



CHESHIRE
IRELAND *learning through listening*

Strategy Statement 2003 – 2006
Summary & Key Points



Developing Quality – Promoting Choice

Vision Statement:

We will be a provider of quality, person-centred services which facilitate people with disabilities to live a life of their own choosing.

Mission Statement

What we do & who we serve:

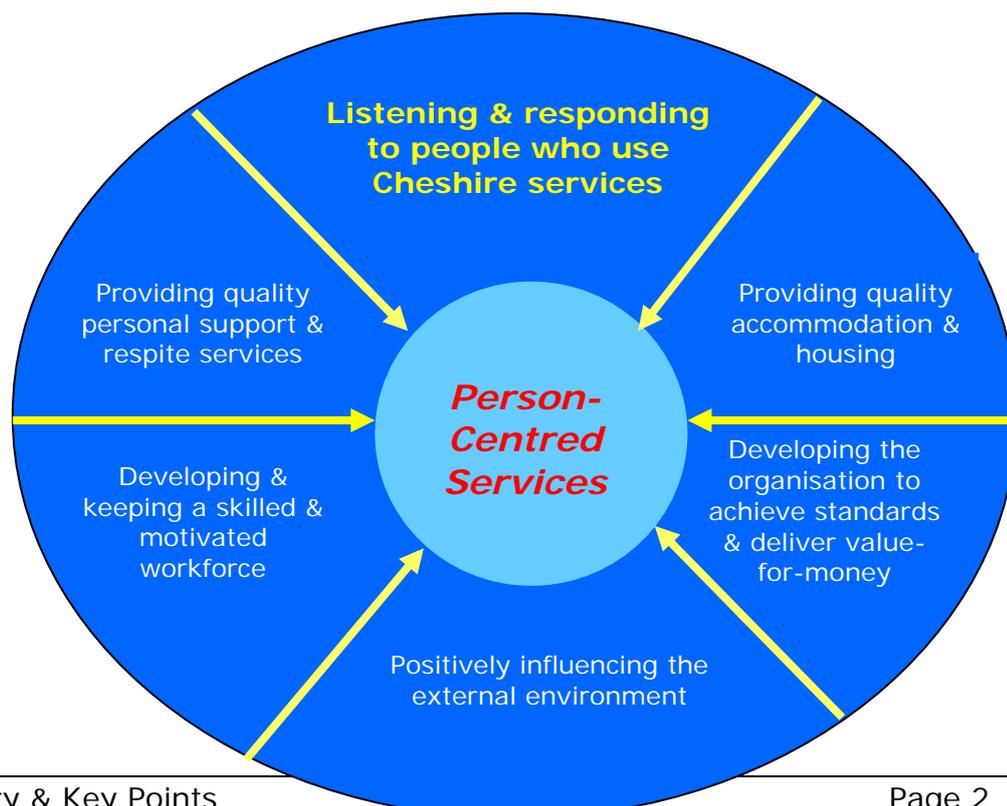
Working in partnership with people who use our services and with statutory and voluntary agencies, we provide quality accommodation and support services across Ireland to adults with, primarily, physical disabilities.

How we aspire to do our work:

We are committed to developing our staff, facilities and management processes to ensure we have the capability, knowledge and skills required to deliver cost effective, quality services in ways that respect every person's rights, personal choice and individuality.

Strategic Results Areas

*These are the six action areas which, taken together, will help achieve our overall goal of providing **person-centred services**:*



Note to readers

Cheshire Ireland published its new strategy statement, *Developing Quality – Promoting Choice*, in July 2003. This strategy statement covers the 3-year period, 2003 – 2006.

The full strategy statement sets out the background to the development of Cheshire Ireland over the last 40 years. It contains information on the creation of the strategy, including details of the feedback received from the extensive consultations which were undertaken with service users, staff, funders and other stakeholders.

