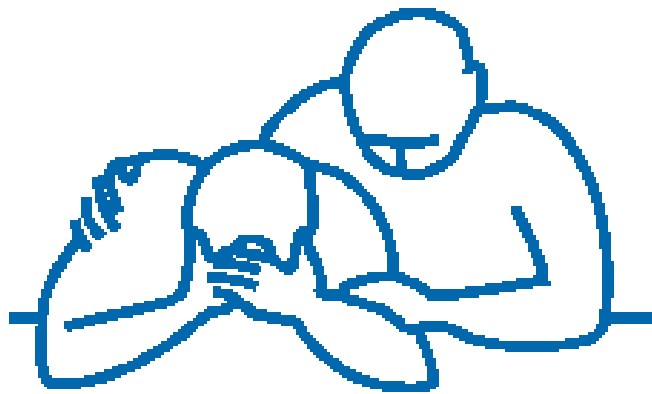


Amen Support Services Ltd. Annual Report 2010



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Amen Support Services Ltd. is part funded by the HSE

Amen Support Services Ltd, Company Registered in Ireland 489263
Directors: David Ring, Eugene Wogan

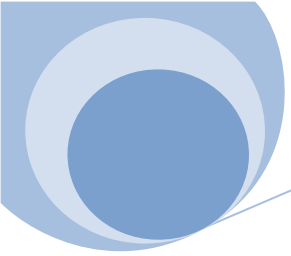


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Chairperson/Director's Report

I am delighted to present Amen's second Annual Report. It is hoped that the information contained in this report will enhance your understanding of the services provided by Amen and the ever increasing demand for services.

This report provides an overview of the different types of services provided to clients by Amen.

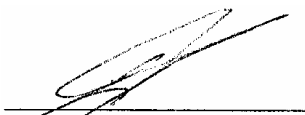
Thousands of people contact Amen to tell of the abuse they, a family member or friend has suffered at the hands of their partner or wife. The common thread running through all of these stories is the perpetrator's desire to control. Essentially Domestic Abuse is another form of bullying involving power and control. It happens in the schoolyard, in the workplace and in the home. Bullies can be either male or female. It is often difficult to understand why some people have a problem accepting that women can also be bullies in the home. Raising awareness of this issue through newspaper articles, radio and television interviews has helped to end the isolation male victims of abuse feel and empower them to speak out and look for help.

In law, a male victim faces two obstacles; firstly to prove he is a victim, and secondly, to ensure that his children are protected and do not become the new victims. Men very often remain in an abusive relationship for the sake and protection of their children.

Most men react by staying silent. Often this silence is encouraged by factors such as fear of ridicule and the realisation that it is unlikely his partner will be convicted. Even when a man has proved he is the victim, it seems his only course of action is to leave the home. He is then separated from his children and often experiences difficulty in obtaining realistic and regular contact with them. He is in fact treated as the perpetrator rather than the victim.

Domestic abuse is not a gender issue – it is a social issue affecting men, women and children.

It was with a note of sadness that the Amen committee accepted the resignation of Ms. Mary Cleary, the founder of Amen. Mary worked tirelessly and with unwavering enthusiasm for the organisation since it's founding in 1997. Her dedication was instrumental in the development of Amen. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mary for her devotion to the organisation.



Chairperson

David Ring
Director
Chairperson of National Executive Committee of Amen Support Services Ltd.

Staff Members:

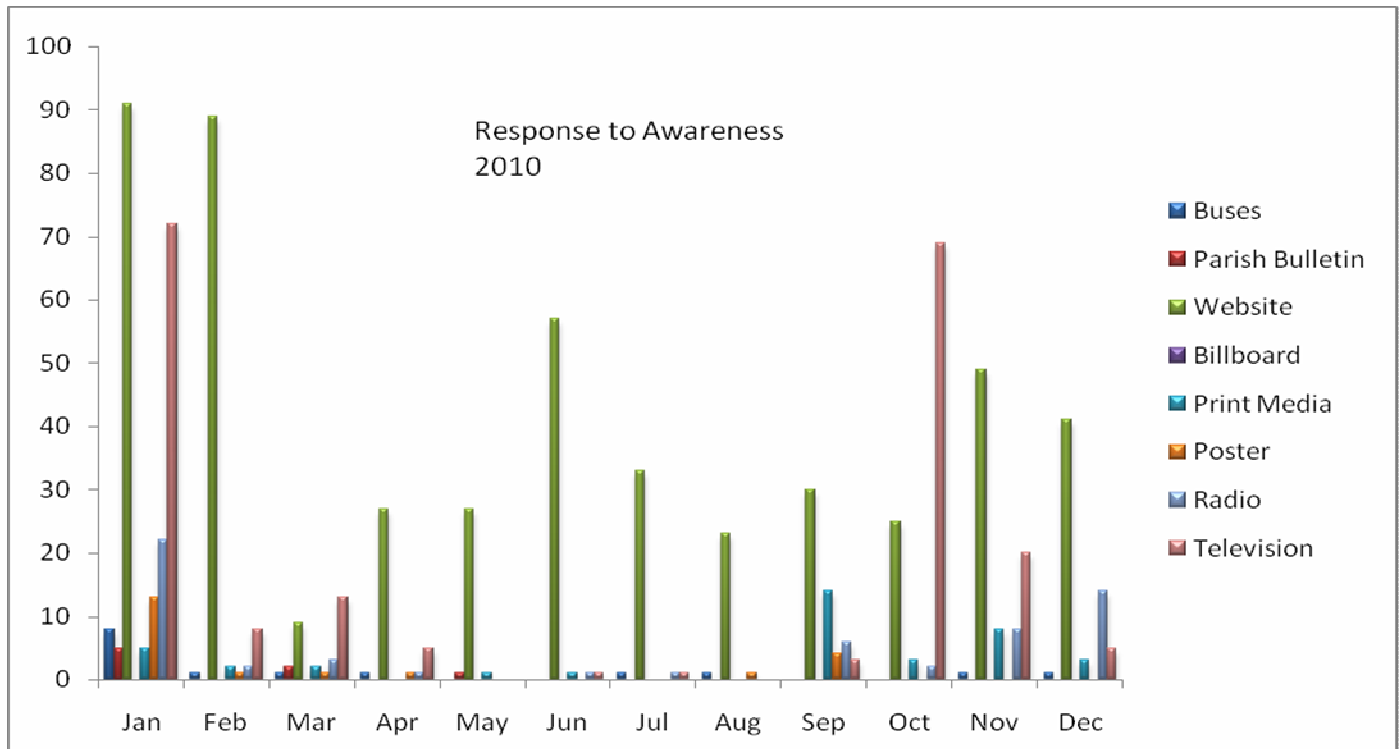
Niamh Farrell	Manager
Sandra Kelly	Support Worker
Aoife McGrath	Support Worker
Kate Markey	Clerical Officer

