



SAFE HOME IRELAND
EMIGRANT SUPPORT SERVICE



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

Welcome from our CEO

March 2022 – Issue 240

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Monday to Thursday:

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Thinking of returning or moving to Ireland?

Get in touch!

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

Welcome to our March Newsletter and the beginning of the summer season. We have been blessed here in Ireland with unprecedented sunshine and high temperatures for the past two weeks and long may that continue! The sun also shone for St. Patrick's Day parades throughout the country, which ensured very enjoyable celebrations after two years of cancellations due to Covid.

Practically all travel related Covid regulations and requirements have been lifted now in Ireland. Travellers to Ireland are no longer required to show proof of vaccination, proof of recovery or a negative PCR test result upon arrival. Also, the requirement for completion of Passenger Locator Forms has now been lifted.

We are united in disbelief at the events that have unfolded in Ukraine since 24th February. We have all witnessed the utter devastation and unprecedented forcible displacement of millions of people, mostly women and children. Ireland has stepped up to the mark very quickly and any Ukrainian citizens who comes to Ireland will be provided with initial supports and services. There has been an outpouring of voluntary offers of help too to support those who will call Ireland home, for as long as that might be needed.

Charlie Bird, a former chief reporter with RTÉ, was diagnosed with motor neurone disease in 2021 and since his diagnosis, Charlie has received an outpouring of support nationwide. With this in mind he set up a campaign to climb Croagh Patrick, Co. Mayo - '*Climb with Charlie*' to both raise funds for two charities close to his heart - Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association and Pieta, Ireland's national suicide prevention charity but also to show support and solidarity with those who climb mountains every day due to their physical and mental health challenges. On 2nd of April, individuals and groups are taking part in climbs and walks across Ireland with 164 climb locations confirmed to date. See *Climb with Charlie* for more information to join/organise your own climb be it in Ireland or abroad.

Last June, at our Facebook live Poetry event, we launched our *Planned Giving Campaign* and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who have signed up and donated to date. We are humbled by your kindness and generosity and as a gesture of goodwill we are organising a *Friends of Safe Home Ireland* 'complimentary and thank-you concert' with our Ambassador, Seán Keane, in December – more information to follow on that in the coming months!

Other upcoming events include a [Home to Mayo 2022](#) event in Mulranny, Co. Mayo on 2nd May, which will also include a guided walk on the Greenway, a talk on emigration and a concert with Seán Keane that evening. One week later on 12th May in the [Ardhowen Theatre](#), Enniskillen there will be another concert with Seán Keane and local band [Tully](#) – please follow our social media channels for updates on both or contact our office for more information too!

Until next month, take care, stay safe and keep in touch from Karen and all the staff and board of Safe Home Ireland



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme



An Roinn Ceilteach Éireannach
Department of Foreign Affairs

Carer's Support Grant – Ireland

The Carer's Support Grant (formerly called the Respite Care Grant) is an annual payment (current rate is €1850) for carers who look after certain people in need of full-time care and attention. Carers, in receipt of, or entitled to receive, Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit or Domiciliary Care Allowance on the 1st Thursday in June are paid the Grant automatically on that date.

However, a carer, not in receipt of one of the above payments may still qualify for a '**standalone**' Carer's Support Grant. The 'standalone' CSG is not means tested and applicants do not have to meet strict Habitual Residence Conditions to demonstrate that they have cut all ties abroad and intend to remain in Ireland. In this regard, the standalone grant may be relevant to some people who have returned to Ireland on a temporary basis to care for a family member.

To qualify for the CSG, the carer must;

- be aged 16 or over
- be 'ordinarily resident' in the State – **please see below for more clarity on this**
- care for the person on a full-time basis
- care for the person for at least six months. This period of care must include the first Thursday in June
- live with the person they are looking after or can be contacted quickly by a direct system of communication (for example, a telephone or alarm) between their home and the home of the person they are caring for
- not be employed or self-employed for more than 18.5 hours per week
- not be attending a training or educational course for more than 18.5 hours per week,
- not be in receipt of Jobseeker's Benefit or Allowance or be signing for credited contributions
- not be living in a hospital, convalescent home or other similar institution
- be fit to care.

To apply: The application form for the Carers Support Grant (CSG1) is available online or by contacting the Carers Section in Longford; **Tel:** +353 4333 40000 **Email:** respitecare@welfare.ie

Website: [HERE](#)

Meeting the 'ordinarily resident' criteria for Carer's Social Welfare payments

The Carer's current home must be deemed to be in this State, albeit temporarily for caring responsibilities.

Determining whether a carer is 'ordinarily resident' in Ireland requires that all the circumstances of the particular case(s), including the valid right and purpose of the immediate residency requirement be considered in order to build up an overall picture of the Carer's position in Ireland.

Global Health Insurance Card – UK

In post-Brexit Britain, for most people, the UK Global Health Insurance Card (UK GHIC) replaces the existing European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for new applications.

You can use the GHIC to access medically necessary state-provided healthcare when you are visiting an EU country or Switzerland. Medically necessary healthcare means healthcare that cannot reasonably wait until you come back to the UK. Whether treatment is necessary is decided by the healthcare provider in the country you're visiting.

