**NCBI inSight Magazine. Winter 2021.**

**Page 1:**

 — Front cover, contains the inSight Masthead which reads

NCBI InSight Magazine 90 Vol. 24, No. 4. Winter 2021

There is one picture on the cover. Our full page picture shows two girls, Bevin Murphy (left) and her cousin Kye. They both have red hair. Bevin on the left is holding her cheque for NCBI and Kye is holding a long cane. The story is carried on page 20.

**Headline:**

‘Bevin’s ‘Chop’ for Charity

***End of page 1 (Front Cover).***

**Page 2:**

**Headline:**

**inSight Contents:**

NCBI Policy & Advocacy

Pages 3 - 5

 • Seeing your Career

 Campaign.

 • E-Scooter Legislation.e

 • Budget 2022 — What NCBI is Seeking.

With this text there is a thumbnail picture which is a copy of a picture we carry on page 3. It is described thus: This is of taster picture for our article on page 3. It has a pink border. It shows four men and one woman at the launch of Seeing Your Career Campaign. The caption reads: Speakers at launch: L-R: Chris White, NCBI CEO; Breandan Ward, Tanaiste Leo Varadkar, Madeleine McNamara and Ross McCarthy.

NCBI Services

Pages 6 - 11

 • NCBI Connection Network Befriending Service

 • Never Too Old to Grasp

 Technology.

 • New Men’s Network Peer Group.

 • Vision Sports’ Zero Limits event.

 • Specialist Medical Retina and Intravitreal Injection Therapy Service Opens in Donegal.

 • The RISE Project.

There is a thumbnail picture with this text, it is a copy of a picture we carry on page 8. It is described thus: This is our taster picture which is a graphic of a mens network, for our article on page 8, New men’s Network Peer Group. It has a dark green border.

NCBI People Profile

Meet the NCBI staff

behind the phones: Stephen Sammon and Debbie Fitzpatrick. See Pages 12-13.

This text is carried on a light green background and there are two thumbnail pictures displayed here. They are described thus: 1. This is one of two taster pictures for our NCBI People Profile. It shows NCBI’s Stephen Sammon. It has an aquamarine border. 2. This is the second taster picture for our NCBI People Profile its features Debbie Fitzpatrick. It has an aquamarine border.

NCBI News & Events

Pages 14 - 16

 • Learning from International Mobility Training Centres.

 • NCBI 90th Celebrations.

There is one thumbnail picture carried with this text. It is described thus: This is our taster picture for our NCBI News and Events section. It shows four people at the NCBI 90th Celebrations. The picture has an orange border.

NCBI Retail

Pages 17 - 18

 • NCBI Successes.

 • The Value of Visual Merchandising.

There is one thumbnail picture carried with this text. It is described thus: This is our taster picture for our NCBI Retail section it shows the interior of an NCBI retail shop with racks of clothing. The picture has a purple border.

NCBI Foundation

Pages 19 - 20

 • The Power is in your Will!

 • Thanks Mary and Paddy.

 • Bevin’s ‘Chop’ for Charity.

These is one thumbnail picture carried with this text. It is described thus: This is our taster picture for our NCBI Fundraising section. It shows two people Mary O’Boyle and Paddy O’Connor, two great NCBI fundraisers, standing either side of an NCBI Celebrating 90 years of NCBI poster. The picture has a dark blue border.

Technology

Pages 21 - 24

 • Microsoft Launched

 Soundscape App in Ireland.

 • Highlights from Apple’s

 Recent ‘Unleashed’ Event.

 • Smarthub — Making Every Day Accessible.

There is one thumbnail picture carried with this text. It is described thus: This is our taster picture for our NCBI Labs section. It shows an array of smart speakers. The picture has a dark red border.

At the foot of the page is our NCBI inSight imprint which carries the inSight logo to the left. It reads:

 NCBI inSight

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***End of page 2.***

**Page 3.**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Policy & Advocacy section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Policy & Advocacy section at the top left of page 3. It is a magenta abstract background with white text and a black key line it reads: NCBI Policy & Advocacy. There is a magenta bar running from this across the page.

**Headline:**

Seeing Your Career Campaign

**Story:**

NCBI recently launched its Seeing Your Career Campaign which includes a suite of resources aimed at tackling the challenges faced by people who are blind or vision impaired when trying to obtain or retain employment.

The campaign was launched by An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar with speakers including Ross McCarthy, Programme Manager at Salesforce, Breandan Ward and Madeleine McNamara, both of whom are NCBI Service users.

Internationally, Ireland has a low employment rate with only 24% of people who are blind or vision impaired in employment. This can be due to employer assumptions, inaccessible recruitment practices, limitations of statutory supports etc. NCBI is keen to gain statutory, employer and public support to tackle these barriers, dispel myths and create a more inclusive workforce.

NCBI’s Seeing Your Career report proposes a series of recommendations which if implemented would see the employment rate increase. One recommendation includes the roll-out of a person-centred fund to support people with sight loss to access technology that they can take with them throughout their career, rather than the current employer funded system. Other recommendations focus on challenging misconceptions and ensuring fully accessible recruitment practices.

NCBI has produced a series of resources to assist employers, inform job seekers and influence policy development. These include Seeing Your Career report, Tips for Employers on how to recruit and retain staff with a vision impairment, Guide for Job Seekers and Guide for Employers on the current suite of statutory supports available.

All are available on our website www.ncbi.ie

**This story carries two pictures. They are described as follows:**

Picture 1.

This is picture one of two which we carry at the top right of page 3. It shows five people, one standing at a podium. The photo caption reads: Speakers at launch: L-R: Chris White, NCBI CEO; Breandan Ward, Tanaiste Leo Varadkar, Madeleine McNamara and Ross McCarthy.