National Executive Committee Members 2010:

David Ring	Chairperson
Eugene Wogan	Vice – Chairperson
Margaret Howard	Treasurer
Finola O’Sullivan	Secretary
Alacoque Fitzsimons	Committee Member
Declan Keaveney	Committee Member

Activities in 2010

In 2010, Amen were still receiving a number of calls as a result of the advertisements from the campaign in 2009. Following the launch of the 2009 Annual Report, representatives from Amen conducted a number of interviews with media outlets, a total of 28 radio interviews. Several indepth tv interviews were also carried out with appearances on programmes such as TV3 Midweek and Ireland AM, RTE's Ear to the Ground and The Afternoon Show.



Fair City

In late 2009, Amen was approached by the writers of Fair City to aid in the development of their story between fictional husband and wife, Damien and Suzanne Halpin. To ensure an accurate portrayal of the violence, the writers were in continuous contact with the Manager and Support Workers in the office.

Declan Keaveney and a client of Amen spent time speaking with Maclean Burke (Damien) and other cast and crew members of Fair City, to give them an insight into the effects that domestic abuse has on a man. They received a great reception from the cast and crew members.

When the storyline went to air, Amen noticed an immediate increase in contacts to the service and an increased interest from other media sources, such as national and local radio stations as well as newspapers.



Weekend Retreat

For the June Bank Holiday weekend, nine men who had completed the course of Group Meetings with Amen attended a weekend away in Rosstown, Co. Donegal.



Over the weekend the men participated in many activities, which included seminars and surfing.

The men who attended had a very enjoyable weekend and below are some of their comments:

"I'd like to thank you and Brendan and the rest of the team at Amen for organising the weekend retreat to Rosstown. I found it a really useful and constructive event and a great follow-up to the 10 week programme I attended last year." Peter

"I really don't know where to begin to thank you for an amazing weekend. It has been a very long time since I have been able to laugh so much and I am so grateful. I would describe it as the perfect weekend." Leo

GAA Advertising

In June Amen placed an advertising hoarding in Pairc Tailteann county grounds. This hoarding has been placed on the goal line, with a great viewing point for all the GAA supporters to see.



