October 2026

WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

Supporting people to live their lives

CANDIDATE BRIEFING BOOKLET FOR THE POSITION OF **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION.**

LANSDOWNE EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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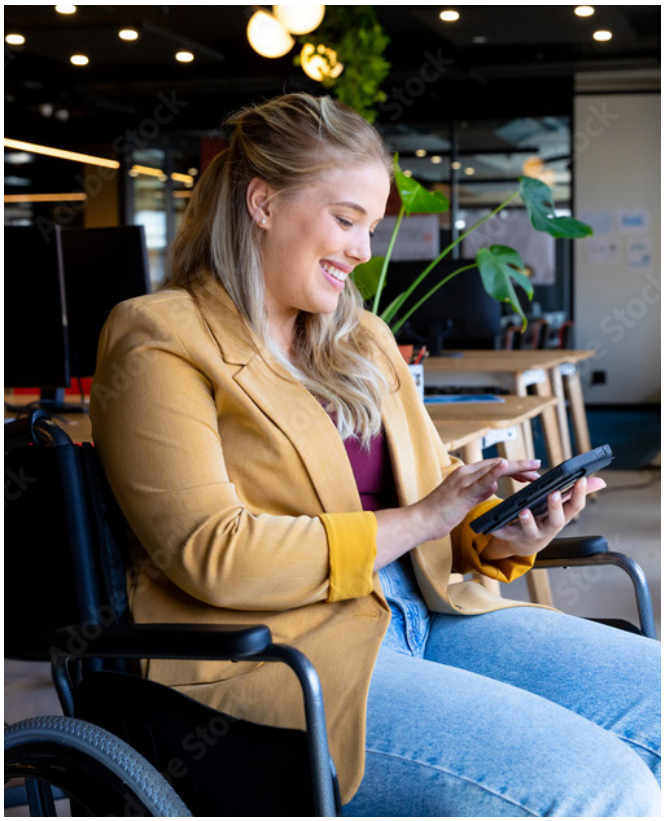
WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

Western Care Association is an extensive county wide voluntary Section 39 organisation providing a comprehensive range of residential, respite, day, community and family supports across multiple locations throughout County Mayo. With a large and diverse workforce, the Association supports a significant number of people with learning and associated disabilities, together with their families, at all stages of life.

Our purpose is to empower people with a wide range of learning and associated disabilities in Mayo to live full and satisfying lives as equal citizens. We pursue this purpose through innovative, responsive and person-centred services and supports that promote choice, inclusion, independence, participation and meaningful connection within local communities.



The Association brings together people supported, parents and family members, staff, volunteers, supporters and wider community partners. It operates in a complex and highly regulated environment and works closely with the HSE, HIQA, Government Departments, schools, other statutory and voluntary bodies, employees, families and local communities.

The Association remains firmly focused on the rights, needs and aspirations of the people we support.

We believe in;

- Supporting people to make informed choices and exercise control over their lives
- Providing high-quality, community-based services that respond to individual needs
- Working in genuine partnership with people supported, families and communities
- Recognising the essential contribution of a strong voluntary ethos, volunteers, friends and supporters
- Valuing the expertise, commitment and unique contribution of every member of staff
- Promoting partnership, unity of purpose, mutual respect and shared responsibility
- Collaborating and coordinating effectively with local and national organisations
- Maintaining accountability, good governance and the responsible use of resources
- Learning continuously and improving the quality, safety and effectiveness of our work
- Pursuing equality of access, inclusion and comprehensive services for all who need them

Our organisational values guide how we work, lead and make decisions. They shape the delivery of our services, our relationships with one another and our accountability to the people, families and communities we serve. The values of Western Care Association are: **Fairness, Integrity, Transparency, Honesty, Inclusiveness and Respect.**

WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

Supporting people to live their lives

Chief Executive Officer, Western Care Association

THE ORGANISATION

Western Care Association is a leading, values-driven Section 39 organisation providing a comprehensive range of disability services across 134 locations in County Mayo. With a dedicated workforce of 1,100 staff and an annual operating budget in excess of €60 million, the Association delivers residential, respite, day and community-based supports. The Association is committed to empowering people with a wide range of learning and associated disabilities to live full and satisfied lives as equal citizens. Operating in a complex and highly regulated environment, Western Care Association works in close partnership with the HSE, HIQA, Government Departments, other statutory bodies, families, employees and local communities. The Association is proud of its strong reputation, deep roots in Mayo and unwavering focus on rights, inclusion and person-centred support.