Picture 2.

This is a picture of Tainaiste Leo Varadkar speaking from a podium with an NCBI Banner to his right. We carry it at mid right of the page.

***End of page 3.***

**Page 4:**

At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Policy & Advocacy section. It is described thus: This is our section header for our NCBI Policy & Advocacy section at the top left of page 4. It is a magenta abstract background with white text and a black key line it reads: NCBI Policy & Advocacy. There is a magenta bar running from this across the page.

**Headline:**

E-Scooter Legislation

**Story:**

E-Scooters are becoming more popular but the legislation around their usage needs to be robust to ensure the safety of disabled pedestrians and those with mobility issues are prioritised.

NCBI, Irish Wheelchair Association and Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind have joined together to call on Minister for Transport, Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan, TDs and Senators to review the proposed Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2021.

Currently, the Heads of Bill fails to:

 • Expressly prohibit the use of E-Scooters on footpaths or shared spaces.

 • Require any audio systems to alert people to the presence of

 E-Scooters.

 • Require specific parking infrastructure meaning E-Scooters could be parked haphazardly on our footpaths and streets.

The Bill allows for a maximum speed limit of 20 kilometres per hour, which is much higher than other European cities.

The Access Advocacy Network, which is a monthly meeting of NCBI Service Users, have reviewed and approved the key asks within a briefing paper that has been sent to key political representatives.

During the debate, a variety of TDs raised the concerns we had highlighted. The next step is to meet with more TDs to bring further awareness to the gaps in the current proposed legislation and have amendments made as it makes its way through the Oireachtas.

You can get involved by contacting your local TD and asking them to support the calls made by NCBI, Irish Wheelchair Association and Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind.

**These is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This is a picture, carried at the top right of page 4, of an E-Scooter parked on a pavement where there is a line of street-planted trees. There is a headline on the picture which reads E-Scooter Legislation. At the bottom right of the picture is the NCBI Corporate Logo with the tag line NCBI Working for People with Sight Loss.

***End of page 4.***

**Page 5:**

**Headline:**

Budget 2022

**Story:**

NCBI believes ‘Budget 2022’ measures announced in October fall far short of the needs of people living with sight loss.

NCBI believes this Budget will not reduce the many structural barriers preventing people who are blind or vision impaired from fully participating in society. Issues around inclusion and accessibility to the built environment and digital world will remain, as will their heightened risk of living in poverty.

The €5 increase in basic social welfare payments is not enough to offset the increased cost of living. NCBI has continuously called for the publication of the Cost of Disability Report which it believes will show the cost of living for people who are blind and vision impaired is much higher than the supports offered by Government.

While the Budget did not remedy many issues, there were some welcomed announcements including the efforts to improve the educational experience of children and young people with the increase in availability of SNAs in schools and ICT grants to schools.

NCBI also welcomed the pilot basic income guarantee scheme for artists as fear of further poverty can stifle creativity and opportunities.

The investment of €250m to tackle public health waiting lists is welcome given that ophthalmology outpatients is one of the longest waiting lists. As of January 2021, 16,739 people were experiencing a delay of 18 months or more for ophthalmic outpatient appointments. The number of people who are on such waiting lists consistently increased since 2017.

There was a commitment of €105m allocated for disability services but NCBI believes it falls far short of what is outlined in the Disability Capacity Review report to ensure disability services can meet current and future demands.

NCBI Advocacy Team will continue to lobby Government, opposition and other policy makers to amend and improve policies and services for people who are blind or vision impaired.

But you can help us too – join your Local Advocacy Network or stay informed by joining our National Advocacy Network. Details on either option are available on www.ncbi.ie

**There is one picture carries with this story. It is described thus:**

This is a picture carried at the top of page 5 which shows the Ministers Michael McGrath and Paschal O’Donohoe holding the presentations of Budget 2022 on Budget day. The caption reads: L-R: Ministers Michael McGrath and Paschal Donohoe presenting Budget 2022 on Budget day.

***End of page 5.***

**Page 6:**

At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Services section. This is our section header for our NCBI Services section at the top left of page 6. It is a dark green abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Services. There is a dark green bar running from this across pages 6 and 7.

**Headline:**

NCBI Connection Network — Befriending Service

**Story:**

NCBI’s Connection Network is a telephone befriending service that was set up during the Covid-19 pandemic in response to isolation that was highlighted as an issue for many of our service users.

The aim of the befriending service is to reduce loneliness for our service users, create a connection between NCBI and service users, and increase service users’ social network.

So how does the befriending service work?

When a service user expresses interest in receiving calls they are matched with a trained volunteer. Their volunteer provides them with a personal, weekly phone call for a friendly chat. Service users and volunteers alike share stories of their past and present, chat about how their week has been and create a connection through building rapport. Through the befriending service a link is created to NCBI services for the service user, should any needs arise through the weekly calls.

The befriending service has proved to be very popular amongst service users with almost 130 referrals received since its launch. We have received very positive feedback from service users and volunteers alike. Service users report that they have created a close connection with their volunteer and look forward to their weekly calls. As well as this, our volunteers report that they find it very rewarding to give some of their time each week to connect with NCBI service users who they have bonded with. The overall success of the Connection Network befriending service will continue to grow and support NCBI’s service users because of the dedication of our volunteers.

If you are an NCBI service user who would like to receive calls from a volunteer as part of the befriending service, please contact your Community Resource Worker or call NCBI’s Info Line on 1850 33 43 53. If you would like to volunteer for the befriending service please contact NCBI’s Volunteer Coordinator at geraldine.byrne@ncbi.ie or call NCBI’s Info Line on 1850 33 43 53 for more information.