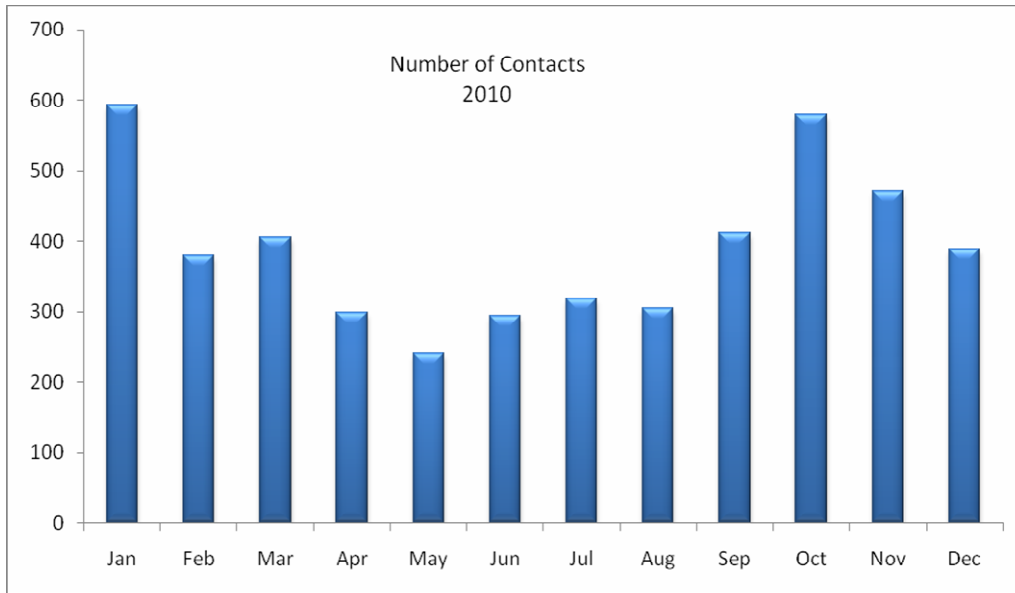
Eurospital

Amen staff held an information stand at the HSE Eurospital Football Tournament in Dublin, where health work representatives from all over Europe were present.

Fathers Count

Fathers Count Course was held in October in conjunction with Springboard Navan. All of the men who attended the course found it to be a great help and very informative.

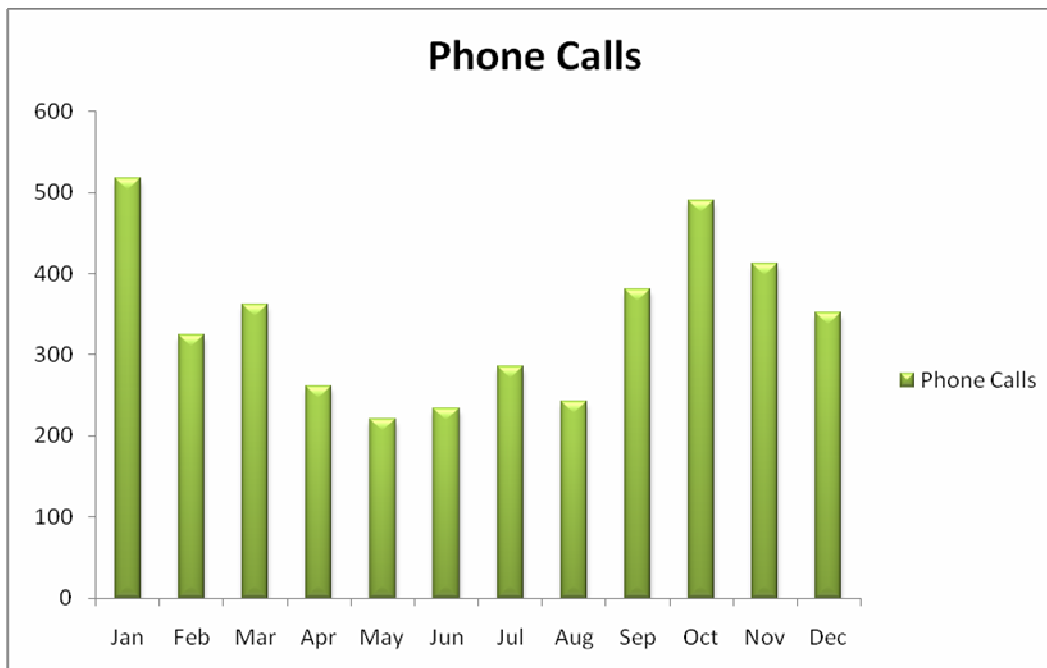
Annual Statistics 2010



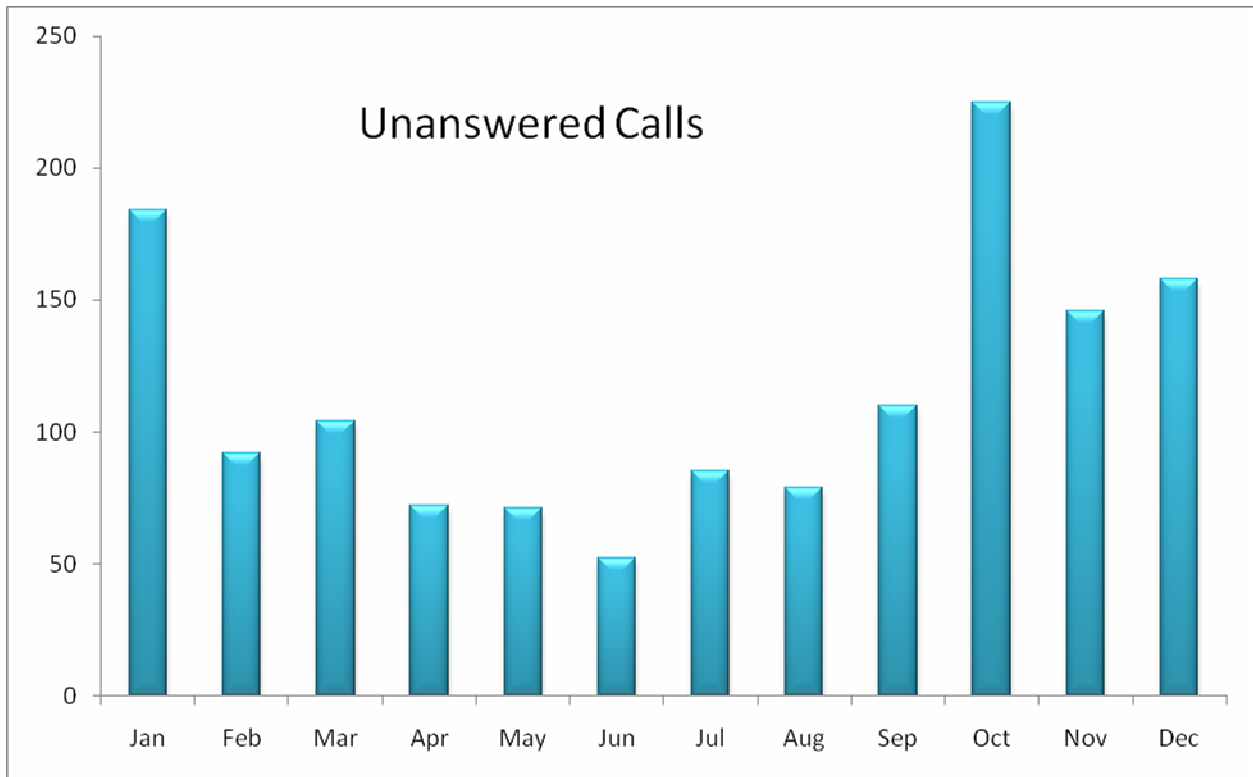
Number of contacts received each month in 2010

