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Monday to Thursday:

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Thinking
of returning or moving to
Ireland?

Get in touch with us!

Safe Home Programme CLG
trading as Safe Home Ireland
Charity No: 20049119
Company Reg No: 351678

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Welcome from our CEO

This month my introduction is all about gratitude! I have so many people to thank for the generosity and kindness shown to both me personally, and to Safe Home over the past month.

Firstly, our annual [National Famine Way Walk](#) was once again a wonderful success, bringing together supporters, friends and partners for a memorable weekend as we walked from Dublin to Roscommon. We were delighted to have John Delahunty of [Innisfree Housing Association](#), London, walk with us this year while also undertaking extensive fundraising in support of Safe Home Ireland. We are most grateful to John for his efforts and to everyone who supported his fundraising campaign. My thanks also go to the Friends of Safe Home, our Board and staff, and to everyone who joined us along the route. A special word of thanks also to our Ambassador, [Seán Keane](#), who joined us and entertained us with a short Homecoming concert on arrival in Strokestown House, Co. Roscommon. As always, we were blessed with glorious sunshine, making the weekend even more special.



Secondly, I had the opportunity to travel to the United States earlier this month, thanks to a dedicated grant from the Emigrant Support Programme of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. I travelled to New York, Boston and Philadelphia. My sincere thanks go to everyone who welcomed me so warmly; the [New York Irish Center](#), the [Emerald Isle Immigration Center](#), the [Aisling Irish Community Center](#); the [Irish Pastoral Centre](#) in Boston and the [Irish Diaspora Center](#) in Philadelphia. Thank you to the Executive Directors of all the centres, all the staff and volunteers for the hospitality and kindness shown to me. It was a privilege to spend time with you all. It was an extremely busy trip with one-to-one consultations with people considering returning/moving to Ireland, information sessions and meetings with volunteers, staff and board members of Centres. I want to commend the extraordinary work carried out every day by the Centres in supporting our diaspora.

The US visit also provided an opportunity to meet with the Irish Consular teams in New York and Boston to discuss Safe Home Ireland's work, emerging trends and issues affecting Irish citizens across the US. It was afforded an opportunity to discuss the work of the Irish-US Driver's Licence Exchange Campaign, and our recently published report, which is available on the Campaign website [HERE](#). My sincere gratitude to [Consul General, Gerald Angley and Vice-Consul, Deniz Ozturk, in New York](#) and [Paul Rooney Vice Consul and Morgan O'Toole Community Engagement Officer in Boston](#) for taking the time to meet and offering continued support.

Finally, it was a pleasure for some members of our Board and staff to meet with our Patron, the [President of Ireland, Catherine Connolly](#), during her recent visit to Mulranny, Co. Mayo, Thank you to our Life President, Dr. Cowley, for inviting Safe Home to be part of this special occasion It was a proud occasion for Safe Home Ireland.

Have a wonderful summer ahead, and thank you once again to everyone who continues to support our work. Your generosity and kindness enables us to support and connect with our diaspora around the world.

From Karen and the entire Safe Home Ireland team

The Magdalen Laundry Restorative Justice Ex Gratia Payment Scheme

The Magdalen Laundry Restorative Justice Ex Gratia Payment Scheme offers support to people who lived in institutions in the Republic of Ireland. The scheme is open to people who were in one of 12 Magdalen Laundries or 14 associated institutions. Payment is based solely on the length of time spent in a Laundry and applicants do not have to discuss their experiences when making an application.

Payments start at €11,500 for people who were in a Laundry for less than 3 months and increases depending on the length of time spent in a Laundry. Payments are capped at €100,000 for women who were in a laundry for 10 years or more.

Additional weekly payments are made by the Irish government. These payments are in line with social welfare and state pension payments in Ireland.