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This is a photo illustration for or article on page 6. It shoes a persons hand dealing on a smartphone. The picture has a dark green cast over it.

***End of page 6.***

**Page 7:**

**Headline:**

Never Too Old To Grasp Technology

**Story:**

Kathleen Kavanagh, a sprightly 100-year-old, came to NCBI for assistance with reading. Kathleen’s vision deteriorated as she lives with Age-Related Macular Degeneration and she required a new magnifier to help her read.

After an assessment in the Drumcondra office, Kathleen received her Humanware 5 Explorer, an electronic device that allows magnification of print by enabling the user to change font size, background colour and photographing what you are looking at. Kathleen took a while to get used to this but was supported and encouraged by her grandson, David.

Kathleen is now using this successfully to be able to access her RTE Guide, read cookery instructions, her post and has started playing cards again using this device with her neighbours. Having reached such a milestone birthday this year, Kathleen wanted to share with others how technology can make such a difference in a person’s quality of life, no matter what age they are!

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This picture carried at the right hand side of page 7 shows Kathleen Kavanagh who is 100-years-old using technology to enable her to read. Kathleen is using her Humanware 5 Explorer to allow her to magnify print.

***End of page 7.***

**Page 8:**

At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Services section. It is described thus: This is our section header for our NCBI Services section at the top left of page 8. It is a dark green abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Services. There is a dark green bar running from this across pages 8 and 9.

**Headline:**

**New Men’s Network Peer Group**

**Story:**

NCBI Services is delighted to announce that a Men’s Network Online Peer Group was launched this summer.  The Network gives an opportunity for men with a vision impairment to meet and share their experiences. The aim of the group is to give the opportunity for socialising, friendship, and peer support around living with sight loss.

Peer groups have benefits such as gaining a sense of empowerment and self-confidence, as well as support around living with sight loss. In a peer group setting, members can discover resources and information that can meet their needs and gain practical advice and information from those in a similar position.

John Pepper, from Haggardstown Co. Louth, said: “Sadly in 2020, I experienced severe sight loss. I was advised to contact NCBI. I have found the empathy, support, and guidance of NCBI to be of huge value in assisting me to come to terms with my new reality.”

“When Jean Kiernan, my Community Resource Worker mentioned the prospect of participating in NCBI Men’s Network to me, I was delighted with the opportunity. So far we have had six meetings and I have found the experience to be very rewarding. We all see this as an opportunity to share information about ourselves, and we learn from each other how best to cope and deal with the situation we find ourselves in. I find myself in the company of men who have very similar interests which has been great for developing friendships. Albeit – remote friendships at the moment! I look forward to our fortnightly meetings.”

NCBI is always eager to provide peer support at every opportunity. The Men’s Network Peer Group meets every fortnight on a Wednesday morning at 11am. The sessions take place on Microsoft Teams. If you are interested in joining the Men’s Network, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Connolly on megan.connolly@ncbi.ie or on NCBI’s InfoLine 1850 33 43 53.

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This is an illustration for our article on page 8. It shows a graphic of 11 male figures in a network. The picture has a green cast.

***End of page 8.***

**Page 9:**

**Headline:**

Vision Sports’ Zero Limits Event

**Story:**

NCBI and Vision Sports Ireland held the inaugural Zero Limits Track Day in Mondello Park on September 23rd. This was organised as part of the European Week of Sport and in association with Motorsport Ireland, Sport Ireland and the events corporate partner Windsor Motors.

It was a day to remember as 35 blind and vision impaired participants had the opportunity to get behind the wheel of red-hot dual control cars to take on the Mondello Park circuit. Then the participants became rally co-drivers alongside some of Ireland’s finest rally drivers in 10 top-spec rally cars, including a Mk II Escort, Fiesta R2 and R5 and an Evo X.

For some it was their first time ever to drive while for others it was their first time in a long time. The excitement and buzz of the experience was palpable from all participants.

Vincent Mulligan said: “It was a fabulous experience to drive again and I was surprised all my driving skills came back to me. I did at least five laps in the Mini at speed. The instructors were patient and gave us clear instructions.”

Mairead O’Mahoney said: “It is something I have always wanted to do and never got the chance until now. I think I was going too fast for the instructor, especially around the corners! I enjoyed the adrenaline from it!”

Senator Martin Conway said: “I got a real sense of what it’s like to drive and now appreciate the level of concentration and skill needed to be a driver. I enjoyed pressing the accelerator and feeling the car go faster.”

Megan Rooney, 18, said: ”It was brilliant to have the opportunity to do this. I’ve always had such a big interest in cars and my biggest dream was to drive and thanks to Vision Sports Ireland today, my dreams came true”.

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This photograph carried at the top of page 9 shows two people sitting in a rally car, both are wearing safety helmets. The woman in the passenger or navigator position, is Megan Rooney and she is looking toward the camera. She is wearing a mask with ‘Mickey Mouse’ figures on it.

***End of page 9.***

**Page 10:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Services section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Services section at the top left of page 10. It is a dark green abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Services. There is a dark green bar running from this across pages 10 and 11.

**Headline:**

Specialist Medical Retina and Intravitreal Injection Therapy Service Opens in Donegal

**Story:**

NCBI was delighted to attend the opening of the Specialist Medical Retina and Intravitreal Injection Therapy service in Donegal for patients with a diagnosis of Diabetic Retinopathy.

For a long time, NCBI had been highlighting the need for a local service as the travel to Sligo University Hospital for regular injections was extremely time consuming and exhausting on patients.