The Helpline

Amen operates a confidential helpline, Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. Throughout 2010, after office hours callers were able to contact the out of hours emergency helpline which was in operation until 9pm each night and at weekends. In 2010 there were 4683 contacts to our service of which 4084 were phone calls.



In 2010, the number of unanswered calls increased from 1274 to a total of 1378. These calls were from people who called the helpline after 5pm in the evening and at weekends. As we do not have a 24hr helpline, many calls go unanswered.



Types of Abuse

Men contacting the Amen helpline report physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse encountered at the hands of their female partners. Many men tell of the false allegations that have been made against them. As a result of both the violence and false allegations, many experience parental alienation.

Violence is damaging in a number of ways and not just in terms of physical injury. There is ample evidence to demonstrate that victims of domestic abuse suffer grave damage to their self-esteem. Many men say that the physical scars heal quicker than the psychological scars.

Physical: stabbings, black eyes, kicking, biting, cigarette burns, pulling out tufts of hair etc.

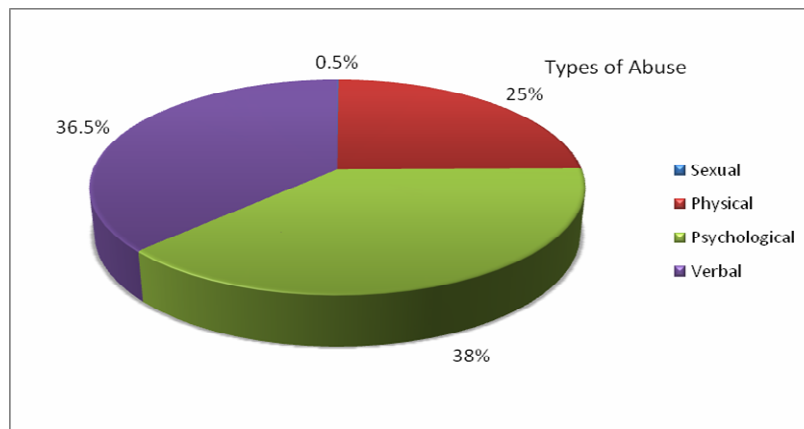
Verbal / Psychological: Not allowing him to see his family/friends, hiding his car keys, listening to phone calls, following him, accusing him of having affairs, publicly humiliating him.

Financial: control of household finances, demanding his wages after he receives them, control of joint bank account, not contributing to household expenditure.

“I keep returning to my abusive partner only so I can be a family man and see my child. I live in the hope that this terrible situation will change. I feel trapped and don’t know what to do.” Andy

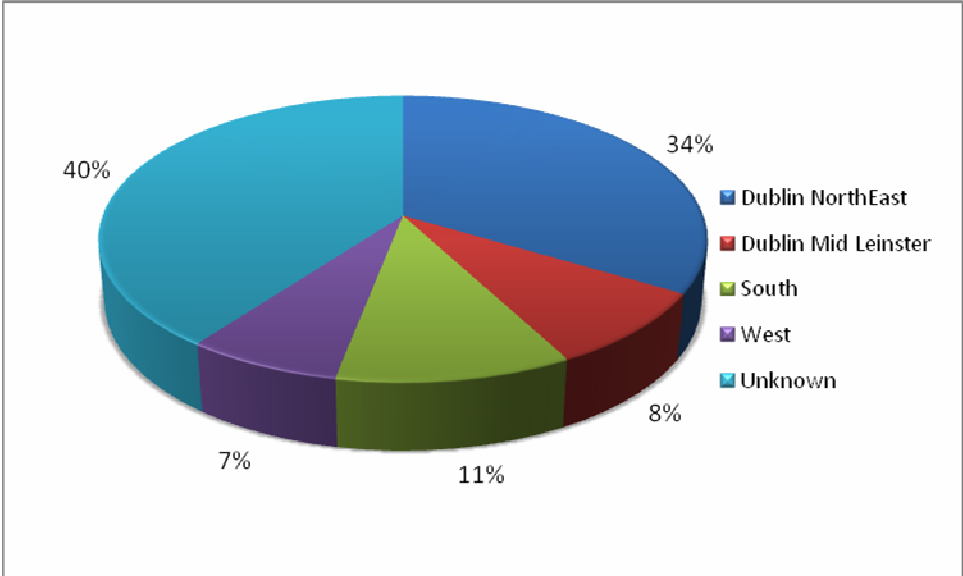
“The first time I was attacked was two months after we got married. My wife stabbed me and I ended up in hospital. When we went to the hospital my wife begged me not to say what she did and just to say it was an accident. I see that scar every day, it is a constant reminder of what my wife is.” Jack

