



# Galway Hospice

## IMPACT STATEMENT

### ANNUAL REPORT 2023



# We are Galway Hospice

At Galway Hospice, we are committed to providing compassionate specialist palliative care to patients and their families affected by life-limiting conditions.

Our high-quality services are free of charge and are available to those living in Galway, Mayo and the surrounding areas.

We listen to what matters most to patients and their loved ones, tailoring our care to meet their physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs.

This care is offered in patients' homes, in other care settings, and within our two Hospices located in Galway and Mayo.



## Our Vision

Our vision is to be a leading example of excellence by delivering a specialist palliative care service, in appropriate settings, to people living with advanced life-limiting conditions.

## Our Purpose

We provide compassionate palliative care to patients and their families in counties Galway and Mayo. We do this by working alongside our health partners. We offer Inpatient, Day Care and Community Palliative Care services, which are underpinned by exemplary knowledge and delivered with compassion, dignity, respect and excellence.

## Our Values





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# Welcome

## A message from our CEO, Mary Nash

At Galway Hospice and Mayo Hospice, we have a vision of being a leading example of excellence by delivering a specialist palliative care service, in appropriate settings, to people living with advanced life-limiting a condition. Operating from two locations, in Galway and Castlebar, our efforts are focused on meeting the goals of people with a life-limiting condition and supporting their families and carers wherever we can. This report aims to provide clear and transparent information on our finances, activity levels and quality improvement initiatives undertaken during 2023.

Demand for our services continues to grow, we cared for 974 patients in the community in Galway during 2023. Occupancy in the Inpatient Unit in Galway increased by 3% and occupancy in the Mayo Inpatient Unit increased by 6%. There were 581 attendances to our Day Service in Galway and 459 attendances to the service in Mayo during 2023.

As we continue to work on delivering on our Strategic objectives for 2022 to 2026, our focus as always is our patients, their families, carers and communities. Quality improvement is a theme that runs through all our work as we work to provide personalised high-quality care and support to patients and families in an environment that respects their wishes,

whilst being a supportive partner to our HSE and community colleagues. The results of the National End of Life survey which HIQUA conducted in 2023 clearly demonstrate that our staff and volunteers are delivering for our communities as Galway Hospice and Mayo Hospice scored 100% in a number of categories and our scores were in excess of 90% in all categories that were rated.

In 2023 we reached agreement with the HSE and the Department of Health to redesignate the Hospice to Section 38 status which is a significant milestone as we have certainty about the level of state funding that we will receive going forward. This will allow us to progress our plans for a much-needed new hospice in Galway. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues in the HSE and Department of Health who worked with us during 2023 to achieve redesignation.

In June the Hospice completed the accreditation against ISO 9001. The final ISO CHKS report confirmed full compliance by the Hospice with all the standards and criteria surveyed.

The gradual progress of implementation of the electronic healthcare record, iCare, a paper light project continued through 2023 with support of the steering



committee and commitment of managers and staff throughout the organisation.

The organisation demonstrated its commitment to shared learning by facilitating staff to attend many educational forums and by supporting the education of primary care colleagues around end of life care.

Project ECHO, a distance learning model that breaks down hierarchies of specialist knowledge by creating virtual local networks of community and practice, was initiated in 2023. It connects a team of specialists in the Hospice to multiple participants in nursing homes around Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. The network which consists of 33 nursing homes and 188 nursing home employees met regularly for scheduled sessions in 2023, via zoom to work to build on the knowledge of nursing home staff on managing end of life patients, using specialist input, case-based learning, and peer support.

Awareness initiatives carried out this year included a Falls Awareness Week which focused on education for staff led by internal and external facilitators, and Palliative Care Week which aimed to raise awareness of palliative care amongst colleagues in local acute hospitals.

Patient engagement continues to be a key priority this year as we work through the guidelines documented in the HSE's Better Together Patient Engagement Roadmap. We have made good progress

on the journey during 2023 and are delighted to have identified a number of service users and family members who have volunteered to assist us on our engagement journey.

We all know that once someone has received a terminal diagnosis no one can change the end of that story. However, through high quality specialist palliative care, what we can do is take the time to get to know our patients and their loved ones; we can take the time to listen to them and hear what's important to them as they approach the end of their life. We can then take the time to care – tailoring the support we provide to help patients live as well as they can for as long as possible. Our role has been, and will continue to be, pivotal for the community of Galway and Mayo, and we know that the expertise, commitment, and sheer compassion from all our staff and volunteers, will shine throughout this report. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our workforce, both staff and volunteers, and the generous support of our local community. We are grateful to all who have contributed this year and look forward to working together to continue to care in 2024 and beyond.



**Mary Nash**  
Chief Executive

## Our Impact in Numbers

**459**

attendances to  
our Day Care  
service in Mayo.

**6,574**

Therapy  
treatments  
provided.

**74.5%**

increase in  
attendances  
to Walk & Talk  
groups.

**1,266**

patients and  
their families  
were supported.

**2,460**

contacts with  
carers (face to  
face/telephone  
support) by our  
Medical Social  
Work Team.

**581**

attendances  
to our Day  
Care service in  
Galway.

**160**

volunteers gave  
their time to  
support our  
services.

**85%**

of patients who received care  
from our Community Palliative Care  
Team died at home.

**78%**

of people in  
Galway who died  
with a malignant  
diagnosis, were  
cared for by  
Galway Hospice.

## In their words

Dear Reader,

My name is Elaine. I'm a lady in my fifties currently going through my journey of living with inoperable lung cancer.

I would like to share my lived experience of being admitted to the Mayo Hospice in Castlebar.

Hopefully I will be able to dispel any preconceived ideas one may have of what coming to the Hospice to be cared for by competent, professional and caring staff is about.

