

# SUPP



# RT

WINTER 2020



**Service of  
Remembrance  
and Thanksgiving  
supplement  
Pages 27-38**

**IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION CLG**

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# Editorial..



It's been a very hectic time since I took up my position with the Irish Kidney Association. As some of you will know, three days after I started, my father became terminally ill and I was out of the office as we cared for him at home until he died. Our Chairman, Colin Mackenzie, covered for me and the Board generously allowed me the time to be with him. The numerous kind comments, emails, notes, letters, and Mass cards made it clear to me that I had joined a very special and kind organisation. As Colin stated, "When you have experienced grief, you know how much kindness means." So, thank you all, from my family and me. It meant so much to us. It has been a very real comfort to return to this lovely community and to be with people who are so kind and supportive.

We had a terrific response to the TV broadcast of our Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving. Over 64,000 people watched the programme with thousands more tuning in later on RTE Player, including diaspora from 24 countries around the world. There is a pull-out supplement on this special event on pages 27-38.

I have been meeting many branches virtually, listening and trying to understand your concerns. I have been impressed by the resilience, ability and strength of Branch Committees, from the Sligo branch, which has secured a commitment from the Minister of Health, Stephen Donnelly, to plan for the upgrade of the overcrowded and not fit for purpose Sligo unit, to the Cork

branch actively recruiting new members and assisting with planning for the development of a second IKA Support Centre. The Branches are key to our success and we will be discussing this in more detail at a future online event.

You can read inside, the welcome news about the completed refurbishment of the Renal Unit at Waterford University Hospital, providing a magnificent training centre for dialysis patients (page 19), and also about the opening of a new state-of-the-art Renal Unit at Tallaght University Hospital (page 14-15).

Previously, at this time of year, we would announce the dates for the forthcoming Organ Donor Awareness Week with confidence. However, with the very real prospect of COVID-19 persisting well into 2021, a very provisional plan for the campaign, most probably involving a move away from the traditional format, is for it to be held from Saturday 27th March – Saturday 3rd April, 2021. The safety of our staff, volunteers and patients will be at the forefront of our considerations when making decisions on how to proceed. We hope to have a clearer picture on our direction by the beginning of the New Year, 2021, and we can then notify our members on social media and through our branch network.

We have been in touch with the National Renal Office (NRO) and have been advocating on behalf of people on home dialysis regarding deliveries. (See 8-9 for report)

We have made a submission to the Joint Committee on Disability Matters on the lived experience of

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Photo: Conor McCabe

people with disabilities and have stated we are willing to attend, to present to the Oireachtas, on the experience of people with end-stage kidney disease (ESKD). In this submission, we gave a factual description of the impact of ESKD on people's lives, not just on the patients themselves but on their families also. These impacts range from physical, emotional, practical, and financial to mental health issues. You can find this submission on our website.

We had a good response to our article on peer support in the Autumn magazine. We have initiated a study on how peer support works in the IKA. It is very obvious to me that this is a major strength of the IKA community, and something we should build upon, as our members want more of this type of support.

It was inspiring to see a patient with end-stage kidney disease, Paddy Cox, feature on the RTÉ Late Late Show, not because of his illness, but because he has developed a range of clothing for people on dialysis. Paddy epitomises the strength of people with ESKD. We have some samples of Paddy's Dialize Clothing, half zip-tops, to give away to people who can review and comment which will feature in a future issue (page 48-49).

Our new Strategy Plan, has been approved by the Board. I am very confident that, working together, we can make an even bigger difference to the lives of those affected by kidney disease.

I am pleased to report that Beaumont Hospital has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Northern Ireland's Belfast City Hospital

on paired kidney exchange. Unfortunately, at the time of going to press, the Northern Ireland transplant programme has temporarily ceased organ transplantation due to COVID-19. It is hoped that the programme will resume soon.

We said an emotional goodbye to two hugely valued and long-serving members of staff. Lorraine Costello, who so many of you will know, has retired after 37 years' service, at the end of October, but she stayed involved until her labour of love, the Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, was broadcast two weeks later. We will miss Lorraine and her dedicated empathetic commitment to patients.

Cyril Kelly, our long-standing Financial Manager, who quietly worked away behind the scenes, has retired after more than three decades of dedicated service. He will also be greatly missed by all who were fortunate to have worked with him and, in particular, the many Branch Treasurers who have been guided by him down through the years.

While Christmas can be a very happy time for many people, for others, it can be a very sad time. This has not been an easy year for many of us and over the festive season we will be unable to meet and socialise in the way that we would like. It seems surreal to think back to last Christmas and see how much our lives have changed since then. People with end-stage kidney disease have been particularly affected, though some of these people have remarked how coping with ESKD has improved their resilience and ability to cope with the

COVID pandemic.

Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, is encouraging us to have a 'meaningful' Christmas. This advice often resonates with people who suffer or encounter hardship, like many people with ESKD experience. Such people value qualities that really matter in life, like connection to other people, kindness and compassion. I have observed all these priceless qualities in so many people in the IKA community – from staff, to branch officers, and to patients and their families. I have also seen these qualities in the healthcare professionals I have met who have worked so hard to keep their patients safe, in very difficult and trying circumstances. They certainly deserve a well-earned break over Christmas, and we salute their dedication and commitment. Hopefully, the upcoming vaccines will make life easier for all of us next year.

Regardless of your expectations for Christmas, we in the IKA wish you a happy and 'meaningful' Christmas that you can enjoy in a way that makes it special for you.

I could not finish without acknowledging our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to organ donors and donor families.

Sallyanne and Derry Clarke, who feature on the front cover, embody this great generosity (page 6-7). It is people like Sallyanne and Derry, who with their selfless generosity, in times of great personal tragedy, continue to make the ongoing life-saving work of organ transplantation possible. Donor families truly have given others the precious 'gift of life'!

**CAROL MOORE**

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# A Christmas Message

from

## The National Chairman



Who would have thought as we celebrated Christmas 2019, that we were shortly to live through the strangest year in living memory.

Even the wisest and most intuitive among us, failed to foresee what was ahead. As COVID-19 began to envelope the world in the early months of 2020, it presented an additional challenge to all, and none more so than renal patients. Thankfully as the year ends, the promise of vaccines in 2021 gives us reason to hope, but not to relax our guard. Therefore my Christmas message to you, is to take care of yourself and your loved ones. The mantra: 'stay safe and protect yourself and others', still applies.

Some of us in the IKA have lost family members, and we remember them as we light a candle at Christmas, which is a powerful symbol of love and remembrance, but also of hope.

All this was highlighted by our recent pre-recorded Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, which had a viewership of over 64,000. Our debt to those who gave the 'gift of life' is recalled anew as we approach the season of giving.

Our IKA year has also been one of change, as our Renal Support Centre was sequestered, but we look forward to its eventual return to us, remodelled and improved, to conform to a new standard of accommodation.

Further change saw the retirement of three valued members of staff: our Chief Executive Mark Murphy, our Patient Support Officer Lorraine Costello and our Financial Manager Cyril Kelly. As we welcome our new CEO Carol Moore, we thank our three retirees for their dedicated and devoted long years of service to the Irish Kidney Association.

I also want to thank all our members and supporters. Without you we could not exist, and this includes our Branch Officers who often labour unseen. We thank our staff who have to cope with the changes we impose on them and our Board of Directors who keep us focussed on our goals while enduring Zoom meetings (our only way to communicate at present).

I sincerely thank my two fellow Officers: John Whelan and Eddie Flood whose support and wise counselling I could not do without and for answering my almost daily phone calls.

A special thanks to Carol for your rapid engagement with IKA affairs at a time of personal bereavement.

I want to add a special note to all hospital staff who take care of renal patients. You put yourselves at risk, on a daily basis, to help and heal in these difficult times and in doing so have become our heroes.

Regardless of whatever aspect of the IKA we represent, we all share the same purpose – to do all in our power to support and enhance the lives of all kidney patients.

I wish all of you a very happy and safe Christmas and a happy and hopeful New Year.

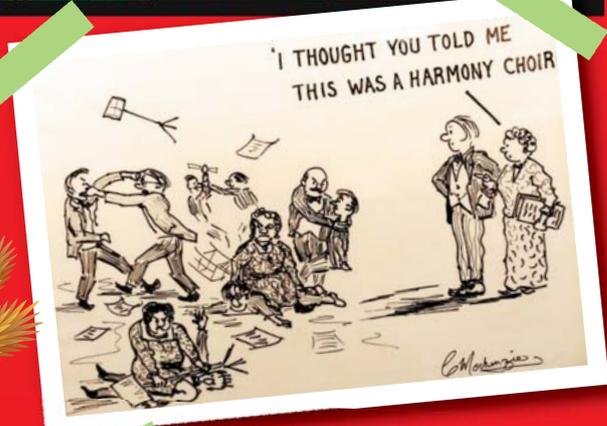
**COLIN MACKENZIE**

# Happy Christmas from us



We all need some fun in this pandemic, so when Ash suggested we dress up for our weekly online team meeting, we all jumped at the chance. See how many people you recognise?

*From top left and across: Simon, Lenny, Carol, Ruth, Robyn, Patricia, Gwen, Ash, Deborah, Aoife, Amanda, Esther, Frank (who is making a good recovery after an operation, helped by the arrival of his first gorgeous grandchild Holly) and Colin.*



## Books for your Christmas Reading

- Ice Skating* by Willie Faull
- The Art of Kissing* by Miss L. Toe
- Guessing Your Presents* by P. King
- Bad Gifts* by M.T. Box
- 101 Cures for Indigestion* by Ivor Payne
- Skiing for Beginners* by I.C. Botham
- Eavesdropping* by Noah Zee Parker
- Bell Ringing* by Bing Bong
- Break of Your Engagement* by Ida Ring
- Astronomy* by C.D. Moon





## FAMILIES URGED TO DISCUSS THE

# 'Gift of Life'

**M**ichelin star restaurateurs Sallyanne and Derry Clarke, the parents of a deceased organ donor, met with seven-year-old Tomás O'Dowd, a kidney patient, and they joined Lord Mayor of Dublin, Hazel Chu, for a photocall at the Christmas tree outside the Mansion House, on 2nd December 2020. They came together to support the Irish Kidney Association's (IKA) Christmas awareness campaign aimed at encouraging families to take time out over the festive season to discuss their organ donation wishes.

Transplant recipients and many others will again be lighting a candle in their homes this Christmas to remember deceased organ donors and their families. This gesture is also in support of the more than 2,000 people in organ failure and over 500 people active on the transplant pool waiting for

By GWEN O'DONOGHUE



Derry and Sallyanne Clarke

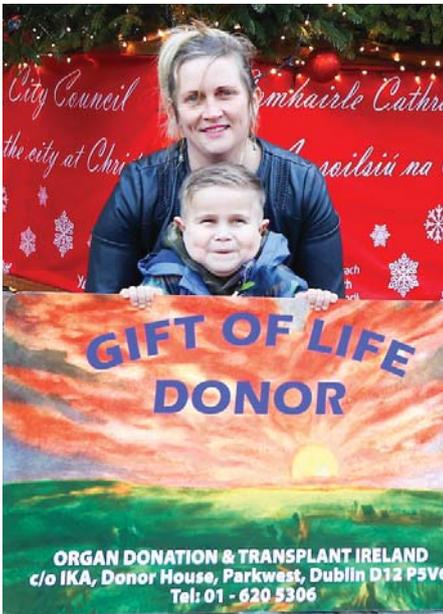
life saving heart, lungs, liver, kidney and pancreas transplants.

Amanda O'Dowd from Dunquine, in Kerry, mother to Tomás, came straight over to the Mansion House from Our

Lady's Hospital for Sick Children in Crumlin. Tomás and his father Denis, were at two different Dublin hospitals, Crumlin and Beaumont, that day for tests as part of the screening process to determine if Denis might be a suitable living kidney donor for Tomás. Amanda said, "A transplant will completely transform Tomas's life and will bring to an end the ten-hour nightly dialysis which he has been receiving for the past three years".

