



# Connected Today, Stronger Tomorrow

Creating an inclusive future for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Ireland

**Strategy 2025–2030**

# Foreword

Every person who comes to Chime has their own story. Some are looking for advice after a new diagnosis. Others are returning to get help with technology, job support or just someone to talk to. Many are parents, unsure what comes next for their child or older people who have spent years feeling isolated because of hearing loss.

Across all these stories, there's a shared theme – the need to feel understood, included and supported.

That's what our new strategy, Connected Today, Stronger Tomorrow, is about.

Over the next five years, we want to reach more people, earlier. We want to grow our services, strengthen our team, and improve how we work in every part of the country. But most of all, we want to make sure that Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Ireland can live full, connected lives, whether that is in school, at work, in their communities or at home.

This plan is the result of honest conversations with staff, clients, families and partners. It builds on what Chime has always done best: responding, supporting and acting with care.

I'm proud of what we've achieved so far and I'm excited for what comes next.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

**Mark Byrne**  
CEO, Chime



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# Who we are

Chime is Ireland's national charity for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. We offer advice, services and community support. We also speak up for equal rights and full inclusion in every part of society.



## Our Vision

Our vision is a future where Deaf and Hard of Hearing people are fully included and have equal opportunities.



## Our Values

**Do the right thing:** Our person-centred approach is open, honest, ethical and fair and we are proud of what we do.

**Make a difference:** We work together with dedication, empathy, creativity and passion to meet the needs of our clients. We hold ourselves accountable for delivering on our commitments.

**Together is better:** Team work is important to us. We strive to build meaningful relationships and create more accessible services and supportive communities.

**Aim high & think big:** We respect diversity and recognise the worth and dignity of every person. We are driven to inspire everyone to reach their potential.



## Our Mission

Providing personalised supports and services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and promoting full equality and inclusion.

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# Our Strategy

For over 60 years, Chime has supported Deaf and Hard of Hearing people living in Ireland through core services that include care, technology, advice and information. Our social groups, technical experts and dedicated centres create a community of inclusivity that helps Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to feel valued and supported.

Our new strategy 2025–2030 sets out our ambitious plan to ensure that Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Ireland, regardless of age, location, or background will have access to appropriate high-quality, personalised supports and services that empower full participation in society.

We will achieve this by mapping existing services, identifying unmet needs, and implementing an evidence-based action plan that strengthens current provision and strategically expands services where they are most needed. This will involve a combination of direct service delivery, accessible information, and impactful strategic partnerships.



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# Our Pillars

## 1

### Personalised Supports & a Connected Community

We will create a strong sense of connection. Everyone who needs us will have access to supports and services that are personal to them.

## 2

### Driving Change through Equality & Inclusion

We will work for a fairer, more inclusive society. Our actions will be shaped by the people we support, by research, and by the knowledge of our team.

## 3

### One Team, Strong Future

We will grow a team culture where everyone feels valued and supported. We will focus on quality, strong systems and long-term sustainability.

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# Our Goals

1

## The Best Start in Life

We will give children the right support to thrive at home, in school and in the community.

2

## Driving Change

We will actively promote improvements in health, education and hearing care to meet our clients' needs.

3

## Dedicated Support Pathways

We will offer personalised, dedicated support pathways to people with extra needs.

4

## Greater Inclusion & Belonging

We will create welcoming community hubs that bring people together and build inclusion.

5

## Pathways to Learn & Work

We will remove barriers to learning and jobs, and support people to reach their goals.

6

## Thriving Culture

We will build a workplace where staff feel valued, supported and able to grow.

7

## Best in Class Governance & Sustainability

We will focus on quality, clear impact and long-term sustainability.



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## GOAL 1:

# The Best Start in Life

## What we aim to do

By 2030, Deaf and Hard of Hearing children will get the support they need to thrive at home, in school and in their communities. We will provide high-quality, timely and personalised services for children and families.

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## Our actions

- Map what children's services exist and where the gaps are.
- Develop Chime's national Children and Families Service Framework including access to Assistive Technology for all ages.

## What will success look like

- Increase our service to support over 500 children and families each year with a person-centred approach and an emphasis on impact and quality.

“ Chime has been part of our journey since our son was born in 2016. The Children and Family Team have made a huge difference not just for him, but for all of us. Their support is thoughtful, engaging and always age appropriate. Most of all, they really understand families. We've felt supported every step of the way.”

Leigh, Dublin

## GOAL 2:

# Driving Change

### What we aim to do

By 2030, we will lead strong, effective advocacy to improve hearing health, education, and access to services. Everything we do will be shaped by the needs and voices of the people we support.



