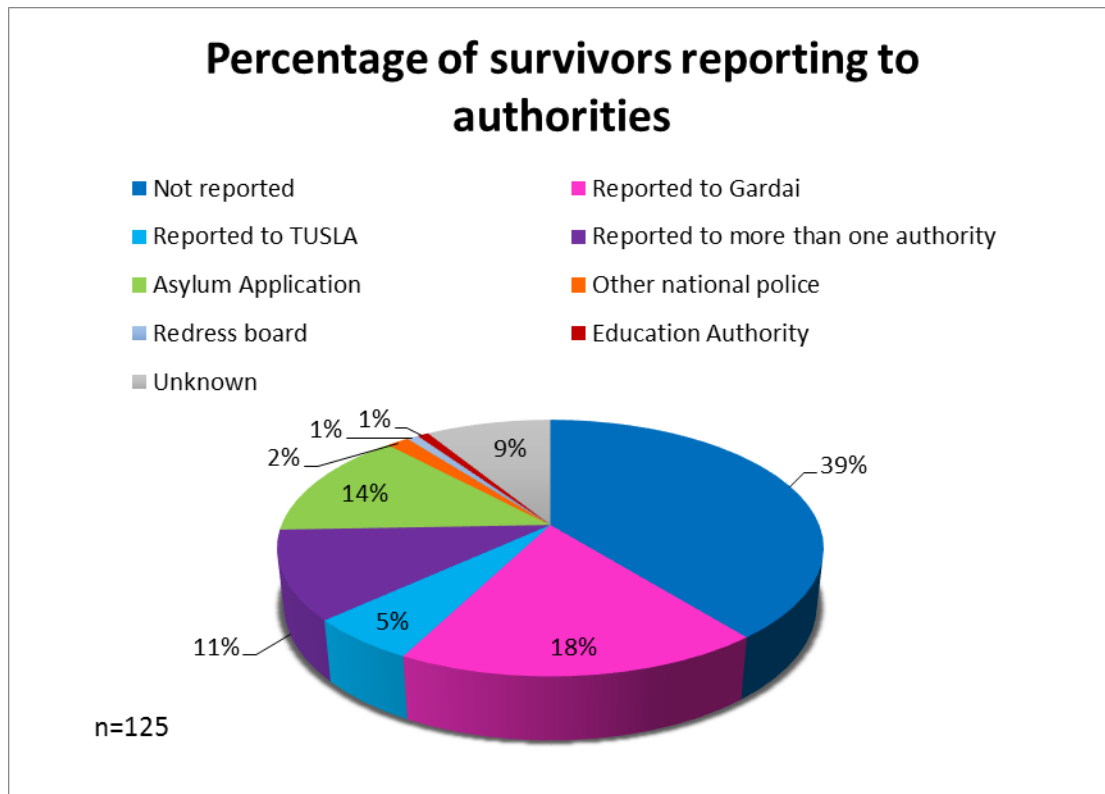


Fig 2.9 The percentage of unreported crimes of sexual violence fell from 49% in 2017 to 39% in 2018. Overall the percentage of our clients that report to the Gardai (18%) is higher than that of the general population which has a reporting rate of 10% (Sexual Violence in Ireland, 2002). Evidently the vast majority of sexual crime is not reported or not taken forward to trial and this is a situation rape crisis centres want to see changed by calling for legislative reform that makes the whole legal process an easier, quicker, more supportive and informed experience for complainants of sexual crime.

Sexual Violence Information

The following figures refer to the type of sexual violence experienced by the survivors availing of our face to face counselling and support services

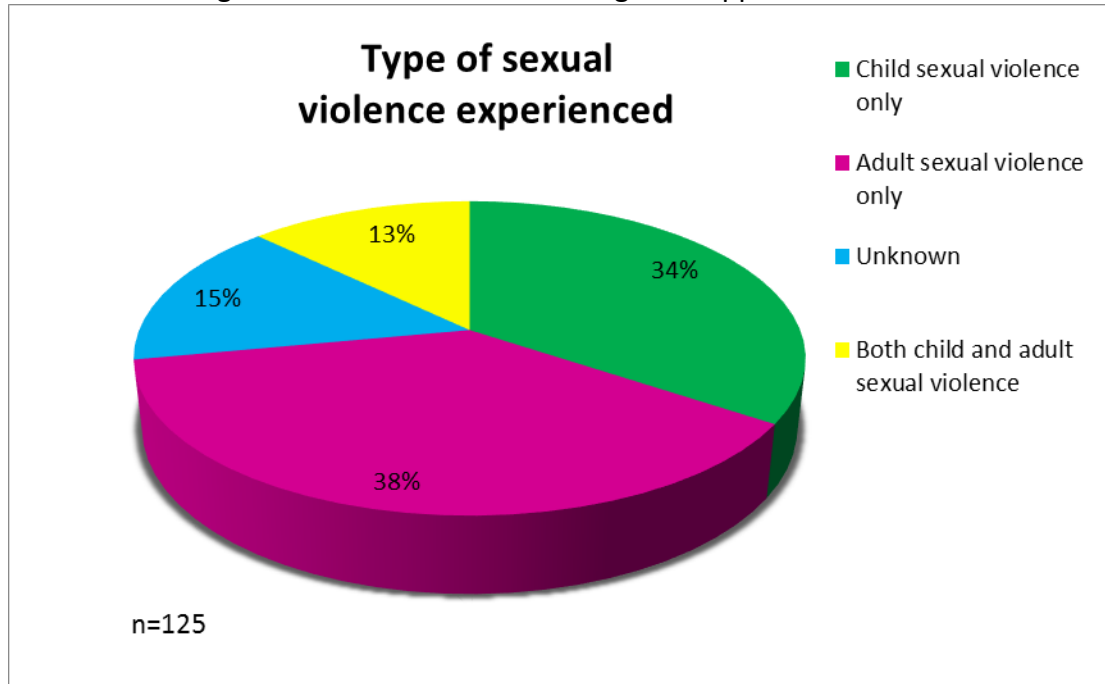


Figure 3.1 In 2018 47% of our clients had experienced child sexual abuse.