“I have to put up with being degraded and belittled on a daily basis. I feel afraid of her and have heard her on the phone saying she will knife me. My belongings get destroyed on a regular basis. I live like I’m walking on broken glass when I am around her in case she goes off on one. I’m told on a daily basis that she’s paying for everything and I’m just a childminder. She has hit me in front of our 3 boys.” Paul

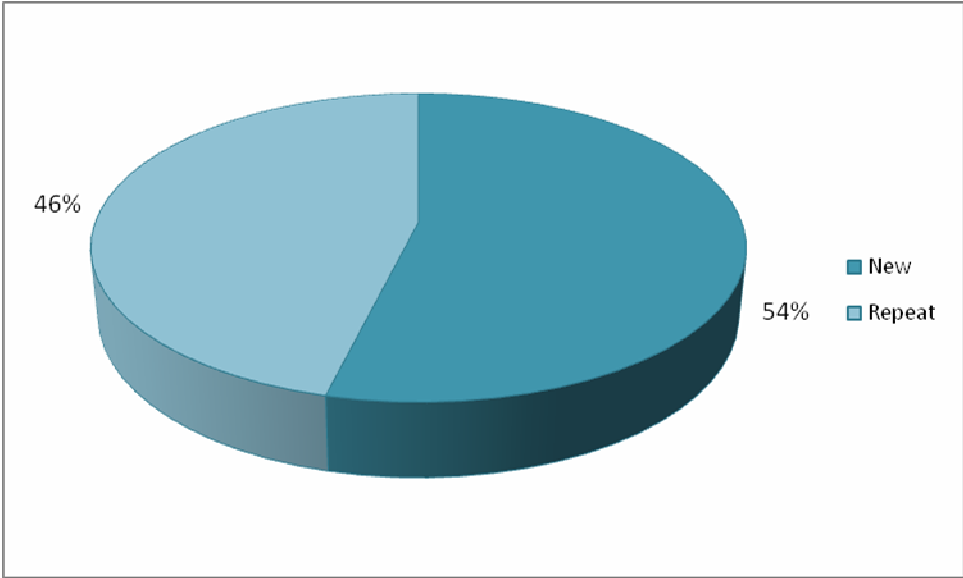


This pie chart details the abuse disclosed by callers to the helpline. Many clients experience more than one type of abuse.

