

Sunflower

Your Supporter Newsletter



YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN!

How you helped us raise €500,000 for Hospice Home Care for Children



There's generosity, and then there's the kind of once-in-a-lifetime generosity that James and Caroline Lynch showed last Christmas.

James and Caroline – both from Ireland and living in the USA – offered to match any donations given by our supporters during our Christmas 2010 Hospice Home Care for Children campaign, up to a total of €250,000.

It all began one day last year when we received a phone call from

James, a neurosurgeon who was visiting family in Ireland. Here's what he told us:

“My wife and I have been very fortunate in our careers and we live a comfortable life – but sadly, we do not have children. We're big believers in the idea of giving while living, and we've been wanting for some time, to do something really meaningful for children, but we didn't know what that 'something' was.

Then while I was in Ireland, I opened up the newspaper one morning, and out fell an envelope containing a letter about Hospice Home Care for Children. I had what I can only describe as a 'Eureka' moment. Suddenly I knew exactly what I wanted us to do with our money.”

As you can probably imagine we were delighted with James and Caroline's incredible offer, which we wrote to all our supporters about just before Christmas. Our goal was to raise the truly ambitious target of €250,000 so that James could add another €250,000, making a grand total of half a million euro.

You all responded with such generosity!

Hospice Home Care for Children supporters like you helped us beat that target! Together with James and Caroline's gift, you're helping us make 2011 the best year possible for the many families who desperately need this unique service

People like Siobhán and John Flynn, whose son Conor was diagnosed with a malignant tumour in his pelvis. Conor's doctors tried hard to save him, but after all the medical options were exhausted, Siobhan and John brought Conor home to die.

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Here's a little of what Siobhán told us about Conor's last days:

“Even though we only had Conor at home for ten days, they were the most precious ten days. We had the comforts of our own home, our own beds, our own bathroom, Conor's favourite toys and games. We had privacy.”

When he died we were at home. Where we belonged. It was so important to have that time. But it wouldn't have been possible without the specially trained nurse provided for us.”

It's a tragic fact of life that at any time in Ireland, there are more than 1,000 families like the Flynns. People facing the inevitable fact that they are going to lose their beloved child.

In this situation, the one thing every parent wants is to be able to care for their child at home in the warm embrace of family.

Your donations are the key to making that happen, for as many families as possible. And we are so grateful to you, our wonderful supporters, for everything you are doing to make Hospice Home Care for Children such an incredible success now and into the future.

YOUR SUPPORT TURNED INTO ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Thanks to kind and generous supporters like you, the last 12 months have been an incredible year of progress for Hospice Home Care for Children.

In May, Dr. Mary Devins took up her post as Ireland's first Consultant in Paediatric Palliative Medicine.

Dr. Devins' will be based at Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin, and the Irish Hospice Foundation will fund her position for the next five years, as part of our Hospice Home Care for Children programme. This is a vital commitment that we were only able to make because of your support.

Through your donations, we will also be able to recruit, train and fund five dedicated Outreach Nurses, all of whom will be in place by the end of the year.

Under Dr Devin's guidance, they will provide the essential advice and support that local healthcare professionals directly caring for children with life-limiting illnesses need.

Also, our Hospice Home Care for Children education programme has already trained more than 1,500 healthcare professionals in the skills needed to care for children who are coming to the end of their lives in their home.

All of these achievements ultimately mean that children will be able to spend their final days in the comfort and security of home, with their mums and dads, siblings, toys and pets around them, instead of the clinical and impersonal surroundings of an unfamiliar hospital.

Our objective remains the same – to make Hospice Home Care for Children available to everyone who needs it.

Thank you so much for helping us to work towards that goal.



Dr Mary Devins is Ireland's first Consultant in Children's Palliative Medicine.

Dr Devins will support all healthcare professionals who provide palliative care to children through our Hospice Home Care for Children programme. She will also provide leadership and support to outreach nurses for children with life-limiting conditions.



