



PFSC

supporting people in need

Annual Report 2015



WELCOME

IT'S A PRIDE AND HONOUR TO WELCOME YOU TO OUR 2015 REPORT

The 2014/15 was a great year for the Polish Family Support Centre. Our expansion to Leith Walk gave us an opportunity to help many more Polish families in Edinburgh. The help and support of local organisations and links we established will provide us with consistent and ongoing service for the Polish local community. We worked hard with our partners at the local and national level to improve the access to services offered to our beneficiaries. We are proud of what we achieved so far and we hope to even more expand our services.

As you all know there is a great number of Poles living in Scotland, particularly in Edinburgh and Lothians and together we can help to make them feel like home.

Therefore, I would like to say a Big Thank You to every organisation who made us feel welcomed on Leith Walk, Edinburgh. Big Thank You to every member of PFSC team, and volunteers for their hard work during the past year.

Although the year has been financially challenging, we proved that by volunteer's engagement and motivation to help Poles in Edinburgh we can give them needed security and comfort when living abroad.



Andrew Kocaj
Director
Polish Family Support Centre

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ABOUT PFSC

INTRODUCTION

Polish Family Support Centre is a charity organisation established in 2009. Since Poland joined the European Union in 2004, there has been a great shift of Polish people coming to the United Kingdom to start new and better life. However due to language barriers and cultural differences they find difficult to adapt to a new life situation, living away from their homeland, which often leads to different mental health problems, anxiety, low self-esteem, low confidence and depression. This on the other hand, greatly impacts and affects children's development and wellbeing. Because of this both parents and children need a support system in place to help them in the first stages of settling in. This is why the organisation was set up to make sure people have all the support and help in their native language, to limit any barriers and unequal access to services and to give them confidence to change their life for better.



We are a growing charity focusing on providing support to the Polish minority in Scotland. We offer comprehensive support for disadvantaged people through offering counselling, support and advocacy services, principally targeting the difficulties Poles face after leaving their native country.

PFSC put emphasis on 3 core aspects of its practice:

ADVOCACY: Confidential advice and information to clients on a wide range of issues. General advice covering, benefit schemes, financial topic, welfare, education, housing, debt and employment. Advice is provided face-to-face, by telephone and email.

MENTAL WELLBEING:

Counselling and advice for people who struggle with different problems, barriers and challenges that affects their daily life. We offer emotional and mental support, help and advice for Poles who find difficult living abroad and coping with different problems e.g. language barriers, cultural differences, stress, anxiety, depression, addictions.

SOCIAL SUPPORT: Support groups and individual advice for children and young people who struggle with different problems and find difficult to adapt to a new situation.

Advice for parents about parenting skills. The consultations aim is to strengthen family ties, make parents aware of their children's problems and provide support and advice for the whole family to improve their wellbeing.



POLISH FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE with a limited funding, offered 1298 sessions of comprehensive support to the largest ethnic minorities in Scotland. Since we expanded to new premises our services became more popular than ever. We find very difficult to meet over demand for the services. However, we hope that we will be able to reduce waiting time to access PFSC services and offer support to everyone who needs it. We encouraged many volunteers to help us to support our community and our local neighborhoods. They provided 2056 hours of volunteer time which is another achievement for the year !



2015

PFSC

FACTS AND FIGURES

PFSC OFFERED: Services provided to the community

Counselling	Advice	Workshops	Phone/Skype
370	250	86	183
Drop in Visits	Social Help	Help via E-Mail	Referrals
208	8	193	34

Sessions

1298

Hours of volunteer time

2056



WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES



LEITH ACADEMY

Support People and Local Communities

THE POLISH BOYS GROUP took place in Leith Academy High School, with 14 Polish students aged 11-17 participating.

The group was held on Friday from 11am-11.50 am. Additionally, after the group activities, each student had the opportunity to participate in individual sessions from 12pm-12.50pm. The students participating in the groups find difficult to adapt to a group, school, new culture and country and had low school attendance. The focus of the groups was to talk to students and help them solve any problems that they may have and also discuss problems reported by their parents.