**Approx 250,000 adults  
in Ireland have a  
significant hearing loss**

\*Census 2022, CSO

### Our actions

- Deliver a national advocacy plan each year.
- Focus on key priorities including the National Hearing Care Plan, access to Irish Sign Language (ISL), Assistive Technology (AT), and better educational outcomes for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

### What will success look like

- Tangible progress on the National Hearing Care Plan.
- Better supports in schools for Deaf children.
- Increased access to ISL and AT in public services.
- Greater awareness of hearing health nationwide.

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**“ Chime supported my daughter Ellie to campaign for an ISL Leaving Cert exam. It gave Ellie real confidence and pride in her voice as a young Deaf person. ”**

Valarie, Co. Dublin

## GOAL 3:

# Dedicated Support Pathways

### What we aim to do

By 2030, Deaf adults, with additional needs will have access to dedicated support pathways, tailored to them. These supports will be built around their lives, their choices and their goals. We will redesign how our services work in residential settings, day programmes and one-to-one supports.

### Our actions

- Review adult services, including day and residential care.
- Map current provision and gaps.
- Create a phased, data-led plan to meet future needs.

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### What will success look like

- Reach 500 people with dedicated help to ensure everyone who needs it has a clear, consistent pathway to the right supports through Chime and our partners.
- Deliver services that are responsive, respectful and designed around each person.

“ Since joining the day service, my sign language has improved, I earned my Gaisce Silver Award, and I’m now on the CE scheme. It’s been a big change and a big step forward.”

Michael, Dublin

## GOAL 4:

# Greater Inclusion & Belonging

### What we aim to do

By 2030, Chime's community hubs will be welcoming spaces for connection, learning and support. We will bring more people together through events, peer support and training that builds understanding and inclusion across society.

### Our actions

- Develop and deliver a Deaf Awareness Programme across Ireland.
- Create more opportunities for shared learning and social connection.

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### What will success look like

- Greater participation in groups that connect, support and inspire.
- Grow our enhanced Deaf Awareness Programme to reach over 1,000 people each year.

“ I was deeply depressed and completely isolated. Joining Chime's outreach clinic was the best decision I ever made. I can't put into words how much it changed my life.”

Paul, Chime Client

## GOAL 5:

# Pathways to Learn & Work

### What we aim to do

By 2030, more Deaf and Hard of Hearing people will be able to access education and meaningful work. We will reduce barriers and build confidence through personalised programmes like LifeTech and Explore, and by working with employers and third-level institutions.

### Our actions

- Develop and launch an accredited 'Employment-Ready' programme.
- Strengthen links with employers and third-level institutions.

### What will success look like

- We will develop an Employment Ready Programme that helps over 40 people annually to secure meaningful fulfilling employment.
- Over 100 new people supported annually into learning and work pathways.
- Services that are responsive, respectful and designed around each person.

**Only 47.3% of Deaf and Hard of Hearing adults in Ireland are in full-time work, compared to 82.3% of the general population.**

\*National Disability Authority 2019

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“ Working with my mentor on the Chime Explore Programme helped me figure out what I want for my future. It boosted my confidence and gave me space to plan and set goals. I'd highly recommend it to anyone thinking about education or work. ”

Erin, Co. Clare

## GOAL 6:

# Thriving Culture

### What we aim to do

By 2030, Chime will be a place where all staff feel valued, supported and inspired to grow, lead and make an impact. We will build a strong team culture based on trust, learning and shared purpose.

### Our actions

- Review how our organisation is structured to make it more flexible and responsive.
- Develop a values-based competency framework that fosters a culture of excellence and accountability.
- Deliver an annual staff engagement plan that responds to the Culture Audit focusing on Communication, Leadership, Development and Collaboration.



### What will success look like

- Staff engagement score grows from +9 to +14 by 2030.
- Key actions from the Culture Audit are fully delivered.

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**74% of voluntary sector staff say recognition, support and communication are key to staying in their roles.**

\*The Wheel, "Employee Engagement in the Non-profit Sector", 2023

## GOAL 7:

# Best in Class Governance & Sustainability

### What we aim to do

By 2030, Chime will continue to lead with strong governance, transparency and a clear focus on impact. We will build sustainable funding, measure what matters and ensure our work delivers long-term value for the people we serve.

### Our actions

- Deliver a 5-year financial plan that supports growth in Assistive Technology and fundraising.
- Create a Marketing and Communications strategy to support our goals.
- Publish an Annual Impact Report, which showcases our service impact and quality.
- Achieve the Charities Institute Ireland Triple Lock gold standard for governance.

### What will success look like

- Fundraising and reserves are strong and sustainable.
- Marketing and communications help deliver the strategic plan.
- Impact is measured and shared every year.
- Chime is Triple Lock accredited.

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“ The Triple Lock isn't just about ticking boxes. It's about demonstrating that we are serious - with strong governance, sustainable finances, and clear evidence that our work delivers impact. This builds trust, and trust secures long-term support. ”

Mark Byrne, CEO, Dublin



**chime.ie**

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