Hospice Friendly Hospitals Update

Turning Your Support into Dignity for the Dying

The shock of losing a loved one through accident or illness is hard enough to bear, but when death is handled insensitively by hospitals, the experience can become even more traumatic. Sadly, this happens all too often.

In 2009, when Catriona Crowe lost Pat, her partner of 32 years, she was so shocked and angered by her experience that she contacted us and offered her support for our Hospice Friendly Hospitals campaign.

Here's a little of what she told us.

"While the doctors were trying to save Pat, I was put into a small office with one chair and one of the doctors periodically came to tell me what was going on. Outside, a drunk was shouting and causing a scene. It still saddens me to think these were probably the last sounds Pat heard before he died.

When they finally told me Pat had died, I was allowed to see him, still lying on the trolley in the critical care corridor. Shortly after this, two of my closest friends arrived. As we waited, a drunken woman stumbled around the area, continually falling over us.

When we were allowed back in to be with Pat, we found him being wheeled away by two orderlies who were laughing and joking with each other.

I was in shock. I was grief-stricken. But separate from this pain was an underlying feeling of anger that everything - from the moment we got to the hospital, to now, watching Pat being wheeled away by these orderlies - was just all wrong."

Fortunately, this is now changing. Thanks in no small part to the incredible generosity shown by supporters like you.

With your help, our ground-breaking Hospice Friendly Hospitals programme has made

huge progress putting Hospice Principles into Hospital Practice right across the country

For example, the hospital where Catriona endured her traumatic experience has joined our Hospice Friendly Hospitals programme. With your help, Catriona hopes that everyone like Pat will receive the dignified treatment they deserve in hospital.

And the good news doesn't stop there. To date, more than 40 hospitals in all corners of Ireland have joined the programme.



Marian Finucane with the end of life spiral



Handover bag: (left to right) the specially designed family Handover Bag beside the old plastic bag used to return the belongings of a loved one to a bereaved family.

Some of the biggest changes you've helped us to bring about have been in the simple things.

Like the practical end-of-life resources designed to enhance the dignity of the deceased and their families, which Marian Finucane recently launched for us.

These include a special *Family Handover Bag*. A proper and dignified way to return the personal possessions of a

deceased patient to their family. Certainly more welcome than the current practice of returning belongings in a plastic bag.

Another key resource is the *End-of-Life Spiral*. A special symbol that Hospice Friendly Hospitals can display outside the room or ward of a patient who is near death, or who has died.

A great many hospital staff have told us that when these resources are used, everyone has become more conscious and respectful of the fact that an intensely personal and profound event is happening.

With your continuing support, we're confident of turning more and more hospitals into Hospice Friendly Hospitals, so that death with dignity becomes the rule, not the exception, for the almost 15,000 people who die in acute hospitals every year.



Marian Finucane with hospital staff: Gráinne Hill, Staff Nurse at Naas General Hospital and Paddy Clerkin, Clinical Nurse Manager at Beaumont Hospital, with the end of life spiral



Bed drape: The specially designed bed drape, multi-denominational altar and the end of life spiral - some of the practical end of life resources that have been designed by the Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme

Forum on End of life 2011

Taoiseach to Launch New "Think Ahead" Project

Both public and professionals will get a chance to reflect on how Ireland deals with dying, death and bereavement at the Forum on End of life 2011 in Dublin on October 12th.

The day-long event will feature four workshops: Carers; Preparing the Public; Spiritual & Psychological Support; and the Medicalisation of Dying. The last is being led by Professor Aidan Halligan, former Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England.

One of the high points of the day will be the launch of a new project called "Think Ahead", by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny.

"Think Ahead" is a pioneering new system to guide people in recording and registering their care preferences in the event of emergency, serious illness or death.

The Mary Holland Commemorative Lecture will also be delivered at the forum by foreign correspondent and author, Conor O'Clery.

For more information, log on to www.endoflife.ie or call 01-679 3188.



Pyjama Day Ambassador Rachel Allen at launch of Pyjama Day 2011 with Aaron, Conor, Fiona, Daniel and Aoibhe

A Gift That Lives on - EVEN AFTER DEATH

Naming a charity whose work is close to your heart in your will is a wonderful and profoundly satisfying act of generosity.

