

GALWAY HOSPICE

newsletter

AUTUMN 2023



RAISE A CUP for Galway Hospice



Walk &
Talk



Volunteering
at Galway Hospice

Welcome



Welcome to our second newsletter of 2023. The last six months have been extremely busy for Galway Hospice and thankfully due to the low incidence of Covid in the community in recent months we have been able to remove all remaining Covid restrictions at the hospice.

The Minister for Health announced last October that Galway Hospice was going to be redesignated as a Section 38 organisation to assist with addressing the ongoing funding shortfalls that we have had since the hospice opened. Over the past six months we have been working with the National Implementation Group set up by the HSE to progress the redesignation and are hopeful that it will be completed before year end. This should mean that we can free up some fundraising income to assist with building the much-needed new hospice in Galway.

We have been working with our property advisors and with the HSE over the past twelve months to identify a new site for the hospice and are currently engaged in active discussion with the HSE and the Brothers of Charity to determine whether lands currently leased by the Brothers of Charity from the HSE at the John Paul Centre in Ballybane could be made available to the hospice. We hope to progress these discussions over the coming months.

We were delighted to receive a significant donation from an anonymous donor via Community Foundation Ireland earlier this year and the funds received has enabled us to employ a Music Therapist one day a week in the Inpatient Unit to provide music therapy to our inpatients. The donor has also made funds available to our Medical Social Work department for a bereavement camp and we are delighted that the camp for twelve bereaved families will take place over a weekend at Wildlands Activity Centre in September.

As more people continue to need our specialist care, our community team have been busier than ever. The significant increase in activity levels has been recognised by the HSE who have granted us funding for two additional nurses and one senior occupational therapist and one senior physiotherapist earlier this year. The new staff will be joining the community team over the coming weeks. Given the current shortage of nurses in Ireland we have been working to seek recruits from abroad and hope that we will have two nurses from the Philippines coming to join us before year end.

With the removal of the remaining restrictions earlier this year we have been able to return to hosting events in the hospice and we were delighted to hold a barbecue for our volunteer workforce in June to mark National Volunteer Week and to celebrate our wonderful volunteers for the generosity, time and skills they bring to Galway.

Palliative Care Awareness Week runs from September 10th to September 16th this year and the theme of this year's campaign is Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow. A number of families from throughout the island have agreed to share their palliative care experiences via videos which will be released during the course of the week, and we are delighted that Naomi & Molly Davies have agreed to do a video to share their experiences of the care we provided to their son and brother Jack who passed away in 2021. Please keep an eye on our social media during the week to hear their story.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and thank you once again for your continued support, every euro you donate really does make a difference. We really couldn't ensure that everyone who needs us receives the best possible care without your support.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir!


Chief Executive

Would you like to be a Patient Engagement Representative?

At Galway Hospice, we are committed to continually improving the quality safe care that we provide and our patients and families are the centre of what we do. Patient and family members have a unique perspective which makes them invaluable partners in how we assess, develop and progress the service we deliver. Patient engagement is associated with improved outcomes and increased satisfaction. In the hospice we are further developing this partnership and aim to ensure that the voices of patients, families and the public are heard in how we deliver our care.

Open Invite

We are inviting patients/family members to contact us directly if you would be interested in taking on the role as a Patient Engagement Representative for the hospice.

Who can be a Patient Engagement Representative

- If you or your family member has received care at Galway Hospice in the last 3 years.
- Specific qualifications are not needed for the role, however there will be a review process to ensure that the commitment required for this role is suitable for you.
- The most important requirement is the ability to share your experience constructively, in order to help improve the quality of care for all patients and family members.
- The hospice will provide you with the training and support required.
- **If you are interested in finding out more about this exciting initiative please contact Niamh McKeon (Director of Quality) or Vanessa Butler (Quality Assurance Coordinator) on 091 770868.**

We look forward to hearing from you and providing further information on patient engagement.