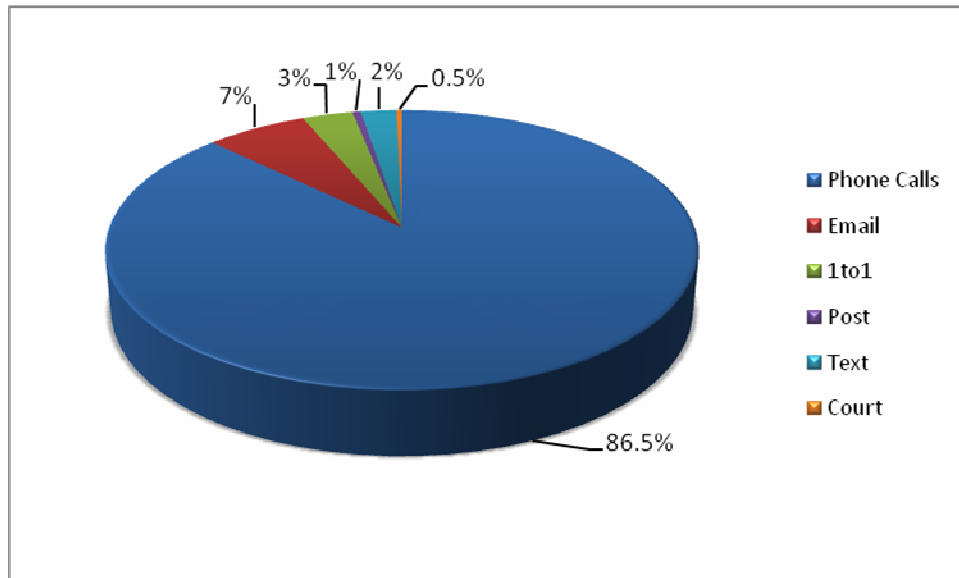
Location of client



Repeat and first time contacts with Amen

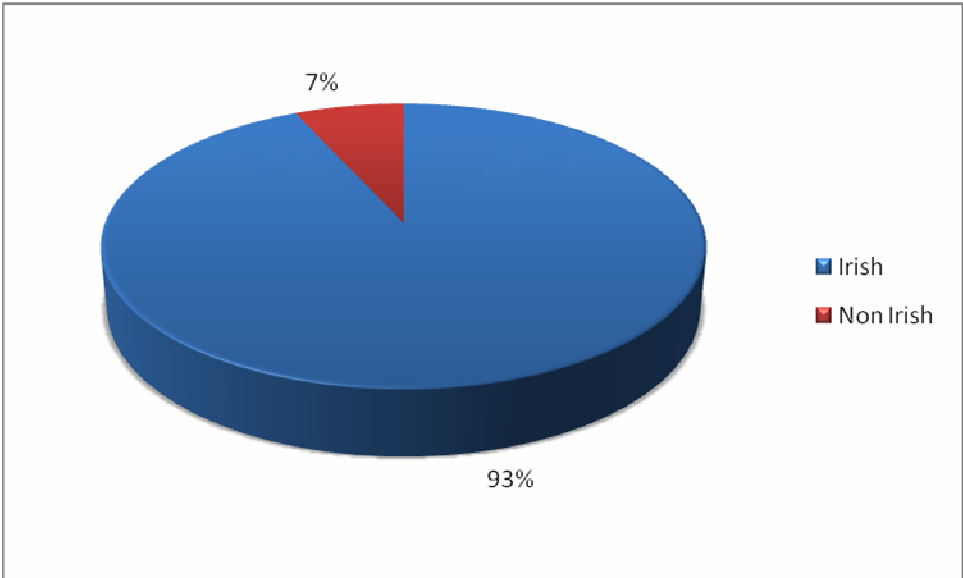


Services provided to clients

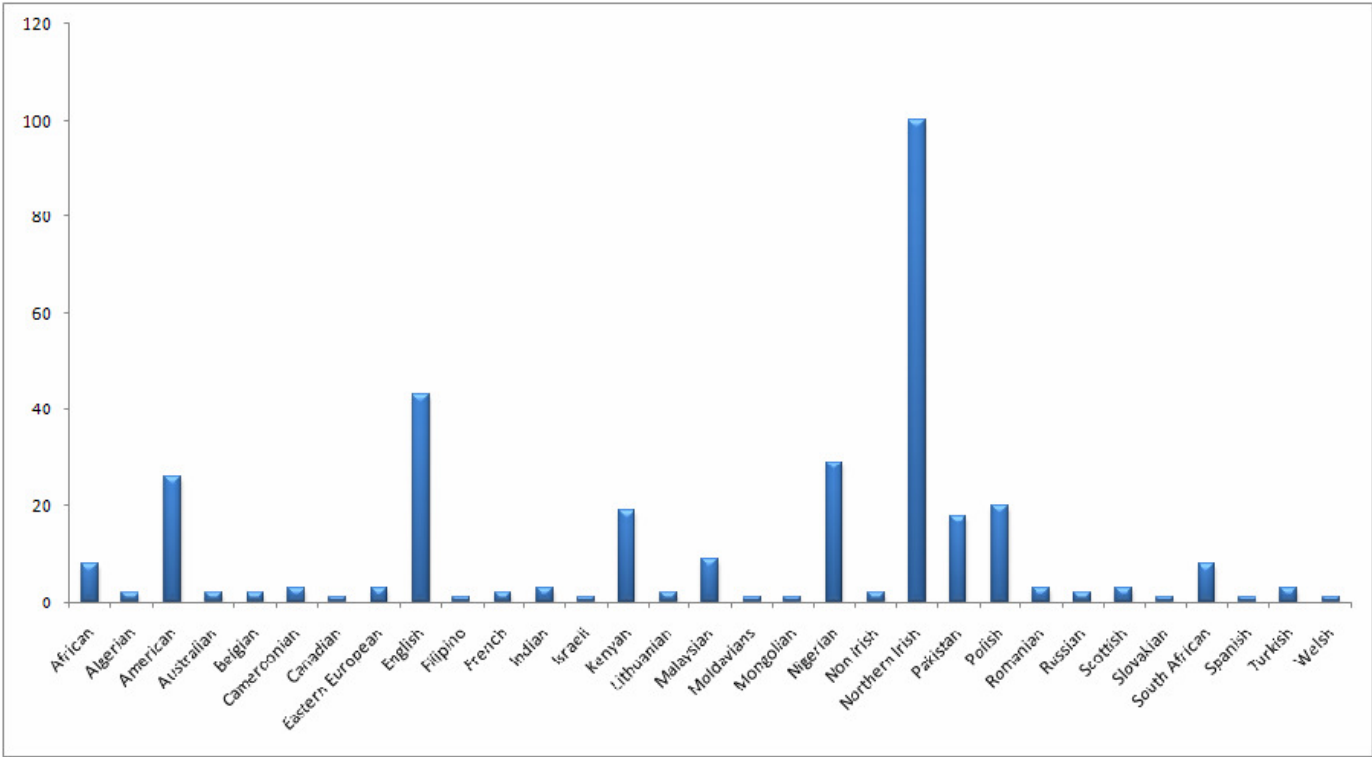


The main contact for clients with Amen is the helpline. Support workers speak to male victims, concerned family members and friends on a daily basis. The number of calls increased significantly in the period following the launch of the 2009 Annual Report and subsequent media interviews. Services offered to the men contacting the organisation include a helpline service operating from 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday, one to one meetings with clients in the office and occasionally their apprehensive family members, weekly support group meetings, a limited court accompaniment service and a counselling service.