When we hear the word hospice, one almost immediately thinks "Oh that is the place where one goes to die". Yes, one can come here for end of life care. However, the Mayo Hospice in Castlebar offers much more than that.

The Hospice provides a Day Care service which is an amazing respite for me. Should one's health become poor, they can come here, as I do say, to be "lovingly glued back together" in the hands of trained professionals from many disciplines. They in turn can send you on your merry way once more, to get on with living with your illness, regardless of what it is.

I'm currently on my third admission to the Hospice in Castlebar, having recently become somewhat unwell again. But it is not a place to fear being admitted to.

It is a place of laughter, joy and contemplative thought. It is a place where consummate professionals use their skills and vast knowledge, to get you to a state of relative wellness. Thanks to

their support, you can carry on with the activities of daily living.

Apart from standard medical and physiotherapy services, there is also access to many other brilliant services such as arts and crafts, beauty therapy, aromatherapy and hairdressing available during the week.

Recently, a greenhouse has been purpose built, perfect for any of you with either artistic or green fingers. There is something for everyone.

Furthermore, for those of us who wish to seek solace in the good Lord himself. There is a beautiful rectory where one can go and converse with whomever you deem is your maker. There is a kind and good-humoured chaplain who is available to chat to with regard to any spiritual issues, should one feel the need to do so.

Well friends, I've said as much as I feel I needed to say with respect to what the Mayo Hospice in Castlebar can offer you.

I hope that you on your journey through your illness will now understand that Hospice care is very much about living the best life you can. I hope any fear you may harbour regarding coming into Hospice care has been somewhat alleviated.

Remember it's not so much about the destination that's important, but the journey that takes us there.

Mise le chara,

*Elaine.*

***“It's a place of emotional buoyancy, filled with great conversations with both staff and other service users.”***





## Inpatient Care

In our Galway and Mayo Inpatient Units, we support patients to get symptoms under control and provide rehabilitation and respite care to help them and their carers so that they can continue to live as independently as possible. A big part of this is making sure that people feel comfortable and at home whilst they stay in our Inpatient Units. We also provide end of life care for patients who are at an advanced stage of their illness.

### Galway Inpatient Unit

- The Galway Hospice Inpatient Unit has 18 Inpatient beds and cared for **308** patients during 2023.
- **95%** of patients admitted had a wait time of less than 7 days and their average length of stay was 14 days.
- **74%** of admissions had a malignant diagnosis and **26%** were non-malignant.

- **46%** of patients admitted were discharged to their home or to another community-based setting.
- Inpatients availed of **3,666** therapy sessions.

### Mayo Inpatient Unit

- 2023 was the third year of operation of the Mayo Inpatient Unit which has 14 beds and cared for **266** patients during 2023.
- **100%** of patients admitted had a wait time of less than **7** days and their average length of stay was **12** days.
- **71%** of admissions had a malignant diagnosis and **29%** were non-malignant.
- **31%** of patients admitted were discharged to their home or to another community-based setting.
- Inpatients availed of **1,437** therapy sessions.



## What Patients & Families Say

### **To all the amazing people at Galway Hospice,**

We will never be able to thank you enough for the care and support you have given our late dad and our family in the last days of his life. It was comforting for us to know dad was so well cared for and made so comfortable in his surroundings on his journey to heaven. You are amazing people and each and every one of you should be so proud of yourselves for your dedication to this wonderful hospice. Your support got us through the hardest time of our lives.

May dad look down on you all from Heaven.

### **To the entire staff in Mayo Hospice,**

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the amazing care and kindness shown to my mother in her final days. You all made a very difficult time more bearable. Every single person we encountered provided exemplary care for us all. Their absolute attention to every need was second to none and won't ever be forgotten. You all truly are special, gifted people and thank you doesn't come close to how much we appreciated you all.

### **To all the team at Galway Hospice,**

The level of care and treatment my husband has received has been exceptional. Throughout this challenging journey, both of us have been consistently well informed and have a clear understanding of the situation. The staff members have consistently demonstrated a friendly and professional approach, going above and beyond to address any concerns or needs. We are grateful for the compassionate care and understanding shown towards our situation.

### **To all the staff at Mayo Hospice,**

Words are difficult to find to express my sincere gratitude to you all, for my significant experience at the Hospice. From the moment the transport arrived to collect me, until I was brought home again, I experienced nothing but kindness, care and guidance.

I thank you all for the individual care and even on gloomy days, you would raise anyone's spirits, with the big smiles on all your faces! Thank you sincerely for everything.



## Galway Community Palliative Care

Our Community Palliative Care Team provides specialist care and support to patients in their own homes, nursing and care homes.

To provide the best standard of care, our team works closely with patients, their loved ones and other professionals involved in their care including their GP, public health nurse and hospital consultant. This includes pain and symptom management, in addition to providing emotional and practical support through home visits and telephone consultations. The team is available from 9am to 5pm seven days a week.

- **24,035** patient calls and **6,647** visits were made during the year by the Galway Community Palliative Care Team.
- **85%** of patients who received care from our Community Palliative Care Team died at home.

Our three community teams received **839** referrals to support patients and families in their own homes during 2023 and cared for **974** patients in the community. **765** were new referrals and there were **74** re-referrals.

**73%** of patients taken on by our Community Palliative Care Team were never readmitted to an acute hospital setting. **53%** of new patients referred in 2023 had a non-cancer diagnosis compared to **56%** in 2022.



## Staff Story – Michelle Scarry

### Infection Prevention and Control CNMII & Quality Assurance Co-Ordinator, Mayo

I joined Galway Hospice and Mayo Hospice in 2021 having just returned from working in London. Although a native of East Galway, I moved to the green and red county to take up the position of staff nurse in Mayo Hospice Inpatient Unit.