Walk & Talk

The Galway Hospice Walk & Talk Group is for those who have experienced a bereavement through the Hospice service.

The group meets every second Wednesday to walk Barna Woods.

For more information, contact Bereavement Services Co-ordinator Hazel Greene at 091-770868.

A 'shared experience, an understanding and a camaraderie'

My wife, Mary, died in April 2020 just as the Covid pandemic arrived in Ireland. Mary was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in June 2017 but even though every conceivable treatment was tried, she survived for less than 3 years. As with other families who lost a loved one during the pandemic - due to Covid, cancer or other circumstances - our grief and trauma was multiplied because of the strict social distancing measures introduced. No proper funeral or wake, no meeting of friends and neighbours, no touch or hug - just utter grief and devastation.

In February 2022, when Hazel from Galway Hospice contacted me about the Walk & Talk group set up for people who have experienced loss through the Hospice service, I was immediately interested. Since then 6, 8 or sometimes 10 people have met at Cappagh Park every fortnight for a walk to Silver Strand followed by a coffee in a nearby hotel. The conversations are always easy, never rushed or contrived and out in the clear air.

We can be talking about different topics - the day's news, the weather etc. Sometimes we talk about our own circumstances and traumas but often there is no need to talk about such things. There is just a shared experience, an understanding and a camaraderie. In everyday life people are not sure how to deal with someone who has been bereaved, there is an awkwardness and reticence which can lead to avoidance, in my opinion. I am only too happy to speak about Mary to anyone who will listen but I get the feeling that some would rather avoid the conversation. There is a great openness and freedom about the Walk & Talk group and I think we have developed a bond which allows us to speak and share our experiences/feelings and even help each other out with advice or empathy.



*Paddy Noonan and his wife,
Mary McPartlan*

Paddy Noonan



'It's good being able to chat'

I find it very helpful. I was there the first day it started, I wasn't expecting anything in particular but thought it was a really good idea because people get sick of you going on about your partner and at least you feel other people are in the same position on the walk. It's good being able to chat.

It's nice to meet up with different people and the tea and coffee afterwards, it's lovely to get to talk to everybody. Obviously we have a lot in common.

It's very difficult for people who are just recently bereaved to come along, to get the courage to come, and they don't know what to expect. I'd absolutely encourage them because I have to say I find it great. It's something to look forward to as well.

Walk & Talk Participant since 2021

'We are all sailing in the same boat'



I've been attending the Walk & Talk group since it started in 2021 and through it I have found a new avenue to deal with the grief of losing a loved one.

I have found that with this group we are all sailing in the same boat and can talk, cry and laugh without being judged and feel truly understood.

I can honestly say that I have found solace within this group and we can all take it at our own pace and truly feel we are all a support to each other.

I strongly hope that that this service can continue as it is truly invaluable

Brid, Walk & Talk Participant since 2021

'There is a great job satisfaction from volunteering'

Volunteer Tim Folan shares his volunteer journey in Galway Hospice

I commenced volunteering with the Galway Hospice two years ago. The Hospice has impacted the lives of many of my relations and friends in a very positive way, so I felt it appropriate to 'pay back' this wonderful organisation by volunteering to help out.

Previous to this, I have been active in volunteering with a number of sports organisations and partaking in various hobbies, which I receive great satisfaction from.

In my 'working' life, I was fortunate to be employed in Thermo King, a multinational company based in Mervue. I am delighted to see several of my former 'Thermo' work colleagues also volunteering here in the Galway Hospice.

I was aware prior to joining Galway Hospice that they are very dependent on recruiting volunteers, which impacted my decision to offer my services to them.

Prior to commencing my Hospice duties, I completed a detailed induction training programme, from which I received a very good knowledge of the various volunteer roles on site.

The first function which I assisted with related

to helping visitors to Hospice to complete various Covid related checks and questionnaires, prior to commencing a visit to site. At the time, the world was progressing through the various challenges presented by the pandemic, and Galway Hospice's management of the Covid situation was first class, ensuring that all staff and visitors complied with various requirements to wear various PPE etc, in order to ensure that Covid did not impact any personnel on site and this ensured and created a safe environment for all.