Ethnicity of clients

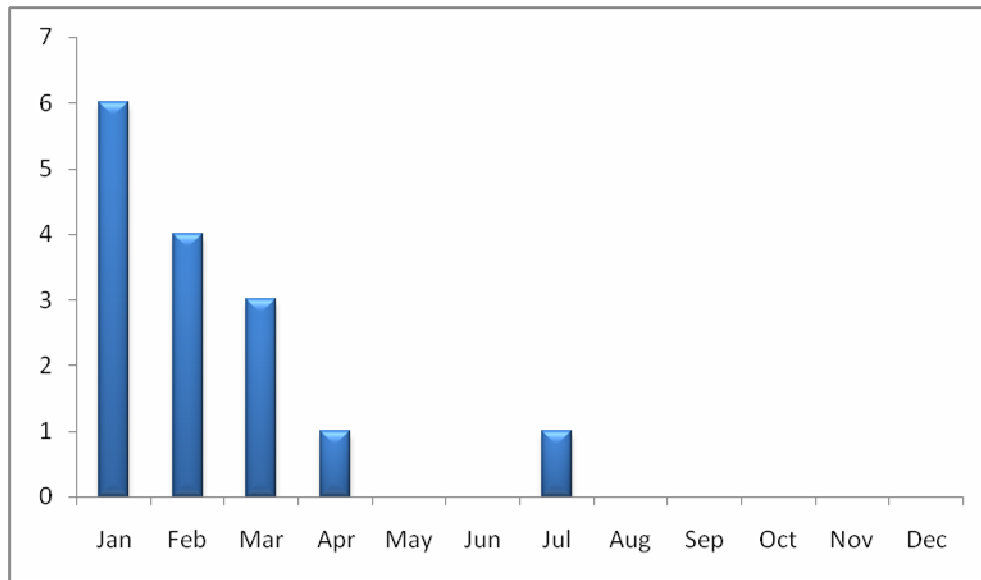


93% of callers to Amen in 2010 were Irish. 7% were foreign nationals; a breakdown of the 7% is below

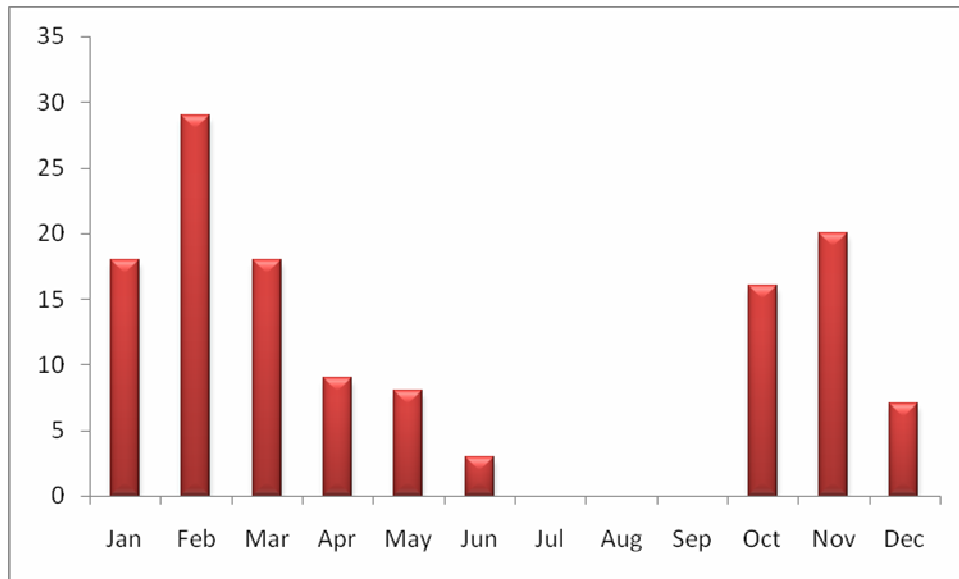


Court Accompaniment

In 2010, our court accompanier met with clients in advance of the court hearing to discuss his options and the possible consequences of those options. The court accompanier explained court procedures and assisted the man by ensuring all documentation was completed. At the request of the man, the court accompanier attended on the day of the hearing.



Support Group Meetings



Another successful Amen support group has just finished for the summer. It has been a great ten weeks of group involvement, with a different theme each week. Each theme has encouraged and challenged the group members to examine and discuss together their personal journeys.

Most men who join the group have no prior experience of a support group. Members of the group share a variety of life experiences, including unemployment, marital and relationship break down, depression, addiction etc. Their experience, though unique, has probably been encountered in some form by other members of the group.

