

Autumn / Winter 2021 Issue 2

# HOSPICE CONNECTION

Your link to us and the care that you support



## NEWS In this issue

PALLIATIVE  
REHABILITATION

SUNFLOWER  
FIELD OF LIFE

POETRY COMPETITION  
NEW BOOK FOR TEENS

Dignity | Respect | Compassion | Collaboration | Excellence | Kindness



St. Francis Hospice Dublin

# Innovation in Care and in the Community

**In this issue of Hospice Connection, we're delighted to bring you stories that reflect our Hospice team's innovative approaches to care as well as the innovative ways that you, members of our community, have supported us during the year.**

## **Community Innovation**

One new initiative was the Sunflower field, grown and organised by the Hoey and Bergin families. It provided a beautiful experience for members of our community to visit and get lost in a sea of sunflowers! Thank you to everyone who visited and donated to St Francis Hospice as you took sunflowers with you to brighten your homes. We loved seeing all your amazing photos on social media.

Earlier in the year, your support of our re-imagined Spring Memorial Walk was simply amazing! Individually, and in family or friend groups, you flooded parks, beaches and pathways with St Francis Hospice T-shirts as you completed your 5k walks. Thank you for sharing your wonderful photos and stories with us; it was evident that your walks in memory of loved ones were highly meaningful and created special memories. Together, our community of supporters raised more than €200,000 to support the vital work of St Francis Hospice Dublin.

## **Innovation in Care**

Our innovation in care includes a number of palliative rehabilitation programmes, such as the PEER programme featured on the page opposite. Aisling's story demonstrates the enormous support that she and others have received from St Francis Hospice before and during the pandemic.

Another innovative project was the creation of a book to support teenagers and young adults who are finding their way through grief. Working

together with some of the teenagers engaged in bereavement support, our social work team compiled a practical and inviting book. With the support of Amazon Web Services, we were able to make the book available free of charge. The demand has been high, demonstrating the need for this resource among young people who have been bereaved.

## **Valuing our Volunteers**

We are innovating in our efforts to bring our dedicated volunteers back to active service. Volunteers are very much a part of our hospice family, and we missed them terribly during the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the safety of all was our primary concern, and we have worked diligently to find solutions to allow our volunteers to return. To date, we have 170 volunteers back among us, and we look forward to the day when it is safe for all 300 of these amazing individuals to return to their roles. We recently celebrated 51 of our volunteers reaching a milestone year in their service: 5, 10, 15, 20, and even 25 years!

## **Thank you**

All in St Francis Hospice feel privileged to be part of the supportive community in North Dublin and surrounding counties. We thank you for joining with us in a commitment to ensure the best possible quality of specialist palliative care for everyone who needs it, at no cost to them or their families. Moving toward 2022, we look forward to continuing to work in collaboration with you, our supporters, as we innovate to meet the growing needs of our community.



**Fintan Fagan**

Chief Executive Officer, St Francis Hospice Dublin



# Supportive Care in the Community

Aisling Keavey was preparing to start her dream job in 2019 when investigations into back pain she was experiencing led to the devastating diagnosis of stage 4 breast cancer, which had spread to her spine. As Aisling, 47, and her husband Peter explain in this video (scan QR code below) their lives and the life of their teenage daughter, Emma Louise, were turned upside down with the news.



## Hospice:

### A helping hand

The family experienced a great deal of confusion and upset, wondering where to turn. When they were referred to St Francis Hospice, they found the helping hand they needed. Aisling was able to attend the hospice for complementary therapies, nursing assessments, and other supports, such as the creation of blister packs to help her keep track of her many new and unfamiliar medications.

When Covid-19 hit, Aisling availed of support at home in the form of the PEER programme (Palliative Enablement, Exercise and Rehabilitation) provided by the Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy teams. When needed, home visits were arranged for additional support.