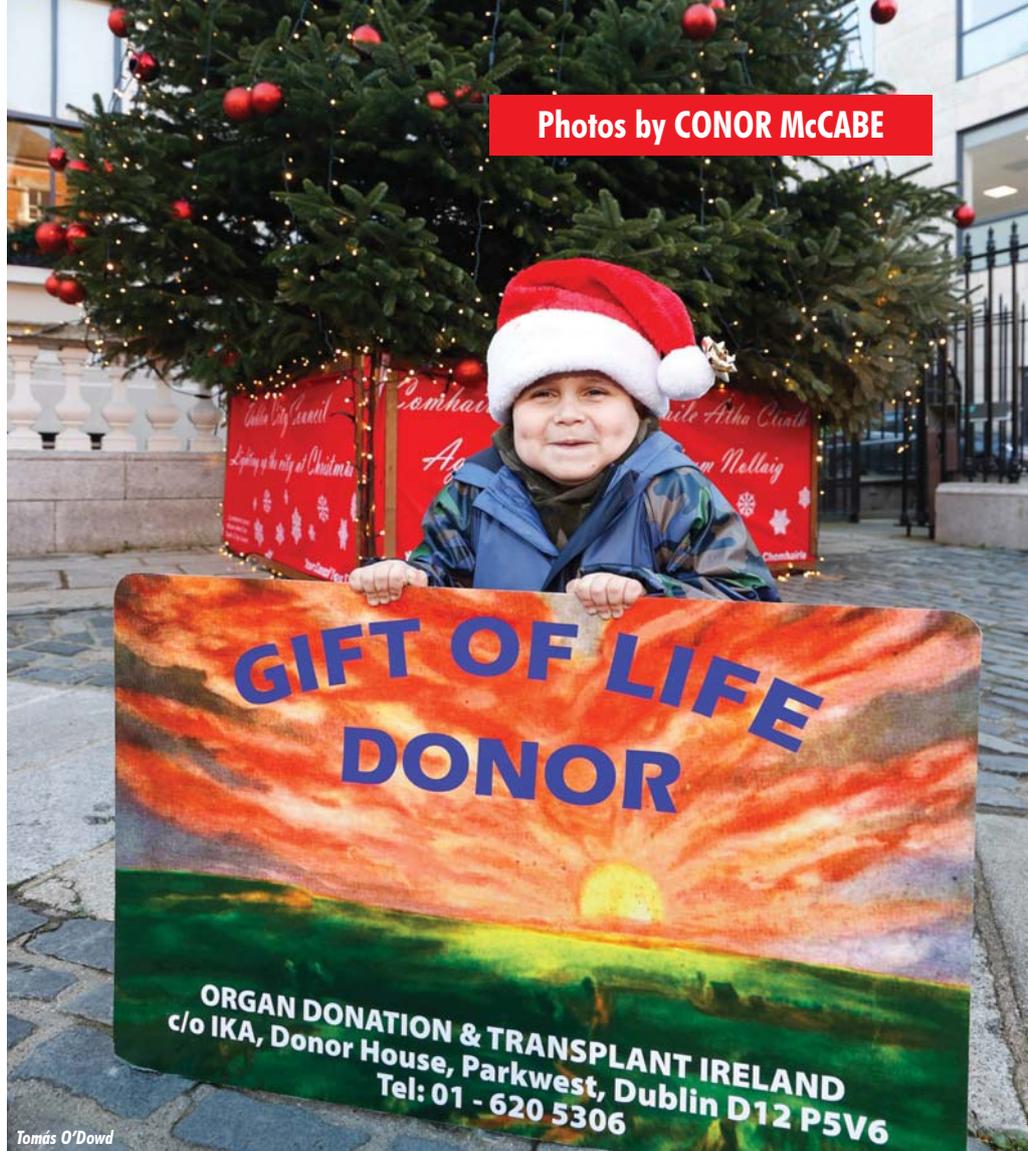
Lord Mayor of Dublin Hazel Chu said, "I am pleased to support the Irish Kidney Association with this hugely important campaign. Organ donation is an integral part of active citizenship and it is beholding on us all to have the family discussion and show our support to those who are waiting on an organ transplant list. I'll be reminding my family at Christmas time about my wishes to be an organ donor and a candle will be lit in the Mansion House".

Sallyanne Clarke and her Michelin



Amanda & Tomás O'Dowd

starred celebrity chef husband Derry, of the award winning l'Ecrivain Restaurant, pledged their support of the campaign to honour their son Andrew's memory. Andrew was just 16-years-old when he passed away on New Year's Eve 2012. Although grief stricken with the loss of their only son, they made the profound decision to donate his organs. Sallyanne said, "Andrew and the entire family had discussed organ donation years before his untimely death. He had discussed it in school too. It is tragic for any parent to lose a child but, we take solace in knowing that our beautiful Andrew gave the 'gift of Life' to three people and, by doing so, spared three families losing their loved ones. We know that a little part of him lives on helping people. We urge all families to discuss organ donation at this time".



Tomás O'Dowd

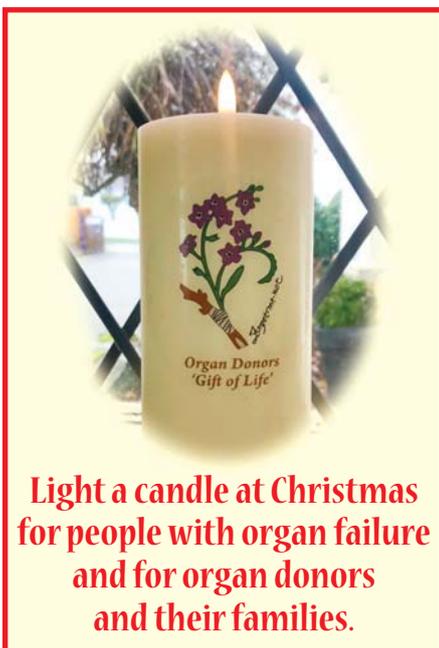
IKA's Chief Executive Carol Moore said, "there are over 2,000 people in Ireland with kidney failure and Tomás is just one of more than 500 patients who are currently on waiting lists for organ transplants including heart, lung, liver, kidney and pancreas. It is thanks to people like Sallyanne and Derry, with their selfless generosity, in a time of great personal tragedy, who continue to make the ongoing life-saving work of organ transplantation possible. Families of deceased organ donors can be assured that over Christmas, all around the country, grateful transplant recipients will be lighting a candle in their honour. We have all taken measures to protect each other from COVID-19. In these unusual times, each and every one of us can also consider others by having the family conversation about organ donation."

Amanda O'Dowd explained, "Tomás is our beautiful miracle child. He was given little chance of survival in my early pregnancy scan, but he defied the odds. He is a happy child, despite his health setbacks and being hooked up to a dialysis machine every

night, for ten hours at a time. He is in senior infants at school and really loves it.

Tomás has been receiving dialysis treatment for three years but only recently entered the transplant pool, as he had to reach a certain weight and size to be considered for a transplant. Several members of our family were screened for suitability and after initial screening, both Denis and I were considered a likely match. We are both going through the various stages of screening for living donation. If this fails our only hope will be that another family, at a time of huge sadness, have the foresight and compassion to think of others and consider organ donation and that Tomás might benefit."

Tomás's parents would like to acknowledge their gratitude for the care he receives from Consultant Mary Waldron and other medical and nursing staff at Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin and to the transplant teams at Temple Street Hospital and Beaumont Hospital who are managing the living organ donor screening process.



**Light a candle at Christmas for people with organ failure and for organ donors and their families.**

# Insights from the NATIONAL RENAL OFFICE COVID-19

By **PROFESSOR GEORGE MELLOTTÉ**  
**CONSULTANT NEPHROLOGIST AND HSE NATIONAL CLINICAL LEAD IN NEPHROLOGY**

**C** COVID-19 was first identified in China in December 2019 and rapidly spread throughout the world. The first case of COVID-19 infection was reported in Ireland on Saturday 29th February 2020.

COVID-19 spread throughout Ireland in two major waves and at the time of writing this, over 70,000 people have become infected and sadly almost 2,000 Irish people have died as a consequence, including 40 patients who had been on dialysis or living with a kidney transplant.

COVID-19 infection is typically associated with cough, high fever, fatigue and loss of taste or smell. For the vast majority of patients, it is a mild illness and they recover fully. However a small proportion of people develop a serious illness that requires hospitalisation. Patients with certain underlying medical conditions, such as diabetes or cardiac disease are more likely to develop serious illness. Patients on medications that depress their immune system are also at higher risk of serious illness. Research from around the world identified very early, that patients on dialysis or living with a functioning organ transplant were among the highest risk groups of developing complications from COVID-19 and many of them died.

This was a very important finding. Patients on dialysis or with a kidney

transplant were categorised by the HSE to be “highly medically vulnerable” to the effects of COVID-19 and were advised to ‘cocoon’.

Another important medical complication that quickly became evident was that COVID-19 infection causes kidney damage, particularly to those patients who developed the severe form of COVID-19 illness that required hospitalisation. As many as one-in-three of the patients admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) had evidence of significant kidney damage and many required dialysis. For some of these patients, the kidney damage was permanent.

The National Renal Office (NRO) and HSE met in very early March to plan Ireland’s response to COVID-19 pandemic with respect to kidney disease. Two key imperatives were identified, firstly, to ensure that the hospitals had sufficient capacity to provide dialysis to the patients who developed kidney failure as a consequence of COVID-19 in a safe environment and, secondly, to protect patients with severe kidney disease from COVID-19 infection.

The HSE provided funding to support both of these initiatives.

## **ENHANCING DIALYSIS CAPACITY**

With the help of HSE procurement, the NRO supplied additional dialysis machines and related equipment to

hospitals, throughout Ireland, to deal with the increased numbers of patients developing kidney damage as a result of COVID-19 and also to provide enhanced isolation facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the dialysis population. This early response allowed hospitals time to plan and install the necessary equipment. In addition, where possible, the NRO asked hospitals to move patients to satellite dialysis centres in order to free up capacity within the main hospital.

This early planning proved critical in managing the first COVID-19 surge. Ireland avoided the situation seen in other countries such as the UK or Italy, where some patients were unable to access standard dialysis treatments due to vital equipment shortage, and other patients could not receive their usual three times per week haemodialysis treatments.

## **PROTECTING DIALYSIS PATIENTS**

As mentioned, dialysis patients were deemed to be “highly medically vulnerable” but because they had to attend for dialysis three times per week, they could not cocoon.

The NRO, working with the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC), issued a guidance document, on March 16th, to all dialysis units that included patient management



strategies, isolation requirements, patient transport provision and a stipend to facilitate self-driving by dialysis patients.

Other steps to protect patients included providing digital thermometers to all haemodialysis patients so that they could identify any early symptoms of COVID-19.

Home blood pressure monitors and digital thermometers were provided to recent transplant patients in order to enhance home monitoring capacity and minimise the need for these highly vulnerable patients to attend hospital for clinical review.

The NRO monitored very closely the experience of nephrologists around the world regarding strategies to minimise risk of acquiring COVID-19 infection. Italian nephrologists noted that dialysis patients and their families were at higher risk of acquiring COVID-19. Some units reported that wearing masks and not eating on dialysis reduced the spread of infection.

The NRO decided to provide surgical masks to all haemodialysis patients from April 7th, 2020 onwards and with the support of Irish renal dieticians, issued a directive restricting eating on dialysis. These steps were taken well in advance of similar directives issued in other countries.

#### **COURSE OF COVID-19 INFECTION IN IRELAND**

The first cases of COVID-19 infection in dialysis and transplant patients were reported in early March. The number of these patients becoming infected by COVID-19 infection increased by approximately 15 to 20 patients per week, despite the imposition of national lockdown on March 16th, 2020 until mid-April. Following the introduction of a 'no eating on dialysis' policy and the supply of surgical masks, the number of patients becoming infected reduced to 5 per week and from mid-May, no patient nationally on dialysis acquired COVID-19 infection until the onset of the second wave in

September.

In June, the NRO met with the Irish Renal Dieticians again and developed a policy regarding a phased reintroduction of eating on dialysis. During the summer months, most units were in a position to restore eating on dialysis because the national situation had improved.

Unfortunately, there has been a second wave of COVID-19 infection and the government has moved the entire country to a level 5 restriction. Dialysis and transplant patients were not spared in the second wave of COVID-19 infection and 40 more patients became infected. The good news is that the strict implementation of a national lockdown, and the reintroduction of 'no eating' policy on dialysis, has stabilised infection in this high-risk group.

One of the major consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the impact on renal transplantation. The national renal transplant programme was suspended in early March due to concerns regarding COVID-19 infection. While the programme recommenced in June, the number of patients who have received kidney transplant in Ireland in 2020 is well below the usual figure. In addition, as outlined above, some people who developed kidney damage as a consequence of COVID-19, now require long-term dialysis.

The net result of all this is that more people are on dialysis this year than any other time previously. The proportion of people choosing home dialysis treatment has increased compared to other years. The challenge going forward will be to provide sufficient dialysis capacity to treat the increased number of patients.

The opening of the new unit in Tallaght University Hospital is welcome. An expansion in dialysis capacity will be required in other centres and locations over the next few years.

Looking at the international data, Ireland appears to have done

significantly better than other countries in terms of patient outcomes. Only about 5% of patients on dialysis in Ireland developed COVID-19 infection, whereas in many other countries between 10% and 20% of patients became infected. Some units in New York, Madrid and London were reporting infection rates as high as one-in-three patients. In Ireland, a higher number of haemodialysis patients (115) acquired COVID-19 infection compared to 39 kidney transplant patients. Less than a handful of patients on home dialysis therapies became infected.

This good result would not have been achieved without the support of patients who accepted the severe restrictions imposed by COVID-19. In particular, I would like to pay tribute to the dialysis patients who were affected by the 'no eating on dialysis' policy. As a nephrologist, I know how difficult it would be for dialysis patients to fast for such a prolonged period. Dialysis units have always provided refreshments to patients receiving in-centre haemodialysis treatment because they spend so much time away from their home; between travelling to and from the unit and the four hours required to deliver a dialysis treatment. It was not a decision taken lightly but was based on strong solid clinical evidence. To their credit, patients supported the decision and I look forward to the time when we can once again provide refreshments to our patients on dialysis.

Finally, I also want to pay tribute to the excellent work done by my colleagues who ensured that every patient was able to receive their treatment. I would echo the words of the patron of the Irish kidney Association, President Michael D. Higgins, who said "as a nation facing together the challenge of the coronavirus pandemic, we have been so greatly inspired and uplifted by the remarkable courage, compassion and generosity of those who work on our health services".