This booklet contains a summary of the strategy and outlines the key points, including our strategic objectives to be achieved over the 3-years from 2003 to 2006. The intention of this booklet is to give readers a quick overview of how Cheshire Ireland intends to develop as an organisation and also to communicate clearly our current vision and mission. Anyone who would like more detailed information is very welcome to request a copy of the full strategy document. Copies are available from our Central Office (see contact details below) or by downloading from our website at www.cheshire.ie.

If you have questions or comments relating to our strategy, we are very interested to hear from you. Please feel free to contact us at:

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Learn more about Cheshire Ireland and our services by visiting our website at www.cheshire.ie

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Cheshire services in Ireland – An overview

Foreword

Nineteen ninety-three was the fortieth year of the Cheshire Foundation in Ireland. This is a good time to take stock of the many achievements of the organisation during the course of its existence. In doing so, we acknowledge the contribution over the years of many people who gave of their time and energy in pursuit of Leonard Cheshire's original vision and dream. All involved with Cheshire services have much to be proud of and there is a fine record of achievement in developing innovative accommodation and other services which meet the needs of people with physical disabilities.

Our strategy, *Developing Quality – Promoting Choice*, sets a clear agenda for development and capacity building over the next three years. Many challenges lie ahead, but I believe we can rise to these challenges by continuing to work together and being careful at all times to listen to people with disabilities themselves and to others who have experience in this field.

Kevin Wylie

Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Introduction

Cheshire has been providing services in Ireland to adults with physical disabilities for over 40 years. Recent times have seen significant changes in a number of important areas – in the wishes and expectations of people with disabilities, in the types of services we provide, in how we are funded and in how the organisation is managed. Arising from these changes, we now need to clarify and define various things to do with the organisation, including:

*What Cheshire is?; What it wants to become?; What services we provide?;
To whom and how we provide those services?; How services are managed?;
What Cheshire plans to do to make services better?.*

Through this strategy, *Developing Quality – Promoting Choice*, through the communication of it and the implementation of the actions within it, we hope to address many, if not all, of the above issues. We hope that this Strategy Statement makes clear, to service users, staff and other stakeholders, our objectives and action plan over the next three years.

Clearly there are many challenges for Cheshire in responding proactively and positively to the many changes ahead. However, I feel confident that by 2006, Cheshire will be able to show clear evidence of positive development. I hope, above all, that the people who use Cheshire services will be telling us that the quality of our services has improved. I also hope that people who work with Cheshire Ireland will have had real opportunities to develop within the organisation and will agree that we have made real and substantial progress towards becoming an employer of choice.

Mark Blake-Knox
Chief Executive

Developing this strategy

What is strategy?

For any organisation, whether public or private, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, *Strategy* is about four things:

- Having a clear *Vision* for the future
- Having a clear *Mission* for the short-term
- Having a set of *Core Values*
- Having definite *Objectives* for the immediate future

Why have a strategy?

Strategy is important to Cheshire Ireland because:

- Cheshire needs a roadmap to guide the organisation's ongoing development and improvement over the period, 2003 - 2006
- Cheshire's vision, mission and core values must be clear to all involved with the organisation
- Cheshire must be in a position to respond to change in the world outside & we must ourselves constantly change and adapt as an organisation
- Having a clear strategy is a vital part of running any organisation well
- A clear strategy is required by the forthcoming National Standards in Disability Services

How was this strategy developed?

We developed this strategy through:

- Looking at emerging trends & current developments within the broad disability sector
- Consulting with key stakeholders including service users, staff, Cheshire trustees, public agencies (government departments, health boards, National Disability Authority, etc.) and others
- Thinking hard about what would be achievable for Cheshire over the next 3 years

Some important trends

Important trends in the outside world over 2003 to 2006 include the following:

FROM		TOWARDS
Medical models of disability		Social models of disability
Charity models of service		Rights-based services
Special services		Mainstream services

Group-centred services

Person-centred services

Our challenge in Cheshire is to respond to these trends in a positive way while also working to influence wider society to develop new types of services and supports which are effective in meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

Our vision, mission & core values

Why a vision & mission?