During my General Nursing training, the area of oncology was always of interest to me. Following graduation, I relocated to England and commenced as a staff nurse on a Head and Neck cancer care unit in The Royal Marsden in Chelsea. There I completed my training in tracheostomy and laryngectomy care alongside chemotherapy administration. While I enjoyed my time working there and learned a great deal, I was drawn to supporting patients and their families on a more ongoing basis through their journey.

On returning to Ireland, the values of the hospice were what led me to seek a role there. It is an honour and a privilege to support the care of patients, their families and loved ones at this point in their journey.

2021 was a year of mixed emotions. The excitement of returning home and the prospect of a new job then quickly became wrapped in sadness from the loss of significant people in my life. After some time off and thoughts on returning to work I knew I didn't want to leave hospice care and as the saying goes "what's for you won't pass you" – and that it didn't!

The opportunity arose for a position within the Quality Department in Mayo Hospice in November 2021. This was a side to patient care I had never experienced. Patient safety and the delivery of quality care is at the heart of all employees. It was there I began to understand the processes and procedures that are considered prior to the implementation of change within healthcare and the avenues which are considered ahead of reaching

our patients. The level of multidisciplinary team input from both hospice sites is remarkable and illuminates the passion all staff have for their roles and desire for the delivery of extraordinary care and I am privileged to say I witness this on a daily basis.

Management of infection has been a concern in healthcare communities for many years and especially during the recent pandemic it became a talking point in the wider community. In 2022, I was successful in obtaining the Infection Prevention and Control Clinical Nurse Manager post for both hospice sites. Infection control is everyone's concern encompassing all disciplines. As CNMII, my role includes advising and educating my colleagues and working alongside various multidisciplinary members in consultation around specific patient needs.

In recent months, I have been fortunate to return to the patient bedside in a nursing capacity and for me this is a privilege. I can acknowledge that we are supporting people at the most vulnerable time in their lives and to me this is person-centred care. From working alongside staff on both sites and with many being considered dear friends, I look forward to going to work every day.

***The energy these individuals bring to those in need and towards each other as colleagues is truly amazing and I'm quite proud to be a tiny cog in the very big wheel of both Galway Hospice and Mayo Hospice.***

*Michelle Scarry*







## Day Care

Our Day Care units in Galway and Castlebar offer patients a creative and safe environment to access specialist nursing and medical care, benefit from treatments and therapies and meet with other members of the team such as social work and pastoral care.

This service enhances and compliments the care that patients are already receiving in the community. Some patients may be referred by their medical team if they believe they may benefit from the Day Care service, but other patients may attend Day Care because they are already known to Community Specialist Palliative Care.

Day Care is often the first introduction to Hospice for patients and their families. While patients may initially feel apprehensive and concerned about the experience of receiving palliative care, this is greatly reduced by the

warm atmosphere and friendly care of our staff and volunteers.

Patients can benefit from a wide variety of therapies which include Aromatherapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy and Art Therapy. Our volunteers also often provide services such as Horticultural activities and Hairdressing/Nail Care. In addition, support is available from our Pastoral Care Team and Medical Social Work Team.

Many activities took place in Day Care in 2023, ranging from crafting seasonal decorations and flower arranging to chair yoga, virtual cycling and beauty workshops. We are also grateful to have had many wonderful guests visit our Day Care patients, such as the Connacht Rugby team, Dáithí Ó Sé, Galway Rose Clare Ann Irwin and musician David James.



*“As a Clinical Nurse Manager, I see first-hand the benefits our Day Care service has for our patients. Day Care bridges the gap between Community Palliative Care and Inpatient Care, where they find camaraderie and practical support amidst their challenges. It is incredibly fulfilling to help patients identify and achieve their goals, working as part of the Multidisciplinary Team that enables them to continue living at home with their families and carers.”*

**Lesley Carroll,**  
Clinical Nurse Manager

*“I really enjoyed the programme and it gave me my confidence back again, the advice and help I got was life changing.”*

**Day Care Attendee**

## **Galway**

**103** patients had **581** attendances to Day Care and availed of **811** therapy sessions.

## **Mayo**

**72** patients had **459** attendances to Day Care and availed of **660** therapy sessions.



## Patient Story - Pat Monaghan

In 1953, Pat was born in the small village of Cooloo in Moylough, Co. Galway.

He was the third of six siblings, with a childhood full of happy memories on the family farm.

As a young adult he moved to Birmingham, where he met Kathleen, a Galway woman who would later become his wife of 49 years. A few years later, they moved back to Ireland together to run his dad's farm, where Pat also began his trade of plastering.

With five kids of their own and five grandkids to follow, Pat was always the centre of his family, spoiling each and every one of them. They just worshiped their grandad, and rightly so. He had the biggest heart imaginable and they were his world. Little Darragh was the last to come along in 2020, who also stole his heart. They were two peas in a pod.

Pat led a happy and healthy life, enjoying his busy lifestyle on the farm and never forgetting to make time for his family and friends. As a gifted singer, he spent many days singing his heart out in the pub and enjoying a few drinks with his friends. He was

always asked to belt out a Luke Kelly song. Not only was he the man in the village that you could always rely on, but also a dedicated family man who was the centre of the Monaghan House. There was no job too big or small and he was always there when you needed him. His incredible humour also had us laughing every day. No matter what, he would always try to make everyone else smile. There are no words to express his influence in our lives. He was an amazing Friend, Brother, Uncle, Husband, Dad, and Grandfather.

In 2017, Pat was diagnosed with dementia. At this stage it was mild and did not interfere too much with his day to day life. He continued to live as normal until the sad news came in November 2021 that Pat now also had bladder cancer. He was treated in University Hospital Galway for two weeks and had radiation the following March for a month, but sadly Pat had lost a kidney to the cancer by the time he was diagnosed.