## Palliative Rehabilitation

The PEER programme is one example of palliative rehabilitation initiatives provided by St Francis Hospice. The aim is to work with individuals to set realistic goals for their independence and quality of life, then work with them both individually and in group settings (or remote groups using Zoom) to build strength, resilience, and confidence to help them achieve their goals. Support from other group members, who are going through similar experiences, is an important element of palliative rehabilitation.

## An open door when needed

When Aisling reached a point where she no longer needed the active input of St Francis Hospice, she was discharged from the service, in the knowledge that the door is open to return at any time should she require any aspects of the care the hospice provides.

Aisling said of  
St Francis Hospice Dublin

*You never feel a burden, you are the main priority for them no matter what you are going through. Everybody should take up on it, given the opportunity. Everyone should take the opportunity with both hands, because it really will make your life so much easier.*



Photo  
GK Media

Would you prefer to receive  
this **newsletter by email?**



If you would like to receive this Newsletter by e-mail, please let us know by e-mailing **fundraising@sfh.ie**. Tell us your name, address and the e-mail address you would like us to use for sending future issues of the Newsletter. They will be sent twice a year, in Spring and Autumn. If you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter, please contact Fundraising on 01-8327535.

# Sunflowers

During 'normal times', each June an incredible team of volunteers rolls out our National Sunflower Street Collection throughout the Northside of Dublin. We were lucky to have representatives in 26 locations across the North City and County, where the name of St Francis Hospice is at the centre for those supporting the Sunflower Campaign annually. With all our usual ways to fundraise not possible at this time, we had to innovate and, quite simply, bring the Sunflowers Campaign to you, our donors. We mailed you directly to appeal for your support and we introduced a remembrance element to the campaign. For the first time we held our Sunflower of Life Reflection; the reflection allowed our supporters to dedicate the name of their loved ones on a sunflower card that was then placed in our hospice gardens and formed the centre of our Sunflower of Life Reflection video on 16th June.

View our Sunflower of Life Video



This re-imagined Sunflower

Campaign not only allowed us to fundraise to support the vital work of the Hospice but to introduce the all-important remembrance aspect of the Sunflower of Life Reflection. The death of a loved one is always painful but with the pandemic restrictions limiting and changing our 'normal' ways of grieving, we were conscious of how this might impact our community and wanted to do something to help those grieving.

Our Sunflower of Life Reflection was aired on Facebook and was viewed by more than 12,000 of you. Thank you for the lovely messages we received, we are so delighted to hear the Reflection had a positive impact.

Another incredible element to the Sunflower Campaign this year was the Sunflower Field, brought to us by the Hoey and Bergin families. During Spring, Oleg and John (pictured) along with others from Country Crest, scattered sunflower seeds across the field beside Ballyboughal Airfield, in North County Dublin. In late July, the sunflowers came into bloom and the public were invited to come and pick their own sunflowers in return for a donation to St Francis Hospice Dublin.

The response to the field was overwhelming. For weeks, our social media accounts were awash with yellow from all the pictures taken by those who visited and spent time among the sunflowers. It was the perfect way to end a very successful and re-imagined Sunflower Campaign.

Sunflowers are the emblem of the Hospice movement throughout the world. They represent love, admiration, loyalty, positivity and strength; those of you who experience hospice care witness all these qualities. Equally, we witnessed all these qualities during our Sunflower Campaign 2021. We hope you drew as much strength from it as we did here in St Francis Hospice.



# Teens Finding their Way through Grief

The Hospice's bereavement support services work with people of all ages who are finding their way through grief, including teenagers and young adults. They found there were plenty of books available to recommend for additional support to children and for adults, but none specifically for teens.

Working together with some of the teens who were accessing bereavement support, the social work department wrote and published a book, *Finding Your Way Through Grief: For teenagers and young adults*.

## The wisdom of youth

The young people speak in the book about what helped them in their grief. The book opens with a beautiful piece of art by Áine Walsh, seen on the front cover, which depicts the many faces of grief. It describes how there are parts to grief that we don't expect.