A forward-looking and challenging vision and mission helps give an organisation clarity as to where it wants to go. Likewise, a set of strong values underpins an organisation's mission and clearly indicates to all stakeholders how that organisation intends to go about its work.

Our vision statement

We will be a provider of quality, person-centred services which facilitate people with disabilities to live a life of their own choosing.

Cheshire's vision statement is intended to present a challenge and inspiration for the future. We do not expect to achieve this vision fully in the next three years but it is something for us all to strive towards over the course of this strategy statement and into the next.

Our mission statement

What we do & who we serve:

Working in partnership with people who use our services and with statutory and voluntary agencies, we provide quality accommodation and support services across Ireland to adults with, primarily, physical disabilities.

How we aspire to do our work:

We are committed to developing our staff, facilities and management processes to ensure we have the capability, knowledge and skills required to deliver cost effective, quality services in ways that respect every person's rights, personal choice and individuality.

Our mission statement is intended to define what we currently do and the ways in which we try to do our work. It is not so much new as a re-stating of the long-standing Cheshire mission as practiced both in Ireland and throughout Cheshire services worldwide.

Core Values

We have developed a set of core values which underpin all of Cheshire's work. Each value is defined through a value statement which summarises how Cheshire puts each value into practice. These values should be evident in everything that Cheshire does, both within the organisation and its services, and where Cheshire interacts with other organisations and individuals.

Value	Value Statement
To be person-centred	<i>Cheshire works to a person-centred approach so that the expressed needs, choices and valued outcomes of individual service users are at the centre of service delivery, planning and evaluation.</i>
To listen & learn	<i>Cheshire recognises the importance of open and continuous communication with all stakeholders. In particular, we value the learning to be gained through listening to people who use, or who would wish to use, Cheshire services.</i>
To respect dignity & privacy	<i>Cheshire recognises and respects the right to dignity and privacy of all service users, staff and volunteers.</i>
To be accountable & effective	<i>Cheshire is committed to clear accountability and transparency concerning all of its actions and to providing services which deliver value-for-money.</i>
To be responsive & flexible	<i>Cheshire aims to be flexible, innovative and responsive to the changing needs of its service users and other stakeholders.</i>
To promote partnership	<i>Cheshire works in partnership with internal and external stakeholders to develop good practice and to achieve mutually agreed and beneficial outcomes.</i>
To improve continuously	<i>Cheshire is committed to developing and supporting a culture of continuous quality improvement.</i>
To value diversity & potential	<i>Cheshire believes in promoting an equal opportunities environment which welcomes difference and values diversity; an environment within which both service users and staff can maximise their potential and contribution.</i>

Our strategic results areas & objectives, 2003 - 2006

Strategic results areas

Cheshire is committed to providing person-centred services. To ensure we stay focused on achieving this primary goal, we have defined six key strategic results areas (SRAs) for the period of this strategy statement. *When taken together, actions under these six strategic results areas will help us achieve our overall goal of providing person-centred services:*

- **SRA 1: Listening and responding to people who use, or who would wish to use, Cheshire services**

This is a core Cheshire value which underpins the other 5 priority areas. It is only through listening, in a real, meaningful and continuous way, to people who use our services that we can ensure we achieve the primary goal of becoming a **person-centred organisation**.

Our strategy in this area is to develop a stronger focus and commitment to real listening through exploring the Personal Outcomes framework and through better internal communication systems, including publishing a Charter of Rights for service users.

- **SRA 2: Providing quality personal support & respite services**

Cheshire is a provider of services, primarily personal support and respite services. Our strategy in this area is to see those objectives concerning support and respite service as separate from those concerning physical accommodation. This will allow us have a clearer focus on those elements of service where improvement and development is required, as identified by our stakeholder consultation.

- **SRA 3: Providing quality accommodation & housing**

Our strategy in bringing accommodation and housing objectives together is to enable better planning and use of resources in both developing new housing and accommodation projects and in refurbishing and re-developing existing accommodation.