The radiation was successful and Pat went back to a somewhat normality but both diseases were taking their toll on his health and strength to do his everyday farmwork, so he had slowed down a lot. During this time, he focused on enjoying the company of his family, especially the grandkids who he held so dear. In the summer of 2023, Pat became very ill. The tumour had grown back and he was in great discomfort. He went back to hospital for two







weeks where he underwent two surgeries, but sadly this time they took their toll on his dementia.

Pat returned home, needing full time care from his family and a palliative care team.

That is where Galway Hospice stepped in, who were outstanding 24/7. They are so gifted at their job. He spent his last three weeks in this wonderful charitable

organization for whom we are forever in debt to. Dad's last few weeks were made as comfortable and relaxed as possible, where he was treated with such kindness, dignity and respect. It was overwhelming how each and every staff member in the Galway Hospice assured us such great comfort on dad's journey home. His kind nature constantly tried to pay the staff for all they did for him and although he was so poorly, he still acknowledged their help kindness and support to him and us as a family.

*The Hospice is a truly amazing gift to us and we will never appreciate the work they do until we see it with our own eyes.*

From the social workers to the physiotherapists, the volunteers to sing and chat with, the pastoral care assistants, nurses, doctors - they all work above and beyond to help you and your loved one.

Pat sadly passed away on the 7th of October 2023 at 70 years of age, leaving his family heartbroken but so proud to call him their own. His legacy will live on in his beautiful green fields, his children and beautiful grandchildren.

*The Monaghan Family*



# Therapies

Our range of therapy services play an important role in the holistic and specialist palliative care that we provide our patients and their families. Our therapists work with patients to maintain or rebuild their strength and independence as well as supporting their physical needs, mental health and overall wellbeing. A Therapies Manager was also appointed during the year, and re-structuring of some therapy posts was carried out to enable service developments and progression of education and student placements.



## Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils, through massage, inhalation or hydrotherapy (bathing). Aromatherapy creates a general sense of wellbeing and contributes to physical,emotional & spiritual healing.



## Art Therapy

Art Therapy is a mental health profession that enriches the lives and emotional wellbeing of individuals through creative process and meaningful engagement.



### Aromatherapy



### Art Therapy

	Delivered treatments	Increase of %	Delivered treatments	Increase of %
GALWAY	602	17%	397	18.5%
MAYO	599	24%	178	109%



### Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy helps people to carry out the everyday activities that they wish and need to do when faced with a life-limiting condition, disability or challenging life events. Through assessment and individual goal setting, Occupational Therapy can support people to maximise their function, independence and overall quality of life.



### Physiotherapy

The Physiotherapy Team works with patients and families to optimise the function and physical wellbeing of our patients, enabling them to live as independently as possible within the limitation of a progressing condition. Their role involves the continual assessment of things such as baseline physical function, pain management, safety around mobility, prevention of falls, management of breathlessness and anxiety.



#### Occupational Therapy



#### Physiotherapy

	Delivered treatments	Patients	Delivered treatments	Patients
GALWAY	1,535	224	1,911	264
MAYO	706	105	591	145



# Medical Social Work

## Supporting family, friends and carers

The Medical Social Work Team provides essential therapeutic and support services to patients and their families at Galway and Mayo Hospice's. The Team also arrange respite care services to give carers a break from their caregiving responsibilities and prevent burnout.

In 2023, the Team focused on developing positive relationships with local services and contributed to networks within the region and nationally to further develop social work services in specialist palliative care.

Eighty-seven family meetings were facilitated across Galway and Mayo in response to the support and complex needs of carers and significant others.

Twenty children were seen during the palliative phase of illness and eight family interventions were facilitated which included children.



### ACROSS ALL AREAS OF SERVICE:

- **2,460** contacts were had with carers, an increase of **81%** from 2022.
- **135** first home visits were made and **148** follow up visits with patients, an increase of **52%** from 2022.
- **859** patients were provided with emotional and psychosocial support (Community, Inpatient and Day Care).

## Bereavement Support Service Volunteers

Our Bereavement Support Service Volunteers work alongside the Medical Social Work Team, offering individual and telephone support to bereaved adults. The Bereavement Support Service Volunteers assist the Medical Social Work Team in the provision of adult bereavement groups and remembrance

evenings. These supports are available to bereaved persons free of charge. Activity across the Bereavement Support Services in both Galway and Mayo saw an increase in 2023.

There was a **105.7%** increase in bereavement screening assessments compared to 2022.

## Remembrance Services

Our Remembrance Services provide the opportunity to the families of our patients who have died to gather, celebrate, reflect, but above all else - remember.

In 2023, there were four Remembrance Services in Galway which were delivered both in person and virtually, in addition to one Annual Service. Mayo Hospice delivered two Remembrance Services and one Annual Service. These services are co-facilitated by our Pastoral Care Team and see a large attendance both in person and online.

We receive positive feedback from the people who attend our remembrance services and a sample of the feedback we receive is below:



*“It was perfect. You all did an amazing job. Thank you so much for the opportunity to honour, remember and reflect openly in a safe space and for the comfort and healing it provided for me and also to remind me that I am not alone on this journey.”*

*“Wonderful, very comforting, peaceful and reflective”.*

*“A very moving and well-measured service in tribute to our loved one”.*



### **Walk & Talk Groups**

The Walk & Talk initiative is an outdoor walking group which provides support to bereaved individuals through professional and peer support. Walk & Talk provides a safe and informal space for those bereaved to access support and meet others who understand their grief. Walk & Talk saw an increase of 74.5% in attendances in 2023, as new members continued to join across the year in both Galway and Castlebar. The feedback continues to be highly positive, providing a respite to many families who have experienced grief under our services.