And for anyone who cares about the Hospice approach to death and dying, leaving a gift in your will to the Irish Hospice Foundation has particular significance. Because your lasting gift will continue to help others in the process of passing on, long after you have gone yourself.

As you may well know, the Irish Hospice Foundation receives no core funding from government and relies entirely on charitable donations from businesses and generous people like you to fund our programmes. Because of this, legacies from caring supporters are incredibly important to our work.

If you are interested in leaving a gift in your will to the Irish Hospice Foundation, you can find out more in the information leaflet we have enclosed for you. Please contact us if you would like further details by calling Tim O'Dea on 01 679 3188 or by e-mailing: tim.odea@hospicefoundation.ie

CHILDREN HELPING CHILDREN

Thousands of babies, toddlers, and young children went to their nurseries on 25th March in their PJs for National Pyjama Day 2011. National Pyjama Day is organized by the National Children's Nurseries Association and this year, their chosen charity was our flagship campaign - Hospice Home Care for Children.

You'll be pleased to hear that Ireland's pyjama-toting tots helped the NCNA raise an amazing €250,000 for Hospice Home Care for Children with more still on the way! We look forward to being the NCNA's partners again next year. A big thank you to all concerned!

Boots Staff raise €200,000 for Children

We think you've helped us to start something quite amazing.

Since 2007, wonderful supporters like you have been giving generously to our Hospice Home Care for Children campaign. You'll be happy to hear that thousands of kind people just like you – from all over Ireland – have also joined the campaign.

In May we received a cheque for €200,000 from Boots the Chemist — all to be used to develop Hospice Home Care for Children.

The funds were raised by Boots staff at 55 outlets nationwide in an intensive fundraising drive from April 2010 to April 2011. And they're continuing to fundraise for another year in the hopes they'll exceed all sums raised to date.

Thank you Boots! And thank you, for supporting our campaign.



Boots staff members receiving awards for their fundraising work

Reaching Out to Carers

We marked the start of the 5th Annual National Carer's Week (13th-19th June) by calling on the public to show compassion and support to friends and neighbours who might be caring at home for someone who is dying.

Even simple things like dropping a note, or making a phone call so they know someone is thinking of them can make a real difference. Practical help such as running errands or preparing a meal every now and then are other great ways of providing solidarity and support to carers. You can find out more at www.carers.ie.

MEET OUR NEW CEO



As you may well know Eugene Murray, who has been our CEO for the last seven years, retired recently. His mantle has been taken up by Sharon Foley.

Sharon is a strategic management consultant with a background in health promotion and senior management in the public service and has advised a range of voluntary and state agencies over the past five years.

She also served as the first CEO of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency, and was Director of Health Promotion at two former health boards.

Our Chairman, Mr Michael O'Reilly, welcomed Ms. Foley, saying: "We will need Sharon's energy and drive to fulfil our vision that no one should face death or bereavement without appropriate care and support."

DEMAND FOR NIGHT NURSING SOARS

Thanks to wonderful supporters like you, the Irish Hospice Foundation has been funding essential night nursing care since 2006.

This important service provides up to 10 nights of night nursing care for people with a condition other than cancer, who are being cared for at home and are in the final stage of their illness.

Last year, 151 carers received 610 nights of nursing care under this service at a cost of €177,635 to the Irish Hospice Foundation: an increase of 17% on those using the service in 2009.

As always, your support was essential in helping us to meet these needs, and will continue to be just as important for carers and patients who need night nursing support in 2011.

Thank you!



Philomena Dunne, CEO of the Children's Sunshine Home and Eugene Murray, former CEO of the Irish Hospice Foundation, at the launch of a report on respite services for children with life-limiting conditions. The report was commissioned by both organisations.

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Go to www.hospice-foundation.ie to learn more, to read our annual report, to find out about our events, and to sign up for our newsletter to receive updates



The Irish Hospice Foundation champions the development of hospice services and better end of life care in Ireland. We do not run or operate hospices.

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