THE ROLE

The Board of Western Care Association now wishes to appoint a dynamic, values-led and visionary Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation into its next stage of development, building on its strong foundations while navigating a changing policy, funding and regulatory landscape. Reporting to the Board of Directors through the Chairperson, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the Association's most senior executive and principal public representative, responsible for fostering confidence, respect and trust in the organisation among staff, stakeholders and the wider community.

Based in Castlebar, Co. Mayo, the CEO will lead the next phase of the organisation's development, ensuring it delivers on its mission, vision and values. The CEO will provide clear strategic direction, strong executive leadership and effective stewardship across all aspects of the Association's work, including service quality, organisational performance, financial sustainability, workforce leadership, governance, regulatory compliance and strategic relationships. The role involves working closely with the Board, Senior Management Team and operational leaders to deliver the strategic plan, drive continuous improvement and manage risk, while engaging constructively with the HSE and other key funders and regulators. The CEO will also act as an influential ambassador and advocate for Western Care Association and for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

The CEO will be skilled at working with and reporting to a board. They will demonstrate integrity, sound judgement, resilience and the ability to operate effectively in a demanding, evolving environment. They will be an outstanding communicator and relationship builder, capable of influencing at the highest levels and engaging confidently with funders, regulators, employees, families and people supported. They will have a relevant NFQ Level 8 qualification (or equivalent) and a minimum of eight years senior leadership experience with a strong personal commitment to the rights, dignity and full inclusion of people with disabilities at the heart of their leadership.

To Apply:

Lansdowne Executive Search has been retained by Western Care Association to manage this recruitment process.

Further information, including details on how to apply are available on **www.westerncare.com**

If you feel you would benefit from a confidential discussion about this opportunity, please contact:

Seán McDonagh, Partner, Lansdowne Executive Search on Mobile: +353 (0)87 796 1062 or

Email: sean.mcdonagh@lansdownesearch.ie

Closing date for receipt of applications is **Friday 6th November 2026**.

Candidates for this role will be sourced through both advertising and executive search processes.

Western Care Association is an equal opportunities employer.

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WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

THE ROLE

Post Title:	**Chief Executive Officer**
Location and working week:	Full-time, 35 hours per week, based in Castlebar. The role requires travel throughout County Mayo and elsewhere as necessary, together with flexibility to attend meetings and events outside normal working hours
Salary:	Current WCA CEO Band 3 salary scale: €114,119 - €133,793. The scale is subject to the scheduled 2% adjustment in October 2026.
Reports to:	Reports to the Board of Directors through the Chairperson

PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the Association's senior executive and the visible public representative of Western Care Association. Accountable to the Board, the CEO will provide strategic, values-led leadership and effective stewardship of the organisation, ensuring that it is well positioned to deliver on its mission, vision and values.