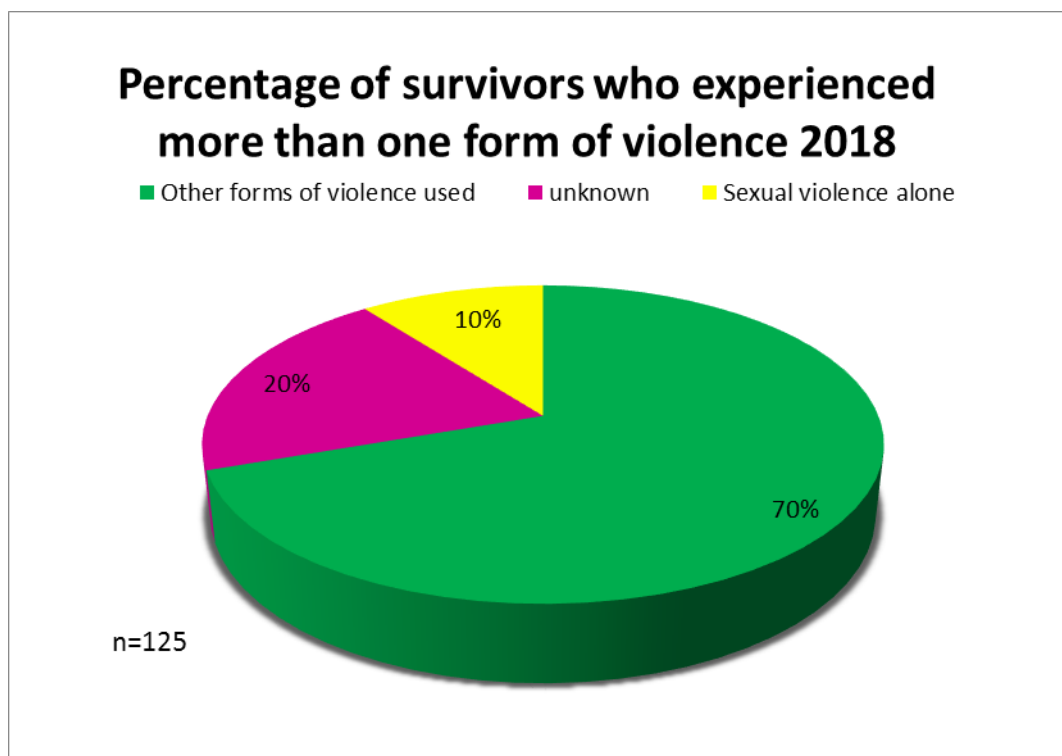


Figure 3.2 The percentage of survivors experiencing more than one form of violence remained similar to the previous year.