I enjoyed this first role with Hospice, and I was then given an opportunity to assist the finance department in processing invoices for payment, a duty which I remain involved in to this day and which I really enjoy.

I also work in the day care office, arranging files for our medical personnel prior to visiting patients off site.

I have also assisted the fundraising team with their events, the Galway Memorial Walk in September, and the Christmas Market and Tree of Lights Celebration at Christmas.

Overall, I am delighted to



be assisting the Galway Hospice in any way I can, and look forward to continuing my volunteering, as there remains a very big need for volunteers in the organisation.

What motivates me to carry out my duties:

The positive and friendly attitude at all times by staff and volunteers.

The offer of help when required.

The variety of volunteer functions available.

That there is a great job satisfaction from volunteering in Hospice.

That the Galway Hospice is such an important charity, impacting so many people.

I thank the Hospice for offering me an opportunity to be a part of their volunteering team and look forward to assisting them in any way I can in the future.

Tim Folan

Study days for nurses in residential care facilities

The Galway Hospice Community Palliative Care Team has been supporting the staff in nursing home and residential care facilities to develop knowledge, skills and competence in managing non-complex symptoms associated with an advanced disease and end-of-life care planning. This has been run throughout the year by the Palliative Community Care Team, by delivering face-to-face study days facilitated in Galway Hospice.

The focus of these study days has been on the following areas:

- Symptom Management in Patients with an Advanced Disease
- Advance Care Planning
- Communication and Breaking Bad News
- Delirium and Dementia
- Spirituality and Spiritual Wellbeing
- Palliative Care Needs of Patients with Non- Malignant Conditions
- Recognition and Management of The Dying Person
- Syringe Driver Workshop Facilitated by Clinical Nurse Specialists

If you would like further information on Study Days please contact info@galwayhospice.ie



Walking in memory of Mary Sheppard

In October it will be one year since we lost our mother, our world, my sister, my best friend. Every year we did the Galway Memorial Walk together and Mam also devoted her time volunteering in Galway Hospice. Little did we know that we would lose her so shockingly and suddenly to cancer. You never think it's going to hit your own doorstep.

Our world has been turned upside down and has left an emptiness that will never ever be filled. Every minute, every hour, every day I think of her. If only we could hug her, hear her voice, hear her laugh just once more.

I also think of everybody else out there, family, friends that have been affected by the Big C in some way. Life is so cruel, so tough.

We received amazing home support from Galway Hospice during our journey and we will be forever grateful especially to nurse Kevin. You were an angel that guided us gently through that unknown territory. Words will never describe how grateful we are to you.

Donna Sheppard

What Our Patients Say

“I can't tell you how safe I feel knowing the community team are there for me.”

“My experience has been fantastic, my body and soul have been rejuvenated.”

“From the moment palliative care came into our lives we felt safe, supported and that we would be looked after”

Quality, safe care at Galway Hospice



Niamh McKeon

Galway Hospice has opted to participate for a number of years in external accreditation to facilitate in depth assessment of the standards of care we provide and support how we can continually improve. The hospice is committed to benchmarking and consistently assessing evidence based standards to support the provision of a specialist palliative care service.

On June 14th we completed our CHKS Surveillance survey which is the first survey since achieving accreditation last year in 2022. This is an important review undertaken by CHKS, to monitor and ensure our compliance with the clauses as set out in ISO 9001.

There were 7 core standards with multiple criteria that were assessed over the day by an independent surveyor. The final report received, confirmed full compliance with these standards and criteria.

The survey which took place remotely provided an opportunity for the organisation to review and reassess the application of quality, safe care. It identifies the important ongoing initiatives and projects that are essential to our mission to provide specialist palliative care to our patients and families and to continually improve what we do every day. This mission is what brings all the staff together as a team and was identified by the surveyor in their report.