The CEO will lead the next phase of the Association's development, with overall executive responsibility for service quality, organisational performance, financial sustainability, workforce leadership, governance, regulatory compliance and strategic relationships. The role requires the judgement, resilience and sustained leadership necessary to guide a complex organisation through an evolving disability and social care environment.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Providing clear strategic direction and sustained leadership, ensuring that the Association is positioned to achieve its mission and long-term objectives.
- Being accountable to the Board for the effective leadership, governance and management of the Association and for the delivery of agreed strategic and operational priorities.
- Holding overall accountability for the quality, safety, effectiveness and continuous improvement of services and supports provided by the Association.
- Ensuring the prudent stewardship of the Association's financial, human and physical resources, supported by robust systems of governance, risk management, assurance and internal control.
- Leading and developing a high-performing Senior Management Team and fostering an inclusive, accountable and values-led organisational culture.
- Representing and protecting the interests and reputation of Western Care Association and developing strong relationships with the HSE, statutory bodies, people supported, families, employees and the wider community.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Provide visionary, values-led and sustained leadership, working in partnership with the Board, Senior Management Team and Operations Management to shape and deliver the strategic direction and long-term priorities of Western Care Association in alignment with its mission, values and organisational objectives.
- Lead and enable the development, implementation and continuous review of the Association's strategic plan through an inclusive, evidence-based and participative planning process that draws on the insight and experience of senior, operational and frontline leaders, people supported, families and key stakeholders.
- Work collaboratively with the Senior Management Team and Operations Management to translate the strategic plan into clear corporate and operational priorities, ensuring that progress, outcomes and organisational performance are regularly measured, reviewed and reported to the Board.
- Provide leadership for organisational change, service transformation and innovation by engaging and supporting senior and operational leaders to respond effectively to emerging needs, policy developments, workforce challenges and changes in the external environment.
- Promote organisational resilience, long-term sustainability and effective succession planning across the Association through shared leadership, collaborative planning and the development of leadership capacity at senior and operational levels.

2. GOVERNANCE, FINANCE, RISK AND ASSURANCE

- Provide collaborative, values-led strategic leadership in corporate governance, working with the Board, Company Secretary, Senior Management Team and Operations Management to foster a shared culture of accountability, transparency, integrity and ethical decision-making across the Association.
- Work with senior and operational leaders to ensure that robust governance frameworks, management systems, internal controls and assurance processes are understood, embedded and operating effectively in accordance with all statutory, regulatory, contractual and funding requirements.
- Build a constructive and supportive working partnership with the Chairperson, Board and Company Secretary, enabling the Board to fulfil its governance, legal, financial and strategic responsibilities with confidence.
- Ensure, in collaboration with the Senior Management Team and relevant operational leads, that the Board receives timely, accurate and insightful information, analysis and professional advice to support informed decision-making and effective oversight.
- Lead the prudent stewardship of the Association's financial and other resources in partnership with the Finance function, Senior Management Team and Operations Management, supporting sound financial planning, budgetary control, sustainability and value for money.
- Promote a shared approach to risk management, internal audit, compliance, business continuity and crisis response, ensuring that organisation-wide and local systems are practical, effective and supported by senior and operational management.
- Work collaboratively with the Board, Senior Management Team and Operations Management, the person nominated on behalf of the registered provider, persons in charge, to ensure that the Association, as registered provider, meets its obligations under applicable legislation and HIQA standards.
- Support and enhance the reputation and standing of Western Care Association through open communication, collaborative stakeholder engagement and a proactive, shared approach to reputational risk.

WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

3. EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SERVICE QUALITY AND DELIVERY

- Hold overall accountability to the Board for the delivery of safe, person-centred, effective and efficient services and supports, working collaboratively with the Senior Management Team, Operations Management and service leaders to respond to the needs, rights and preferences of people supported.
- Promote and support continuous quality improvement and the development of services and supports in partnership with operational, clinical and quality leaders, ensuring alignment with best practice, regulatory standards, evidence and the Association's strategic objectives.
- Ensure clear executive oversight, shared leadership and appropriate delegation for safeguarding, health and safety, clinical and operational governance, and the management of significant incidents and concerns.
- Work with senior and operational leaders to ensure that meaningful performance and quality information is gathered, understood and used to monitor outcomes, identify risks, celebrate progress and support timely improvement.

- Provide appropriate executive oversight of the Association's responsibilities in relation to the patronage of schools, supporting constructive engagement with relevant boards of management, education authorities and internal leaders with responsibility for education-related matters.

4. PEOPLE, CULTURE AND EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

- Provide empowering, supportive and collaborative leadership to the Senior Management Team, encouraging shared ownership, effective decision-making, mutual accountability and a collective commitment to organisational performance and the Association's mission.
- Foster a positive, inclusive and values-led culture across the Association, working with senior and operational leaders to promote employee engagement, openness, innovation, learning, wellbeing and continuous improvement.
- Work in partnership with the Senior Management Team, HR and Operations Management to support effective workforce planning, talent management, leadership development and succession arrangements that meet the Association's current and future organisational needs.
- Promote constructive employee relations through open communication, respectful engagement and collaborative working with employees, trade unions, representative bodies and relevant managers.
- Model the Association's values through integrity, professionalism, respect, accountability, accessibility and a commitment to excellence, inspiring confidence, trust and shared purpose across the organisation.

5. STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS, ADVOCACY AND SECTORAL INFLUENCE

- Develop and sustain strong, constructive and strategic relationships with the HSE as the Association's primary funder, and with government departments, regulators, public bodies and other key stakeholders.

- Represent Western Care Association with credibility and influence at local, regional and national levels, ensuring that the Association contributes actively to policy development, sector collaboration, service innovation and the promotion of best practice.
- Advocate constructively with policymakers, public bodies, funders and sectoral stakeholders to advance the rights, inclusion, wellbeing and interests of people supported and to contribute to the development of progressive disability policy and practice.
- Build and nurture collaborative partnerships with statutory, voluntary, community and education partners to support coordinated service delivery, shared learning, innovation and collective impact for people supported and their families.
- Act as a visible, trusted and credible ambassador for Western Care Association, promoting its mission, values, contribution and achievements while strengthening public understanding of its work and inspiring confidence among stakeholders, communities and partners.

6. ENGAGEMENT WITH PEOPLE SUPPORTED AND FAMILIES

- Ensure that people supported and families have meaningful, accessible and effective opportunities to influence organisational priorities, service design and quality improvement.
- Promote a culture in which the voice, rights, choices and lived experience of people supported are central to decision-making at every level of the Association.
- Maintain strong and respectful relationships with people supported, families and representative groups, encouraging dialogue, partnership and shared purpose.
- Ensure that feedback, complaints, concerns and compliments are treated as important sources of organisational learning and improvement.

WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

- A relevant qualification at NFQ Level 8 or higher in management, social care, healthcare, business, finance, law, public administration or a related discipline, or related discipline and a minimum of eight years senior leadership experience.
- A relevant postgraduate or professional qualification in leadership, governance, management or a related field would be an advantage.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Significant senior executive leadership experience, including a minimum of eight years at executive or senior management level, within a large, complex, regulated and values-led organisation.
- A strong record of leading services and activities involving a substantial workforce, significant operating budget and multiple locations or service settings.
- Experience of reporting to and working effectively with a board, together with a sound understanding of corporate governance, risk management, assurance and organisational accountability.
- Demonstrable experience of financial planning, budgetary control, resource stewardship and maintaining organisational sustainability and value for money.
- Experience of leading organisational change, service transformation and continuous improvement in a complex operating environment.
- Experience of establishing and maintaining effective quality, safeguarding, health and safety and regulatory compliance systems.
- A strong record of building strategic relationships with funders, regulators, public bodies, employees, representative organisations, families and communities.
- Experience of representing an organisation publicly and communicating effectively in complex, sensitive or high-profile circumstances.

- Clear personal alignment with Western Care Association's mission, vision and values and a demonstrable commitment to the rights, dignity and inclusion of people with disabilities.

DESIRABLE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Senior leadership experience in the disability, health, social care, community or not-for-profit sector.
- Senior leadership experience of working with the HSE, HIQA, Government Departments or comparable public funders and regulators.
- Senior leadership experience of employee relations and constructive engagement with trade unions or other representative bodies.
- Senior leadership experience of school patronage, education governance or engagement with boards of management and education authorities.

KEY COMPETENCIES

- **Strategic direction and organisational leadership** – thinks ahead and assesses complex information and makes sound short, medium and long term decisions, places the rights, voice and lived experience of people supported at the centre of the Association's work.
- **Governance, Finance, Risk and Assurance** – demonstrates the highest standards of accountability, probity, transparency and ethical leadership.
- **Service Quality and Delivery** – converts strategy into clear priorities, decisions and measurable outcomes. Communicates with clarity, authority and sensitivity and represents the Association credibly, in public and in stakeholder settings.
- **People, culture & executive leadership** – inspires confidence, builds strong teams, manages performance and develops leadership capability throughout the organisation.
- **Strategic relationships, Advocacy and Sectoral influence** – develops trust, manages competing interests and works effectively across organisational and sectoral boundaries, remains composed, decisive and constructive in a demanding transparent and evolving environment.