A tribute to our retiring PATIENT SUPPORT OFFICER

# Lorraine Costello



**M**ost of you are familiar with the name Lorraine Costello, who has been our Patient Support Officer for many years. She is the person who has been looking after all those requests for patient aid, so important in these difficult times. She has also been working in advocacy, promoting patients' rights in a great number of situations that require persistence and extreme diplomacy in dealing with local authorities throughout the country. Demonstrating great intelligence and skill in articulating her thoughts, nobody could craft a letter like Lorraine!

Hers was the calm reassuring voice when you rang for advice, she was the patient listener when you needed to be referred for counselling. While advocating for patients she forged a successful and mutually respectful relationship with nursing and medical teams in dialysis centres around the country and with Beaumont Hospital's transplant teams and organ donor coordinators.

But how much do you know about this remarkable, dedicated lady, who shuns the limelight and who has been the mainstay of IKA for nearly four decades? To realise the extent of her contribution to the Irish Kidney Association, we need to take a brief look back at the history of our Association.

The idea of a national Association for people suffering from chronic renal failure germinated at the kitchen table of Patricia Doherty, then living in Glenageary, in conversation with her friend Thelma Trevaskis, both personally involved with the difficulties of life on dialysis, with very few kidney transplants taking place. At that time,



Archbishop Dermuid Martin, Lorraine and Miriam Bryan at the Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving in 2004



Bernadette Munnelly and Lorraine in 2001



Lorraine with President Mary McAleese in 2007



Lorraine with colleagues Ashling Hand and Deborah Cervi

in the 1970s, it was government policy to have just three Dialysis Units in the Republic of Ireland, one each in Dublin, Cork and Galway. This posed huge hardship on patients, some of whom had to travel long distances for dialysis, with little hope of a kidney transplant.

Patricia travelled around the country, coming to Galway in February 1978, to find out the level of interest in forming a national Association to look after the concerns of renal patients and to promote organ donation. The result was a hugely successful Inaugural Meeting, held in the auditorium of the now demolished Jervis St. Hospital in April 1978, attended by several hundred interested people from all over the country. Thus, the Irish Kidney Association was born. Patricia became our first CEO, from 1978 to 1998.

She moved to a tiny office in Eaton Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin and in 1981 advertised for a part-time secretary. This is where Lorraine's long-standing involvement with the IKA began.

Galway born, a busy mother of two young children, also living in Glenageary at the time, Lorraine was highly qualified in secretarial work and a part-time job suited her well. As she took minutes at the meetings, she became fascinated by the enthusiasm and commitment of those early founder members, elected by the



By **ANGELINE COOKE**  
IKA Founder member, Galway branch

branches, who formed the National Executive Committee, now the National Board. When the occasion presented itself, she became our full-time Secretary, then our Patient Support Officer, a post to which she has dedicated herself for many years and always carried out with great sensitivity, compassion, and discretion.

From Eaton Square, the IKA moved to Donor House in Pembroke Road, Ballsbridge (opposite the US embassy) and from there, in 2000, to our present location in Park West.

Lorraine has been with us all these years and has contributed hugely to the evolution of our Association. A little-known fact is that many of our now long-established practices were initiated by Lorraine. For example, in response to a phone call from a

distraught mother who had donated her only child's organs and had not received an acknowledgement. This prompted Lorraine to ask the newly appointed Transplant Coordinator Phyllis Cunningham (who has since retired from this role), to set up a system, that is still in operation today, where the donor family is contacted within six weeks of the donation.

Lorraine then suggested to Patricia the idea of organising a Mass which might offer some solace to donor families. That evolved from an annual Mass in St. Mary's Church, Haddington Road, 35 years ago, attended by just a few hundred people, to the annual ecumenical Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving in Corpus Christi Church, Homefarm Road. This is such an important event on the IKA's calendar and is now attended by approximately 2,000 people. Needless to say, every aspect of this exceptionally beautiful and moving event has been carefully coordinated by Lorraine every year.

Although Lorraine was due to retire in May of this year (2020), when COVID-19 struck, she chose to remain on to be of further service to patients, in this time of crisis. As this year's Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, unfortunately could not take place in its usual form, a 'virtual' service was televised on RTÉ 1 and Radio 1 Extra on November 15th.

*continued next page*

# Lorraine Costello

contd...

As we watched this in the comfort of our homes, we need to remember the months of research, time, and effort that Lorraine has put into coordinating every single aspect of the Service. What a farewell gift she has given to us, to be treasured!

A hugely important part of the Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving is the Roll of Honour, in which the name and details of each organ donor are inscribed in beautiful calligraphy and is carried with great honour and respect to the altar. Again, it is most moving when, after the Service, donor families quietly queue to view the inscription of their loved ones. It was Lorraine who contacted the calligrapher, Annette Daly, who, to this day, continues to inscribe the names of donors, in her beautiful script.

Looking after renal patients has always been Lorraine's priority. In speaking to people who have worked



Lorraine with members of the Liturgy Committee 2018 with Claire Byrne – Valerie Brady, Colin MacKenzie, Ellen Flanagan, Peggy Eustace, Claire Byrne, Joan Gavan, Patricia May, Monica Finn



Lorraine at the 9th European Day for Organ Donation & Transplantation Walk in 2007



Lorraine with IKA PRO Gwen O'Donoghue

## Tribute from **PHYLLIS CUNNINGHAM** Former National Transplant Co-ordinator, Beaumont Hospital



On the occasion of Lorraine's retirement I would like to take the opportunity to express my admiration of, and immense respect for a wonderful person. Lorraine touched the lives of so many renal patients, their families and colleagues, with her warm, kind, friendly manner and with her unflinching generosity of spirit.

Lorraine was a wonderful ambassador for the Irish Kidney Association. A committed, idealistic and dedicated worker, she was first and foremost a source of hope, kindness and practical support to renal patients and their families.

Lorraine could be relied upon to leave no stone unturned in the interest of patients and in the interests of the wider functions of the IKA.

Due to her positive 'can do' attitude Lorraine created an empathetic non-critical work environment focused on the 'good' in everyone. She carried out her duties in an inclusive, practical and efficient manner.

The IKA have benefited hugely from Lorraine's tenure with them. Lorraine was proactive in the acknowledgment of the 'gift of life' through organ donation. The Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving which she organised annually, with

such love and attention to detail, is one of the many testaments to this acknowledgement of the selflessness and generosity of donor families.

On a personal level I wish to acknowledge my genuine heartfelt gratitude to Lorraine. I appreciate the unwavering support and advice Lorraine so frequently gave me over the 29 years that I worked in my role as Transplant Coordinator.

We worked together on many projects, bouncing ideas off each other and brainstorming. I never failed to be impressed by Lorraine's measured and balanced approach in all situations. She was a pleasure to work with and to have at the other end of my phone.

Lorraine, congratulations on your retirement, you are a fantastic individual and deserve only the best. I wish you, your husband Frank and family every happiness for the future in your well-deserved retirement.

**PHYLLIS CUNNINGHAM**



Lorraine at her desk in Park West, November 2003



Lorraine with Joe Duffy in 2011



Lorraine and husband Frank



Mark Murphy, Lorraine, Joan Gavan, 2020



Lorraine and Deirdre Tyrrell in 2004

closely with her in recent years, the replies were all consistent: she could not do enough for the patients. Her confidentiality was absolute, and she was also good fun! She was totally reliable, and you knew that if you passed a problem on to Lorraine, you didn't have to worry about it anymore. Remember that we went from three Dialysis Units in 1970s, to 23 Units, 25 branches and over 3,000 members. A huge cohort of patients and their families seek support for our services, so there has been a colossal increase in her workload.

In her absolute dedication and sense of responsibility to the patients, even when 'out of office', she kept in touch so that no patient would be neglected.

In addition, Lorraine organised and coordinated the National Launch of each Organ Donor Awareness Week, as well as carrying out the protocol for the reception of three Presidents. President Mary Robinson launched our new multi-organ donor card in Ballsbridge in February 1991, President Mary McAleese officially opened Donor House, Park West in 2000 and also in 2007 she attended the IKA's hosting of an international conference in Dun Laoghaire, Dublin to mark the 9th European Day for Organ Donation and Transplantation, which was attended by delegates from 40 countries. President Michael D. Higgins attended the annual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving in Galway Cathedral and officially opened the 'Circle of Life'

Garden in Salthill in 2014. He also participated in this year's first 'virtual' Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving.

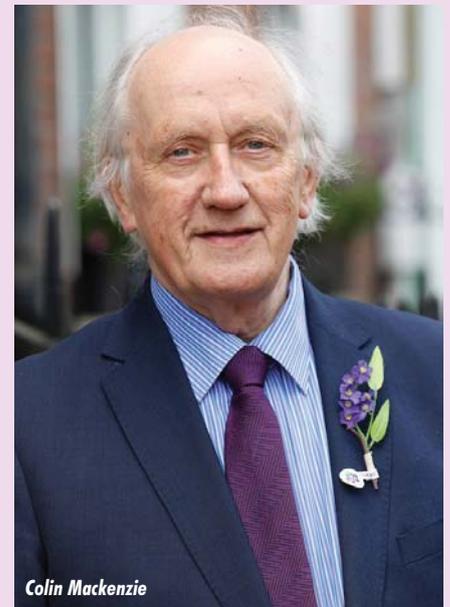
Lorraine was always the quiet person in the background who ensured that these most important events ran smoothly.

I have touched here on just some of the most important aspects of Lorraine's work. I may also be writing from a Galway perspective, but I know that dialysis and transplant patients from all over the country have benefitted enormously from her help and hold her in extremely high esteem.

So, Lorraine, on behalf of all the members of the IKA, 'thank you' most sincerely for your dedication, kindness, empathy, sensitivity, and untiring work on our behalf.

While we wish you many long, happy and healthy years of retirement with your husband Frank, son Colin and his wife Ciara, daughter Criodhna and her husband Andrew, and your beloved grandchildren, we also hope that you will keep in contact with your many friends in the extended IKA family.

What a wonderful legacy you are leaving us!



Colin Mackenzie

## Message from Hon. National Chairman **COLIN MACKENZIE**

In this year of change, it is my unwilling duty to announce the retirement of Lorraine, who has been a most dedicated servant of the Irish Kidney Association for the past 37 years.

I have had the pleasure of working with Lorraine on more than one occasion. Her unobtrusive presence combined with her meticulous attention to detail has contributed to the production of many projects over the years. Her caring and attentive supervision of Patient Aid and her confidential and approachable manner has ensured that this area of our work for those in need has been addressed.

Over many years Lorraine has been the Staff member of our Liturgy Committee and her work on that Committee ensured that the sensitivity and attention required was maintained.

Lorraine's work on the *SUPPORT* magazine helped ensure the accuracy and high standard of our quarterly publication. Lorraine, we will miss you as a team member and gentle guide and advisor, and we wish yourself and Frank, with your grandchildren, a long and happy retirement.



The Vartry Renal Unit at TUH.

# LANDMARK DAY AS RENAL UNIT OPENS

**T**he first sessions of dialysis have been delivered in the new state-of-the-art renal unit in Tallaght University Hospital, a 'landmark' day for patient care at the local health facility.

The opening of the new renal unit also comes at a time when, following the arrival of Covid-19, the number of dialysis patients nationally has increased by six per cent.

The second largest centre in the country for Haemodialysis management, Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) was operating out of a 12-bed renal unit.

However, this week saw the opening of the new Vartry Renal Unit on campus, a 2,700m<sup>2</sup> unit built over two floors with 28 haemodialysis treatment bays and six single haemodialysis rooms for immunocompromised or acutely ill patients.

The unit also comprises of four home dialysis training rooms and for the first time in Ireland, four self-care haemodialysis bays.

There are also 14 offices, which for the first time will bring all of the different medical and allied health care professionals involved in the

care of renal patients together.

Speaking on behalf of the Renal team at TUH, Professor George Mellotte, Consultant Nephrologist and HSE National Clinical Lead in Nephrology, said: "This is a landmark day for the patient care in TUH and could not have come at a better time as Ireland has seen a three per cent increase in the number of patients requiring dialysis every year for the last 10 years.

"Following the arrival of COVID-19, there has been an increase in dialysis patient numbers nationally by six per cent.

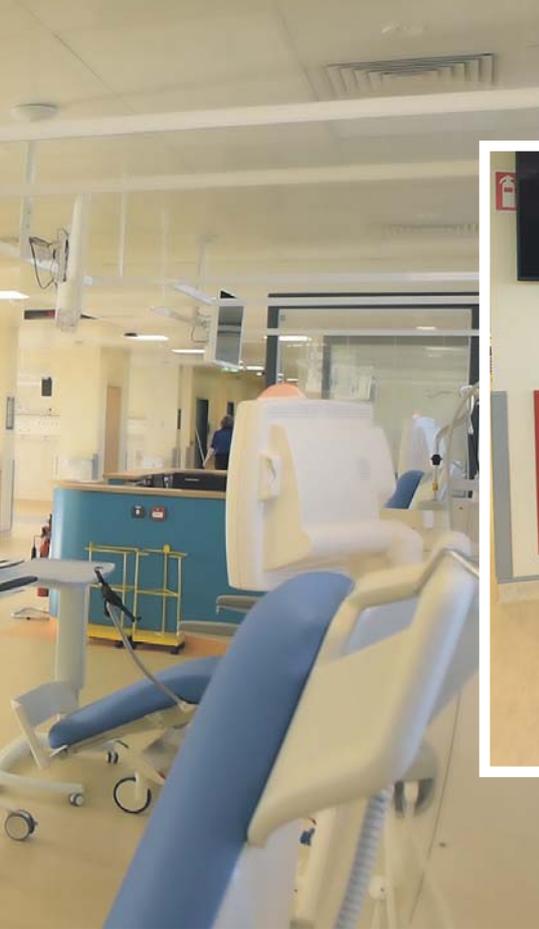
"There are two reasons for this increase nationally.