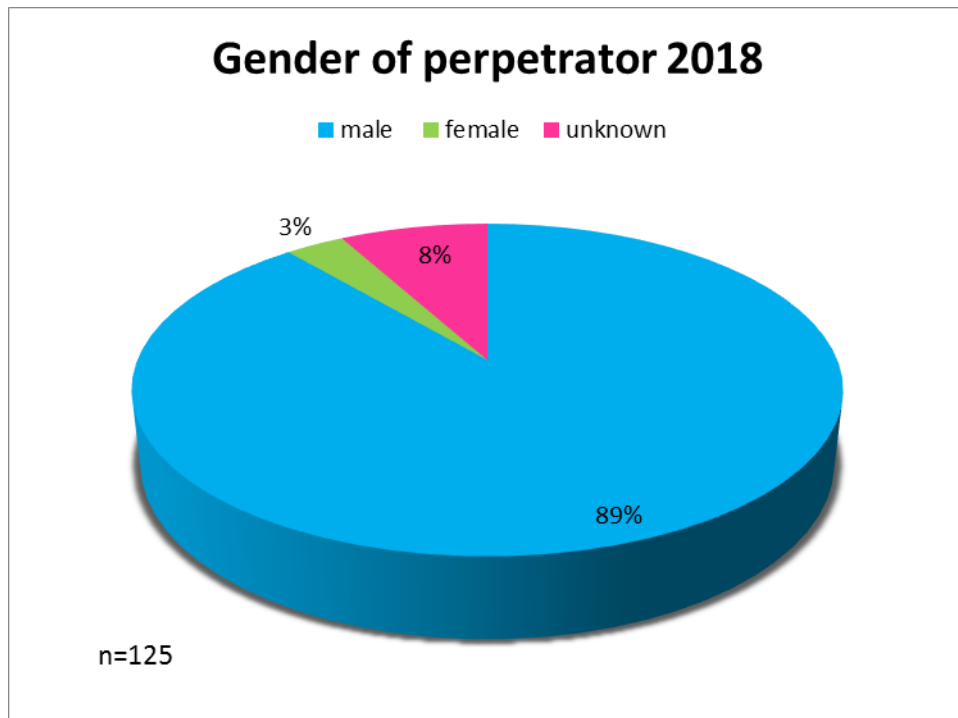


Figure 3.3 The gender profile of perpetrators remains similar to previous years

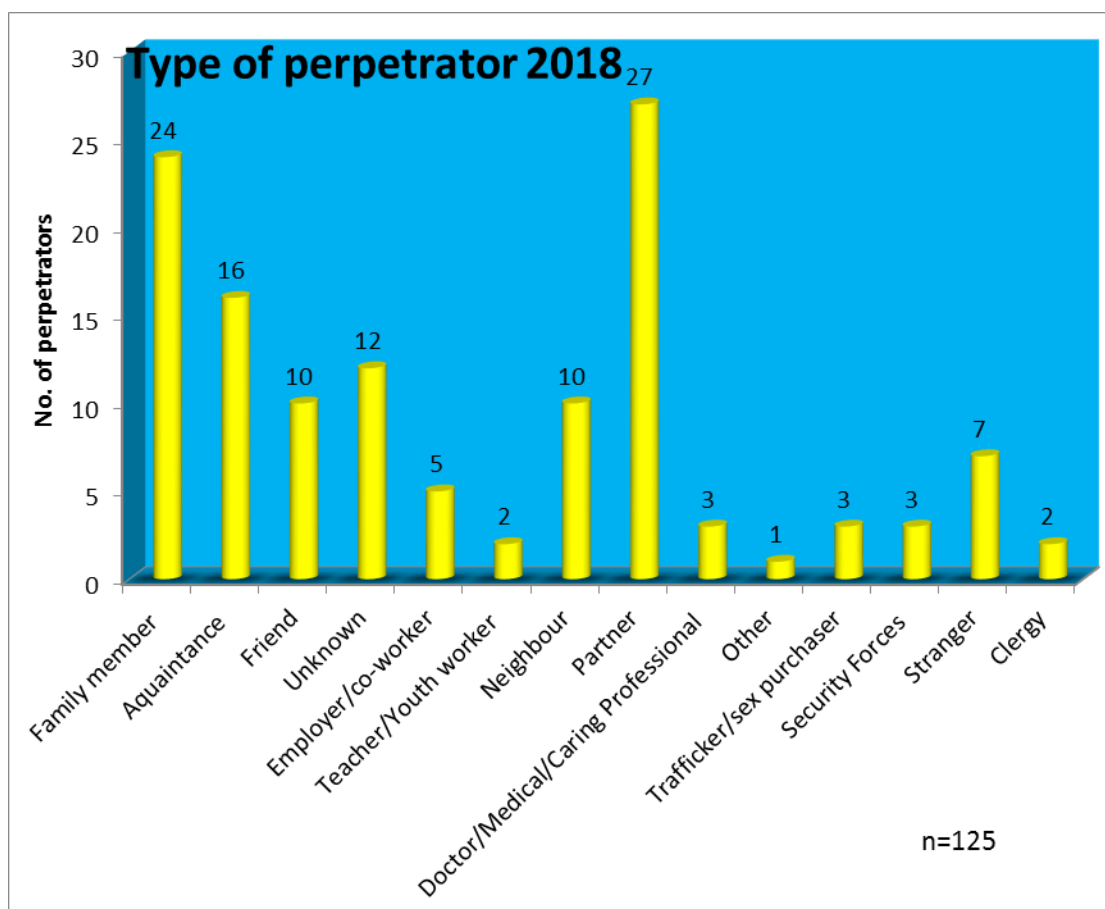


Figure 3.4 Relationship of perpetrator to survivor- shows that 93% of perpetrators were known to the survivor this would mirror international statistics.

Service Information

The following figures refer to service statistics relating to how clients come to our face to face service and phone counselling, the types of services clients are using and the uptake of services in comparison with other years