There is a Health Payment reimbursement scheme for people living outside the Republic of Ireland. This enables people who access certain treatment (not available on the NHS in the UK) to be reimbursed any money that they have paid. **It is advisable to contact the Redress Reimbursement Scheme, in advance, for guidance: Tel +353 61 461138**

For information on how to make an application please, see: [HERE](#)

Email: MRJScheme@dcde.gov.ie

Telephone: 00 353 87 165 6460

When applying, you will need to supply proof of your time in a Magdalen Laundry. If you do not have these records, you will need to contact the relevant religious order to obtain these. There is a list of orders and their addresses on the Justice For Magdalen website. There is also a standard letter on the website that applicants can complete which should hopefully help to make the process easier. See [HERE](#) for more information

This can be a difficult and emotional process for many. If you need support or guidance in relation to your application, contact: Freá Renewing Roots in the UK [HERE](#):

For people living in other parts of Britain, many of the Irish Centres will have specific support services in place for survivors, for example, *Irish in Britain* have compiled a listing of these services. See [HERE](#) for more information.

For services in other locations worldwide, contact the nearest Irish Centre and they can advise on what supports are available. For a listing of Irish Centres globally, please see the Diaspora Directory [HERE](#)

Note! If you are not online, please contact the Safe Home office directly and we will be happy to provide further information.



Assisted Decision-Making (ADM) in the Republic of Ireland

When considering a move to Ireland with someone who may need help managing their affairs or making future plans for yourself it is very important to research all aspects involved. Please see below for a brief overview of information that may be helpful in doing so.

ADM is a rights-based framework to support people who may face challenges making decisions due to intellectual disabilities, acquired brain injuries, mental health conditions, or dementia.

ADM recognises and upholds each individual's autonomy and dignity, ensuring decisions are made in line with their will and preferences.

Key Principles of the Act:

- ☐ Presumption of Capacity; Every adult is presumed to have the capacity to make their own decisions unless proven otherwise.
- ☐ Decision-Specific and Time-Specific Capacity; Capacity is assessed based on the specific decision that needs to be made, recognising that a person's ability to decide may vary depending on the issue or over time.
- ☐ Support rather than substitution; The Act promotes assisting people in making decisions, rather than making decisions for them, wherever possible.

A. Decision Support Arrangements:

The Act covers five formal decision support arrangements, tailored to a person's level of capacity and need:

- ☐ *Decision-Making Assistance Agreement*
Allows a person to appoint someone to help them gather information, understand it, and communicate their decision.
- ☐ *Co-Decision-Making Agreement*
A trusted individual shares decision-making responsibilities with the person. Both parties must agree together on the specified decisions.
- ☐ *Decision-Making Representation (DMR) Order*
If a person is found to lack capacity to make certain decisions, a court may appoint a Decision-Making Representative to act on their behalf in those specific areas.

B. Areas specific to advance/future planning:

- ☐ *Advance Healthcare Directive*
A legally binding document that allows individuals to state their healthcare preferences in advance, in case they become unable to make or communicate those decisions in the future.
- ☐ *Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA)*
Allows a person to legally appoint someone to make personal welfare and/or financial decisions on their behalf if they lose capacity in the future.

The Decision Support Service (DSS) was established under the Mental Health Commission to ensure the proper implementation of the Act. The DSS is responsible for:

- ☐ Registering all decision support arrangements.
- ☐ Supervising decision supporters and maintaining relevant oversight.
- ☐ Investigating complaints and safeguarding the rights of those who need support.

Important Note!

An application to appoint a DMR can be made through the courts for a non-resident person. **However**, very limited criteria applies. **If the person abroad for whom the DMR is being applied for has resided in the State at any time in the three years immediately prior to the application.** In these cases, the DMR application should be lodged at the court office in the county where the person was resident during that time.

The Assisted Decision-Making process can be an emotional and complex area for the 'relevant person' (person to whom the ADM relates to) and their loved ones to navigate.

For further information or to access support, contact the Decision Support Service (DSS) via; Tel: +353 1 211 9750; **Email:** queries@decisionsupportservice.ie
Web: www.decisionsupportservice.ie

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Carers Support Grant

Following up from the coverage of the **Carers Support Grant** in our May Newsletter, we had a query from a person who spent time as a family carer in Ireland:

Q. Are contributions paid during the caring period taken into account when it comes to claiming the Irish State Contributory Pension?

