

Older Persons Services Project “Staying Safe”

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Background to “Staying Safe” Project

- ◆ In a Study on Needs of Older People in Co Longford (by LCRL & OPN) the need for a minor repair service and improve safety in the homes of older people was raised.(2002 and updated 2008)
- ◆ LCRL through the Rural Social Scheme employ 55 people around the county, and undertook a project in early 2008 with the Longford CDB, whereby 2 smoke alarms were each installed in 500 homes in the county in homes of older people.
- ◆ Longford CDB agreed to organise training to the LCRL RSS workers. Longford Fire Service provided training to 14 of the workers. The alarms are battery operated and easy to install.
- ◆ 92% of fires occur in homes that don't have a working smoke alarm!

Responding to the Need

- ◆ The LCRL Rural Social Scheme workers had requests from older people seeking minor repairs on their homes to make them more safe & secure.
- ◆ Feb 2008 LCRL with LOPN applied for Dormant A/c's funds to Pobal and got €100,000 for an 18 month project to co-ordinate a minor repairs project to improve safety in the homes of older people in Co Longford. Funds secured Sept 08.

Work to be undertaken

- ◆ Installation of smoke alarms in homes of older people (Smoke alarms provided free by HSE to the project)
- ◆ Change locks on doors and put catches on windows.
- ◆ Change bulbs –dangerous for a person with a mobility problem to get up on a chair to do so.
- ◆ Minor gardening
- ◆ Installing of hand rails (customer to provide the hand rails or get them from the HSE Occupational Therapist)
- ◆ Other requests will be dealt with as they arise

Partners in the project

- ◆ Longford Community Resources Ltd
 - Rural Social Scheme workers
- ◆ Longford Older Persons Network- members
- ◆ Health Services Executive
 - ◆ - Accident Prevention Officer
 - ◆ - Public Health Nurses/ Home Helps
 - ◆ - Longford Social Services (meals on wheels)
- ◆ Longford Volunteer Centre - volunteers

How the project will work

- ◆ LCRL will employ a Project co-ordinator (Margaret Walsh) to co-ordinate the project and through the Rural Social Scheme, the smoke alarms will be installed and other minor repairs carried out
- ◆ HSE will help identify potential clients through their services that work directly with older people (public health nurses/ home helps/ meals on wheels, etc). HSE is providing smoke alarms free
- ◆ HSE will ask their clients if they would like to receive the service and gain consent. Clients will be offered other minor repair services whilst installing the alarms.

How the project will work

- ◆ LOPN will promote and publicise the project to its member older persons groups around the county.
- ◆ As the LCRL RSS workers undertake other work in their areas ie village enhancement, a large number have some time available in winter when growing season has stopped as they usually work in halls, etc at that time
- ◆ Longford Volunteer Centre has had retired able trades people offer their services so they will be tapped into and the volunteer base expanded. Out of pocket travel expenses can be provided.

How the project will work

- ◆ Longford Fire Service will train a further 6 RSS workers so there are trained installers across Co Longford.
- ◆ A Project Steering Group will support the effective delivery project & the Project Co-ordinator (LCRL, LOPN, HSE, Longford Volunteer Centre)
- ◆ Contact will be made with other relevant bodies (Co Council & CDB who have referred clients to LCRL in 2008, Longford Warmer Homes, etc)

Promotion of the Availability of the Service

- ◆ HSE Services informed and interested (PHNs, Home Helps, Meals on Wheels, etc)
- ◆ Longford Garda informed and Community Alert groups so they will inform people in the locality who may have require it.
- ◆ Older Persons Groups and Community Groups across County & to CIC
- ◆ Inclusion in Parish notes
- ◆ Promotion in local papers and Radio

Promotion of the Availability of the Service

- ◆ Link with Longford Warmer Homes (fuel poverty project insulating homes of older people and people on social welfare) to promote it
- ◆ Link with Friendly Call service to tell the clients & ask them to tell their friends and neighbours who may benefit
- ◆ LCRL will contact the people who got alarms installed in 2008 re other minor work needed
- ◆ Contact will be made with the passengers on the LCRL Rural Transport Services (17 weekly & 91% hold Free Travel Passes)

Promotion of the Availability of the Service

- ◆ Word of Mouth – tell your neighbours, they might be interested and can benefit from the project.
- ◆ LCRL will provide identification to the Project Co-ordinator and to its RSS workers and the time the work will be undertaken will be pre-arranged with them to ensure the older person is not fearful as a result.
- ◆ Always ask a caller to your door for Identification and ask to see it and ring the number of the Company to verify if it is true before admitting anyone to your home

Benefits of the Project

- ◆ Older people will be safer and more secure in their homes for longer
- ◆ Fires in homes can be reduced and prevented due to alarms.
- ◆ Awkward minor repairs will be undertaken making houses and their residents safer
- ◆ Accidents can be prevented
- ◆ Workers trained to do the work safely.

Benefits

- ◆ 600 homes of Older People to receive the service
- ◆ Already 87 requests for smoke alarms so there is an immediate demand.
- ◆ Collaboration by all parties to the project with the aim of responding to needs raised by older people in the Study

Thanks

- ◆ Thanks to LCRL's partners in the Project; - HSE, the Older Persons Network, & Longford Volunteer Centre
- ◆ Thanks for listening and please pass on this information.
- ◆ Any questions? Contact Margaret Walsh, Longford Community Resources 043 45555 or ring 087 948 0369