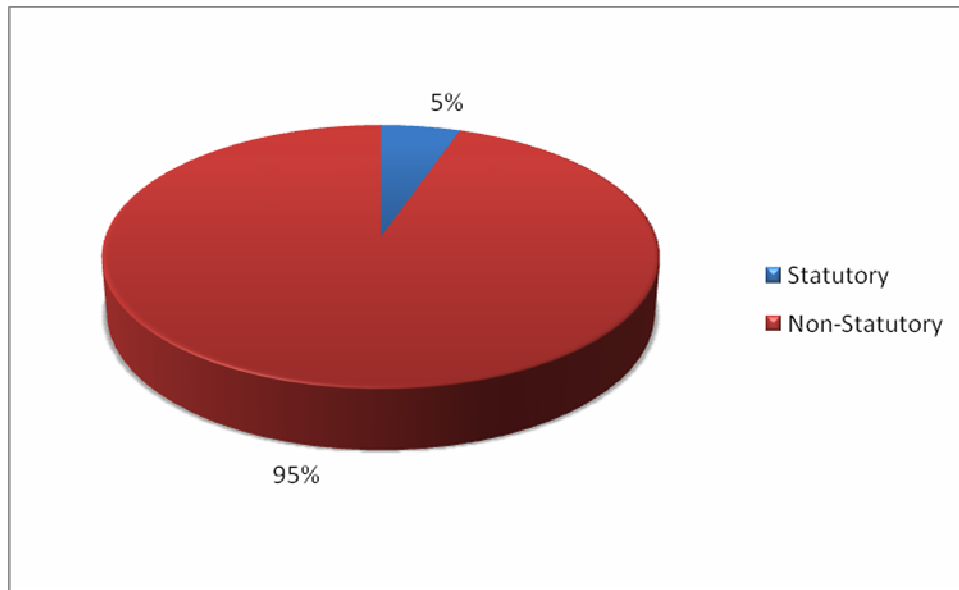
Each week the member's sense of confidence, coping skills, personal growth and development were enhanced.

The members shared from their life experiences which gave meaningful and insightful understanding into how they are coping with ongoing difficult issues in their lives. Additionally, the work and support Amen provides has had a very positive impact on their situations.

"I found the group meetings very helpful. They addressed all the issues I had experienced".
Garry

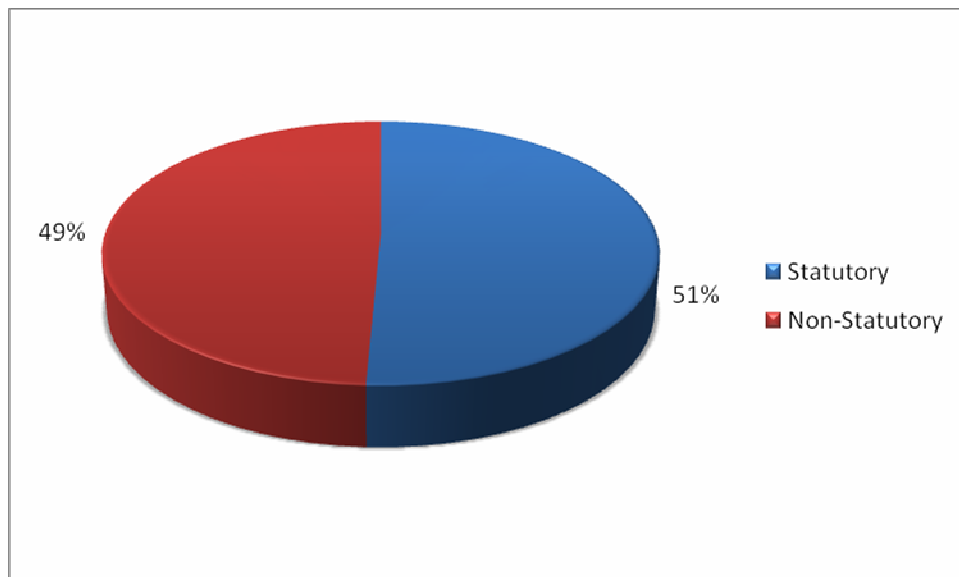
"When I first came to the meetings, I felt that I was 100% to blame; now with all the help I received I can see things in a much clearer light". Andrew

Referrals



Only 5% of the callers to the helpline in 2010 were referred to Amen by a statutory agency. 95% of callers were referred from other sources including media coverage, internet, word of mouth etc.

1569 referrals were made in 2010. Of these, 51% were to statutory agencies and 49% to non-statutory agencies. Clients were referred to agencies including Gardai, G.P. District & Circuit Court Offices, Solicitors, Legal Aid Board, Citizen Information Centres & Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC)



Note on data collected

The information relates to details and facts disclosed by clients in the process of their contact with Amen. The aim of Amen is to provide support and information to male victims of domestic abuse. Only partial information is available to Amen on the majority of men, in relation to the extent of abuse being experienced and the barriers and obstacles to help-seeking.

Amen operates in line with the Children First Guidelines which callers and clients are made aware of if disclosing child abuse.