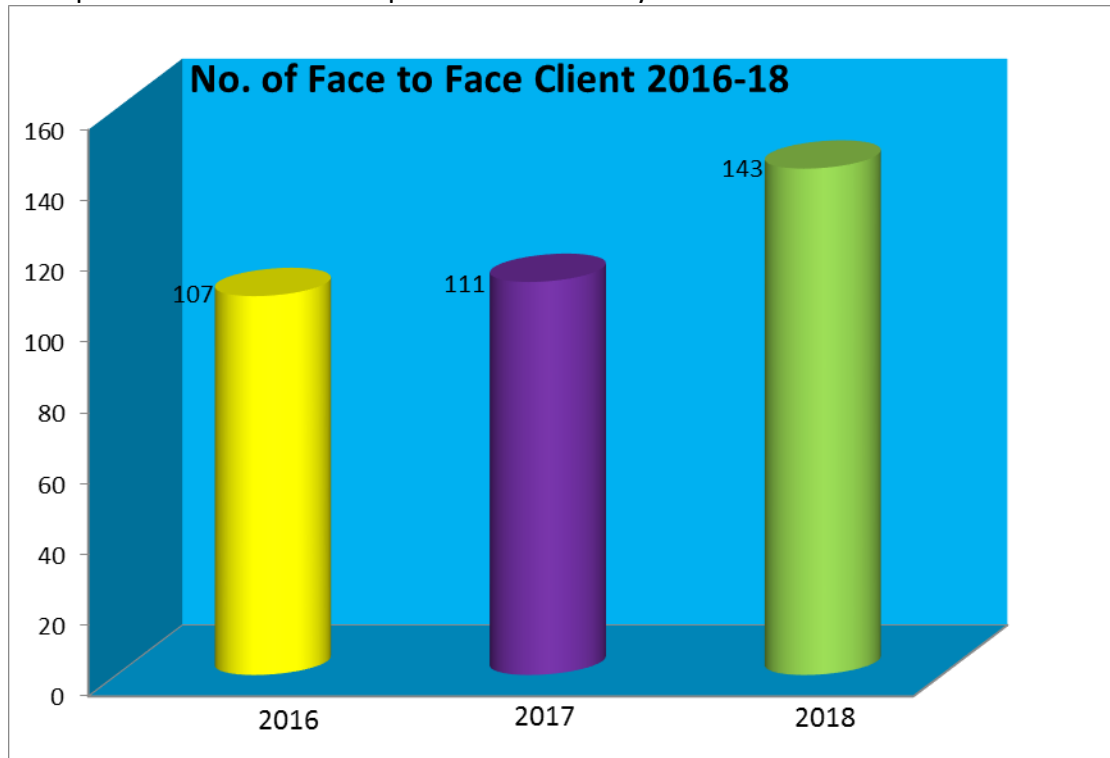


Figure 4.1 There has been a significant increase of 30 % in the number of people attending for face to face counselling in 2018

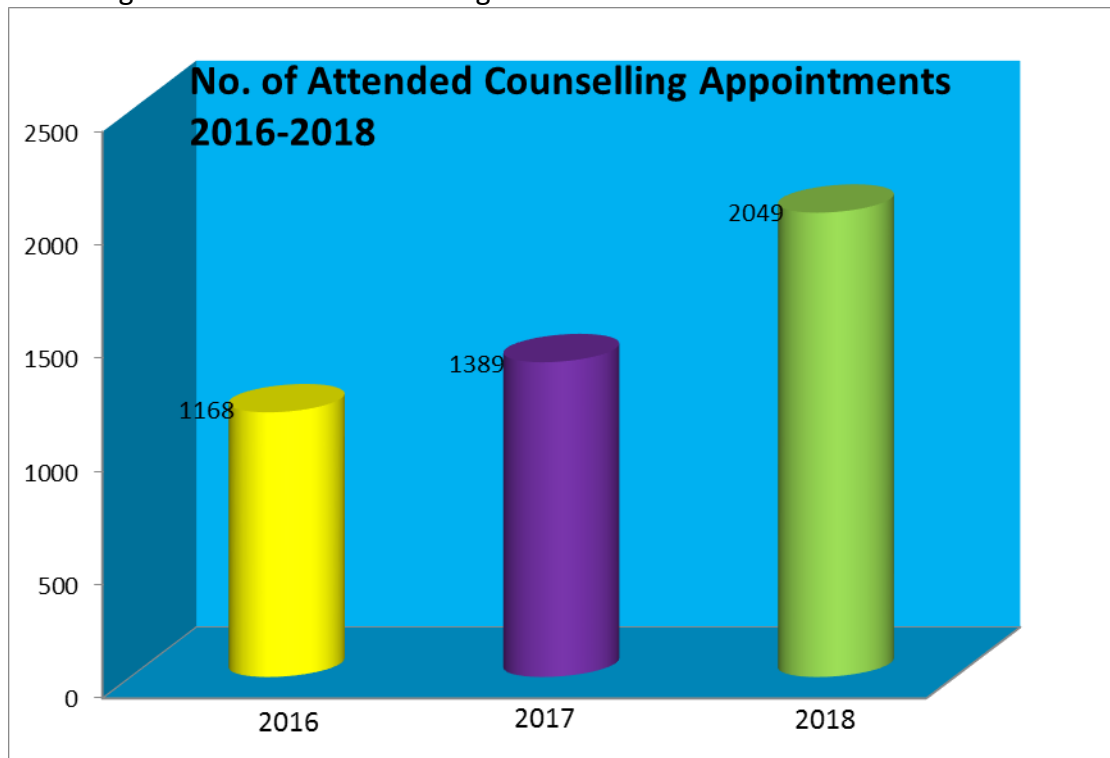


Figure 4.2 There has been a significant 48% increase in the number of attended counselling appointments in 2018