This pilot service has emerged through a partnership with HSE CHO Area 1, Letterkenny University Hospital, Sligo University Hospitals, Sláintecare and the National Diabetic Retina Screening service. It will genuinely make a real difference to the quality of life of patients.

Consultant Ophthalmic Physician Dr Darren McAteer, the consultant lead for the Sláintecare Injection for Diabetic Retinopathy project in Donegal said: “I am delighted to see the positive impact that having the service much closer to home has had on our patients and their families. The increased capacity for intravitreal injection has the simultaneous benefit of easing pressure on the busy intravitreal injection service in Sligo.”

Danny Cahill, NCBI National Services Manager said: “As patient advocates we are delighted with this new service. Not only will it hopefully lead to better outcomes for patients but also offer crucial services locally. Whenever services are offered locally barriers are removed. We wish and hope the service expands in the years to come.”

Danny O’Donnell explained what this service being in Letterkenny will mean to him. He said: “It would take me over three hours to travel to Sligo for my appointment. Coming back was worse with being uncomfortable after the procedure. My son had to take time off work to take me. I can’t fault the service I got in Sligo. It was just the travel. This facility that’s now on our doorstep in Letterkenny is state of the art. The team here treat me like royalty when I come in and I want to thank all the team here.”

If you would like any further information about the Diabetic Retina Screening Service - www.diabeticretinascreen.ie  Freephone 1800 45 45 55 (choose option 4).

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This picture, carried at the top right of page 10 shows shows five people, two women and three men, standing in a room. The captions reads: L-R:  Helen Kavanagh (Diabetic Retina Screening Programme), Joe Travers (Deputy General Manager LUH), Dr. Darren McAteer Consultant Ophthalmic Physician), Danny Cahill (NCBI) and Colette Murphy (Diabetic Retina Screening Programme management).

***End of page 10.***

**Page 11:**

**Headline:**

The RISE Project

**Story:**

NCBI were thrilled to receive €100,000 from the Late Late Toy Show Appeal this year for the delivery of a new programme supporting wellbeing, resilience, activity and self-advocacy to children and their families.

The RISE Programme is being coordinated by Jennifer Wilson, whom we caught up with recently to hear about how the project is progressing!

Jennifer said: “Before joining NCBI, I earned a master's degree in UL in Marketing, Consumption, and Society. I've worked in NCBI for a little over a month now and the staff have been extremely supportive as I adjust to my new position. For me, vision impairment is a whole new experience that is both challenging yet so interesting. With the RISE Project, my mission is to assist not just the children and young adults, but also their families. The initiative is about instilling hope, support, and joy into the lives of others.

“I’ve already developed many new skills. For example, I created a video for the “Late Late Toy Show” demonstrating NCBI’s work. I recently learned the power of workshops, both online and in person and how they open space for children to connect with others on the same level.

The RISE project embodies two strands, one includes the delivery of programmes/workshops and the second strand will include increasing the capacity of support structures to ensure meaningful inclusion while also delivering a menu of multimedia information resources to support the key participants. I look forward to this new chapter with NCBI along with future collaborations”.

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This picture carries at the top right of page 11 shows Jennifer Wilson the NCBI Coordinator for the RISE Programme.

***End of page 11.***

**Pages 12 and 13:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Profiles section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Services section at the top left of page 12. It is an aquamarine abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Profiles. There is an aquamarine bar running from this across pages 12 and 13.

**Headline:**

People Behind the NCBI Infoline

**Story:**

(This story is carried across pages 12 and 13, we will show the break in text at end of page 12 and start of page 13.)

One of the positive interventions and legacy from Covid19 was the establishment of the NCBI Infoline 1850 33 43 53. This single entry point to adult services, children services, LABs, Fundraising and general queries has helped ensure callers get through to the correct team as quickly as possible. But who are the staff behind the phones? inSight chatted with Stephen Sammon and Debbie Fitzpatrick to learn more.

Stephen who is based in our Dundalk office and has worked in this role for five years explained: “I enjoy the variety of issues I have to deal with and chatting to the various callers. The sense of fulfilment of helping service users and their families is very rewarding. Even the most basic thing like issuing a replacement magnifier can mean so much to a service user. I recently received feedback via email from a family member to thank me for sourcing a replacement magnifier for her mother. The daughter told me that the family and nursing home staff were brought to tears by her mother’s joy and excitement of receiving the replacement magnifier. Helping with things like this and receiving thanks from truly appreciative people makes the job all the more satisfying.

Debbie is the receptionist in NCBI Head Office in Drumcondra, Dublin 9, for the past four years. Debbie told inSight: “I enjoy being front of house meeting blind or vision impaired people every day and hearing their stories. The Infoline picks up calls from all across the country so I can get a call from anyone outside Dublin and put them through to my colleagues around Ireland depending on their query.”

**What are the most common requests you receive on the Infoline?**

Stephen comments that “there are a lot of them, but often people are calling to make a new referral or re-referral to NCBI, looking for magnification devices to assist with reading, advice and support on benefits and entitlements, calls from healthcare workers asking how to refer their patients, requests for letters of blind registration, or callers ringing to ask what services NCBI provide.” Likewise, Debbie receives similar calls with many callers expressing surprise they can refer themselves but Debbie also takes orders for the shop products, receives financial donations and directs people who are making clothing or furniture donations to their local shop. **(page 12 ends here.)**

**(Page 13 commences here.)**

**What story or issue stayed with you when you passed on a caller? And why?**

For Stephen it was a recent call from an elderly lady in her 90s who contacted NCBI for help and support. “It was a heart-breaking call for me as the lady was crying through the entire call, so much so I could tell that she was shaking. I talked to her for a while, providing reassurance, we could try and help her but I tried not to ask too many questions. The most heart-breaking thing she said was that she tries not to sleep at night due to fear of waking up blind in the morning. My heart was truly broken for that lady, after the call I was reduced to tears myself.”