*“It’s a wonderful space where people understand, you don’t really have to explain yourself, they just get it, your grief.”*

**Walk & Talk Attendee, Galway**

*“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.”*

**Walk & Talk Attendee, Galway**



## Claddagh Camp at Wildlands



**In mid-September, our Medical Social Work Department facilitated the Claddagh Camp for bereaved families in Wildlands, Moycullen.**

The camp which took place over a weekend was attended by ten adults and twenty children. It was facilitated by four members of the Medical Social Work Department.

Each family shared a common theme, and that was they had all experienced the death of a spouse, partner or parent. Although

the overarching theme of the group was bereavement and loss, the facilitators acknowledged the importance of each family connecting with each other, having some fun together and creating new memories again after experiencing a very traumatic family event.

Each family was provided with their own luxury cabin for the weekend, including breakfast, lunch and dinner in the Olive Kitchen, Wildlands. Both the parents and children enjoyed the food, with the pizza and pancakes on the menu being among the children's favourites. One parent commented that "as a family we rarely sit down and eat together because life is just so busy - so it was really special for us to have our own family meals together over the weekend". Each cabin also had a goodies hamper provided with some essential food items and some treats for the children to enjoy. One child noted that the treats in the cabin were his "favourite" part of the weekend.

A big part of the weekend was the wide variety of fun and entertaining activities for all of the family, including Ziplining, Archery, Off-Road Adventures, and Fun Challenge Rooms.

A 'Wildlands Walk' was also scheduled for the parents on the Saturday afternoon, which enabled them to have time on their own and enhance peer relationships whilst the children were involved with scheduled activities.

Families also enjoyed some therapeutic focused activities together throughout the weekend. The first activity for the group was pottery making as it enabled them to connect with other families and to share special family memories and memories of the family member who had

passed. One child said that they “loved doing the pottery and I loved doing it with my mum”.

Other activities scheduled during the weekend included family shield exercises, a family entertainer and a local band who played music over dinner. During this time, children had the opportunity to play in various activity areas inside and outside while parents enjoyed time with each other.

Following the weekend at Wildlands, each family received a follow up home visit by one of the Medical Social Workers and an evaluation was completed with each parent and child. All the feedback received was very positive and all families rated the Claddagh Camp as “excellent”.

Many of the parents enjoyed being looked after all weekend and expressed a huge appreciation in having a break from all the cooking and cleaning at home and the juggling demands as a one parent family. Each family also received photos and a video reel of activities capturing some of the fun activities that took place over the weekend.

It is evident from the feedback that the Claddagh Camp was a great success and had huge benefit to all the bereaved families as they continue to come to terms with their loss. One parent commented that Claddagh Camp “exceeded all my expectations...I felt the entire weekend was managed so well and I didn’t realise that I needed that time with the kids and for myself”. Many children asked if they could return to Wildlands as a group again. One child stated “I would love to go back again and thank you so much for inviting me and my mam”.

We would like to thank Community Foundation Ireland, whose financial support made this

possible. It is the first of its kind known to be delivered by an Irish Hospice and we are grateful to have been able to provide a fun therapeutic weekend for families to spend together in the company of others who have also benefited from our Bereavement Support Services.

All of the families said they would recommend this group to other bereaved families and were very thankful to Community Foundation Ireland and Galway Hospice for facilitating the weekend. As it was so well received, the Medical Social Work Team has planned to organise another Claddagh Camp for September 2024.





## Volunteer Stories

### Galway Hospice

My name is Trudy Concannon and I'm a volunteer with Galway Hospice. As I had worked in the Bon Secours hospital for twenty years, I was accustomed to dealing with patients. However, I had no experience of dealing with seriously ill people and I felt that this would be a challenge for me in volunteering with the Galway Hospice. Initially, I had thought hospice care was about sickness and dying but I quickly learned that it's about providing the best quality of life possible for people with life-limiting conditions. The Hospice is an environment filled with warmth, kindness, and a sense of community.

People with a life-threatening condition can often feel isolated and fearful. However, at Galway Hospice, there is a patient-centred approach meaning that from admission, people are treated courteously with dignity, respect, and compassion. Our professional staff address their medical, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs whilst volunteers support staff in creating a welcoming environment in which patients feel secure. My role involves the serving of meals to patients in the Inpatient Unit, where I have the opportunity to check in with them and often share a few smiles and laughs too. Day Care also provides complementary therapies, such as art therapy and aromatherapy which really helps provide patients relaxation.

Seeing patients willingly coming in from their homes to participate in these activities demonstrates that they are living life to the fullest, which is very rewarding.

Volunteering at Galway Hospice has profoundly impacted me. It has given me a deep understanding of empathy and human connection, witnessing firsthand the difference a kind word or a simple gesture can make. It is such an enriching experience and one that I cherish deeply.

*Trudy Concannon*



### Mayo Hospice

I applied to be a volunteer with Mayo Hospice after having a tour and introduction to the beautiful new building of Mayo Hospice in March 2021.

I had often played pitch and putt with my family on these grounds before the Hospice was built. My abiding memory of such a game was with my sister Jean's three children. My sister was recovering from cancer of the tongue, throat, and tonsils at the time. She was so ill and so weak at the time. She just sat on a seat as we did the rounds of the course.

I must say that at that time we just tried to make the most of our time together and did not know what the future held for Jean or her lovely young family. Thankfully Jean made a full recovery and has enjoyed many years of good health and the happiness of seeing her children grow up, get married and she is now the proud Granny of 4 beautiful grandchildren and hopefully more to come.

Back in 2021, I was self-employed at the time and hoping to retire. I was a bit concerned that I would be bored with the new retired life, so I had to get a plan for Susanna. I am delighted that my application was accepted, and I now volunteer in Mayo Hospice. I cover reception and give the full-time staff a lunch and tea break on a rostered basis. We are like a happy family of volunteers with superb training. As volunteers we have regular "get togethers" organised with food, drink, and an opportunity to catch up and get to know everyone.