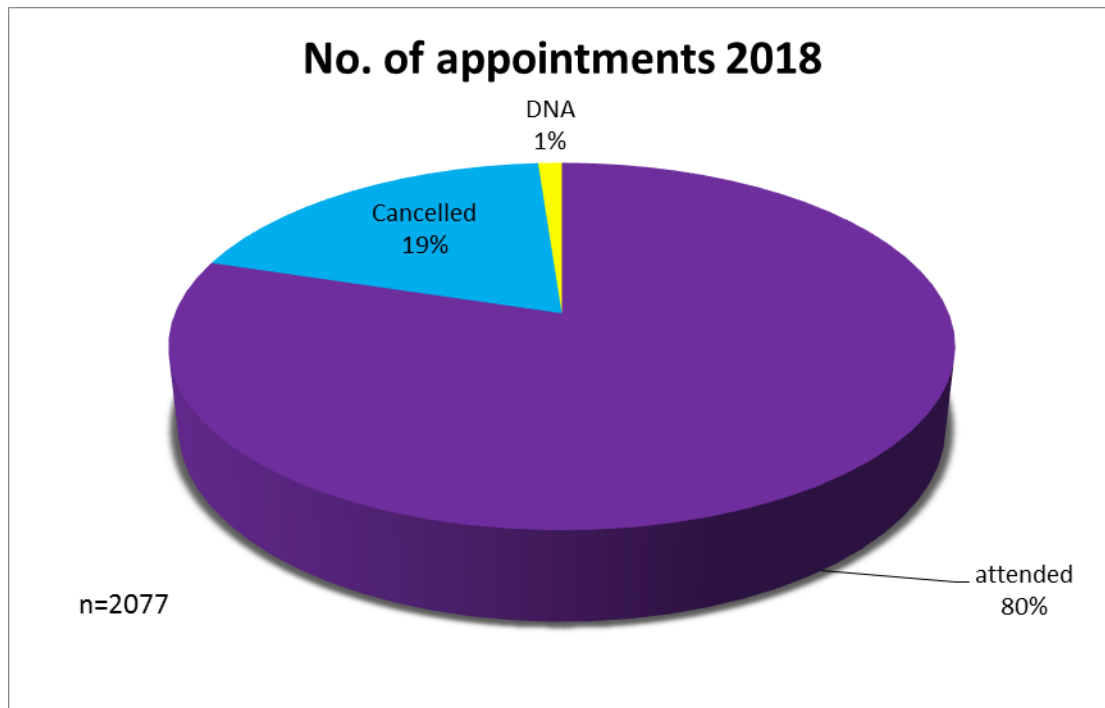
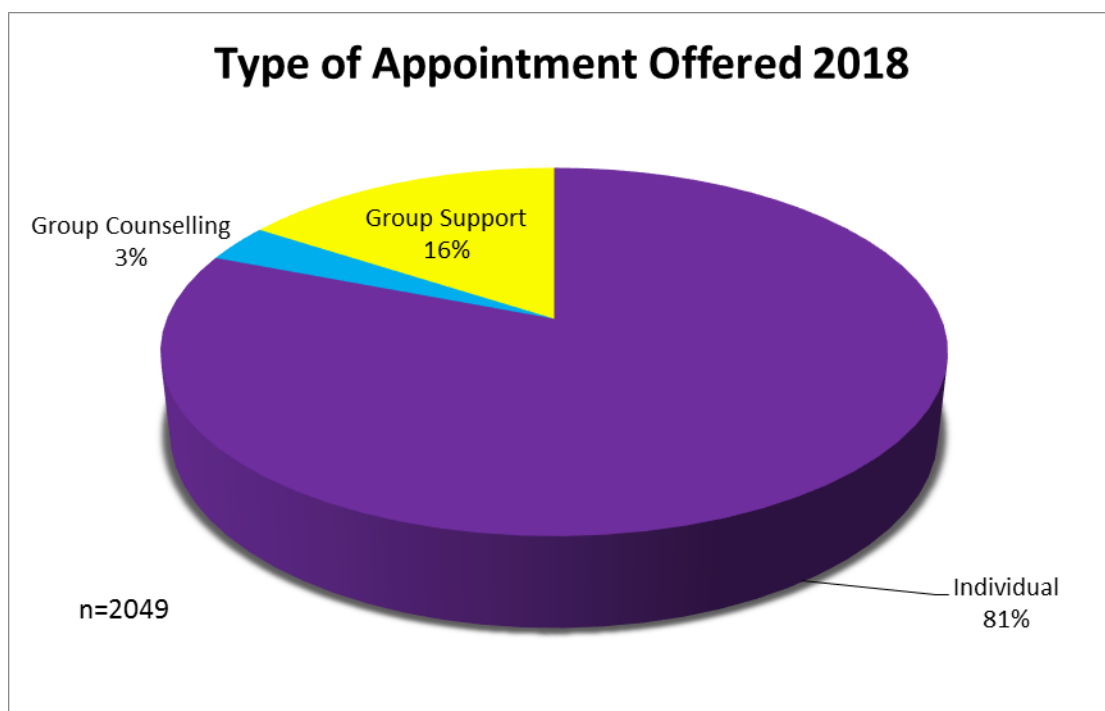


Figure 4.3 The Percentage of attended individual face to face appointments remains similar to previous years.