As NCBI works with young and old, Debbie recalls chatting with a very grateful father whose teenage child, who had been working with the Children’s Team for some time, had just gone on public transport into Cork city with their friends by themselves for the first time. The dad was thrilled his daughter was becoming so independent.

**What has been the most random query you have heard?**

Stephen remembered receiving a call in the early days of Covid19 lockdown in March 2020. “This was not a very pleasant call, but I have not forgotten it either.  It was from a gentleman who wanted NCBI to contact its service users nationwide and advise them to stay indoors during the pandemic. I asked why and he said that blind people were a danger to others and at a higher risk of passing on Covid19. I could not believe what I was hearing. The gentleman went on and on about a blind man from his locality who was leaving his home on a daily basis and going to the supermarket etc. The caller was appalled at the thoughts of that person touching products in shops with the potential for leaving traces of Covid19 on packaging.  I know we were all quite fearful of Covid19 then, but I was genuinely surprised by his level of ignorance and presumption that Covid19 was passed on more because blind people live in a more tactile world. When in reality people who are blind or vision impaired are more vulnerable because they have to touch more surfaces than others.”

Debbie and Stephen are part of the wider staff behind the NCBI Infoline who are always happy to help, answer queries or direct calls. If you wish to speak to any of them, please feel free to call 1850 33 43 53.

***Please note: In January 2022 all 1890 numbers will be discontinued, so our new Infoline will change to 1800 911 250.***

**There are two pictures carried with this story. The first on page 12 is described thus:**

This picture carried at the top right of page 12 shows a man, Stephen Sammon, sitting at a desk answering a telephone.

**The second picture on page 13 is described thus:**

This picture carried at the top left of page 13 show a woman, Debbie Fitzpatrick sitting at receptions in NCBI’s head office answering a telephone.

***End of page 13.***

**Page 14:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI News and Events section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI News & Events section at the top left of page 14. It is an Orange abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI News & Events. There is an Orange bar running from this across pages 14 and 15.

**Headline:**

Learning From International Mobility Transport Training Centres

***(This story is carried across pages 14 and 15. We will show where the text break occurs at end of page 14 and start of page 15.)***

**Story:**

Increasing a person’s independence and confidence to navigate public transport has been central to NCBI’s individual orientation and mobility work.

We know through this work that the experience of many people who are blind and vision impaired attempting to access transport, or the public streetscape is often difficult. These challenges are not unique to those with sight loss. Other people with reduced mobility also find it difficult to utilise public transport effectively.

As part of the solution, NCBI is seeking to establish, with support from the National Transport Authority (NTA ), a mobility transport training centre for vision impaired people, and for all those with mobility issues or a disability of any type. The Wayfinding Centre (TWC), as it will be known, will compliment already existing initiatives like the Travel Assistance Scheme.

In its preparatory phase, NCBI has reached out to look at similar centres operational in other countries to learn from them and to establish what is best practice.

**International View**

Other transport training centres, operating globally, have successfully demonstrated that transport training systems, located indoors, are having a positive impact on their users.

**Melbourne Leigh Garwood Centre, Australia:**

The concept of a transport training centre for people with sight loss first originated in Vision Australia / Seeing Eye Dogs in Melbourne, Victoria. It has received acclaimed feedback since its opening in 2017, as a proven design for training opportunities for people with sight loss. NCBI have been working with our colleagues at Vision Australia to learn from their experience in the design and build of the Leigh Garwood Centre. The Centre is administered and managed by Vision Australia and is located in a 14,000 square foot warehouse. Modules include a mock-train and platform set up, escalators and stairs, a variety of surfaces, marked and unmarked crossings and a mock streetscape.

“The centre means that my guide dog Humphry and I can practice getting on and off the train safely as many times as we liked without the pressure of other commuters or the fact the train may leave. We could take it at our own pace, and build Humphry’s confidence, and my confidence before taking it out and practicing in the wild” said, Ashley, Vision Australia Service User at the Leigh Garwood Training Centre.

**Nevada Regional Transport Commission Centre, United States.**

This centre supports not only people with sight loss but is available pan disability and to any person that presents with specific access needs. The centre additionally provides education opportunities for all local transport operators and companies in disability awareness training.

The 18,000 sq ft. centre also offers a space for Independent Living Skills training in ‘Angela’s House’ – a smart house within the streetscape representative of that of a local home, for training in cookery, home skills and cleaning. ***(End of page 14 here).***

***(Start of page 15 here.)***

**London PEARL Centre, UK.**

The PEARL (Person-Environment-Activity Research Laboratory) Centre is not a training centre but a unique laboratory, run under the auspices of University College London, which was set up to explore the ways in which people interact with their environment. It is a massive space – around 43,000 square feet and 33 feet high – in which they can create life-sized environments – a railway station, high street, town square – under controlled conditions, so they can examine how people interact with the environment and other people in these types of places.

The newly opened centre can change the profile, type and material of the floor, simulate lighting of any colour and intensity, create sound from the tiniest bird song to the most massive explosion, include other senses, such as smell, and much more. PEARL is able to study in detail how people actually interact with the environment and each other, to test detailed differences in the environment – such as space, colour, lighting, sound – under controlled conditions, so that systems can be designed to meet the need of all transport users / urban system users.

**The Wayfinding Centre**

The Wayfinding Centre (TWC) has now secured planning permission and it is hoped to be operational in 2022. TWC will provide a safe and controlled indoor environment which aims to be a replica of the real-world experience of using public transport including lighting, acoustics, hazards and the built environment that surrounds public transport.