I am enjoying my time with Hospice in its beautiful surroundings. I am not involved in the care of patients, but I am on the receiving end of how happy everyone is with the courtesy shown to them and how happy they are with the care provided to their loved ones.

*Susanna Kenny*





## Energy & Environment Initiatives

As we continuously work to reduce our energy usage and environmental footprint, we have completed several projects in 2023 to assist with achieving this objective. Examples include:

**EV Chargers:** At Mayo Hospice, we installed four new Electronic Vehicle charging points, which are available to staff, visitors, patient families and the local community. Having this service will ensure EV users will feel more secure knowing this is available, reduce the planning needed to find other charging locations while they are visiting us and hopefully reduce any range anxiety for longer distance EV users.

**Electric Heaters:** At Galway Hospice, we successfully switched all fan heaters in our six-bed prefab unit with infrared panels. In doing so, we increased the number of heaters in the prefab from eighteen to twenty-three, while still reducing the combined wattage by 4000W.

We are also able to monitor the energy used to

heat our space, change settings and set the desired temperatures for our patients and staff. This is a welcome change, as infrared heat has been shown to support health benefits including: a stronger immune system, improved blood circulation, better heart health, and a reduction in joint pain and stiffness.

**Nurse Call System:** At Galway Hospice, we have managed to combine our two separate nurse call systems into one, which has ensured patients calls for assistance will be communicated across our entire Inpatient Unit and can be answered by any available Inpatient staff member. This new nurse call system reduced response times and enables staff to respond to patient requests more quickly than ever before.

**Gardening Spaces:** To support patient interaction and wellbeing, we have installed a wheelchair accessible greenhouse at Mayo Hospice. This is fitted with raised beds that can be enjoyed by both in-house patients and Day Care patients. It is accompanied by a tea station area where users can take a break during



their gardening activities. Plans are also being developed for a composting project, which would enable us to reuse food waste on site for 2024.

At Galway Hospice, we have also installed small raised beds, providing our Day Care patients the opportunity to grow a variety of small plants such as herbs and flowers with the aid of a volunteer.

We are thrilled to introduce these lovely additions to our outdoor spaces, offering a shared space to aid therapy services for patients and allowing them to show families the activities they are involved in while in our care. The produce can be used by our kitchen, allowing our patients, staff and visitors to enjoy the organic produce grown at both Hospice sites.

In general, we seek to reduce our energy usage and promote sustainability wherever we can within the organisation. Galway Hospice has switched all the community homecare fleet of cars from diesel to hybrid. Where possible, we have removed all waste bins from office and single room spaces in our Galway facility and set up waste station points around the building to make users think of segregation at the point of disposal. With this, we have seen an 8% waste reduction in the last 12 months.

I think the efforts we have made thus far shows the organisation's commitment to sustainability and its importance to our service users. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote and support sustainability initiatives within the organisation and will strive to do so well into the future.

*Brian Nally*

Maintenance and Facilities Manager



## It's all thanks to YOU!

In addition to the support of the HSE, it is thanks to the incredible kindness and generosity of our local supporters that we can care for those in our community facing one of the most difficult journeys in life. We want to extend a huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who has volunteered, fundraised, donated, collected, and supported us in 2023.

Throughout the year, we saw a significant increase in the number of community events held across Galway city and county. These events included everything from tractor runs to walks, runs, dances and many more. A major portion of our community fundraising is thanks to the families who come together to remember their loved ones and fundraise to support our care. Many memorable events took place in 2023, including Journey for Ger in Kilkerrin, Essie's Road Run in Laurencetown, The Friday Game in memory of David Cox, the Renmore Ladies AFC 5-a-side, and the Joyce Country Truck Run in Clonbur.

In addition to these, many individual community fundraisers joined us to conquer personal and physical challenges, raising funds that are a vital contribution to our services. We are also deeply

grateful to the Hospice Hosts of our Bewley's Big Coffee Morning, our Memorial Walk attendees, our Croagh Patrick participants, our Tree of Lights Celebration attendees and the hundreds of people who participated in our Car Raffle.

Gifts in Wills accounted for over €1.5 million of our fundraised income in 2023. We invite you to consider leaving a gift in your will, however big or small, as this is a way to ensure we can care for future generations.

It is also important to acknowledge the €75,000 grant awarded to us by Community Foundation Ireland, in support of our Music Therapy Programme and our Claddagh Children's Bereavement Camp. You can read more about the Camp on page **19**.

*We cannot thank our supporters enough. Your care and generosity make our work possible!*

**Lending a hand and giving your time**

**Doing the miles: walking, cycling, running and trekking**

**Donating, giving, sponsoring and supporting**

**Being there for us**

**Making us smile!**

**Being brave and taking on a challenge**



# Highlights & Quality Improvements

## Project ECHO

We are grateful to have a lead role in Project ECHO, the Caru All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing Home Knowledge Network for Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. Initiated in 2023, this programme is facilitated by our Quality Co-Ordinator at Galway Hospice, Vanessa Butler.

The network fosters a spirit of collaborative learning in a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment, where participants have the unique opportunity to share, learn, discuss and access peer support. In sharing our specialist knowledge through this network, we can help to improve the delivery of compassionate palliative care to the residents and their family members of nursing homes in our community. In phase 1 of the Project ECHO Nursing home network, there were 183 staff from thirty Nursing homes registered to the network, ten learning sessions were completed. Phase two will continue with quarterly learning sessions available to all nursing home staff in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.



## Gaillimh le Gaeilge Recognition

In 2023, we continued to increase our efforts in the inclusion of the Irish language in our communications. As a result, we were delighted to be selected as a finalist for the Gradam Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh for 2023, organised by Gaillimh le Gaeilge in partnership with the Galway Advertiser and TG4.