"Transplant activity was suspended during the height of the COVID crisis and has yet to return to previous activity levels.

"Also, one-in-three patients that end up in ICU as a result of COVID have kidney failure and require dialysis.

"Some don't recover and end up on permanent dialysis, particularly those with pre-existing kidney disease."

Despite the challenges of recent months, the



**Annamma Samuel, CNM2 Home Therapies with Professor George Mellotte, Consultant Nephrologist and HSE National Nephrology Lead in the new reception area where patients will arrive when they attend for dialysis in the Vartry Renal Unit at TUH.**

dialysis service at TUH has continued throughout.

"Nobody has missed a dialysis session," Prof Mellotte said.

"The staff worked very hard, working late in the evening and into the night to make sure no one missed their treatment."

Prof Mellotte added: "I and the Renal Team are looking forward to caring for our patients in this new state-of-the-art facility.

"Our patients attend for dialysis three times a week for up to four hours at a time, some have attended for over 1,000 sessions.

"I have no doubt our patients receiving their life-saving treatment in this brighter modern facility will be of great comfort to them."

The new unit was named after the Vartry reservoir and river in Wicklow, where the water supply for the dialysis service is sourced.

According to TUH, the name also reflects the importance of water in the haemodialysis service, with each dialysis session requiring around 500 litres of raw water.

Initially the new unit will

use around 10 million litres of water annually, a volume anticipated to double in the coming years as the number of dialysis sessions increase.

Once water arrives at TUH, it is processed through a dedicated Dialysis Water Treatment plant on the hospital campus.

According to Lucy Nugent, Chief Executive of TUH: "The hospital is grateful to all those who have supported us in this journey to get to where we are this week, delivering dialysis to our patients in an incredibly impressive state-of-the-art facility.

"I have to acknowledge particular thanks to the incredible teamwork by our nursing, medical and facilities

staff in getting the unit open at a time when the Hospital is particularly busy and continuing to provide dialysis treatment in the old renal unit.

"It has been a herculean task and is testament to the calibre of the team we have here at TUH, despite the challenges we have faced this year staff have remained focused and work together to prove the best possible care to the patients under our care."

Funding for the building of the Unit was provided by the HSE and is one of the Government's National Development Plan projects 2018-2027.

*Reprinted courtesy of The Echo Newspaper*



**Some of the Vartry Unit Renal team members before the new unit opened to patients.**

**On 10th February 2020, AOIFE ADAMS received a life-changing gift from her younger brother, Daniel Watters, both from Dundalk, when they underwent a successful living donor kidney transplant. Here Aoife shares her uplifting story.**

# Big brother saves the day!

**T**en years ago, I was diagnosed with Stage 4 Chronic Kidney Disease. Through adherence to a strict renal diet, under the watchful eye of Barbara Gilman (dietitian) in the Mater Hospital, I managed to maintain my kidney function and live a relatively normal life (missing bananas and crisps!), until my health further deteriorated, two years ago, with the onset of kidney failure.

Last year I was referred to Beaumont Hospital in the hope that a pre-emptive transplant might occur before I would need to start dialysis. My husband Mark, and brother Daniel, put themselves forward to commence the screening process for living donation and, remarkably, both were a match. Daniel was a full-house match, which he was told is quite rare, and so took it upon himself to volunteer to donate his kidney as it was more likely to be successful. What makes this story even more extraordinary is that Daniel is my only sibling.

The transplant came just in time for me, who would have been starting dialysis early in 2020. I continued to work full-time until the week before the transplant, as a lecturer in Dundalk Institute of Technology, where my colleagues were very accommodating.

The transplant took place on Monday, February 10th, 2020. By Tuesday morning, although still groggy from the transplant, I knew straight away that it was successful, as it felt like a fog had been lifted and I

felt truly alive again. Seeing Daniel that morning was a wonderfully joyous moment, knowing that my 'little' brother was doing well and that his sacrifice was worth it.

Ten months later I haven't looked back. I'm enjoying a whole new lease of life, thanks to Daniel's altruism, despite having to cocoon as a result of COVID-19 for most of this time. My husband Mark and daughter Sophia is delighted to have me back to full health. I now have the energy to play with Sophia, and she calls Daniel her 'real-life superhero'. It is only now that I have my health back that I realise quite how unwell I was before the transplant. Every day I am amazed at my energy levels. Every morning my scar reminds me of the marvels of modern medicine and the sacrifice my brother made, so that I could have a second chance at living a healthy life. I don't take a moment for granted, even during COVID-19. I know I am extremely fortunate and have so much to be thankful for.

Five weeks after the



Daniel and Aoife

transplant, the first lockdown began. A couple of weeks after our surgery, the transplant unit had to temporarily cease transplants due to COVID-19. Daniel and I are extremely grateful and feel lucky that everything fell into place for us.

Just like for everyone around the country, COVID-19 has impacted on both mine and Daniel's lives. I spent much of the last ten months cocooning, enjoying cooking all of the foods I couldn't eat before and having energy to do so. I am now back to work remotely and I'm delighted to have the energy to be back at work, even more so given the additional demands that working remotely places on people.

Daniel also returned to work, remotely, in the Civil Service in May. Daniel and his fiancée Mary were due to get married in September, but, unfortunately, took the decision in May to postpone their wedding until October 2021, in light of the pandemic. What a celebration that will be! Our parents, Margaret and Frankie Watters, are relieved and elated, in equal measure, that both of their children are now back to full health and are counting down the days until the wedding next October.

Daniel says that he felt "lucky to be in a position to donate the kidney to his only sibling." He said, "We were very fortunate, I was first tested in October for donation and the surgery took place four months later. It was an extremely short process for us in comparison to others in similar situations. My colleagues in the Civil Service were very accommodating as well, which helped with this timeline. Looking back now, there is no difference in my health today than there was prior to the surgery. I would urge anyone who is in a position to be



Daniel and Aoife, post-transplant



Derek Hoey

tested to come forward and if circumstances are right, go ahead with donation. To see Aoife walking down the corridor in St Damien's ward before me was an extraordinary moment and seeing her able to lift Sophie now makes it all worthwhile. As my older sister, Aoife always looked out for me when I was younger (and still does!), it was nice to be able to do something for her."

Inspired by Daniel's wonderful deed, Mary's brother Derek, decided

to run his first ever marathon, just prior to the second lockdown, for the Irish Kidney Association and raised over €900 in the process. Derek's fundraising platform is still open at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Derek-Hoey2>

Prior to running the virtual Dublin City Marathon in October, Derek, from Dundalk, had only been an occasional runner, running not more than 5k from time to time. He set about training harder with his local Fighting Fit Gym in Dundalk, which he credits for helping him to attain his impressive first marathon finish time of 3 hour 57 minutes. Derek's wife Niamh and two daughters, Neasa and Fiadh provided moral support and treats, to help him accomplish this magnificent deed. Running a first marathon was Derek's way of acknowledging and paying tribute to both Daniel and me. It also created awareness and paid tribute to the amazing people that work right across our healthcare system, and indeed supporting bodies, such as the IKA, during these most extraordinary times.

Both Daniel and I would like to express our sincerest gratitude to our respective surgeons, Professor Ian Robertson and Ms. Dilly Little, the staff on St. Damien's Ward and the Transplant Co-ordinators. Beaumont Hospital, took amazing care of us and ensured the transplant process was as smooth as it could possibly be. The work undertaken by them is truly

contd next page...

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***Looking back now, there is no difference in my health today than there was prior to the surgery. I would urge anyone who is in a position to be tested to come forward and if circumstances are right, go ahead with donation.***

## BIG BROTHER SAVES THE DAY! *contd...*

inspirational, and never more so than in the current times. I would also like to thank Professor O'Meara, Ms. Barbara Gilman and the renal team in the Mater Hospital, whose care I have been under for the last ten years, and where I once again attend following my discharge from the Transplant team in Beaumont Hospital. Daniel would also like to thank Mr. Michael Allen, for his care during a minor follow-up procedure in September, and his colleagues in the Civil Service for their support throughout the whole process.

The IKA were a rock of practical support for Daniel, myself and our family, both during and after the transplant process. The staff in the IKA's Renal Support Centre at Beaumont were amazing and the Centre provided a refuge for our family during the week of the transplant. The work undertaken by the IKA is inspiring and the importance of the Renal Support Centre cannot be overemphasised. My husband Mark and Daniel's

fiancée Mary joke that they had the more difficult time during the transplant, so myself and Daniel would like to just set the record straight, we will give you this one! 'Thank you' for all of your love and support. Throughout the last ten years myself and Mark would not have been able to keep up full-time jobs and look after Sophia without the unwavering support of my loving parents. They kept it altogether, and still do!

We have been the recipients of so much kindness and generosity over the last number of years and months. We would like to extend our gratitude to our wider family, circles of friends and colleagues, and Daniel's soon to be brother-in-law Derek, for taking up the mantle of raising awareness of organ donation and much needed funds for the IKA, during these unprecedented times for charities.

A big shout out to my daughter



*Aoife (6) and Daniel (4)*

Sophia. She keeps everyone going, particularly through the most difficult times (and lockdown!), never failing to inspire us to keep going and to make us laugh. Myself and Mark are eternally grateful to Daniel, Sophia's 'real-life superhero'.

# HOME THERAPIES DELIVERIES

## AN UPDATE FROM THE NATIONAL RENAL OFFICE

**P**rior to the COVID pandemic, Baxter delivery drivers would often deliver the pallet load of medical supplies to the room where the patient's dialysis equipment was located.

Due to COVID-19 safety concerns in March 2020, the HSE / Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) advised that delivery of prescriptions and medical material should not cross the patient's threshold and should only be delivered to the patient's doorstep. Based on this advice, the National Renal Office (NRO) issued a "home dialysis delivery protocol during COVID-19".

When Baxter Healthcare changed delivery company in October, they discovered some patients had continued to receive 'across the doorstep' deliveries. This had occurred in certain individual circumstances where patients were unable to manage doorstep deliveries.

Once Baxter informed the NRO of these deviations the NRO asked the HSE/HPSC for advice.

The NRO received new guidance from the HPSC, which laid out the conditions upon which, 'across the doorstep' deliveries may be facilitated. It acknowledged that 'across the doorstep' deliveries pose additional risks to patients and advised that these should be minimised, particularly the duration of contact between the patient and the driver.

The new October 2020 protocol can be used as a guide

for clinicians to use in consultation with their patients in relation to their home dialysis supply deliveries. The final decision regarding implementation is a matter for the individual patient and their own clinician.

In general, dialysis patients are deemed to be 'extremely vulnerable patients', and are therefore advised that they should check with all visitors that they do not have symptoms of COVID-19, before they allow them to enter their house. They should also ask them to clean their hands (soap and water or hand sanitiser) and to wear a face covering.

The length of time the driver is in the patient's house should ideally be less than 15 minutes. Patients should avoid being in the same room as the driver and ensure room windows are open as far as possible.

The HPSC general guidance can be found at the [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) website and the circular is called 'COVID-19 Guidance for Older People and Others at Risk of Severe Disease on Reducing Risk of COVID-19 Infection'.

**In conclusion, we in the IKA encourage patients to discuss arranging 'across the doorstep' deliveries with their local healthcare team if they believe 'across the doorstep' deliveries are in their best interests.**

If you experience any problems, please let your healthcare team know and if the matter is not resolved contact us at Donor House.

# REFURBISHED WATERFORD DIALYSIS UNIT

It is fantastic to see the refurbishment project in Waterford dialysis unit come to a conclusion. They have increased their capacity for training for peritoneal dialysis and they have added a room for home haemodialysis training and for minor procedures.

In writing to Vera Frisby, Waterford Branch Treasurer, Hazel Bond from the Home Therapies team in University Hospital Waterford expressed appreciation for the support from the

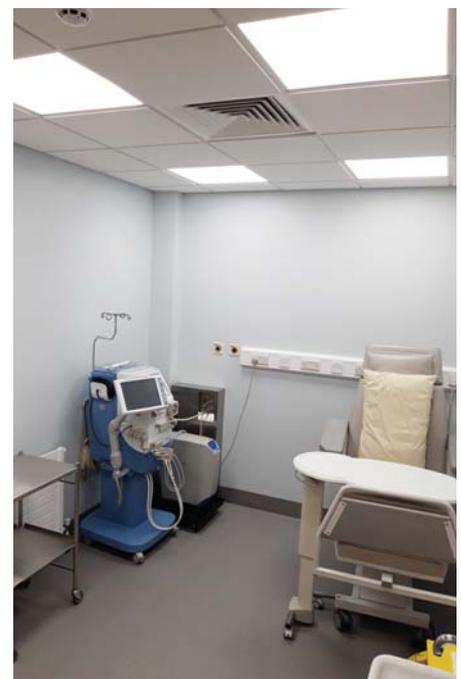
Irish Kidney Association for the project. "On behalf of the renal service and all the renal patients in the southeast who will benefit from this project we would like to extend sincere gratitude to the IKA board who have so kindly provided a generous financial contribution for this project."