- **SRA 4: Developing & keeping a skilled & motivated workforce**

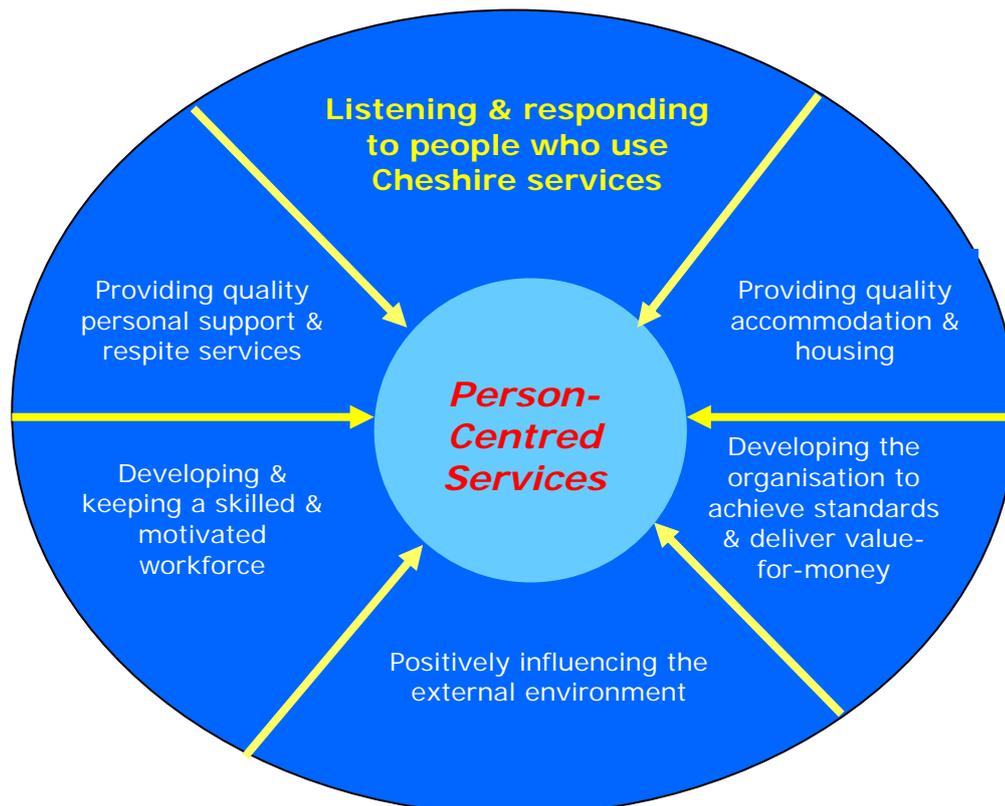
Skilled and motivated staff are central to Cheshire providing quality services. Our strategy in this area aims to develop and keep a skilled and motivated workforce through positive and proactive human resource management throughout the organisation. Promotion of active learning, skill development and open communication are central to this strategy.

- **SRA 5: Developing the organisation to achieve standards & deliver value-for-money**

Our strategy in this area is to undertake actions designed to ensure Cheshire has the structures and processes required to deliver quality and value. Meeting and exceeding the registration requirements of the National Standards in Disability Services will play a major role under this strategy as will actions in relation to appropriate structures and required planning frameworks.

- **SRA 6: Positively influencing the external environment**

As a voluntary agency operating in an environment containing a wide mix of statutory and voluntary or non-governmental agencies, Cheshire must be proactive in making links to these diverse organisations. Our strategy in this area is concerned with ensuring these links are in place and that Cheshire plays an appropriate and clear role in influencing the external environment in the interests of developing a more inclusive society for all.



Strategic objectives

Within each of the 6 strategic results areas (SRAs), we have defined a number of strategic objectives which we intend to pursue over the course of the 3-year period, 2003 - 2006. These are summarised in the following pages together with indicative timescales.