## Aitheantas ó Gaillimh le Gaeilge

In 2023, leanamar ar aghaidh ag cur lenár n-iarrachtaí chun an Ghaeilge a chuimsiú inár gcumarsáid. Mar thoradh air sin, bhí an-áthas orainn a bheith roghnaithe do Ghearrliosta Ghradam Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh 2023, arna eagrú ag Gaillimh le Gaeilge I gcomhpháirtíocht leis an Galway Advertiser agus TG4.

## Medical Initiatives

During 2023, the Medical Team continued to further support patients and staff with a variety of quality initiatives. Last year, there was ongoing consultant attendance at the Motor Neuron clinic in Galway to support their patients with palliative care needs.

The Medical Team in Mayo Hospice introduced the 'iValidate' tool to Mayo University Hospital in a two-day programme with a visiting facilitator from Australia.

The course is a communication-based training which aims to enhance patient centred care and encourages discussion around goals of care in people with life limiting illness.



## NISO Awards

We are delighted that Galway Hospice & Mayo Hospice received a Distinction in the 2023 NISO Awards for Safety in the Workplace.

The awards are highly valued and regarded among health and safety professionals throughout the island of Ireland and demonstrate the positive and proactive culture of safety management in organisations.

Thank you to all the staff and volunteers of both facilities, whose commitment to Safety in the Workplace made this possible.

## Nursing Initiatives

In collaboration with the CNME Mayo/Roscommon, the CNM3 in Practice Development devised a full study day on "End of Life care in the acute and non-acute settings", which was open to nursing staff from both acute and non-acute settings in Mayo and Roscommon to attend. Attendance and feedback was very positive and has created opportunities in the future for both services to work collaboratively to provide education to healthcare professionals in palliative care.

In-house nurse study days were facilitated in Galway Hospice with staff attending from Mayo also, in February and November 2023. These days were designed to provide a more in-depth knowledge of some of the more specific topics and learning needs identified through the course of incident review and feedback from nursing staff themselves.

## Infection Control

Infection prevention and control is a core component to ensuring the Hospice provides safe quality care for our patients. Continuous education and quality improvements were undertaken throughout 2023.

The IPC CNM proposed and progressed the development of an Infection Prevention and Control forum across hospices within the All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care QA+I group. The objective of this is to strengthen infection prevention control across hospice care and support standardisation and consultation to enhance safe quality care.

## Staff Wellbeing

Recognising the importance of supporting our staff to be their best selves, we made many efforts throughout the year to improve staff wellbeing, from providing resources to hosting various events.

During the month of April, we celebrated National Workplace Wellbeing Day. There were various activities organised that our staff could attend, all aimed to support their emotional, spiritual, physical, mental and financial wellbeing. Examples include a group lunchtime walk, a book swap & share, a yoga class, and many more. A series of workshops and seminars were also provided covering topics such as cancer detection, resilience and managing a work/life balance.

## Galway's First Bereavement Network

In 2023, the Bereavement Support Service in Galway Hospice joined a project team with Galway University Hospital, Anam Cara, Hopespace, Rainbows Ireland and Embrace Farm, with a view to establishing Galway's first Bereavement Network. As a Network we were successfully awarded a Local Bereavement Development Grant by the Irish Hospice Foundation to assist with developing the Network. The overall aim of the Network is to identify and coordinate bereavement support services in Galway City and County. At present, there are only three such Networks in the Country (two in Dublin and one in Kildare). The Galway Network is the first of its kind in the West of Ireland.

## Patient & Family Feedback

Galway Hospice encourages feedback in a variety of ways as we continuously work to enhance our patient-centred care. This helps us to provide services that respects the wishes of our patients and their families, whilst being a supportive partner to our HSE and community colleagues.

In 2023, we continued to receive highly positive feedback, evidenced through our surveys.



## National End of Life Survey

We participated in the HSE's National End of Life survey during 2023.

The results of the National End of Life survey demonstrate that our staff and volunteers are delivering for our communities as Galway and Mayo Hospice's scored 100% in a number of categories and our scores were in excess of 90% in all categories that were rated.

## Annual Patient Experience Survey

We also conduct our own annual patient experience survey, where 100% of patients who took part said that they had confidence in staff providing care and rated the hospice environment as very clean.

"The team is so friendly and reassuring, gives great comfort to the patient and their family, and always answered our questions. We are so grateful for their service." - Galway Hospice patient

Patient engagement continues to be a key priority and we have made great progress during 2023, identifying several service users and family members who have volunteered to assist us on our engagement journey.



# Statement Of Financial Activities

**For the Financial Year Ended 31 December 2023**

	<b>2023 Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2023 Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>2023 Total</b>	<b>2022 Total</b>
	<b>(€)</b>	<b>(€)</b>	<b>(€)</b>	<b>(€)</b>
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>				
Donations and legacies	107,222	1,998,555	2,105,777	898,872
Charitable activities	11,756,942	1,926,710	13,683,652	13,208,265
Other	17,480	83,853	101,693	71,197
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,881,644</b>	<b>4,009,118</b>	<b>15,890,762</b>	<b>14,178,334</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>				
Charitable activities	12,435,667	640,492	13,076,159	12,190,784
Other	98,028	-	98,028	78,851
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,533,695</b>	<b>640,492</b>	<b>13,174,187</b>	<b>12,269,635</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>(652,051)</b>	<b>3,368,626</b>	<b>2,716,575</b>	<b>1,908,699</b>
Taxation	-	-	-	-
Transfers	861,496	(861,496)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>209,445</b>	<b>2,507,130</b>	<b>2,716,575</b>	<b>1,908,699</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
Total funds brought forward	168,958	14,220,313	14,389,271	12,480,572
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>378,403</b>	<b>16,727,443</b>	<b>17,105,846</b>	<b>14,389,271</b>