Support groups that took place in partnership with Leith Academy were mainly aimed at Polish students' working with Polish youth worker. The aim of the group is to increase school attendance of children and young people, help them adapt to Scottish education system, to improve communication between students and teachers, integrate students and educate of the principles prevailing in Scottish education.

This year we were also able to access support from the Junction. It is an organisation for children and young people aged 12-21, facing different problems that have an impact on their lives. Polish students were very happy to participate in the activities in the Junction and were encouraged to access their support. Thanks for inviting us!

We can Support Local Neighbourhoods!



YOUTH IN ACTION



WORKSHOPS

Workshops were organised during the school year, in the Polish Family Support Centre for children and young people aged 11-17. The group is for boys and girls, and is held in the Centre on Leith Walk every Friday between 1:30 pm – 3pm. The individual consultations are available to parents after group.

The activities mainly involve group work, with the elements of individual work. Every week, the group topics are discussed with participants and other problems faced by participants are evaluated during the workshops. The activities are combined in the way to show the theoretical and practical way of understanding the problem. Methods used during group work include: creative thinking, cognitive behaviour, pantomime and educational games.



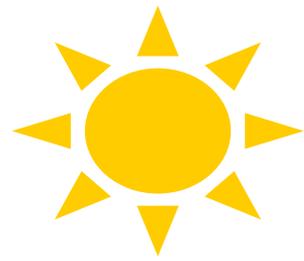
The fact that we are able to build trust with the children is priceless and it makes the project very successful. We show children that they are not alone, that ever Friday they can come to our workshops and they can share how their last week has been and what they struggled with, it creates a relation and a bond between the peers. We talk about our good and bad days and about problems that we try to solve together.

The number of participants increases from year to year and in the near future, we plan to partner with other local organisations and schools in Edinburgh which will help us in reaching our target group and promote other services available to youth.



COUNSELLING & ADVOCACY

Comprehensive approach

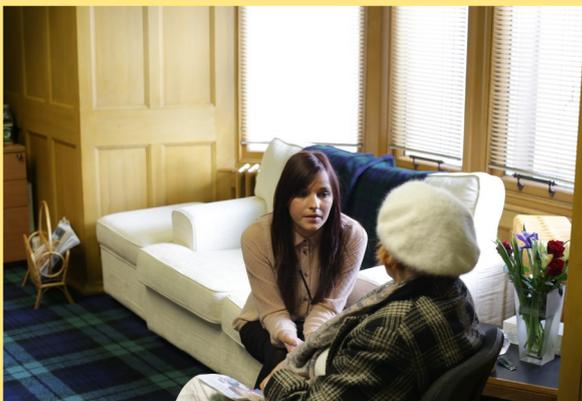


PFSC has been working with disadvantaged Poles for over 6 years and gained knowledge and understanding of this particular minority ethnic group. The difficulties related to living in a different country are complex and affects Poles mental health and emotional wellbeing, thus has impact on their family wellbeing.

We aim to help people identify problems and help cope with challenges and barriers of their daily life, thus **IMPROVING THEIR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH**. We offer face to face support as well as support by skype and email.

We are also aware how difficult it is to settle in a new country, to start this new life and cope with challenges that arise. It is crucial to **INFORM** people where to start and where to go to give the family sense of security and comfort. From helping in translations, making phone calls, filling in applications to **ADVICE** in native language and **HELP** to get started. These all contribute to a family wellbeing and significantly **REDUCE THEIR STRESS AND ANXIETY** when living in a different country.

We **BUILD TRUST** with our beneficiaries, understand them and know how to help. Our comprehensive approach, and giving personal touch to all the services gives people confidence and belief that they can cope with life difficulties.



Satisfaction Feedback

How do you rate our services?



We listen to our beneficiaries constantly!

Here is a feedback of 18 beneficiaries about Workshops...