A. Contributions can only be counted if the applicant satisfies relevant conditions to qualify for either of the schemes below.

- ☐ For the [Home Caring Periods Scheme](#)- applicants must **already have 520** contributions - those who qualify for the State Pension on that basis may then get an enhanced payment (subject to qualifying conditions), based on the time they spent 'Home Caring'
- ☐ The [Long -Term Carers Contribution Scheme](#) where one of the qualifying conditions is that applicants must have been caring for 20 years.

For further information on the above and other supports available to carers in Ireland, please contact; Family Carers Ireland: **Tel:** + 353 57 9322 920
Email: careline@familycarers.ie OR complete the **Website** Contact Form [HERE](#)

2. Repatriation of remains to Ireland

Q. Can you take ashes to Ireland?

A. Yes, you can take ashes to Ireland. There are multiple avenues open to you should you choose:

- ☐ Ashes can be taken on a plane with you, carried either in your hand luggage or in the hold
- ☐ Ashes can be transported to an international airport in Ireland and collected from there
- ☐ Ashes can be transported via road or sea to Ireland
- ☐ Ashes can be transported to an address of your choosing by a funeral director (not a courier)

Regardless of how you choose to transport the ashes, you may be required to provide the following:

- ☐ Death certificate
- ☐ Cremation certificate
- ☐ Passport of the deceased is generally required (even if it is expired)
- ☐ Funeral Director's declaration/Sealing certificate/customs sealing letter – issued by a funeral director or crematorium, and states the ashes container is sealed and contains only the ashes of the deceased, alongside some of their personal information

Travel and Airline Considerations:

Notify the Airline - It is essential to inform the airline ahead of time. Each carrier may have specific guidelines regarding the transport of cremated remains, including packaging, labelling, and whether the urn must be carried-on or checked.

Note! - For international travel: contact the embassy or consulate of the destination country to understand their specific regulations regarding the import of cremated remains. Some countries may have additional paperwork or procedures.

Helpful Resources:

- ☐ Department of Foreign Affairs: [HERE](#)
- ☐ Citizens Information: [HERE](#)
- ☐ Irish Association of Funeral Directors: [HERE](#)

The death of a loved one abroad is particularly distressing because of the complications of having to deal with bureaucracy as well as the obvious emotional challenges. In some cases, the repatriation of someone who has died abroad will be covered by their health insurance or travel insurance policies.

The first step is to establish if such cover is in place, as the insurance company will appoint a repatriation company who will make all arrangements for repatriation to Ireland. In some circumstances, if there is no insurance cover, families may be able to apply for financial assistance from the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust: [HERE](#)

Thank you to the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust



On behalf of everyone at Safe Home Ireland, we would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the extraordinary contribution of Colin and Eithne Bell as they step back from some of the day-to-day demands of the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust.

[The Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust \(KBRT\)](#) was founded in 2013 following the sudden and tragic death of Colin and Eithne's son, Kevin, in the Bronx in New York. What began as an outpouring of community support at that time to bring Kevin home, has since grown into a lasting charity in his memory.

Through their vision, compassion and dedication, Colin and Eithne transformed personal tragedy into a source of comfort and support for thousands of families facing the loss of a loved one overseas. Since founding the Trust in 2013, they have helped bring home almost 2,500 people from all corners of the world, creating a lasting legacy that has touched countless lives.

As they strengthen the future of the Trust through the appointment of staff and a planned succession structure, Colin and Eithne remain actively involved in its work and mission. We thank them, and everyone involved in the Trust, for their remarkable service and for the support and compassion they have provided to individuals and families during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

Finally, we would like to congratulate Colin on receiving an honorary doctorate from Queen's University, Belfast. This is a well-deserved recognition of both Colin and Eithne's dedication and leadership, and of the lasting impact of KBRT. While a bittersweet award, it is also a reminder that Kevin's legacy lives on through the Trust and continues to make a difference.

We wish Colin and Eithne and their family all the very best and hope that they can take some well-earned time out now.
