



# Social Media (Facebook) as an Intervention to Support Family Carers

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@CareAllianceIrl

# Ireland's 360,000 Family Carers

- ▶ Irish are heavy users of social media
  - ▶ 71% adults use social media
  - ▶ 46% use Facebook - and dominates the 35-54 age group - 'the sandwich carers'
- ▶ Family Carer's may indeed be more prolific SM users than the non-carer population
  - ▶ housebound
  - ▶ Isolated -
  - ▶ Waiting around/on call time

Source: <https://irishtechnews.ie/71-of-irish-adults-enjoy-using-facebook-and-instagram/>

# 2012 - Lets Create a Facebook Page

- ▶ National Carers Week - <https://www.facebook.com/nationalcarersweek/>
- ▶ Timely
- ▶ Christmas period - notable absence of NGO Social Media activities - a clear gap
- ▶ Corporate Funds (2013)
- ▶ Yes we spend money to promote some posts and to recruit followers.
  - ▶ c35c each -
  - ▶ now have 18,500 followers - strong retention
  - ▶ estimated 80% of followers are secured through paid ads -
  - ▶ have spent €10,000 over 6 years on paid ads - c €1,500 per year
- ▶ Estimated €5,000 investment of our time annually - (c4% of staff costs)



National Carers Week



Liam

Home

Find Friends



Page

Inbox

Notifications 2

Insights

Publishing Tools

Promotions

Settings

Help



National Carers Week

@nationalcarersweek

Home

About

Events

Photos

Videos

Community

Groups

Reviews



Like



Follow



Share



Donate



Write something...



Charity in Dublin, Ireland

4.0 ★★★★★



# What's the content/posts?

- ▶ Looked at March 2018 (typical month) and June 2018 (focus on Carers Week)
- ▶ 53 posts over 60 days
- ▶ Categories
  - ▶ Signposting to Carer Resources/Top Tips/Information 44% (23)
  - ▶ Carers Week Focus (Events, etc) 28% (15)
  - ▶ Affirmation/Acknowledgement of their caring 11% (6)
  - ▶ Photos with Inspirational Quotes 11% (6)
  - ▶ Share Partner Posts 4% (2)
  - ▶ Recruitment for Research 2% (1)



Are you a former Family Carer? A new booklet has just been published. The Way Ahead - A resource to support Former Family Carers - is available now on request - email you name and address to [info@carealliance.ie](mailto:info@carealliance.ie) to request a copy by post. A pdf version is also available from [bit.ly/2FduBHb](http://bit.ly/2FduBHb)

Ireland

# The Way Ahead

A resource to support former family carers



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## National Carers Week

Published by Zoë Georgina [?] · 17 March · 🌐

We hope all of Irelands 360,000 family carers are enjoying this St. Patrick Day!

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

6 Effective Ways to Stop Judging Yourself as a Family Carer.  
<http://bit.ly/2G5NtWs>



DAILYCARING.COM

## 6 Ways to Stop Judging Yourself as a Caregiver - DailyCaring

Many caregivers get in the habit of unfairly judging themselves and focusi...

👤 1,493 people reached

Boost Post



## National Carers Week

Published by Liam Carer [?] · 9 June at 09:30 · 🌐

57,000 young people in Ireland care for relatives who need extra care and support. We call them Young Carers. Lets acknowledge the care they provide this National Carers Week June 11th-17th. [www.carersweek.ie](http://www.carersweek.ie)







## National Carers Week

Published by Liam Carer [?] · 10 June at 07:34 · 🌐

...

We understand that approximately 1,500 people in receipt of the carer support grant are affected by a slight delay in receiving this payment this year. Details at <http://www.welfare.ie/.../Issue-with-Carers-Support-Grant-.as...>

### Issue with Carers Support Grant



#### Update: Issue with Carer's Support Grant

The Department is aware that, of the 110,000 customers due to receive Carer's Support Grant today, approximately 1,500 recipients have been affected by a delay in payment. The affected payments were due to be paid by electronic fund transfer into bank accounts, at post offices and by cheque.

We would like to inform affected customers that the electronic payments will be processed overnight tonight, 7th June, and are due to be in customers' bank



## National Carers Week

Published by Liam Carer [?] · 10 June at 21:30 · 🌐

...