PFSC PROVIDES...

a high quality services for our service users. We are proud to create a trust and safe environment to our beneficiaries.

Fresh and open minded organisation which can recognise demand, and serve the public. We listen to our community, people in need and meet their expectations. We are proud to share our knowledge with others. We are proud to be unique and we are happy to learn.

During private sessions, face to face, in group meetings or befriending, we create safe, comfortable and friendly environment which has been recognised by our beneficiaries.

Individual consultations:



4.3

Workshop At the Leith Academy:



4.5

Workshops at the PFSC office:



5.0

Counselling services:



5.0

OVERALL:



4.7





With support of local and national organisations we were able to deliver the following projects to our beneficiaries.

SUPPORT GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The focus of the project were young people who find difficult to settle in a new country. The aim of the project was to reduce stress and anxiety related to leaving native country, help integrate with the local peers and make it easier to open up to Scottish society and culture.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - SCOTLAND

Mental help and support via Skype for Polish people in Scotland who are not able to visit our Centre. The project offered free consultations for people in a difficult financial situation who are not able to pay for mental health services. The project aimed at improving the self-esteem of clients, reducing stress and barriers of moving abroad and also overcoming insecurities regarding the job and integration with the local community.

FIGHT DEPRESSION WITH FAMILY HELP

Help and support for people who are directly affected by depression as well as their family members to make sure they understand what their relatives are going through. We believe that by family help people are more likely to recover and continue the process of recovery with the needed support and understanding of their loved ones.

NEW AND BETTER LIFE

Comprehensive mental and emotional help and support for Polish individuals living in Edinburgh and local area who struggle with mental problems and social deprivation.

OUR PROJECTS

Support People and Local Communities

ADVOCACY SERVICES FOR POLISH COMMUNITY

Advice workers provide confidential advice and information to clients on a wide range of issues. General advice, covering, benefit schemes, financial topic, welfare, education, housing, debt and employment. Advice is provided face-to-face, by telephone and email services.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR POLES

Support and help for Polish individuals and families facing different challenges related to moving to a different country. The services involved: counselling, advocacy and family support e.g. individual consultations for parents, support groups for children and young people and family consultations.

VOLUNTEERS SUPPORT PROJECT

In order to develop PFSC support services, we recruited and supported a bank of volunteers to take on a variety of support roles in our organisation and help to provide much needed services to the Polish community.





OUR EVENTS





FUNDERS AND DONORS

Accounts to 31st March 2015

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

**VERY MANY THANKS TO ALL FUNDERS AND DONORS
WHOSE GENEROSITY HAS ENABLED US TO CARRY OUT OUR WORK OVER THE PAST
YEARS. WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT.**

FUNDERS

FUNDER'S LOGO

Income:

• POLISH GOVERNMENT	£25,073
• CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL	£12,840
• JOHN WATSON TRUST	£784
• DR GUTHRIES ASSOCIATIONS	£1,000
• SCVO	£3,002
• OTHER INCOME	£6,061
• EVOT	£1,850

TOTAL INCOME £50,610

Expenditure:

• STAFF COSTS	£34,422
• RENT AND PROPERTY COSTS	£10,255
• EVENT EXPENSES	£532
• TRAVEL COSTS	£1,286
• GOVERNANCE COSTS	£711
• OFFICE RUNNING COSTS	£3,280

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £50,486



John Watson's Trust

DR GUTHRIE'S ASSOCIATION



CHARITY INFORMATION

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PFSC STAFF LIST - MAY 2015

MARTA NOWAK - PROJECTS COORDINATOR

KAROLINA WOLSKA - SUPPORT WORKER

DIANA NOWAK- COUNSELLOR

ANDREW KOCAJ- ADVICE WORKER

ANNA LISINSKA— ADMIN WORKER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ANDREW KOCAJ

KYLE REID

JUSTYNA CZARNACKA-WOJTYSEK

MALGORZATA RACZYNSKA

JAKUB ZEGADLO

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

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