If you have an existing EHIC, it will remain valid until the expiry date on the card. You can apply for a new card up to 6 months before your current card expires. There is no charge for the GHIC. Applications can be made online via the NHS website; [HERE](#)

Note! If you are planning to travel and would like cover, ensure to apply for your card in time, as it is currently taking longer than usual to process applications due to high demand.

Police Checks/Garda Clearance requirement by social housing providers in Ireland

* For Safe Home Ireland Social Housing Applicants*

We are once again highlighting the fact that most Local Authorities and social housing providers in Ireland will require prospective tenants to have Police/Garda clearance (or the equivalent, depending on the country you are currently living in).

These checks can often take some time to be carried out. For example; In the UK, the relevant clearance is known as a Subject Access Request (S.A.R) and can take up to 30 days to be processed. There is no charge for the S.A.R, applications, whether online or by post

When you submit a S.A.R application you will need to include copies (not originals) of at least two different documents which confirm your identity, current address and signature. These could be:

- A passport or driving licence which shows your date of birth and signature
- And **IF** you have lived at your current address for less than 10 years, a utility bill, bank, mortgage or credit card statement which is dated within the last six months and which shows your current address

More information on **UK Subject Access Requests**, including the application form can be obtained via: **www.acro.police.uk**; To request an application form; **Tel:** 02380 47 9920

Email: customer.services@acro.pnn.police.uk **Applications can be made online or by post.**

Please contact the Safe Home office if you are having difficulty with the application process, we may also be able to facilitate your application for a S.A.R online

Some people may already have police clearance* or the equivalent, if you have this and want to give your housing application the best chance of being successful, please forward to our offices to include on your housing file. ***The clearance must have been carried out within the past 12 months***

Important Note! In our experience of dealing with Housing Associations throughout the country, particularly in most recent times, only applicants who have recent police checks/equivalent will be made offers of accommodation. We understand that some applicants may have difficulty in applying for the required checks so please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries whatsoever.

The application procedures will of course be different depending on what country you are based in, so, you may need to research things for yourself in your host country. If you live close to an Irish Welfare & Advice Centre abroad, they too will be happy to offer assistance.

Returning to Ireland – Registering with a GP

There is a shortage of doctors in general practice in many areas in Ireland at present. In cities, GPs cannot cope with the level of demand and in rural areas, there are simply not enough GPs in practice. This can cause a big issue for people moving home, where GP practices state that they are either “not taking on new patients” or are operating a waiting list system for new patients.

For GP visit card/Medical Card applicants who run into the difficulties as outlined above, if they can give details of 3 GPs/practices that they have tried and failed to register with, the HSE will have to allocate a GP to them.

For private patients seeking to register with a GP when they move here, there is no assistance in terms of the HSE allocating a GP, it will be a case of ‘shopping around’. Some practices may offer a ‘walk in’ service so this is worth exploring too.

See HSE for more information – [HERE](#)



Postcard from Abroad



Long ago, I followed the best man a woman could pray for to his country, far from my own; we came in the hopes of a decent life. He (John*) had to do a year's compulsory army service and it was difficult for me on my own caring for a young son and a new baby. Released from uniform, John found a good job and we felt our chance had come. Then political conflict brought war. The town he worked in came under the weight of the enemy army, his job was gone and more trials awaited us. We managed through, living with his parents who had had reservations about his marriage to a 'stranger' but I was secure in his love.

John found another job and gave it his utmost as the former management had left some corrupt practices behind. To his boss's delight, he set up his own honest, well worked out systems. We always confided in one another, and he encouraged me to write.

We moved to a small flat and, although we had scant of furniture, we were happy to be living on our own. He began to have headaches, an eye specialist told him it was probably eye strain, but John should have an encephalograph. He did so and was informed there was nothing on it. I thought, conscientious as was his nature, he was just overworked.

John and his boss went to London to do a presentation and while there he suffered a blackout. His boss took him to Harley Street where a specialist said return immediately with all his data as there was evidence of a growth; the hospital had missed the indicator and we had lost nine months. It became obvious he was losing his sight. We borrowed money to return to London for brain surgery. Two months later my soul mate was dead and our family faced an approaching Christmas without him.

Life as a widow was hard, coping with the sorrow of confused kids along with my own sense of desolation and scant sympathy from parents engulfed in their own sadness. I worked several jobs to make one salary. My daughter and I wanted to return to Ireland when the Tiger was roaring, but those who could have helped us did the opposite. I now see my rent going up by 14% every two years and feel trapped and frustrated on an inadequate pension, inadequate heating in winter and the same with cooling in summers passing 40 degrees. Then, I found out that there was social housing available via Safe Home Ireland to return home to a place I constantly long for, and I now wait in anticipation.

With much love xx

Census 2022 – Ireland

The census is a count and account of everyone in Ireland on census night, which will take place on Sunday 3rd April. A Census Enumerator will deliver a census form to homes between 28 February and census date and they will return to collect completed census forms between 4 April and 6 May.

[Census 2022](#) has a new feature – the '**Time Capsule**'. Completely voluntary, the Time Capsule is a dedicated space at the end of the census form for you to leave a message – for your descendants/future generations/historians. Your message can be about anything you want, to anyone you want.

If you have difficulties with any aspect of the Census form, speak to the Enumerator when they come to collect the form or **Tel:** LoCall: 0818 202204; **Email:** census2022@cso.ie