In setting these objectives, we have tried to be realistic as to what can be achieved given our existing and expected level of resources over the next 3 years. As such, each objective is intended and designed to be *stretching but achievable*.

Strategic Results Area 1

Listening & responding to people who use Cheshire services

Results in this area will be achieved through focusing on the following objectives:

Ref.	Strategic Objectives & Supporting Actions	Indicative timescale
1.1	<p>Begin working towards accreditation under the Personal Outcomes system (as defined by the US Council on Quality & Leadership).</p> <p><i>Working towards, and ultimately achieving, accreditation will be a key element in demonstrating that Cheshire services are person-centred, outcome-driven and responsive to service users.</i></p> <p><i>This objective represents a major undertaking for the organisation. However, the process of pursuing accreditation will also drive the achievement of many other of our strategic objectives over the next three years and beyond.</i></p>	<p>From October 2003 to October 2006 & ongoing</p>
1.2	<p>Design & implement a systematic approach to communicating & consulting with service users</p> <p><i>Communication and consultation benefits from well-designed structures and mechanisms. This objective is concerned with providing communication and internal advocacy structures which work for Cheshire service users.</i></p>	<p>From October 2003 to 30 September 2004</p>
1.3	<p>Develop and publish a Charter of Rights for users of Cheshire services</p> <p><i>Cheshire is committed to a rights-based approach in providing its services. The Charter of Rights is an important element in ensuring all Cheshire services operate in a way which clearly respects peoples rights.</i></p>	<p>From October 2003 to 31 March 2004</p>

Strategic Results Area 2

Providing quality personal support & respite services

Results in this area will be achieved through focusing on the following objectives:

Ref.	Strategic Objectives & Supporting Actions	To be completed by
2.1	<p>Develop & implement a standard approach detailing how Cheshire's supported accommodation services are allocated</p> <p><i>The type of supported accommodation service provided by Cheshire is in very short supply. This objective aims to ensure that Cheshire has a system in place to ensure that this scarce service is allocated in a way which is fair, open and accountable.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 31 March 2004
2.2	<p>Review Cheshire's current model of respite provision and develop Cheshire models for the future (see also Objective 3.3)</p> <p><i>The current model of centre-based respite provision within long-term accommodation services is not satisfactory. This objective aims to deliver models of respite provision appropriate to the needs of people using this service.</i></p>	From October 2004 to 31 March 2005
2.3	<p>Review the current role of Cheshire Community Services & define future role (see also Objective 3.4)</p> <p><i>Cheshire Community Services is a new and evolving element of Cheshire's overall services. As this Service develops, it is essential that its role remains clear and that it is focused on providing those services which are of most benefit to people with disabilities living in the community. This objective aims to clarify the role of Community Services and ensure its services are in line with the actual requirements of people using the service.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 30 September 2004
2.4	<p>Implement a standard form of service/residency agreement with service users</p> <p><i>Any person receiving a Cheshire service should know clearly what that service consists of and what their own obligations are in relation to using the service. This objective is concerned with ensuring Cheshire uses a form of agreement which properly clarifies and protect the rights of all parties.</i></p>	From January 2004 to 30 September 2004
2.5	<p>Implement protection policy and supporting procedures</p> <p><i>Every person using a Cheshire service should be safe from any form of abuse. All Cheshire staff, both paid and voluntary, should</i></p>	From October 2003 to December

	<i>be clear as to what to do in situations where an incident of abuse is reported or suspected. This objective is concerned with implementing a comprehensive protection policy, and supporting procedures, which are appropriate to Cheshire services</i>	2004
2.6	Develop a comprehensive volunteering policy, including a programme of supports for volunteers <i>Volunteers are important to Cheshire and their contribution is valuable. This objective aims to clarify the varied roles of volunteers and to provide the supports required to ensure volunteers can play a positive role in supporting Cheshire service users.</i>	From January 2004 to 30 September 2004