4.4 Type of Counselling appointment offered in 2018. Our group work has increased in 2018.

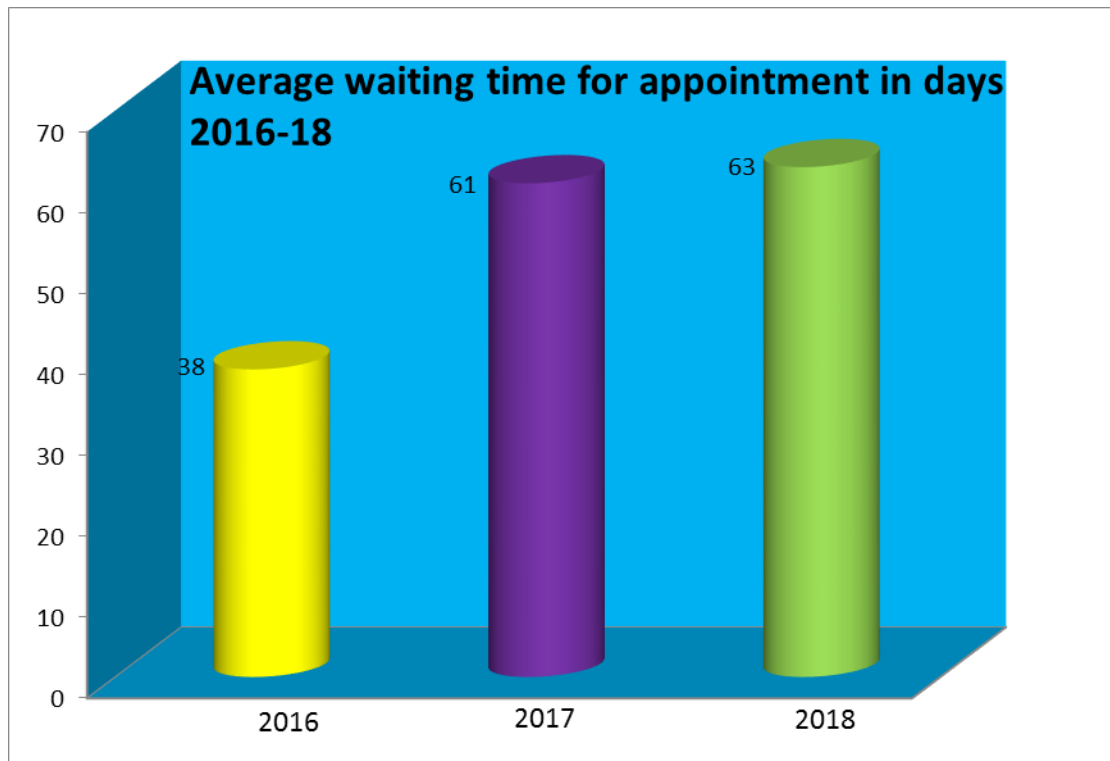


Figure 4.5 The waiting time for appointments has stabilised during 2018 at just over 2 months.

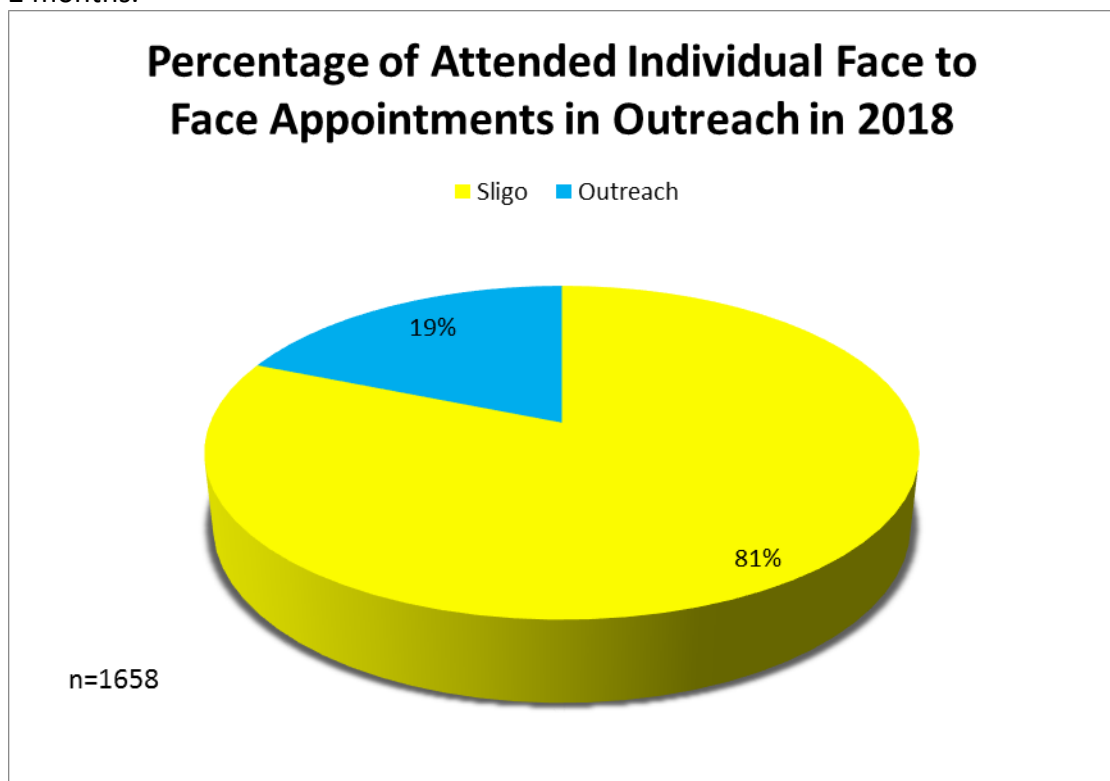


Figure 4.6 The proportion of appointments attended in our outreach centres has increased by 2% in 2018