*All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.*

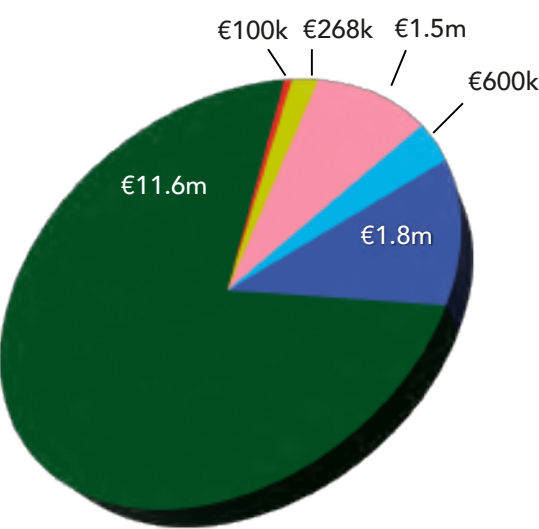
# Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2023

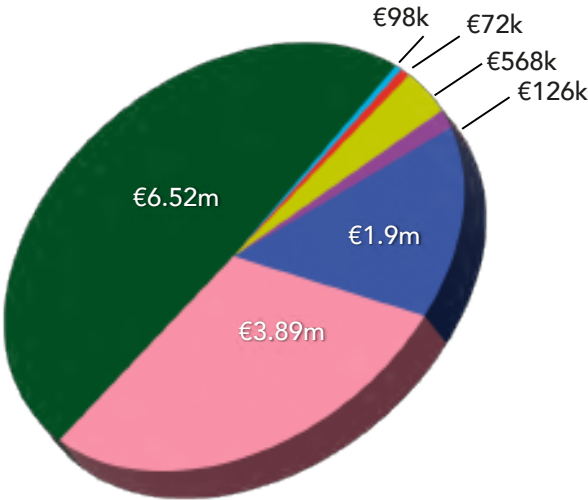
	2023	2022
	(€)	(€)
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Tangible Fixed Assets	4,365,752	4,689,946
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	707,325	1,475,756
Cash at bank and in hand	13,220,526	10,007,825
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13,927,851	11,483,581
Creditors Amounts falling due within one year	(1,187,757)	(1,784,256)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	12,740,094	9,699,325
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>17,105,846</b>	<b>14,389,271</b>
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>		
Restricted funds	441,897	168,958
Designated funds	10,553,273	7,003,273
Unrestricted funds	6,110,676	7,217,040
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>17,105,846</b>	<b>14,389,271</b>

# Graphs

2023 Total Income = €15.86m

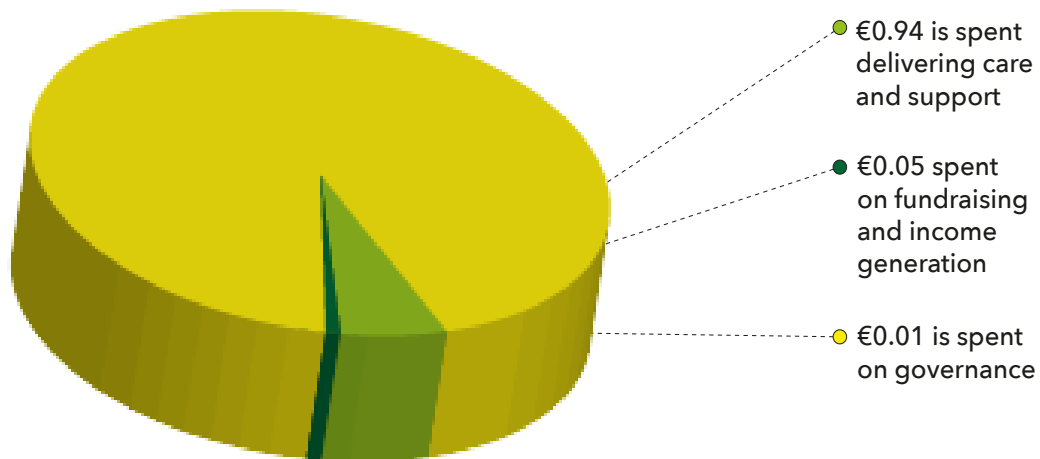


2023 Total Expenditure = €13.17m

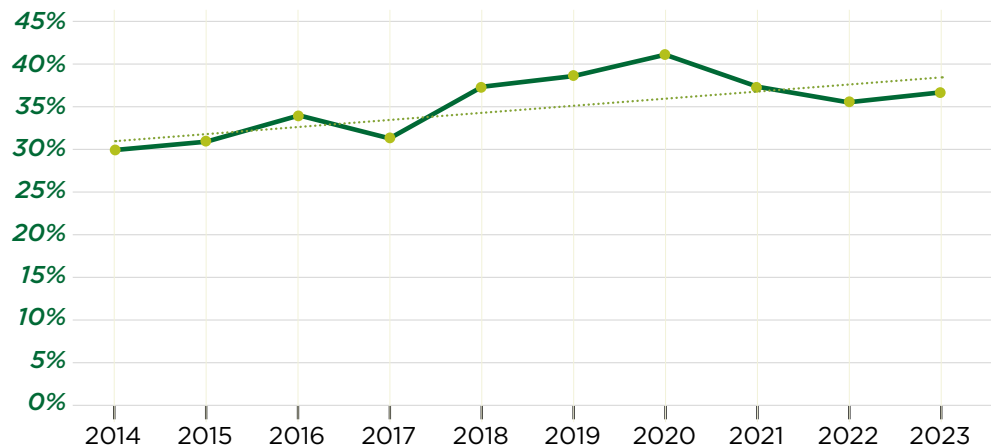




## How the money is spent



## Percentage of Individuals who Died in Galway, Cared for by Galway Hospice



Thank you











*Every moment matters*



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