Another piece of wisdom is Lucy Fitzpatrick's insight that grief comes in waves so it's helpful to know that on the bad days that it's not always going to be this hard.

The teenagers highlight the importance of not suffering or struggling alone. They emphasise that you should tell someone if you are struggling as there is support available. Layla Saunders speaks from her own experience when she advises, *"It's important to talk even though it's really hard sometimes ... if you talk you can get help."*

## Resilience and hope

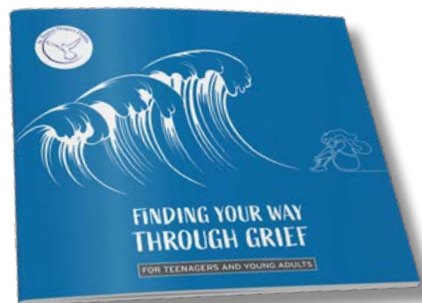
It is a mark of these teenagers' own resilience that they contributed to the book. They showed the

ability to come through adversity and to find resources they may not have known they had, as well as the ability to find joy and meaning in life. They all felt that contributing to the book was significant and gave them meaning, as they felt it would be a support to others, whilst also honouring how the loss of their loved one has impacted their lives.

The book gives a message of hope. It acknowledges how painful the loss of a loved one can be but it describes how grief is an active process and how we can try to find ways through grief that work for us so that life can be good again.

## Available free of charge

With kind support from Amazon Web Services, the book is available free of charge to anyone who might find it helpful. You can order the book on [www.sfh.ie/online-shop](http://www.sfh.ie/online-shop).



aws InCommunities



Read the book on-line



# Our Values in Verse Poetry Competition

The power of poetry in palliative care is well known; it is not only pleasurable for patients, staff and volunteers alike, but also helps individuals and families with finding meaning, connecting with others, and enriching organisational culture.

We are delighted to announce our St Francis Hospice poetry competition, "Our Values in Verse". The shortlisted poems will be displayed proudly on the walls in both our Raheny and Blanchardstown hospices.

For this competition, we are combining our love of poetry with our passion for the six core values that guide us in all we do: dignity, respect, compassion, collaboration, excellence and kindness.

St Francis Hospice Dublin invites submissions of original poetry which reflects or represents one or more of our core values. The words themselves do not have to appear in the poems, but the concept of one or more of the values needs to be reflected in the poem.

The deadline for submissions is Wednesday 9th February 2022. There are three categories for entry:

- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Adults

Full details can be found on [www.sfh.ie/poetry-competition](http://www.sfh.ie/poetry-competition), or by scanning the QR code on the poster.



## DO YOU WANT TO WORK WITH A DYNAMIC PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM OFFERING:

- Job satisfaction
- Employee assistance programme
- Location / Specialist allowance
- Values-based organisation
- Pension scheme
- Sick leave scheme
- Opportunities for funded education and development
- Free car parking and subsidised restaurant
- Equal opportunities employer

## ST FRANCIS HOSPICE DUBLIN IS RECRUITING:

- Registered General Nurses - Inpatient Units
- Clinical Nurse Specialists - Community Palliative Care

Whole-time / Part-time positions are available

For further information, please visit [www.sfh.ie/career-opportunities](http://www.sfh.ie/career-opportunities)  
Tel: 01 832 7535 or 01 829 4000



Now in its 29th year, Bewley's Big Coffee Morning Social for Hospice is very much a staple in the nation's diary. It is one of the biggest fundraising events for St Francis Hospice each year.

As with all areas of fundraising since the start of the pandemic, St Francis Hospice had to innovate and develop new ways for you, our wonderful supporters, to host Coffee Mornings to support our vital work. With this in mind, we introduced a QR code that allowed hosts to take contactless donations from those supporting their Coffee Morning. To date, nearly €4,000 has been raised using the QR codes.