Describing how they plan to make the facility attractive for patients and staff she said, "We plan to get some artwork through the Waterford Healing Arts Team (WHAT). Artwork from one of our current Home Therapies patients and another from one of the Haemodialysis patients will also be displayed. One of these is a beautiful photography piece of the forget-me-not flower. We plan to attach an appropriate plaque under this artwork to acknowledge the IKA donation."

The "Friends of the Hospital" have also generously contributed in the planned purchase of new trolleys/chairs and some of the current Renal Home Therapies patients kindly contributed through donation and fundraising activities, all of which will benefit both current and future patient experiences.

This project clearly illustrates what can be achieved when all sides of the

renal community come together. Congratulations to all involved.





By **AOIFE SMITH**

*"If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete."*

**JACK KORNFIELD**

**C**hristmas? Really? If only I could say "COVID-19, it's Christmas, I'm sure it would be ok with everyone if you took a 'break', actually take the full two weeks off. You have outdone yourself this year, overachieved and impacted nearly every household around the world in some way. It really is time for you to slow down. Feel free to stop completely!"

It is hard to believe we have entered the Christmas period and hard to believe this year turned out the way it did. From one perspective, I feel the year disappeared, weeks morphed into months without any real markers or celebrations to create a timeline of memories, and from another perspective the year was heavy with so much happening it kept me searching for updates, living week to week, watching numbers go up and down within timeframes of lockdowns and

confusion around levels.

The Christmas period traditionally is marked by spending time with loved ones, friends and family, the very thing we have been encouraged not to do all year long. For many this Christmas might be a very different one. There are so many who have lost loved ones, lost jobs, lost relationships and lost supports. My thoughts are with you all. Many living with long-term health conditions, in order to minimise any risk, will not get to enjoy the normal hustle and bustle of gatherings at this time of year. Maybe, this Christmas, giving ourselves a 'break' is exactly what the doctor ordered.

Recently there has been an explosion of research showing the benefits and importance of **self-compassion** for emotional wellbeing. Most people see *compassion* as an admirable trait, a mixture of good qualities such as

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Often when I mention self-compassion to people, I'm greeted with rolled eyes or comments like "is that not just self-pity or a bit self-indulgent?"



kindness, mercy, tenderness, understanding, empathy and sympathy along with a willingness to help others. But we seem less sure about *self-compassion*.

Often when I mention self-compassion to people, I'm greeted with rolled eyes or comments like, "is that not just self-pity or a bit self-indulgent?" One of the biggest misconceptions about self-compassion is, it means feeling sorry for yourself. Self-compassion doesn't allow you to tune out the bad stuff, it helps you to mindfully accept, experience and acknowledge difficult feelings with kindness, which actually helps in the processing of emotional upset.

Renowned expert and leading self-compassion researcher, Dr Kristin Neff explains the core elements. *Self-compassion* entails being kind and understanding towards ourselves when we suffer, fail or feel inadequate rather than self-criticism and judgement. *Self-compassion* involves recognising that suffering and personal inadequacy are part of the shared human experience – something that we all go through, rather than being something that happens to 'me' alone. *Self-compassion* requires taking a

balanced approach to our negative emotions so that feelings are neither suppressed nor exaggerated.

Having compassion for ourselves really is no different to having compassion for a friend or loved one. When a friend is in distress, how easy is it to notice their suffering, to respond to their pain with a feeling of warmth or care, and to show a desire to help or support them in some way? How easy is it to offer kindness and understanding realising that suffering, failure and imperfection are all part of life? When we are mindful of our own struggles and respond to ourselves in the same way we would to a friend, things can start to change for us.

Self-compassion can be a new way of relating to yourself which can, like any new behaviour, take a bit of practice. Remember it is a *practice of goodwill, not good feelings*. In other words, even though the friendly, supportive perspective of self-compassion is aimed at the easing of suffering, we can't always control the way things are. If anything, this year has taught us that. If we use self-compassion practice to try to make our pain go away by suppressing it or fighting against it, things will likely just get worse. With self-compassion we

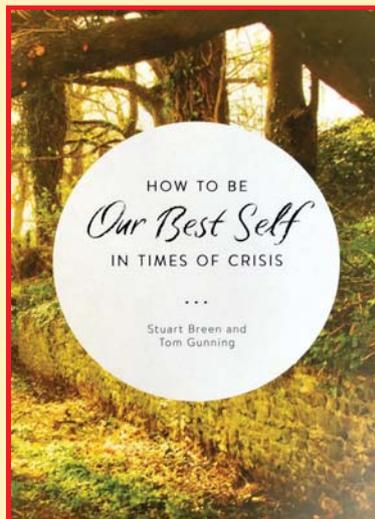
mindfully accept that the moment is painful and embrace ourselves with kindness, remembering that imperfection is part of the shared human experience. This allows us to hold ourselves in love and connection, giving ourselves the support and comfort needed to bear the suffering.

2021 looks hopeful with developments of treatments to help us better manage the impact of COVID-19. Taking a more self-compassionate view of the emotional impact 2020 has had on us all, will help us better prepare for a more emotionally well balanced 2021.

Thank you to all who called or emailed the counselling services provided here at the IKA throughout the year. Please continue to email me with topics that might benefit you to read about. Your comments to me will be completely confidential, no names will be used, and no reference will be made to any person or any specific email. If there is a common theme in the requests, I will base the next article around that topic.

I would like to wish you all well over the Christmas, stay safe, and be mindful of yourself and loved ones. I look forward to seeing you all in 2021.

# Giveaway



Recently I was gifted a lovely book, 'How to be Our Best Self in Times of Crisis', by Irish authors Stuart Breen and Tom Gunning. The book helps the reader to understand the body's reaction to crisis and how the physiological response impacts our way of thinking, often for long periods of time.

In the spirit of passing goodwill forward, I have **TEN** of these books available to the first ten people to email me a request for one at [aoife@ika.ie](mailto:aoife@ika.ie)

# Kidney friendly festive treats

**As Christmas approaches we can all get excited about the prospect of festive foods. This year more than ever Christmas will be a time to enjoy great food. As a person with renal disease, you may feel restricted or even worried about what you can eat. Although some Christmas foods and treats can be high in potassium, phosphate, and salt, they can also be altered to be more renal friendly.**

Christmas treats such as dried fruit, chocolate, toffee, fudge, mince pies, Christmas pudding and crisps are high in potassium. Lower potassium options to choose this Christmas include desserts such as trifle, panna cota, pavlova, spiced pears with cream, apple tart, shortbread, ginger bread biscuits or sweets such as fruit jellies, jelly beans, dolly mixtures, marshmallows, boiled sweets or Turkish delight. Another option for those who love a mince pie at Christmas is to add stewed apple and cranberries to your mince pies instead of dried fruit to reduce the potassium content. If you are unsure as to whether you need to follow a low potassium diet, please check with your doctor or dietitian.

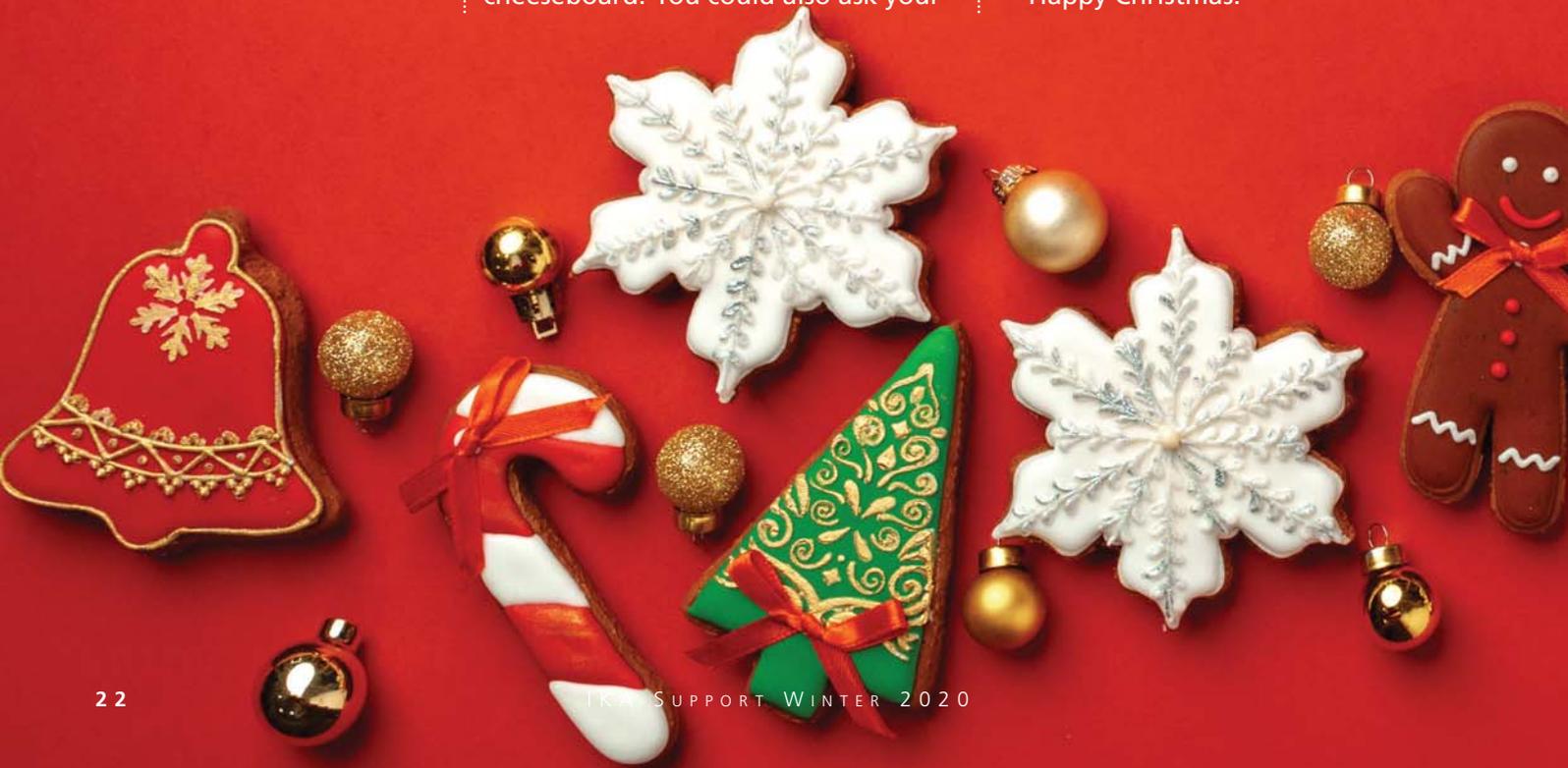
If you have been advised to follow a low phosphate diet during the Christmas period it can be challenging managing your dairy allowances to help control your phosphate levels. Some tips over this Christmas are having sorbet or cream with your desserts instead of ice cream and choosing a portion of cream cheese with crackers instead of having a cheeseboard. You could also ask your

dietitian about using a milk substitute to make up low phosphate custard.

Not to be forgotten is trying to keep to your low salt diet to help control your blood pressure and thirst over the Christmas. Salt and salty foods can cause us to become very thirsty which makes it hard to stick to the daily fluid allowance. This Christmas swap salty snacks such as crisps, salted nuts, salted crackers, and processed meats such as ham, rashers, and sausages for lower salt tasty options. Instead choose lightly salted popcorn, crackers, rice cakes, a slice of melon, or cucumber slices. Keep an eye on the amount of fluid you are drinking, if you are having an alcoholic drink choose a spirit or glass of white wine instead of mulled/red wine or beer as it is lower in potassium. (Check with your doctor/dietitian if you can have alcohol).

As a final tip try to keep to your usual routine, eat regular meals and avoid skipping meals as this will help with keeping to your portions of festive treats when at family gatherings.

Happy Christmas.



## BAKED PEARS

*Serves 4 (Recipe with thanks to Truly Tasty)*

### Ingredients

4 ripe pears  
4 level tbsp reduced-fat crème fraiche  
½ level tsp ground cinnamon  
4 tbsp clear honey  
8 gingernut biscuits

### Method

Preheat the oven to 190/373°F/Gas 5.

Cut each pear in half, then place them cut-side up on a large baking sheet. Use a teaspoon to scoop out the cores and make a dip in the centre of each one. Sprinkle over the cinnamon and drizzle with a little honey.

Roast the pears in the oven for 10-15 minutes. Meanwhile, put the biscuits into a food bag and use a rolling pin to crush them lightly. Remove the pears from the oven, then put a tablespoon of reduced fat crème fraiche in the dip of each pear. Scatter the biscuit crumbs over each pear to serve.

Per Portion this dessert provides: 1 portion of fruit.

If you have a daily allowance of dairy products, please note that there is crème fraiche in this dessert which needs to be taken from your daily allowance.



## FRUIT PUDDING

*Serves 4 (Recipe with thanks to Food with Thought (NKF))*

### Ingredients

450g Mixed Tinned Fruit (analysis with 300g raspberries, 150g strawberries)  
25g Sugar  
300ml Water  
5 Slices White Bread (2 days old), crusts removed  
4 tablespoons of cream

### Method

Drain the tinned fruit and place in a saucepan. Add the sugar and water and cook for 5 minutes.