Family Carers often underestimate the skills they have acquired as a Carer.  
<http://bit.ly/2f9gbYm>



**I GOT SKILLS**

# Skills

Learning

ag  
n  
Leadership  
management

Teamwork

Organization  
Problem-Solving

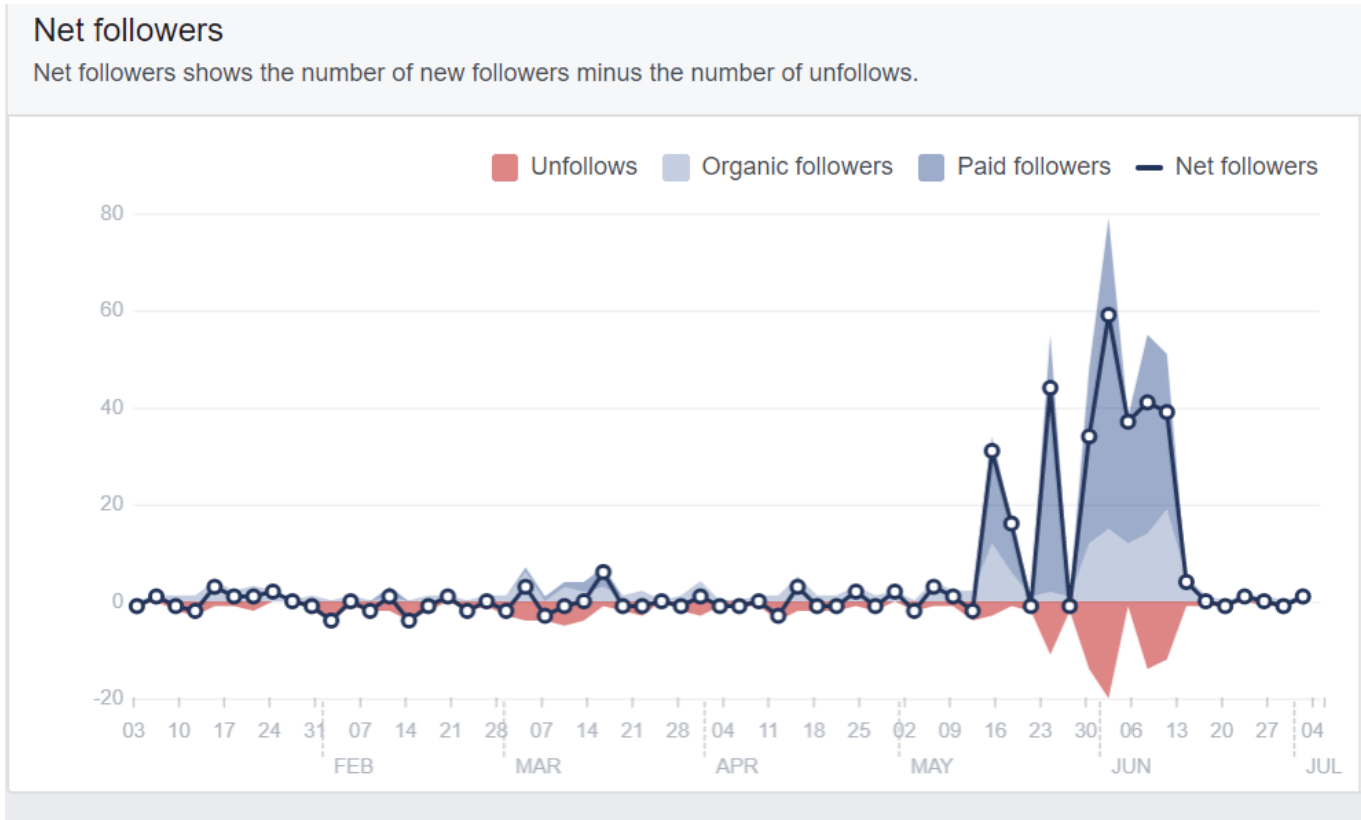
Time

My mother looked  
after us for so many  
years & now we're  
looking after her as  
she deserves it & so  
much more