The Wayfinding Campus will provide an opportunity to familiarise clients with and teach them public transport skills, as well as inform policy development on future public transport design to eliminate many of the challenges encountered by society using the system today.

**Public consultation is continuing, and we welcome all views to help inform all aspects from the design of the building layout through to service provision. If you are interested in learning more please email admin@thewayfindingcentre.ie**

**There are three picture carried with this story on the right hand column of page 15. They are described thus:**

***Picture 1:***

This picture carried at the top of page 15 is one of three which illustrates our article ‘Learning from International mobility transport training centres’ on page 14 and 15. It shows the proposed site for the TWC at Botanic Road, Dublin.

***Picture 2:***

This picture carried on page in the centre right of page 15 shows a man boarding public transport at the Leigh Garwood Mobility Transport Training Centre in Melbourne, Australia.

***Picture 3:***

This third picture, carried on the right hand column of page 15, shows a woman training with a long cane at the Nevada RTC Transport Training centre in the USA.

***End of page 15.***

**Page16:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI News and Events section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI News & Events section at the top left of page 16. It is an Orange abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI News & Events. There is an Orange bar running from this across page 16.

**Headline:**

NCBI 90th Celebrations

**Story:**

NCBI was delighted to host a celebratory function for current and past staff, volunteers, services users, donors and corporate partners. This fully compliant Covid19 function was held in Iveagh Gardens Hotel, Dublin 2.

It was also an opportunity to announce the winners of the inaugural Vision Awards who were all presented with tactile artwork designed by visually impaired artist Camille Peat. Vision impaired singer Emilie Conway, also gave a special performance at the event, much to the delight of attendees.

The winners of the Vision Awards were:

 • Visible Difference Industry Award: Microsoft Soundscape.

 • Clinical / Social Care Award: CHI Temple Street.

 • Circular Economy Award: The Useless Project.

 • Society Award: O’Brien Press.

The event and speeches made, clearly demonstrated an appreciation for the services offered and how the organisation has evolved and modernised over the years.

**There are five pictures carried with this story. They are described as follows:**

***Picture 1:***

This picture carried at the bottom left of page 16,shows three women holding an award, The caption reads: Taz & Geraldine from The Useless Project with Beverley Scallan NCBI Head of Retail in the middle.

***Picture 2.***

This picture carried at the top right of page 16 shows three women and one man at a celebratory event. The caption reads: L-R: Guilia Vallone; Chantelle Smith, NCBI; Lord Mayor Cork County Council, Gillian Coughlan; Chris White NCBI CEO.

***Picture 3:***

This picture shows two men in a presentation ceremony. The caption reads: L-R: Ivan O'Brien, O'Brien Press; Paul Ledwidge NCBI Chairperson.

***Picture 4:***

This picture, shows two women, one holding a award. The caption reads: L-R: Sarah Chamney, CHI Temple St. with Hilary Devlin NCBI ECLO.

***Picture 5:***

The picture carried at the bottom right of page 16 shows a man and an woman holding an award. The caption reads: RIGHT Senator Martin Conway and Chantelle Smith, NCBI.

***End of page 16.***

**Pages 17:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Retail section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Retail section at the top left of page 17. It is a deep purple abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Retail. There is a deep purple bar running from this across page 17.

**Headline:**

NCBI Successes

**Story:**

All our shop managers and volunteers are winners in our eyes but recently a number of them have received awards for their hard work and commitment. It is great to see their skills and dedication being recognised. Congrats to them all.

A huge congratulations to Catherine Nolan who came 3rd in the Irish Charity Shops Association (ICSA) 2020 awards for Charity Store Manager Of The Year. We are hugely proud of Catherine and her fabulous contribution to NCBI retail.

In Cork, Megan Fox a volunteer in Mitchelstown won the award for the Cork Youth Volunteer of the Year Award. A fantastic achievement and very well deserved.

We also had a number of volunteers shortlisted for the ICSA Martin Kenny Volunteer of the Year Award, three of whom were among the runners up:

 • John O'Sullivan from Newbridge Whitewater, Co.Kildare;

 • Liz Williams from Edenderry, Co. Offaly;

 • Mary Higgens from Midleton. Co.Cork.

Sadly, Mary passed away earlier this year. It was great to be able to recognise Mary’s contribution to the organisation after so many years.

The volunteers in our stores play a huge part in enabling our stores to operate. Without them we simply would not be able to open our doors to our local communities. It’s fantastic that we can recognise the contribution that out volunteers play.

**There are two pictures carried with this story. They are described as follows:**

***Picture 1:***

This picture carried at the top right of page 17 shows two women, one is holding an award. The caption reads, Carol Broe and Catherine Nolan.

***Picture 2:***

This picture carried at the bottom right of page 17 shows three women, the one in the centre is holding an award. The picture caption reads: R-L: Shauna Fox, Michelstown Shop Manager, Megan Fox, volunteer and her mother.

***End of page17.***

**Page 18:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Retail section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Retail section at the top left of page 18. It is a deep purple abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Retail. There is a deep purple bar running from this across page 18.

**Headline:**

The Value Of Visual Merchandising

**Story:**

NCBI retail has 130 stores across the country, varying in size, design, layout and fit-out. But the basics of visual merchandising and presentation are the same and when implemented correctly will streamline and align our stores.

B L U E P R I N T is a framework for visual merchandising in our stores and is used in collaboration with the latest Visual Refresh and Seasonal launches.

To create the strongest visual proposition in our stores we always need to consider a number of factors that not only enhance the visual integrity of our stores, but also drive our business commercially.