Strategic Results Area 3

Providing quality accommodation & housing

Results in this area will be achieved through focusing on the following objectives:

Ref.	Strategic Objectives & Supporting Actions	To be completed by
3.1	<p>Review existing accommodation & identify capital development requirements</p> <p><i>All Cheshire accommodation should meet relevant quality and safety standards. This objective aims to identify the financial requirement involved in bringing all accommodation up to required standards.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 31 March 2005
3.2	<p>Develop a framework for planning & prioritising new developments</p> <p><i>Various opportunities are available to, or presented to, Cheshire for becoming involved in potential accommodation developments. However, action on developments requires active involvement by both Health Boards and local authorities. This objective aims to develop an effective framework within which new developments can be planned and prioritised.</i></p>	From January 2005 to 30 September 2006
3.3	<p>Develop a new model for stand-alone respite units (see also Objective 2.2)</p> <p><i>If respite services are not to be provided within long-term accommodation services, a new type of respite accommodation model is required. This objective aims to develop such an accommodation model.</i></p>	From January 2005 to 30 September 2006

Strategic Results Area 4

Developing & keeping a skilled & motivated workforce

Results in this area will be achieved through focusing on the following objectives:

Ref.	Strategic Objectives & Supporting Actions	To be completed by
4.1	<p>Ensure all employees and volunteers, new and serving, understand and embrace the issues involved in providing rights-based, person-centred services.</p> <p><i>Modern disability services must recognise and respect the rights of people using those services. This objective aims to ensure that all Cheshire employees understand and embrace the concept and practice of rights-based services.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 30 September 2005 & ongoing
4.2	<p>Ensure all Cheshire management and other staff in leadership roles have the core competencies to perform their current and future roles effectively</p> <p><i>Effective Cheshire service provision is critically dependent on the role played by skilled and knowledgeable managers and supervisors and other staff at team, service, regional and national levels. This objective is concerned with ensuring that, in the first instance, all employees in leadership positions have the core competencies required in their roles with Cheshire.</i></p>	From January 2004 to 30 September 2004
4.3	<p>Develop & implement a standard performance management & development scheme covering, initially, all management and other employees in leadership positions</p> <p><i>Management of individual performance is critical to each employee's success in their individual role. A focus on development ensure employees have the skills, knowledge and ways of thinking which are critical to their roles. This objective aims to ensure all Cheshire employees in key roles are clear as to performance expectations and have the required training and development supports available to them.</i></p>	From October 2004 to 30 September 2005
4.4	<p>Develop & implement required HR policies & related procedures</p> <p><i>Effective human resource management requires that organisations develop clear and consistent written policies together with supporting procedures. This objective aims to ensure that the full range of required HR policies and procedures are in place and are being implemented throughout Cheshire services.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 31 December 2004

4.5	<p>Develop a staff communication and involvement programme</p> <p><i>Clear and open communication with staff is a key element in ensuring Cheshire delivers on its mission and vision. Involvement by staff, in the sense of participation in projects and in decision making, is also very important. This objective aims to ensure Cheshire staff have the benefits of an effective communications programme and are facilitated in participating within the organisation.</i></p>	From January 2004 to 31 December 2004

Strategic Results Area 5

Developing the organisation to achieve standards & deliver value-for-money

Results in this area will be achieved through focusing on the following objectives:

Ref.	Strategic Objectives & Supporting Actions	To be completed by
5.1	<p>Develop a clear focus on service quality through a high-level of compliance with the planned National Standards in Disability Services.</p> <p><i>Compliance with the National Standards will be mandatory for Cheshire. The Standards will involve an externally-conducted assessment leading to registration at one of 3 levels.</i></p>	October 2003 to 30 September 2005
5.2	<p>Design a business planning framework capable of meeting current service planning and future service agreement requirements</p> <p><i>Business planning translates strategic objectives into yearly plans at the level of each Cheshire service or centre. Successful business planning for Cheshire services should incorporate both current service planning and anticipated service agreement requirements. This objective aims to develop a planning and service costing framework meeting these various requirements.</i></p>	From April 2005 to 31 March 2006
5.3	<p>Ensure the organisation structure at all levels is appropriate to the current mission and strategy</p> <p><i>Cheshire's organisation structure, at Board, central, regional & local levels, must facilitate implementation of its strategy. This objective aims to ensure that the organisation's structure, from national to local level, fits with the organisation's overall mission and strategy for the next three years and beyond.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 31 March 2004
5.4	<p>Develop & implement required financial management policies & related procedures</p> <p><i>Effective financial management requires that organisations develop clear and consistent written policies together with supporting procedures. This objective aims to ensure that the full range of required financial management policies and procedures are in place and are being implemented throughout Cheshire services.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 31 December 2004
5.5	<p>Develop a strategy implementation & planning framework</p>	From October

	<p><i>To help ensure the achievement of the strategic objectives set out in this Strategy Statement, Cheshire requires a clear strategy implementation framework. This framework will monitor implementation of Cheshire's current strategy and progress on the achievement of the defined objectives. The framework will provide for the capture of newly-emerging or unplanned strategic requirements. It will also play an important role in formulating Cheshire's next Strategy Statement (2006-2009).</i></p>	<p>2003 to 31 March 2004</p>
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Strategic Results Area 6

Positively influencing the external environment

Results in this area will be achieved through focusing on the following objectives:

Ref.	Strategic Objectives & Supporting Actions	To be completed by
6.1	<p>Build and maintain positive relationships with statutory agencies at national, regional and service level</p> <p><i>Cheshire recognises the critical importance of working effectively with statutory agencies in the interests of people who use its services. This objective is concerned with ensuring that Cheshire is proactive in building and maintaining positive relationships with statutory agencies.</i></p>	From October 2004 to 30 June 2005
6.2	<p>Maximise Cheshire contribution on Health Board co-ordinating committees</p> <p>Health Board Co-ordinating Committees are one of the key elements in the future development and improvement of services. This objective aims to ensure that Cheshire representatives on Co-ordinating Committees play a full role and assert Cheshire values of integrity, openness and transparency in decision-making processes.</p>	From January 2004 to 30 September 2004
6.3	<p>Build and maintain positive relationships with non-statutory agencies at international, national, regional and service level</p> <p><i>Cheshire recognises the important role which other voluntary agencies play in providing personal social services. This objective is concerned with ensuring that Cheshire is proactive in building and maintaining positive relationships with voluntary agencies statutory agencies.</i></p>	October 2004 to 30 June 2005
6.4	<p>Promote the concept of living options and person-centred services particularly for people who up to now have been offered only limited options.</p> <p><i>Cheshire aims to support people to live a life of their own choosing. We are conscious that some people are vulnerable to having assumptions made as to their living options and may be seen as having no alternative but traditional "residential care".. This objective is concerned with ensuring that people, irrespective of their support needs, are facilitated to live a life of their own choosing within a variety of living options.</i></p>	From October 2003 to 30 September 2004 & ongoing

Making it happen

The challenges ahead

Some of the challenges we face include:

- Recognising that strategic management is new to the organisation and so there will be new learning for all of us over the next 3 years
- Recognising that our strategy is ambitious and that there will be much work involved in its implementation
- Recognising that our resources are limited and that we will have to work within these constraints

Implementation

Despite the challenges, we are committed to achieving our objectives as set out in this strategy through:

- Building leadership & commitment across the organisation
- Ensuring wide participation & involvement – its only by working together that we will be successful
- Developing ongoing communication – up, down and across the organisation

II

Appendix

Cheshire services in Ireland – An overview

The first Cheshire service in Ireland opened in Shillelagh, Co. Wicklow in 1961. This was followed in 1963 by the founding of the Cheshire Foundation in Ireland, a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Operating under the name of *Cheshire Ireland*, we currently operate 15 accommodation centres around Ireland, including residential respite services, together with an evolving range of community-based services.