This year, while things were not quite back to pre-pandemic ways, thankfully it was all a little more 'normal' than Coffee Mornings in 2020. Hopefully, in 2022, with things stabilised, we will be able to host Coffee Morning at our hospices again. We look forward to the fun and community spirit that those events always bring!

Thank you to all who supported Coffee Morning this year and a special thanks to our amazing hosts. St Francis Hospice had nearly 400 Coffee Morning hosts this year, a 20% increase over 2020. Without your support we would not be able to raise vital funds to support the work we do.

# Legacy Giving

Once you have taken care of those that are important in your life, there are many reasons why we would appreciate you leaving a gift to St Francis Hospice Dublin. The work showcased in this edition of the newsletter allows you see how the vital work we undertake impacts those in our community who are living with a life-limiting illness and their family.

St Francis Hospice is about people: the individuals and families we care for, the extraordinary staff and volunteers who provide the care, and the amazingly supportive people in our community, like you, who have ensured for the past three decades that we have the funds we need to continue providing our services free of charge. It is through legacies that can ensure we are there for our growing community long into the future.

Since 2014, the demand for our services has grown by 45% and we estimate that it will grow by a further 35% by the end of the decade.

We must secure our future and plan for the foreseeable needs by developing outstanding facilities and growing our professional staffing numbers to meet the changing needs of the people and community we serve.

If you would like to learn more about leaving a gift in your Will to St Francis Hospice Dublin, please contact Eimear Kellett by e-mailing [ekellett@sfh.ie](mailto:ekellett@sfh.ie) or by calling 086 066 8675.



# Connect with us for our Christmas Appeal



Send your Christmas greetings at home and across the miles by using hospice Christmas Cards

Box of 12 with 2 Cards of each image **€10**



Inside Card greeting  
"Wishing you peace at Christmas"

Send a gift of decorations to family and friends, or make it a gift for yourself

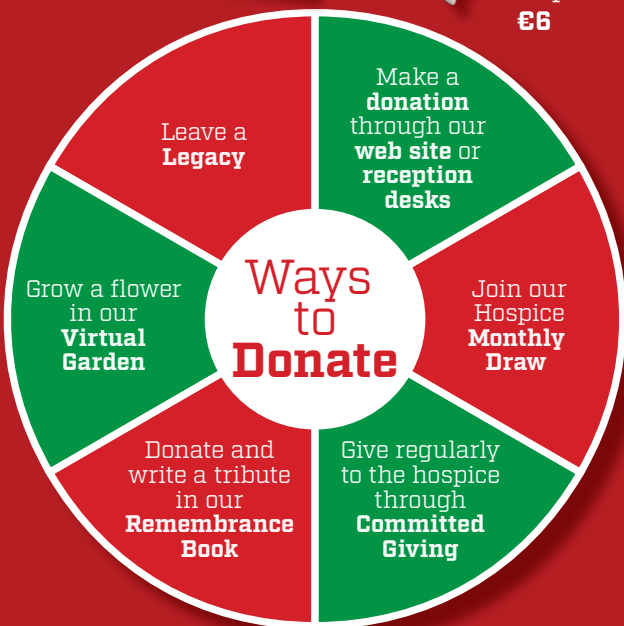
Gold / Silver Angels **€4**



A Star to Guide Your Way **€6**



Wings of Love and Hope **€6**



Remember a loved one by dedicating a light on the hospice Christmas tree, **€6 per light**



**St Francis Hospice**  
Station Road  
Raheny, Dublin 5  
T: 01 832 7535

**St Francis Hospice**  
Blanchardstown  
Dublin 15  
T: 01 829 4000

Web:  
[www.sfh.ie](http://www.sfh.ie)  
Email:  
[fundraising@sfh.ie](mailto:fundraising@sfh.ie)

Follow us on social media @SFHDublin



Charity Regulator Number: 20027193 CHY Number: 10568