👤 8,107 people reached

Boost Again

# Follower Retention



- **97.3% stayed as followers over a 6 month period (472/17,501, 2.7%)**



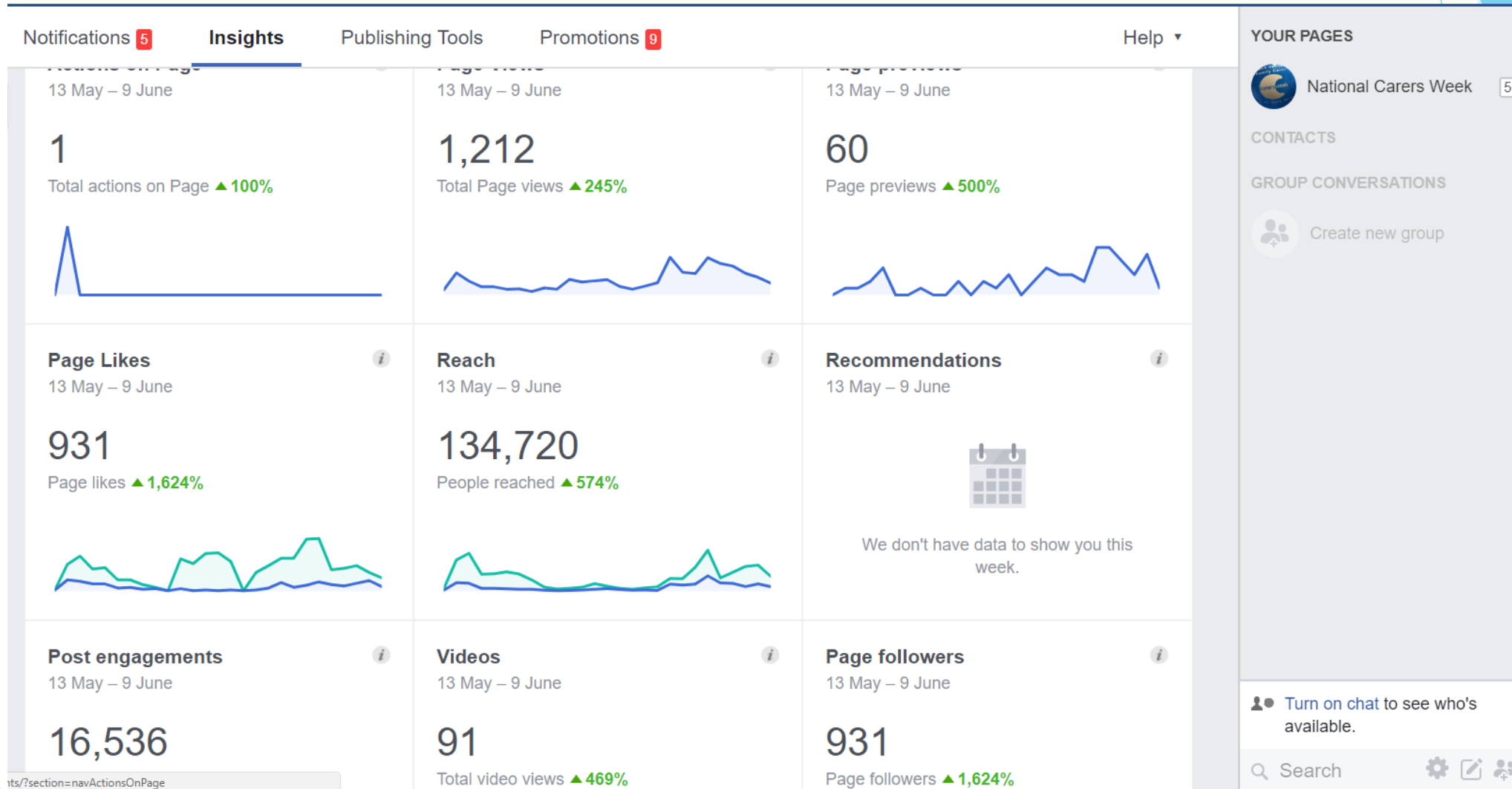
# When does it become a Social Work intervention?

- ▶ Moderation of comments (learning by doing, protocols, blocking users)
- ▶ Replying to private messages - empathise, signposting,
- ▶ Inspirational Posts (??)
- ▶ Recruitment for participation in online mindfulness intervention
- ▶ Information Signposting - supports - events - information
- ▶ Sending on free merchandise as part of Carers Week - (pens and trolley coins)
- ▶ Impact???

# What does the Page mean to those who Follow it and Engage in it?

- ▶ A safe place to rant - respecting peoples right to be angry
- ▶ Get accurate and timely information
- ▶ No agenda about securing a client ( tied to state funding)
- ▶ Maybe we should ask our 18,500 followers!!!!

# Post Reach - 28 day period (peak period)



# Level of Engagement

## Post engagements

13 May – 9 June

16,536

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- ▶ Likes/Dislikes
- ▶ Shares
- ▶ Comments

The language of ‘failure to engage’ in traditional SW settings



# What we do not post

- ▶ Fundraising Requests
- ▶ (Cautious about publishing media articles) - unclear about the positive value of doing so.
- ▶ (Cautious about research requests)

# But it's not Really Social Work is it?

- ▶ “work carried out by **trained personnel** with the aim of **alleviating the conditions** of those people in a community suffering from **social deprivation**.”
- ▶ “**Social work** is an academic discipline and profession that concerns itself with individuals, families, groups and communities in an effort to enhance social functioning and overall well-being”
- ▶ Recent changes to our organisation’s constitution affirmed this work

“to make use of social media fora to engage with and support Family Carers and those who support them.”

- ▶ Sources : [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_work](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_work) [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/social\\_work](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/social_work)

# Direct State Financial Support for Family Carers

- ▶ €1.2bn - Income Supports and c €400m - Home care supports - reaching c 120,000 Family carers
- ▶ National Carers Week Facebook Page - c €6k per year - 18,500 followers - with high levels of engagement and follower retention
- ▶ Value for Money

# What questions should we be asking our users?

- ▶ How is the page useful for you as a family carer?
- ▶ What's the one significant thing you have got from your engagement in the page?
- ▶ How does it compare with other services and supports you receive in your caring role?
- ▶ Audience Suggestions?



# Thank-You

- ▶ Full Slide set available to download at [www.carealliance.ie](http://www.carealliance.ie)