

Membership

We offer membership to both individuals and groups that are interested in fostering stronger links with us and the wider women's sector. Becoming a member of the WRDA is easy and more importantly free to join. We continually strive to work towards women's equality and to keep our members up to date and although membership is free, we do accept donations to continue the vast amount of work we are involved in. To donate visit our Localgiving page on

www.localgiving.org/charity/WRDA.

If you are interested in becoming a member of WRDA please download the Membership Form from our website and return to us either by post or emailing it to info@wrda.net.

Domestic Violence

2016



Calls to PSNI



96

Christmas
Day



147

New Years
Day



One Call
Every 18
Minutes



You can get help **any day of the year**. Call Women's Aid NI's 24 hour, free and confidential help line on **0808 802 1414**. If you are in immediate danger call **999**.

WRDA Out and About

Reach Out! A selection of where we have been promoting and delivering the BCB programme in November and December.

- ⇒ Rathlin Development and Community Association
- ⇒ Resurgam Trust Lisburn
- ⇒ Mary Queen of Peace PTA, Ballymena
- ⇒ Reconnect
- ⇒ Ballycolman Our Time Group
- ⇒ Arches Senior Citizens Group
- ⇒ Lenadoon Women's Group
- ⇒ Whiterock Carers Group
- ⇒ Headway Larne
- ⇒ Headway Ballymena
- ⇒ The Hope Centre Ballymena
- ⇒ An Munia Tober
- ⇒ Fresh Focus Enniskillen
- ⇒ Cookstown Day Centre
- ⇒ Inspire Newtownards
- ⇒ Fortwilliam Day Centre



If you are interested in the Breast, Cervical and Bowel screening awareness programme please contact our office on **028 9023 0212**.

Women Resisting Welfare Reform

During 2017, workshops delivered in communities by WRDA staff have allowed us to have discussions with women about their shared concerns for themselves and their communities. One of the most common concerns was the impact of changes to benefits that are gradually affecting more and more people in Northern Ireland. The introduction of Universal Credit and the 2 child cap on child tax credits are new measures that many women are worried about but for some time now, we have been experiencing the problems associated with changes to the disability benefits system and a move to a more punitive approach to sanctions.

While the political institutions continue to be on hold, women from all communities are increasingly concerned at the impact of cuts to welfare and have very little opportunity to challenge the decisions that have been made as a result of UK government policy.



WRDA has been inspired by the approach taken by the grassroots human rights organisation Participation and the Practice of Rights who support the Right to Work: Right to Welfare campaign group. This group of individuals who have all been affected by harmful government policy on social security have been promoting the use of a human rights checklist which all social security decisions makers should be using when they choose to reduce someone's benefits or remove them entirely as part of a sanction. They call this 'the People's Proposal' and it is a demand for due process to be properly applied as the current system does not afford people the right to tell their story before the decision is made. This campaign also demands that human rights standards regarding the need to ensure people have the basic essential minimum income to live are respected as currently we know that some benefits decisions are leaving people destitute.

We therefore invited PPR to facilitate two discussions about the people's proposal for groups of women in North and West Belfast and South and East. The workshops were supported by Belfast City Council and allowed women from different communities to explore together how they could have more of a voice in challenging the impact of welfare reform.

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Community Facilitators

Push the Boat Out

Community Facilitator Colette Rodgers has just delivered a Breast and Cervical session on Rathlin Island and will be going back in the New Year to deliver some more sessions. Rathlin is a small community of less than 100 permanent residents and is about 3 miles from Ballycastle. WRDA truly is a regional organisation and we will deliver our programmes anywhere, even if we have to push the boat out to get there! Colette is going to write an article for our next newsletter and let us know how it all worked out.



Merry Christmas to all WRDA's Community Facilitators I hope you all have a great Christmas and come back super enthusiastic in the New Year.

Women Resisting Welfare Reform Cont.

During the workshops we heard of examples of how the campaign is engaging with the Department for Communities to try to get the People's Proposal adopted and used in all jobs and benefits offices. While there remains no commitment from the Department to do this, the campaign group is also supporting individuals to make human rights complaints where they feel their rights have been violated through benefits decisions. The women who attended the workshops found this approach extremely inspiring, particularly hearing from other women about how successful their human rights complaints had been. Many women noted that it is all too easy to be intimidated by the 'system' when in fact the system might not be human rights compliant and designed to cause you further harm. It was the first time some participants had seen human rights in action and we ended the sessions by exploring how women's organisations could use this approach to stand up for women in their communities who have been suffering because of welfare reform.

WRDA would like to thank Seán Brady from PPR who facilitated the sessions along with the members of the Right to Work: Right to Welfare campaign who came and shared their stories. We also appreciate the support of Belfast City Council and all the organisations and individuals who came along to participate.

For more information on the People's Proposal and how to get involved in the campaign for a human rights compliant social security system, contact Seán Brady at PPR on sean@pprproject.org

WRDA AGM 2016/17



On the 1st of December WRDA celebrated its 34th AGM. Claire Hanna from the SDLP was the guest speaker and she praised WRDA's attitude of 'working with people from where they're at' as a great way of achieving change. There was also an informative and enjoyable Q&A at the end which covered topics as diverse as Brexit, reproductive health care, rural crime and student's rights.

The following women were elected onto the management board:

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|------------------|-----------------|
| Anne O'Reilly | Eleanor Jordan |
| Patricia Donald | Sandra McCarry |
| Karen Armstrong | Marie Abbott |
| Eileen Weir | Caroline McCord |
| Brenda Callaghan | |

We are looking forward to our 35th AGM and the work that will be done in 2018.



Screening Saves Lives—January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

CERVICAL CANCER SYMPTOMS

- Leg swelling
- Backache
- Pain or bleeding after intercourse
- Abnormal vaginal discharge
- Menopause but bleeding
- Bloody stools
- Menstrual irregularities
- Dizziness, Fatigue
- Like menstrual blood
- Wash away vaginal bleeding
- Weight loss
- Abdominal pain

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, would you recognise the symptoms of cervical cancer?

At WRDA we can deliver a dedicated information session around all aspects of Cervical Screening, including signs and symptoms, what happens at screening and we explain what results mean.

If you have a group of women that would like to take part please contact Emma on 02890230212 or email emma.gray@wrda.net