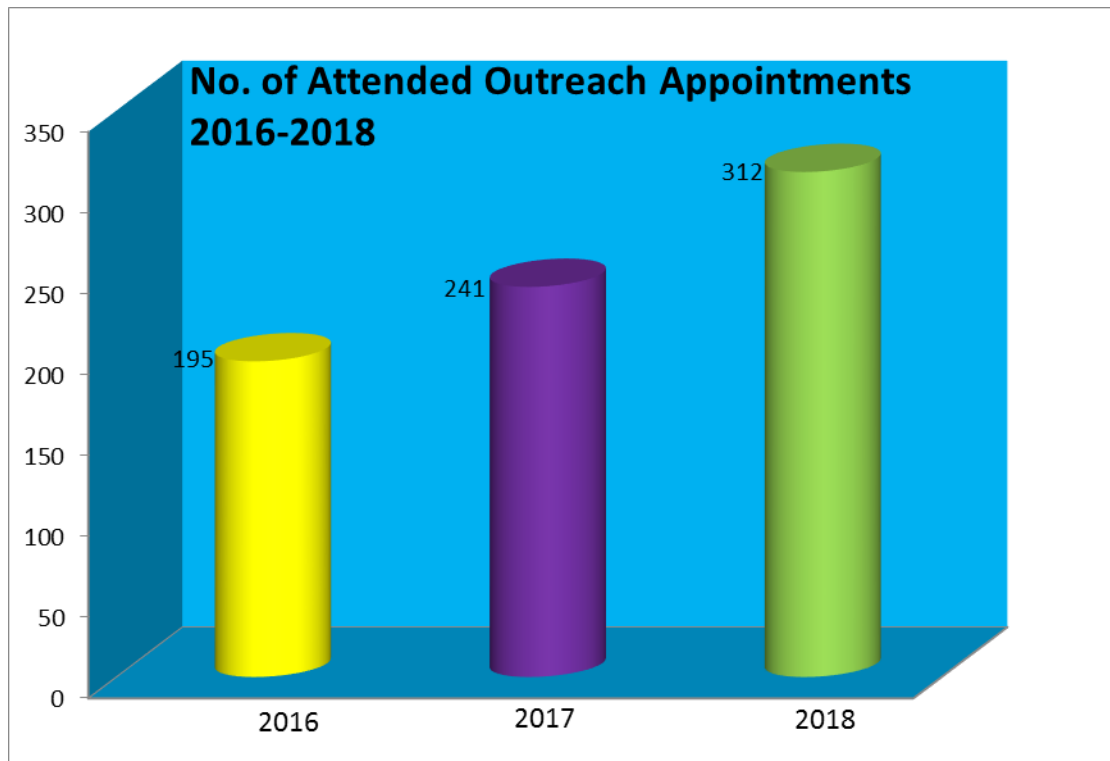


Figure 4.7 There has been a significant increase of 30% in the number of counselling sessions attended in our Outreach Services from 2017-18.