If you would like any further information on the CHKS ISO surveillance visit or have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Niamh McKeon, Director of Quality

Leaving a legacy

Would you like to leave a gift in your will to Galway Hospice? The Hospice has produced a new legacy information leaflet. Read it online at www.galwayhospice.ie/legacy or request a copy by contacting the Fundraising Team on fundraising@galwayhospice.ie or **091-770868**.





Journey for Ger



JOURNEY FOR GER
"MOMMY NEVER WALK ALONE"

The late Ger McMahon was diagnosed with a brain tumour in August 2022. He underwent brain surgery in Beaumont Hospital but shortly afterwards Ger was told the tumour was cancerous and he would have to undergo further treatment for his illness.

Ger fought his sickness with such courage and bravery right to the end and was always determined to get better despite all the odds. Sadly, Ger passed away peacefully on the 24th March 2023, aged 60, just seven months after receiving his diagnosis.

Thanks to the Community Palliative Care services provided by Galway Hospice, Ger's family were able to bring him home to his beloved Kilkerrin for his final days so that he could be surrounded by all who loved him, and this will be forever appreciated and cherished by his family.

In association with Kilkerrin Community Development Centre Limited, the family of the late Ger

McMahon decided to organise a 46 kilometre staged walk/run in his memory from Knock Shrine to Ger's native village of Kilkerrin on 15th July 2023, with the proceeds raised to go to Galway Hospice.

The people of Kilkerrin and its surrounding areas turned out in their droves on a wet Saturday in July and raised an incredible amount of money for Galway Hospice with nearly 1,000 taking part in different stages of the journey. The event on the day was concluded with a fundraising Auction. The event has raised an overwhelming amount of over €75,000 to date with donations still being received. The event was a wonderful tribute to Ger and was testament to the high esteem in which he was held by so many.

A special word of thanks to all the volunteers who helped organise this event for giving up so much of their time to make this day possible. The funds raised from Journey for Ger will enable Galway Hospice to provide care and support to other families in their time of need.

Host a Hospice Coffee Morning

Bewley's Big Coffee Morning Social for Hospice is a chance to get together and help Galway Hospice!

By hosting a Coffee Morning on Thursday 21st September or on another date that suits, you will be helping Galway Hospice to continue providing specialist palliative care services to patients in your local community.

If you can't host this year, pop along to your local Coffee Morning! There are hundreds taking place across Galway City & County, including at Galway Hospice on 21st September.

All hosts receive a free Bewley's Coffee Morning Pack containing Bewley's Coffee. Register as a Coffee Morning Host on galwayhospice.ie/coffee, email fundraising@galwayhospice.ie or call Fundraising on 091-770868.



*Caroline Quinn,
Galway Hospice
Principal Medical
Social Worker,
and Lorraine
Gallagher, Galway
Hospice Campaigns
Manager, pictured
with Domhnall
Gleeson, Bewley's
Big Coffee Morning
Social for Hospice
Ambassador.*



Supporting Galway Hospice this Christmas

Christmas Cards

12 Luxury Christmas Cards for €7. Sponsored by O'Toole's SuperValu, Radharc Landscaping, Signfit Branding, Busker Brownes and Ultimate Office

Galway Crystal Decoration

NEW for 2023. Exclusive Galway Crystal designed robin decoration for €15.

Galway Hospice Weekly Draw Voucher

Give the gift that keeps on giving.
12-Month Weekly Draw Voucher (€66.04) or
6-Month Voucher (€33.02) available

Tree of Lights Celebration

Join special guest Dáithí Ó Sé for live music at the Galway Hospice Tree of Lights Celebration on Sunday 3rd December at 5pm at Galway Hospice. Dedicate a Light to a loved one online.

Festive Fashion Friday

Get your friends, family, school, company or community to wear their festive best on Friday 15th December in aid of Galway Hospice.



To support Galway Hospice this Christmas, see
www.galwayhospice.ie/christmas or call Fundraising on 091-770868