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Any appointment will be subject to satisfactory references, Garda vetting, occupational health clearance and any other employment requirements applicable to the role.

This job description outlines the principal responsibilities and expectations of the role; however, it is not intended to be exhaustive. It may be reviewed and amended in line with the evolving needs and strategic priorities of Western Care Association.

Western Care Association is an equal opportunities employer.

WESTERN CARE ASSOCIATION

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application Closing Date: **Friday 6th November 2026.**

To pursue your interest please email a comprehensive Curriculum Vitae and supporting letter to:

Seán McDonagh, Partner

Lansdowne Executive Search Limited,

Email: sean.mcdonagh@lansdownesearch.ie

Or for a confidential discussion please call Seán on +353 87 796 1062.

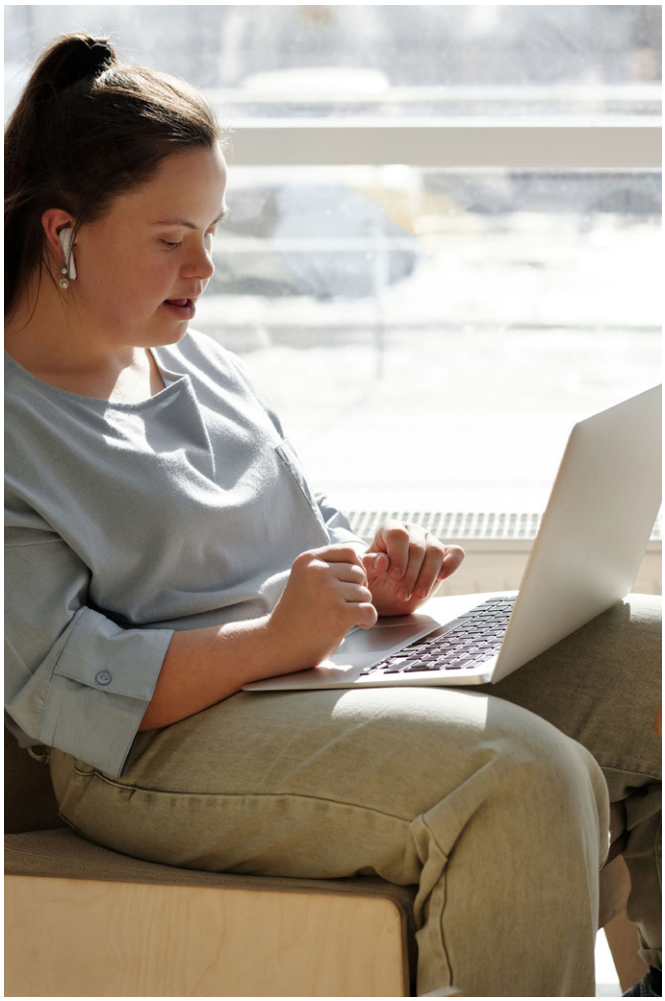
PLEASE NOTE:

- Candidates must submit ONE document in WORD format containing CV and Application Letter summarising your relevant experience in the following competencies;
  1. Strategic Direction and Organisational Leadership
  2. Governance, finance, risk and assurance
  3. Service quality and delivery
  4. People, culture and executive leadership
  5. Building strategic relationships, advocacy and sectoral influence
- The document must be TYPED. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.
- Please read the job specification (Pages 4-9 of this booklet) which provides relevant information about the requirements of this post.
- Western Care Association is an equal opportunities employer. Recruitment to posts within Western Care Association is on the basis of merit as assessed during the recruitment process.
- Please note that omission of any or part of the requested application documentation or incorrect formatting, as set out below, will render the application incomplete.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS TIMETABLE

Application Closing Date	Friday 6th November 2026
Screening Meetings Commence (Lansdowne)	Mid-November 2026
Qualified candidates presented for short listing	Late November 2026
First stage interviews (Western Care Association)	Late November 2026
Final stage interviews (Western Care Association)	Early December 2026

For more information about Western Care Association, please see www.westerncare.com



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