The guidelines we use are fit for purpose in any size store. It is a working tool that our teams use to refer to throughout the year. We have created a set of easy-to-follow principles to support our teams with delivering the best visual environment and to ensure brand consistency across the chain.

We merchandise all of our clothing departments by gender or end use and use the product to create capsule wardrobes. This Autumn / Winter you will see we have tried to create warmer colour palettes within our colour blocking and configurations to adapt and accommodate heavier and longer products.

New this season in participating stores are Claire’s Accessories and Topshop Jewellery.

**There are two pictures carried with this story. They are described as follows:**

***Picture 1:***

This picture carried at the top right of page 18 shows an array of clothes displayed on three mannequins. The caption reads: Autumn Winter 2021 /2022.

***Picture 2:***

This picture carried at the bottom right of page 18 shows the interior of a shop with a vast array of clothes hanging in shop displays racks. The caption reads, Winter stock in model stores.

***End of page 18.***

**Page 19:**

**On page 19 we carry a full page ad for NCBI Foundation. It shows a picture of three generations of a family and the text reads:**

**This is our full page ad on page 19. It reads The Power is in YOUR will ...**

**be part of OUR vision**

It can be a frightening time when you, or a loved one's sight, starts to fail. National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI) provides support and services to almost 55,000 people with a vision impairment nationwide.

Serving people since 1931, our experience helps people to live independently and to make the very best of their remaining vision. We provide the rehabilitation support, guidance, and technology skills needed. Public support is vital to ensure these services continue to grow into the future.

**You can help by remembering NCBI in your Will.**

By making a gift, big or small, in your will to NCBI, you leave a legacy of hope for so many people.

For further information phone( 01) 882 1972

or visit www.ncbi.ie/personal-giving/

Email: foundation@ncbi.ie

Registered Charity C HY1 2673

***End of page 19.***

**Page 20:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Fundraising section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Fundraising section at the top left of page 20. It is a deep blue abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Fundraising. There is a deep blue bar running from this across page 20.

***We carry two stories on this page. The first on the left hand column and the second on the right hand column.***

***Story 1:***

**Headline:**

Thank You to Mary and Paddy

**Story:**

On Friday 5th November 2021, we held a lunch to honour some of our fundraising volunteers, mainly Mary O’Boyle and Paddy O’Connor.

Mary and Paddy have been tirelessly fundraising for NCBI for many years and helped to raise over €100,000, through their annual Christmas swim, church gate collections and other fundraising efforts.

To celebrate all that Mary and Paddy have done for NCBI we had a small, socially distant gathering for some of their family, friends and fellow volunteers in Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim. Mary and Paddy’s friends and family shared some stories and good memories of all the events they had organised and taken part in throughout the years.

Paddy O’Connor then gave a lovely speech of how Mary got started in fundraising for NCBI and how she helped to achieve so much and still keeps driving them forward. He explained how all the businesses in the Carrick on Shannon area can’t say no to Mary and still donate each year to NCBI when Mary comes knocking.

**Thanks to your continued efforts we’re able to deliver our frontline services.**

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described as follows:**

This picture shows two NCBI Fundraisers, Mary O’Boyle and Paddy O’Connor standing with an NCBI Banner. Mary and Paddy are tieless fundraisers for NCBI having helped to raise over €100,000 for NCBI.

**Headline 2:**

Bevins ‘Chop’ for Charity

**Story 2:**

Twelve-year-old Bevin is a true inspiration. She decided she would cut her lovely long hair and donate it to the Rapunzel Foundation (they make wigs for people with alopecia) while at the same time raising much needed funds for NCBI.

Bevin chose NCBI because her cousin Kye, who she has grown up with, was recently diagnosed with Stargardts disease and is now legally blind. Stargardts is a severe irreversible visual impairment that affects central vision. NCBI have been invaluable in supporting Kye and her family throughout their new journey, from understanding the diagnosis and offering emotional help to allowing Kye to test equipment to help everyday life be that bit easier.

An emotionally hard time was made that bit easier thanks to the NCBI.

Bevin and Kye have grown up together and are only six months apart in age and Kye’s struggle has really hit close to home and Bevin wants to help.

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described as follows:**

This picture, which is also our front page picture, shows two girls with striking read hair one is holding a cheque for €1,619 which she raised for NCBi and the other on the right is holding her long cane. The picture caption reads: L-R: Bevin Murray and her cousin Kye.

***End of page 20.***

**Page 21:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Technology section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Technology section at the top left of page 21. It is a deep red abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Technology. There is a deep red bar running from this across page 21.

**Headline:**

Microsoft Launches Soundscape App in Ireland

**Story:**

NCBI is delighted to have worked with Microsoft to bring their Soundscape App to Ireland. The Soundscape App is ground-breaking technology used to help people navigate safely.

This free app, available on iPhone and iPad, has been designed to enable people to explore the world around them through a 3D experience. The app uses innovative audio-based technology to enable people to build a richer awareness of their surroundings, thus becoming more confident and independent when moving around their town, city or local area.

**How does Soundscape work?**

Soundscape provides information about your surroundings using stereo audio, creating the effect of 3D sound. It can run in the background in conjunction with navigation or other applications to provide you with additional context about the environment. Your phone, in hand or in pocket, tracks movement using location and activity sensors, and lets you move toward a self-set audio beacon. Soundscape runs on iPhone SE, iPhone 6S or later iPhone models and is compatible with most wired or Bluetooth stereo headsets.

**What makes Soundscape different from other navigational apps?**

Unlike step-by-step navigation apps, Soundscape uses 3D audio cues to enrich ambient awareness and provide a new way to relate to the environment. It allows users to build a mental map and make personal route choices while being more comfortable within unfamiliar spaces. Soundscape is designed to be used by everyone and live in the background; therefore, it can be used in conjunction with other apps such as podcasts or audio books.