In general, Cheshire provides services to adults with physical disabilities. However, we also provide services to some people who have learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries or progressive neurological conditions.

Types of Cheshire service: Cheshire services currently fall into three categories:

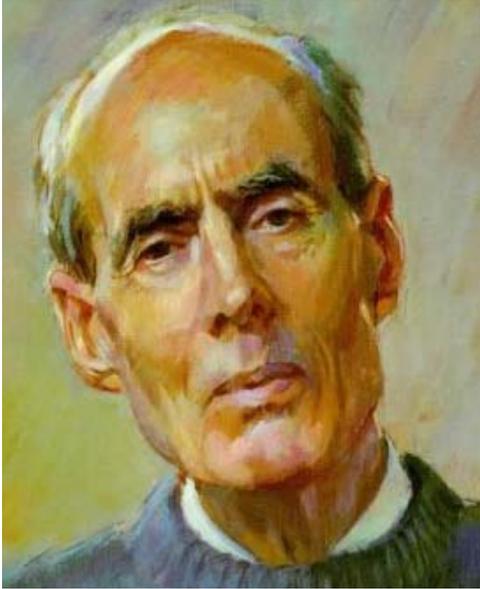
- **Supported accommodation services:** Up until the 1990s, the accommodation service provided by Cheshire took the form of a “traditional” residential Home. Over the last 10 years particularly, Cheshire’s model of service provision has changed and expanded. Today, all of our centres aim to facilitate people to live as independently as possible and with the maximum degree of choice as to how they live their lives. Our newer centres see people with disabilities living in their own apartments within a small complex with support, as required, from Cheshire staff. Our older centres are gradually being refurbished and redeveloped in line with this policy of self-contained accommodation.
- **Residential respite services:** Most of our centres provide respite rooms or apartments which are available to people who normally live in the community or who get services from other agencies. Typically, people avail of breaks of 1 – 2 weeks duration. Emergency or crisis respite is also provided, subject to accommodation being available. Based on positive feedback regarding our dedicated respite service on the grounds of Ardeen Cheshire Home, this type of dedicated service is likely to be our preferred model of respite provision for the future.
- **Community services:** In the Eastern Regional Health Authority area, we provide community-based services to disabled people in their own homes. This service, which is evolving, currently gives people support with daily living, provides information and access to specially adapted transport. It also links to respite and other facilities in Cheshire’s supported accommodation services and links to services provided by other agencies.

Organisation structure: The organisation is structured as follows:

- Overall policy, direction and governance is provided by the Board of Trustees. (The directors of The Cheshire Foundation in Ireland Limited are known as “Trustees”.)
- The Chief Executive is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation and its services.
- A team of Central Office executive staff, encompassing skills in key areas such as service quality, human resources, finance and development, co-ordinates and supports the organisation’s activities.
- Cheshire’s accommodation and respite services are delivered through 15 centres, 4 in Dublin and the remainder throughout the country. Our Community Services currently operate in the Eastern Regional Health Authority area. Each service operates under the direction and leadership of a service manager.
- We are in the course of developing a regional management structure as a means of strengthening the overall management and quality of our services. At present, two regional managers are responsible for all Cheshire services within (a) the Western and North-Western Health Board areas and (b) the

Eastern Regional Health Authority area. Additional regional management posts will be established as soon as the required funding is available.

Funding: Each Cheshire Centre is funded through its local Health Board. Our funding method is likely to change in the near future and, as part of this change, Cheshire will conclude formal service agreements with Health Boards. Funding also comes through service user contributions and through voluntary fundraising. Our policy is to seek to ensure that money raised through fundraising is used to improve the quality-of-life of service users and not to fund the core service costs.



Leonard Cheshire
1917 - 1992

A Cheshire service should:

*“give each individual person the
greatest possible choice as
regards all aspects of living”*

Leonard Cheshire, 1981