Place 3 slices of bread around the edge of the pudding bowl. Spoon half the fruit into the bread-lined bowl and place a layer of bread on top. Spoon in the rest of the fruit and finish off with another layer of bread. Put a plate on top of the bowl and leave in the fridge overnight

Turn out and serve with 1 tablespoon of cream per serving.

Per Portion this dessert provides: 1 portion of fruit; Low Fat.

If you have a daily allowance of dairy products, please note that there is dairy (cream) in this dessert which needs to be taken from your daily allowance.

By

**ANN-MARIE MURRAY**

(Renal Dietitian)

B.Braun Wexford & Portlaoise

and

**NIAMH KEARNEY**

(Dietitian)

Mater Misericordiae Hospital,

Dublin

on behalf of the

**INDI**

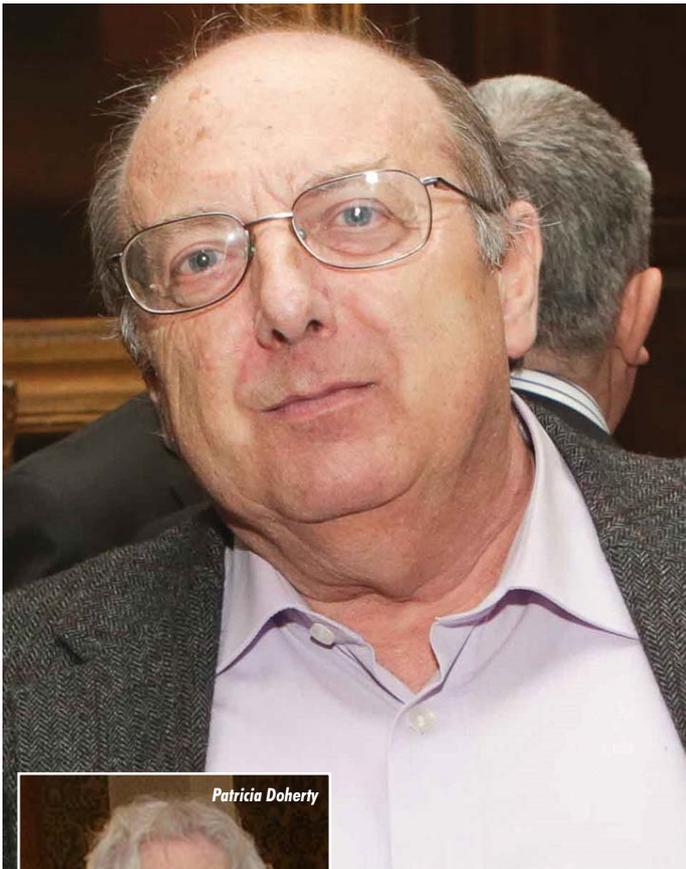


Irish Nutrition +  
Dietetic Institute  
Renal



# A tribute to our retiring FINANCIAL MANAGER

## Cyril KELLY



I, **Patricia Doherty**, first IKA Chief Executive who, along with others, have been invited to write a tribute to Cyril, a Rathdrum, County Wicklow man whom the Board appointed over thirty years ago. He managed the IKA accounts and assisted the branch managers with their accounting responsibilities which he did, eventually moving them to online banking.

Cyril had been a very successful CAPD patient in the Meath Hospital whilst studying accountancy.

On a personal note, the Chairman Sean Donovan and his wife Doreen (Tipperary) and I, were invited to Cyril and Mary's wedding in Sutton, County Dublin. The bride looked really beautiful and the later

arrival of baby Paul was their crowning glory.

At Donor House, Ballsbridge, Cyril undertook the computerisation of the IKA annual records. He shared an office with Lorraine who worked mornings and he afterwards.

With the appointment of Mark Murphy, Chief Executive, Cyril moved to new premises, Donor House in Park West and, with this, his responsibilities grew exponentially.

Cyril's devotion to the IKA, expanded his role into areas other than accountancy. He fastidiously

scrutinised the IKA's funds moving and placing them in deposit accounts whilst monitoring their status.

The care, respect and forbearance he demonstrated with Branch Treasurers and volunteers, could not be overstated. His helpfulness and patience, explaining banking practices and training and assisting them, accordingly, was hugely appreciated by the IKA's volunteer Branch Treasurers.

Similarly, each Honorary National Treasurer, is fulsome in their praise of his faithful and loyal assistance to them, in their role, during

their officership.

Cyril is liked, enormously, by one and all – Officers, Board, members and especially by the IKA staff. There are not too many people, in life, that can boast of this. His dark wit and droll sense of humour is legendary. During his time with the IKA he was successful and popular, he will be sorely missed by all for his discreet and gentle ways.

The IKA wish him and Mary a long, healthy and happy retirement. Thank you, Cyril, for steering the IKA ship, for many years, into a safe harbour.

### A tribute to Cyril from **VERA FRISBY**

I would like to wish Cyril a happy and healthy retirement. It was an honour and a pleasure to work with Cyril, over the years, especially during my term as National Treasurer and National Chairman. He was always respectful, passionate, calm and professional. The accounts were always accurate and up-to-date when he presented them to me.

Thank you Cyril for your courtesy, patience and kindness. I appreciate the time and energy you have put into your work with the IKA over the years.

You will be missed in the office and by all our members.

You can now do all the things you wanted to do, and I wish you good health and enjoyment with your family.

## Message from Hon. National Chairman **COLIN MACKENZIE**

It is with regret that we learnt recently that our Financial Manager, Cyril Kelly has decided to retire. Cyril is a long-time servant of the IKA, and his meticulous attention to detail ensured that the records of all transactions were recorded with forensic precision to detail.

Due to circumstances I had to deliver three annual financial reports, one as interim National Treasurer and two as elected National Treasurer, so I had some experience of Cyril's work ethic. He presented Accounts that were easy to read and understand, was always available to answer any

queries, and made the job of Treasurer much easier. Most of us who take on the task of Treasurer are not accountants so it was important that there was someone there who understood that, and was sympathetic to those with only a rudimentary knowledge of financial procedures.

As a co-worker, Cyril was extremely popular with his colleagues, and will be missed – especially when all get back to normal office procedures. Cyril was a quiet, reassuring presence in Donor House and one always had the impression that IKA finances were

in safe hands.

Cyril stepped down on Friday, 27th November which was also the date of our recent Board Meeting, at which tribute was paid to Cyril for his many years of dedicated service to the Association. Cyril's retirement was marked by an appropriate gesture from the Board and members of the IKA, and his staff colleagues also recognised his valuable contribution.

Cyril, on behalf of the Members, Branches, Board and Staff we wish you a long and fruitful retirement after years of exceptional service.

## A tribute from **VALERIE BRADY**

"I first met Cyril, many years ago as a young girl, when he found himself on the same hospital ward as my mother. Back then he was quiet and unassuming with a friendly smile and always a 'hello'. Today, I am happy to say, he hasn't changed. Cyril has always been the unsung hero of the Association, working away in the background, always ensuring his work was completed meticulously. It did not matter what was happening in his personal life he always found a way to muddle through without complaint or excuses.

As many a Branch Treasurer throughout the country will attest, Cyril was always there supporting them, no problem was too big or too small, there were no silly questions, just help and encouragement. Cyril has always shied away from the limelight but we all know how hard you have worked and your commitment to the Association.

The nice part about retiring from doing what you do so well is there is no more rushing around to meet deadlines and complete tasks. You'll have lots of time to make all your dreams come true. The bad part is how much we will miss the pleasurable experience of working with you. We wish you the all the best and 'thank you' for your years of dedication, enthusiasm and team spirit."



## A tribute from **MARY YOUNG**

My late husband Richie and Cyril formed a great bond right from the beginning which lasted for many years.

Later Cyril had to bond with me when I took up the position of Offaly Branch Treasurer. He actually earned the title of Treasurer, more than me, as I needed so much of his help. He was kind and patient and always available at the other end of the phone for me.

Cyril is a true gentleman and I will be forever indebted to him.

Cyril may your retirement be all you dream of. May you have many blessings and may the sun always shine for you.



# Irish Kidney Gene Project (IKGP)

## POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY GENE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

**A**utosomal Dominant Polycystic Kidney Disease (ADPKD) is the commonest genetic condition leading to kidney damage.

This means that one or more of your genes are faulty, which results in you making many cysts in your kidneys. Inheriting a faulty gene of autosomal dominant means that each child that you have has a 50:50 chance of inheriting the faulty gene and also developing the condition. The disease develops very slowly, varies from person to person, and therefore symptoms and problems usually do not develop until adulthood. Because the affected kidneys get bigger, you may experience pain in the tummy or lower back, blood in the urine, passing kidney stones and symptoms

By  
**PROF. PETER J CONLON**

related to high blood pressure.

Although the kidneys are the main site affected, cysts may also develop in other parts of the body such as cysts in the liver. Many people with ADPKD remain well and free of problems for years after the condition is diagnosed. No particular treatment may be needed for a time. You would be offered an annual follow-up for blood pressure check and blood tests to monitor your kidney function.

Beaumont Hospital is undertaking research to help understand the genes that cause ADPKD. **We are looking for volunteers** to help us with this

project. Our goal is to understand the genes that cause kidney failure and why patients might have different clinical course. The Research involves a ten-minute telephone conversation in which a kidney doctor from Beaumont Hospital will call you or talk to you while at clinic, talk to you about your kidney condition and a brief family history. With your permission we will also review your medical records.

We will either take a blood sample when next at clinic or send you, by post, a detailed patient information sheet, consent form and a DNA spit tube in which we will ask you to give us a spit sample. We will also use this sample to study your DNA to help better understand why you get kidney disease.

**VOLUNTEERS  
WANTED**

If you are interested in helping us email:

[IrishKidneyGeneProject@Beaumont.ie](mailto:IrishKidneyGeneProject@Beaumont.ie)

*The Irish Kidney Association's first virtual and  
35th Annual Service  
of Remembrance and Thanksgiving*



Recorded at  
*Newman University Church, Dublin 2*



Archbishop Dr Michael Jackson, Rev Gary Chamberland, Colin Mackenzie, IKA National Honorary Chairman

## Huge audience tunes into virtual Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving

The Irish Kidney Association's first foray into staging the 35th Annual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving as a 'virtual event' this year was in response to the global pandemic. The event was recorded on October 1st, 2020 at Newman University Church, Dublin 2 and in the weeks that followed at other locations including the 'Circle of Life' National Commemorative Garden in Galway on October 10th. Its timely broadcast at 11am on Sunday, 15th November, 2020 fell during the month of All Souls and on the same day as World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

Pulling in a viewership of 64,000 households nationwide, the pre-recorded production received hugely positive acclaim following its broadcast on RTÉ One television. The production was laced with captivating music, singing, poignant symbolic processions and meaningful scripture, homily and testimony.

Thousands more people from at home, and 24 other countries, streamed the beautifully orchestrated 55 minutes long production, within days on RTÉ Player and many others listened into a radio broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 Extra while hundreds more watched it on YouTube.

There were almost 4,000 interactions on the IKA's Facebook related to posts about the Service, in likes, comments and shares and in the five days after its broadcast there were 205 donor card requests, double the average five day period in previous weeks. Over the week the IKA Facebook reached 120,205 people, up 29.4% on average and IKA's Instagram reached 2,341 which was up by 14.4%.

The Organ Donation Transplant Ireland (ODTI), which holds the confidential database for organ donor families, posted the IKA invitations, to view the Service, to thousands of families around Ireland and hundreds more living abroad.

A fortuitous outcome was that it

reached people from all over Ireland and abroad, many unaware when tuning in as usual to watch the Sunday morning Service, and were presented with a hugely significant and meaningful Service, thereby lifting the profile of the IKA and increasing organ donor awareness.

In the Spring 2020, it became apparent to the IKA's Liturgy Committee that with COVID-19, with safety being the main concern, there would be too many challenges to overcome in order to even contemplate holding our usual live event which has in recent years attracted a congregation of over 2,000 to Corpus Christi Church in Dublin.

Since its inception 35 years ago, the Service has become a hugely important event in the calendar of members of the organ donation and transplant community. Out of a collective strong will to fulfil this demand, the Board of the IKA unanimously agreed to proceed with a virtual event. Video production

company, Kairos Communications, was engaged to produce it. From the outset everyone involved worked tirelessly to ensure it would be a befitting alternative to all those Services which had gone before, in paying homage to organ donors and their families who gave the 'gift of life' so that others could live.

Participants at the Ecumenical Service included celebrity, clergy including two Archbishops from different churches, organ donor families, a transplant politician, transplant recipients, members of the medical profession, the cream of musical and singing talent, whilst patron of the IKA, President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins recorded an engaging message in *Áras an Uachtaráin*. The President's Address is on page 36.

This diverse cross-section of the community was involved in the recording which took over five hours at Newman University Church together with many hours more, at other locations. This culminated in a Service which was beautifully blended together, like pieces of a jigsaw, into an almost seamless 55 minutes Service suitable for broadcast. At all times restrictions were adhered to, social distancing observed, while ensuring that the safety of participants was at the forefront for its organisers.