**Setting Markers in Microsoft Soundscape**

One of the most useful features of the app is the ability to create Markers to places that are relevant to you such as pedestrian crossings, intersections in parks, benches, ATMs, and things that are not always available in public maps. Setting Markers is also good for giving you the heads up about upcoming dangerous obstacles such as bollards, sets of steps, or overhanging branches. What’s more, Markers you create can now be shared with others; for example, you can send a Marker to another Soundscape user, or a Mobility Instructor or friend can send you Markers they have annotated for your route.

**Where can I download the Soundscape app?**

Microsoft Soundscape is available to download from the Apple App Store through the following link: https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/microsoft-soundscape/id1240320677.

**There is one graphic carried with this story, at the top right of the page. It is described thus:**

This is the NCBI Labs logo.

***End of page 21.***

**Page 22:**

**At the top left of the page we carry our colour background splash for our NCBI Technology section. It is described thus:**

This is our section header for our NCBI Technology section at the top left of page 22. It is a deep red abstract background with white text and a black key line; it reads: NCBI Technology. There is a deep red bar running from this across pages 22 and 23.

**Headline:**

Highlights from Apple’s Recent ‘Unleashed’ Event

**Story:**

**Apple Music Voice Plan**

Apple has unveiled a new Voice Plan for Apple Music which will be €4.99 per month.

You can use only your voice through its Siri voice assistant to access all Apple Music content across Apple devices. It will be available soon in 17 countries including Ireland.

Non-subscribers can sign up for a free, seven-day trial without auto-renewal to try out Apple Music Voice Plan before they commit.

Users can subscribe to the plan with Siri by saying, “Hey Siri, start my Apple Music Voice trial,” or by signing up through the Apple Music app.

You can request music to be played across all of your Siri-enabled devices, including HomePod mini, AirPods, and iPhone.

There will be a dedicated section called “Just Ask Siri” with tips for how to optimise Siri for Apple Music.

You will have full control over your music with your voice including unlimited song skipping.

Not included is some of the premium offerings from Apple Music such as spatial audio and lossless audio. Also, you cannot download the songs onto your phone or make playlists.

Still, this should be a game changer for the casual listener who owns a HomePod mini and wants access to Apple Music’s streaming service at a reduced price.

**MacBook Pro**

The new MacBook Pro, in 14-inch and 16-inch sizes, is completely redesigned. The speed is much faster than the M1, the screen is far better, the I/O is improved, and MagSafe has made its return to the MacBook line-up.

On the outside, the MacBook Pro is slightly larger than the M1 model it replaces. The keyboard is all keys, with the Touch Bar finally replaced by full-sized function keys. The arrows are also in the inverted T shape and the power button doubles as a Touch ID sensor.

There are three Thunderbolt/USB-C ports, any of which can charge the machine. An SD card slot, HDMI 2.0 port, and headphone jack (capable of handling high impedance headphones) gives users a wide range of options compared to the strategy of USB-C for everything that we’ve seen in previous generations.

An updated MagSafe port rounds out the I/O and allows the computer to have a 50% charge in just half an hour. It also has an amazing battery life with up to 21 hours of usage depending on the tasks you are doing.

You can watch back the full Apple Unleashed event on YouTube.

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This picture carried at the top right of page 22 shows an iPhone with speaker and ear buds.

***End of page 22.***

**Page 23:**

**Headline:**

Smart Hub – Making Every Day Accessible

**Story:**

When smart speakers first appeared, they were a breakthrough for accessibility. NCBI decided to use these speakers to give even more independence to people all around Ireland, and so, the Smart Hub skill was born.

Available this Christmas from any Alexa or Google Home device, the Smart Hub skill provides access to NCBI services, information on sight loss, access to audio books and magazines, and the ability to request a call from NCBI.

NCBI Services

The myNCBI Smart Hub provides information on NCBI services, from children to technology to advocacy. Accessing this content is as simple as asking “Hey Alexa/Google, tell me about Adult Services.”

Information about sight loss

Learning about sight loss can be confusing and often people don’t know where to begin. With the myNCBI Smart Hub, a user can ask “tell me about Glaucoma treatments”. There is content for 18 different sight loss conditions, each with a section about general information, terminology, symptoms, treatments, and how NCBI can help.

Audio books and magazines

All library members will be able to access audio recordings of their favourite magazines and newspapers directly from their speakers. Similarly for Bookshare members, books will be available from their smart speaker, as soon as they’re uploaded.

Call backs

Want to be contacted by NCBI? No problem, ask your device “request a call back”, and a staff member will ring you.

**The myNCBI Smart Hub has accessibility at its core. If you have questions, please email smarthub@ncbi.ie .**

**There is one picture carried with this story. It is described thus:**

This picture carried at the top right of page 23 shows an array of smart speakers to illustrated the NEW NCBI Smart hub.

***End of page 23.***

**Page 24:**

**On page 24 we carry a full page ad for NCBI Labs. It is described thus:**

This is our full page at on page 24 for NCBI Labs.

It shows the NCBi logo and reads: NCBi Labs invites anyone interested in how technology can help overcome barriers in daily life to participate in their virtual clubs. Each club has an NCBi Technology Trainer who is available to answer questions. The you join you will be given a Microsoft Teams link where you can join a meeting on your computer or small device. Clubs are run virtually throughout the country. To join please contact NCBI Labs labs@ncbi.ie

***End of page 24.***

**End of this Edition of NCBI inSight Magazine, Vol. 24; No 4. Winter, 2021.**