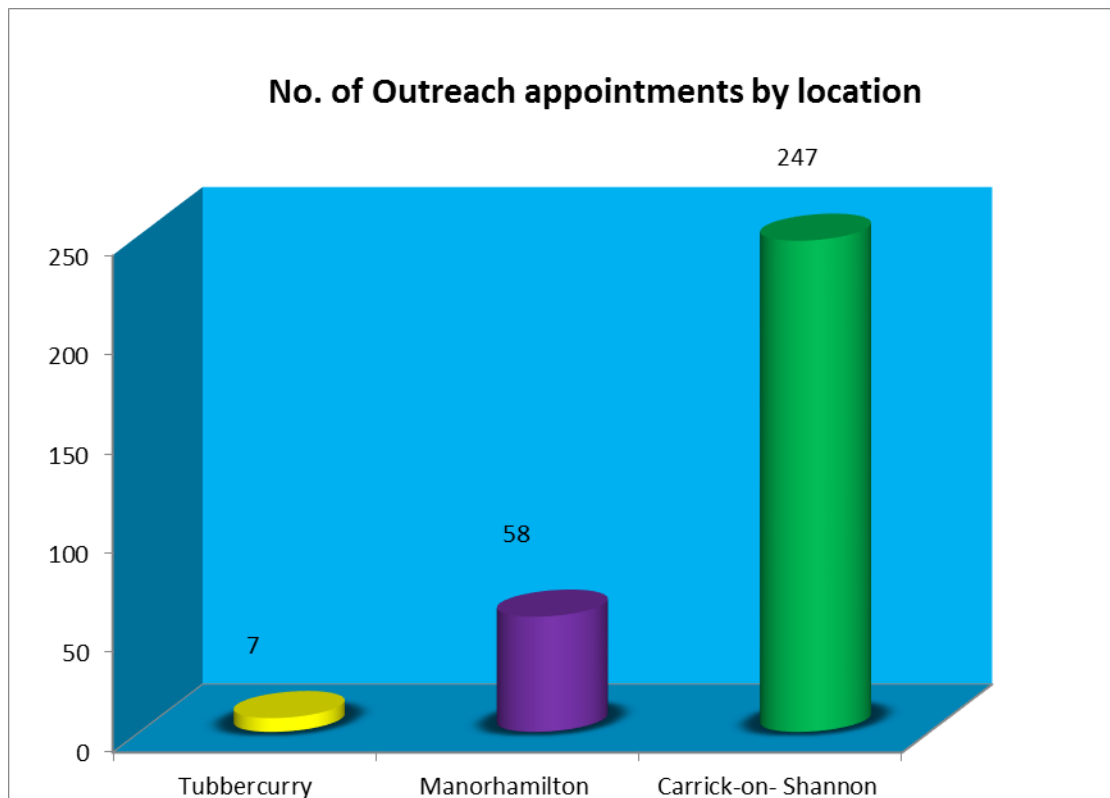
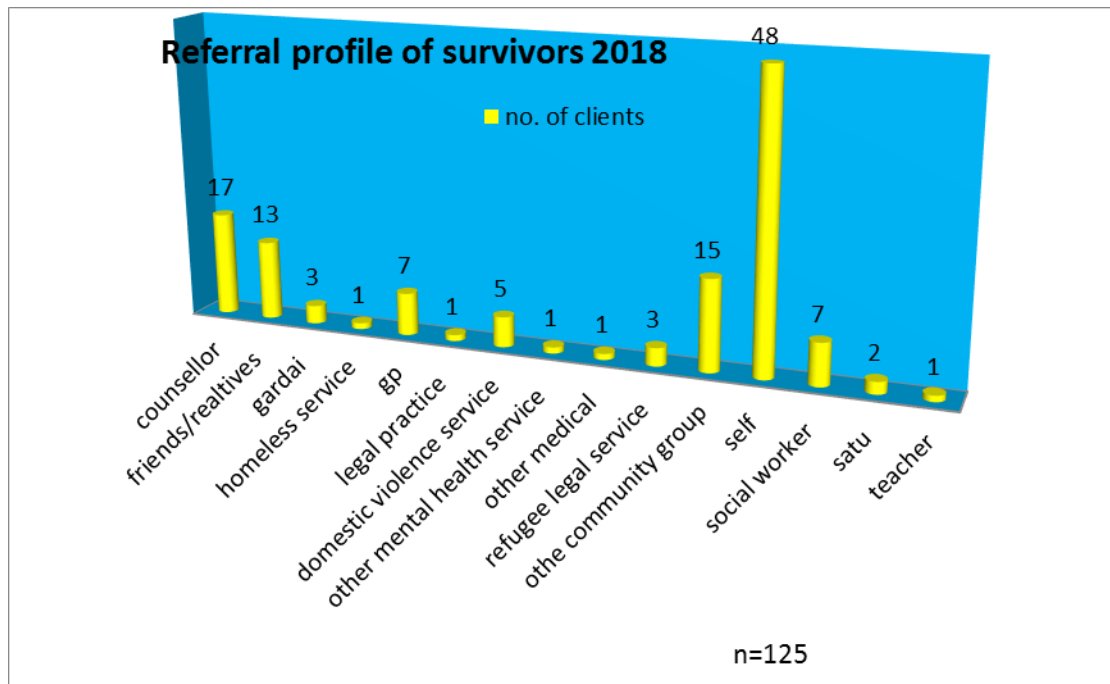
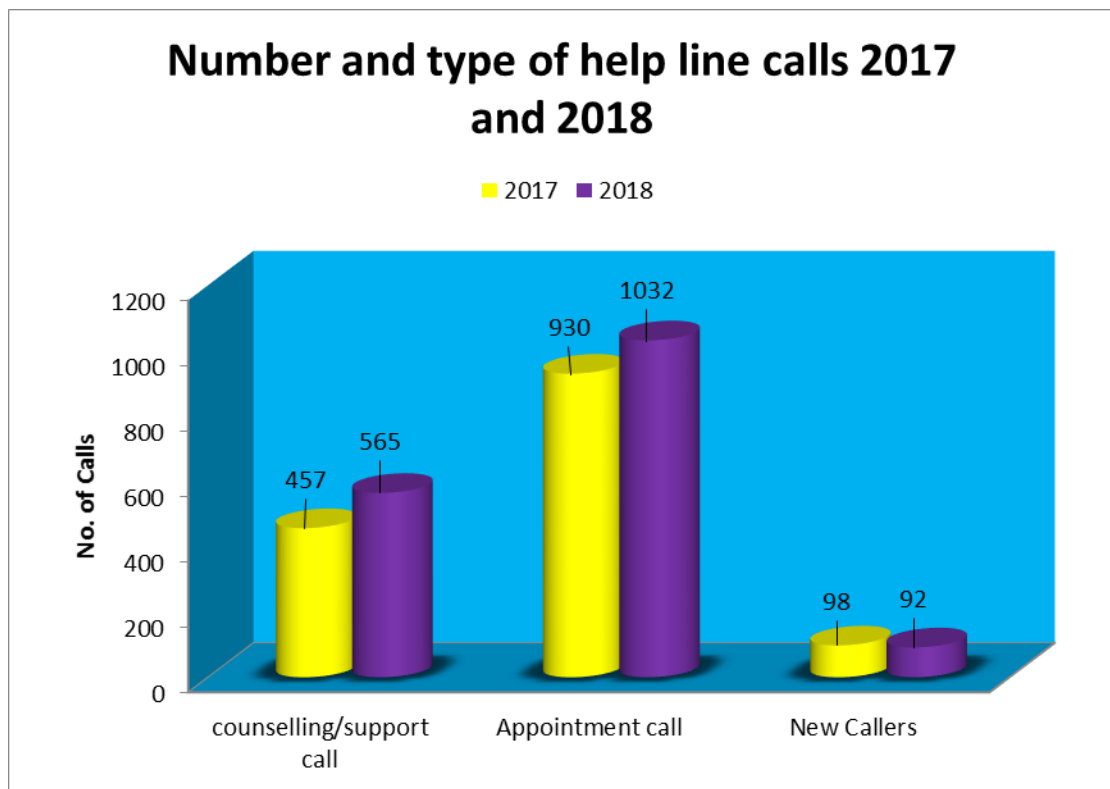


Figure 4.8 Showing the geographical location of attended counselling sessions within out Outreach Services



4.9 The referral pattern to our service remains similar to previous years.



5.0 We have had increases in counselling and appointment calls in 2018.

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