Colin Mackenzie, IKA Honorary National Chairman, carried out his role as Narrator, with great aplomb, and acknowledged the magnificent setting of Newman University Church. He thanked all those involved in the production. He captured the objective and meaning of the Ecumenical Service beautifully in his narration when he said, "It (the Service) provides us with an opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all organ donor families who, through their profound compassion and generosity, have given hope and new life to many patients. You are all welcome, regardless of your faith or philosophy. Donors, from all backgrounds, have given the 'gift of life' and patients, from all backgrounds, have received the 'gift of life'."

All involved in the filming of the Service were invested in acknowledging deceased donors and their legacy. Throughout the years the Service has been a mixture of sadness and joy for the families of organ donors and transplant recipients alike. For many



Harry Ward, Deirdre Faul

donor families this unique annual Service has become an anniversary to both remember their loved ones, and for transplant recipients, the opportunity to honour and give thanks for the wonderful 'gift of life' they have received.

National TV and radio presenter Ryan Tubridy, a former ambassador to the IKA, discussed it on his RTÉ Radio 1 morning show explaining how 'struck he was' by the Service, 'how beautiful it was' and 'a beacon of kindness in a world gone mad'. He spoke about how stark the image was – the view of an empty church in these times of COVID when watching a testimony by Alan Finnegan, a member of a deceased donor family. Ryan also paid tribute to Lorraine Costello, who has been working on the Service since it began in 1986, and he commended Lorraine for her service to the Association as she now reached retirement.

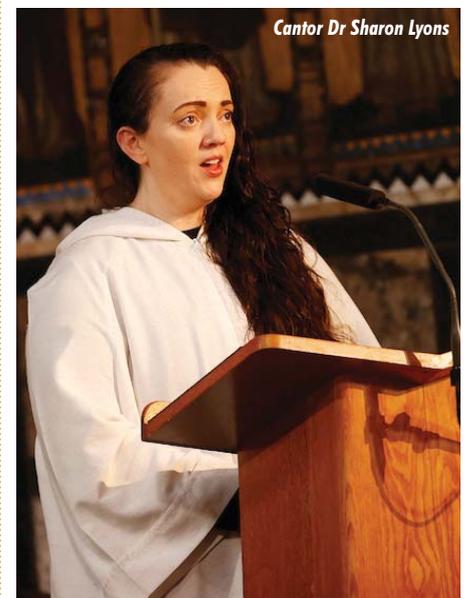
In publicity, leading up to the event, the public were encouraged to actively participate in this year's Service, particularly during the very symbolic 'Service of Light' ceremony, to light a candle in memory of deceased donors. This ceremony was led by two members of the successful Transplant Team Ireland, liver transplant recipient Deirdre Faul from Dalkey, Co. Dublin and Team Captain Harry Ward, from Baldoyle, Co Dublin, a kidney transplant recipient. Both slowly and respectfully lit numerous candles representing organ donors which were laid out on marble railings at the front of the Altar in the beautiful Church. The significance of this aspect of the Service was not lost on the Sound Engineer Adrian Cunningham, in the adjoining room, who was so moved after watching in on a TV screen that

he immediately declared that he wanted to waive his professional fee.

Similar generous gestures of goodwill were proffered by the hugely talented Rev Steven Warner, Director of Music and Liturgy and Associate Director, Notre Dame-Newman Centre, as he waived all the musicians' fees. They, together with The Newman Vocare Ensemble Choir, delivered a wonderful repertoire of music and song. The Choir included Sopranos Michele Dachtler Warner and Sarah Caldwell, Altos Anna Carney and Maddie Loftin, tenor Patrick McGinley and musicians, flautist Maedhbh O'Rourke, organist Joseph M. Bradley and Steven, himself, who played guitar.

The music seamlessly blended together with Cantor Dr. Sharon Lyons, the highly respected Soprano who performed as a soloist at Pope Francis's Papal Mass in the Phoenix Park. Sharon's performance as Cantor was exceptional and added a uniquely enriching atmosphere to the Service.

*contd next page*



Cantor Dr Sharon Lyons

# Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving

Eleanor Shanley, John Feeley



## Strange Boat

*We're sailing on a strange boat  
Heading for a strange shore  
We're sailing on a strange boat  
Heading for a strange shore  
Carrying the strangest cargo  
That was ever hauled aboard*

*We're sailing on a strange sea  
Blown by a strange wind  
We're sailing on a strange sea  
Blown by a strange wind  
Carrying the strangest crew  
That ever sinned*

*We're riding in a strange car  
We're followin' a strange star  
We're climbing on the strangest ladder  
That was ever there to climb*

*We're living in a strange time  
Working for a strange goal  
We're living in a strange time  
Working for a strange goal  
We're turning flesh and body  
Into soul*

appearance on a tree branch behind Eleanor,

Indeed, Sharon also generously donated her stipend to the IKA, which was an extremely generous gesture in a COVID time when musicians are encountering so few opportunities to perform for their livelihoods.

Also waiving their fees were the hugely talented Eleanor Shanley and Classical Guitarist John Feeley. They were filmed at the 'Circle of Life' Commemorative garden as Martina Goggin introduced the Service. They performed the hugely appropriate song, 'Strangeboat', which was captivating as its lyrics resonated with many for the times we are living in. An unexpected chorus of birds joined in and a robin made a special

an almost magical addition to the already special introduction.

The Book of Remembrance, a 'Roll of Honour', has been an integral part of the Service since its inception with the names of organ and tissue donors carefully inscribed by calligrapher Annette Daly from Glenageary, Co. Dublin for the past 35 years.

Annette Daly



Gina Lenahan

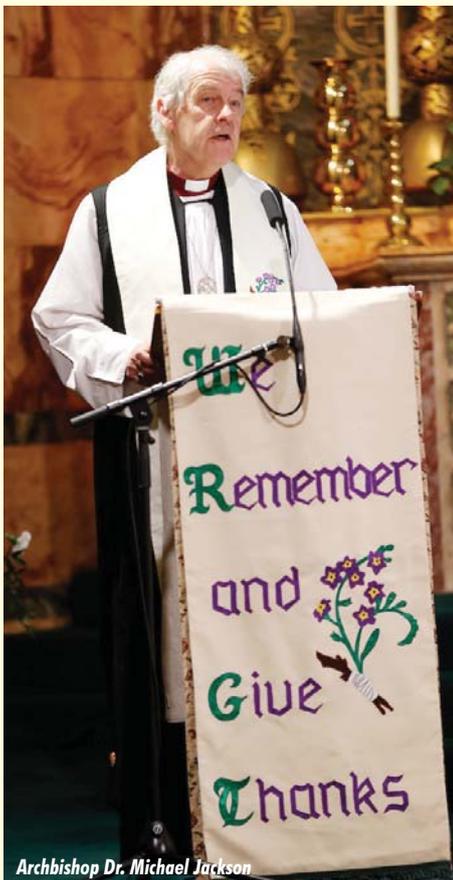
Annette was filmed prior to the commencement of the Service carefully inscribing a donor's details into the book. The Book was carried to the Altar by pharmacist Gina Lenahan, a heart transplant recipient and mother of three from Ranelagh, Dublin.

This year's Service included a very special message, of 5 minutes 45 seconds duration, from the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, Patron of the IKA, in which the President paid homage to deceased and living organ donors, who have made possible "that most precious gift, of life and living." Such an endorsement, from the highest office in the land, demonstrates the importance and high regard held for the IKA's Service which pays homage to organ donors and their families.

Grateful transplant recipients including heart, lung, liver and kidney, and members of deceased organ donor families, were filmed carrying out various symbolic roles for the pre-recorded Service.

Chief Celebrant Rev. Gary Chamberland, c.s.c, Director of Notre Dame-Newman Centre read from the book of the Gospel of Luke, 'Jesus Heals the Paralysed', Luke 5:17-26 which describes how strangers help a paralytic man by carrying him from outside on his bed and lowering him down from roof tiles to be in front of Jesus who healed him."

Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough Dr. Michael Jackson, attended Newman Church to deliver his carefully projected Homily



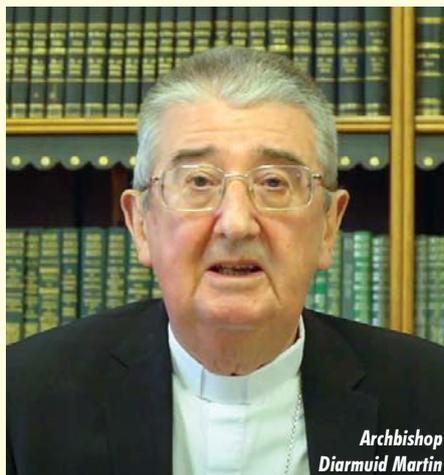
Archbishop Dr. Michael Jackson



Rev. Gary Chamberland

also from the Book of Luke about a person stopping on the road to show kindness to a stranger saying, "The Good Samaritan in the Christian tradition points us towards selfless love and life renewed. Someone on the road stops and cares without hesitating to count the cost. People like our donor families and our recipients today are involved in the practical expression of care. They live the spirit of this parable daily."

Catholic Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of Ireland Diarmuid Martin shared a Reflection, via video from his residence, explaining that this might be his last time to be involved with the Service of Remembrance with his impending retirement. His Reflection followed the same theme about helping strangers in need, as Archbishop Jackson's Homily and Rev. Chamberland's reading. In an extract from Archbishop Martin's Reflection, when he spoke directly to donor families, he said that "If God is love being a follower of Jesus and being a believer must mean that we, too,



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

become loving people thinking not just of ourselves. But even in the midst, as in your case, of the greatest sorrow recognising the need of someone we may not know and changing a situation which seemed tragic and hopeless and meaningless into a gesture of kindness and love that endures."



Sallyanne Clarke with a photo of her late son Andrew

In the same Church, that her deceased donor son Andrew was baptised, Sallyanne Clarke delivered the second reading from the Book of Revelations (21:1-5) 'A New Heaven and New Earth'. Sallyanne and her husband Derry run the Michelin star L'Ecrivain Restaurant on Dublin's Baggot Street.

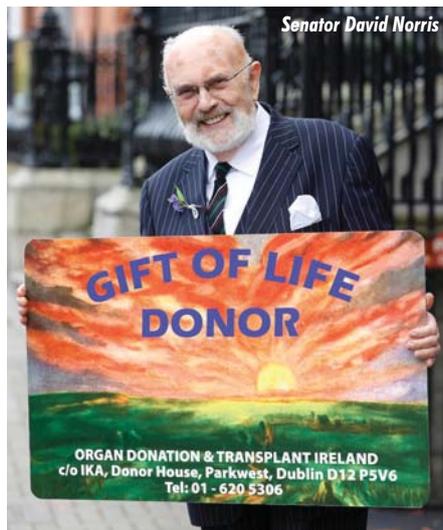
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# Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving

Alan Finnegan shared a very moving testimony about the profound impact of the passing of his late brother and deceased donor Paul, the celebrity chef, who passed away in 2014 less than a year after he famously prepared a meal for Michelle Obama and her daughters when they visited the family pub Finnegan's in Dalkey, Co. Dublin.

Senator David Norris, a skilled orator and human rights campaigner, who underwent a liver transplant in 2014, recited Nobel prizewinner Seamus Heaney's aptly chosen poem, 'Miracle', at Newman University Church. The poem adapts a New Testament miracle to pay tribute to those who came to his aid in crisis when he suffered a stroke.

National treasure Majella O'Donnell, whose mother had experienced temporary kidney failure, sent a message of encouragement from outside her home in Donegal and



expressed "from the bottom of my heart to all the families who have selflessly donated the organs of a loved one at a very, very difficult time, thank you!"

Dilly Little, Transplant Surgeon and Surgical Director of the National Kidney Transplant Service recorded a message standing beside a memorial sculpture, to commemorate organ donors, located just outside the front entrance to Beaumont Hospital. The sculpture was commissioned by the IKA and designed by Denis Goggin of the Strangeboat Foundation. In her address she said, "In the National Kidney



Transplant Service, we have now performed more than 5,000 (kidney) transplants and more than 2,500 people enjoy the extraordinary benefit of a functioning kidney transplant. As a transplant surgeon, I and my colleagues have the privilege of seeing first-hand the tremendous benefit that a successful kidney transplant has for each recipient. None of this would be possible without the extraordinary generosity of each organ donor who literally gives the 'gift of life' and living. It is an amazing thing to witness the transformation of a successful transplant not only on the recipient themselves, but on all the people they love. I know that each recipient holds their donor close to their hearts and constantly remembers them with gratitude and affection."



## Alan Finnegan Testimonial

Six years ago my brother Paul suffered a catastrophic cerebral aneurysm on the eve of his 48th birthday. Two days later we gathered as a family and with the kind and gentle guidance of the staff of St Vincent's ICU we made the heartbreaking decision to let him go. The decision to donate his organs was easily made, a moment of catharsis in a wave of grief. Later that night after saying my final goodbye to Paul, a nurse informed me that the organ transplant crew were ready to go and recipients had been notified for transplantation.

I drove home that night strangely elated, my sorrow tempered by the knowledge that Paul's story hadn't quite finished. In the weeks that followed we struggled with the giant void Paul's death had left in our lives, his absence felt in his family home, the workplace we shared together, at birthdays, communions and funerals. We were informed that the transplantation of his kidneys and liver had been successful, news which came as solace to us all but it wasn't until we received a letter one Saturday morning some months later that the magnitude of organ donation was made apparent to us. Here in a handwritten note was the testimonial of a life changed, of new beginnings thanks to the transplant of one of Paul's kidneys. In that moment I recognised that the act of organ donation was as much a gift to us as it was to the recipient.

On behalf of everyone who holds Paul's memory dear I wish to thank the brilliant transplant teams in Beaumont and St. Vincent's hospitals for the gift they provided us by bringing renewed life to others.



Prof. Jim Egan

Prof. Jim Egan, a lung physician who is also Director of the HSE's Organ Donation Transplant Ireland (ODTI) spoke the first reading, Ezekiel 34:11-10, 'I shall keep my sheep in view'.

Carrying the Cross to the Altar, in full uniform, was Barrack Quartermaster Sergeant Paul Gifford, from Clondalkin, Co Dublin who is stationed at Cathal Brugha Barracks and who underwent a kidney transplant from a deceased donor 17 years ago.

On her very first day, as the newly appointed Chief Executive of the IKA, Carol Moore expressed what an honour it was to be given the role of carrying the 'Book of the Gospel' to the Altar.

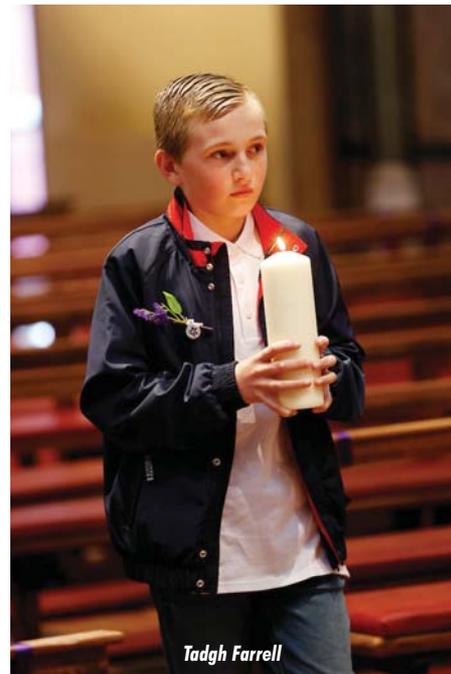


Barrack Quartermaster Sergeant Paul Gifford

Also taking part in the opening procession were Tadhg Farrell (13) from Coolock and Garrett Ffrench from Mulhuddart carrying candles to the altar. Tadhg was born the day after his late grandfather Michael Golding, from Coolock, passed away and his organs were donated. Tadhg's grand aunt Lillian Byrne, sister of the deceased, accompanied Tadhg to Newman



Carol Moore



Tadhg Farrell

University Church. Garrett Ffrench underwent two single lung transplants, a year apart.

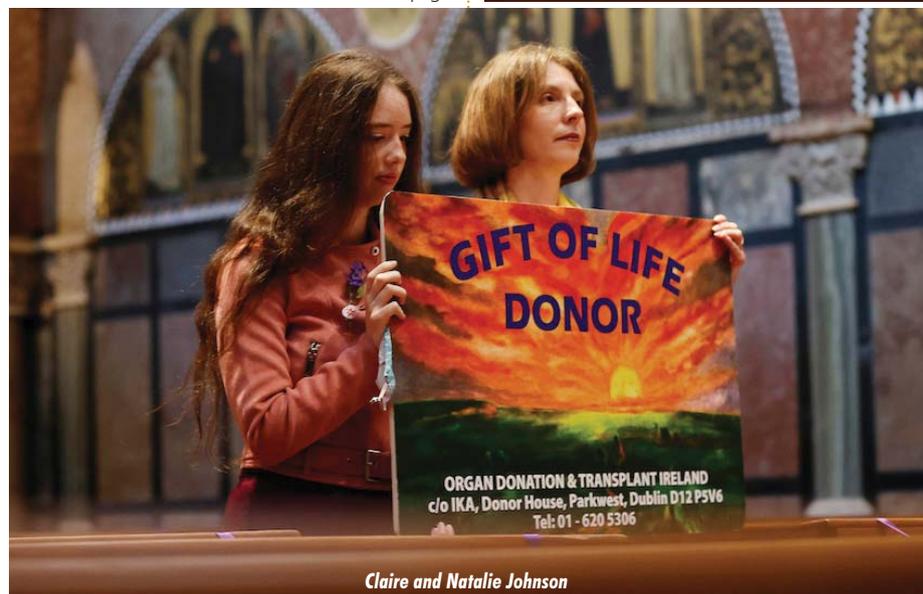
At the Service, forget-me-not flowers, the symbol of transplantation, were carried to the Altar by Pauline Callaghan, from Old Bawn, Tallaght and her grandchildren, twins Layla and Maddie Rose Henderson (9). In 2014 Pauline travelled across the world to Australia to donate a kidney to Layla when she was just three-years-old.

Taking part also and carrying a large organ donor card to the Altar was Natalie Johnson from Balbriggan, and her daughter Claire (16). Natalie and her two daughters made the selfless decision to donate her husband and the girls' father Roy Johnson's organs when he passed away during the Summer of 2020.

*contd next page*



Maddie Rose and Layla Henderson with grandmother Pauline Callaghan



Claire and Natalie Johnson

# Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving

The Liturgy Committee was intent that the 'Circle of Life' National Commemorative Garden in Salthill, Galway be showcased as part of the Service so that viewers were introduced to this special place to remember organ donors. The Garden was the brainchild of Martina and Denis Goggin, parents of a deceased donor Éamonn. Martina spoke eloquently as she introduced the Garden and then following Eleanor Shanley and John Feeley's performance of 'Strangeboat', she directed viewers on to Newman University Church for the beginning of the Service.

Filed at the 'Circle of Life' Commemorative Garden also were founding member of the IKA Angeline Cooke, a kidney transplant recipient from Maunsells Road together with Bernadette Glynn, from Peterswell, Co Galway, the widow of the late Albert Glynn who, also, was one of the founder members of the Association. Bernadette, a retired nurse, is enjoying the successful longevity of a kidney transplant she received from a deceased kidney donor almost 42 years ago and is one of only a few people in Ireland whose transplant has lasted so long.



Fr. Finbarr Treacy with Denis and Martina Goggin



Bernadette Glynn and Angeline Cooke



Lauren, Ann and Bernard Óg Keaney

Marieann Keaney from Roundstone, Co Galway was present in the Garden also with her ten-year-old son Bernard Óg who underwent his life-changing kidney transplant from a deceased donor in 2016, three years after his cousin Thomas tragically passed away in Australia. His family made the courageous decision to donate his organs. The late Thomas's mother Ann and sister Lauren Keaney, who live in Roundstone, were also present for the recording. (story on page 50-51)

Producer Fr. Finbarr Treacy from Kairos Communications and Steven Warner, Associate Director at Newman University Church, collaborated closely with the IKA's Liturgy Committee, who

were involved in its planning and content. They include:- Colin Mackenzie, IKA Honorary National Chairman, Lorraine Costello, the recently retired IKA Patient Support Officer, Gwen O'Donoghue, PRO, IKA, and four IKA board members: Valerie Brady, Joan Gavan, Monica Finn, and Pat May.

The Liturgy Committee would like to thank all involved as mentioned above but also Roger Childs, Head of Religious programming at RTE, for kindly agreeing to broadcast the Service. It is noteworthy that the Sunday televised Service has become hugely popular since COVID placed restrictions on churchgoers. Special mention is also given to Fr. Finbarr Treacy,

Kairos Communications and his hugely gifted camera crew, Ita and Seamus Callagy, and Sean Connelly, for their camera work. A wonderful production was delivered, reflecting a determined and concerted wish by all involved, to pay tribute to courageous organ donors and their families in a deeply respectful way.



The magnificent flower arrangements, which adorned the church were arranged by Una Whelan from Bray, a member of the IKA's Dublin East/Wicklow branch and wife of the IKA's National Honorary Secretary, John Whelan. The IKA's Lorraine Costello and retiring Chief Executive Mark Murphy prepared the Altar and lectern, covering them in hand embroidered linen cloth which featured the forget-me-not emblem whilst they also laid the candles for the 'Service of Light' ceremony on the marble railings.

Board member Valerie Brady, performed the role of floor manager at Newman University Church, ensuring that everything ran in order for participants to be able to leave promptly once their roles were completed, and that social distancing was observed.

Photographers Conor McCabe from Dublin and Galway photographer Andrew Downes captured the participants beautifully at the Church and the Garden.

The IKA would like to acknowledge the support of the media for highlighting the Service. The IKA placed small adverts on the back pages of three national newspapers on the two Saturdays leading up to broadcast while one of the papers, *The Irish Times*, kindly gave up free advertising space on several other days.

The concept for the Service



**Members of the Liturgy Committee: Lorraine Costello, Gwen O'Donoghue, Colin Mackenzie, Joan Gavan, Valerie Brady**

evolved from a grieving organ donor mother who contacted Lorraine Costello at the IKA in their first office in Monkstown, Co. Dublin. The mother expressed her distress and sadness that her son's organ donation had never been acknowledged. At the time there was no system in place at the Old Jervis Street Hospital to acknowledge and thank organ donors and their families. In consultation with the then newly appointed National Transplant

Co-ordinator, Phyllis Cunningham, it was decided that a Service be held to publicly acknowledge and recognise the courageous generosity of organ donors and their families.

The inaugural Service, in 1986, had an attendance of 300 people in St Mary's Church, Haddington Road, Ballsbridge. Since then, the numbers have increased annually with an attendance more than 2,000 people now attending from all over Ireland.

*Reflection by*

## Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

I've been involved with the annual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving of the Irish Kidney Association for many, many, years now. It has always been a very moving experience. This is probably my last time to be able to be there as Archbishop of Dublin as I near retirement.

Your gatherings are unique. A moment of your grief had become a moment of promise, promise of newness and life for somebody else. Your generosity at a moment of grief benefitted another family enormously as they receive a precious gift from someone who they may have never known.

Humankind was created as a family. The human family is built up by solidarity and is broken down by self-centeredness. We all know the story of the good Samaritan, about this man who was taken by thieves, left abandoned on the road. Various notable people walk by and leave him. And then the good Samaritan comes, and he is moved to compassion. And he takes him and puts him on his shoulders, brings him to an inn and ensures that his wounds are healed.

And we naturally look to the good Samaritan as the hero of the story. But what do we know about the man who was found lying on the road. The Gospel tells us nothing – no name, no nationality, not status, no family tree. And the moral of the story is that we don't need to know those type of details. All that is important is that this was a man, a human being in need, and that should be enough to move each of us to compassion. Also, in today's word, if God is love, being a follower of Jesus and being a believer must mean that we too become loving people thinking not just of ourselves. But even in the midst, as in your case, of the greatest sorrow, recognising the need of someone we may not know and changing a situation which seemed tragic and hopeless and meaningless into a gesture of kindness and love that endures.

## Message from

# President Michael D. Higgins



I welcome the opportunity to participate in today's Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, organised by the Irish Kidney Association. In the more than half a century since the first kidney transplant took place in Ireland, that most precious gift, of life and living, has been offered to thousands of our citizens. This life-saving, or life-changing, gift is made possible through a generosity of human nature so worthy of recognition.

Today's event is, thus, an important one, bringing together those generous individuals and families who have performed an act of great altruism towards a fellow human being; and the grateful recipients of that profound action of human solidarity.

Some of you with us today may have made this gift at a time of great personal tragedy. Others amongst you are living donors who have selflessly donated a kidney to a friend, family member or stranger in need. All of you have enriched and extended the lives of others, have played a vital role in the making possible of new chapters of hope and possibility for those suffering from kidney failure.

That so many recipients and their families are joining us here today is surely a powerful testament to the great gratitude felt for the new lease of life that has been offered to them or their loved ones, and a demonstration of the great difference an organ transplant can make to a recipient's life and to the lives of their family and friends.

Among the events Sabina and I have organised since I became President, I recall a St. Patrick's Day reception held in Áras an Uachtaráin in 2018 for organ donors, recipients and their families. The wonderful sense of solidarity between all those in the room on that St Patrick's Day was deeply moving and remains with us.

In terms of medical science and practice, organ transplant is one of the greatest medical advances of this modern age. Currently, some four-thousand people in Ireland are enjoying an extended and better life because of the generosity of organ donors. However, while transplant is now a commonplace technique in Ireland, there are, unfortunately, too many people who continue to die each year while waiting for transplants.

Encouraging and achieving donation remains, I am aware, a challenge. It is critical that we all play a part in nurturing both public and private conversations on the importance of organ donation. We know that deceased organ donation remains rare in Ireland with an average of 80 multi-organ donors from the approximately 30,000\* deaths each year in this country.

We also know that currently some 500 patients are awaiting life-saving transplants and, you all will understand, that behind those figures lie the many anxious family members desperately hoping their spouse, child, parent or sibling will become a beneficiary of the powerful gesture of organ donation.

Discussion around organ donation is, of course, and will always be, a very sensitive and emotional one, tied up as it is with thoughts of loss and bereavement. It can also, however, be a conversation of hope and renewal, on commitment and the intangible joy of giving, of life continuing, and of the wonderful legacy it constitutes, one that we can leave behind by donating our organs to others.

I am well aware of recent months having been particularly difficult for many of those awaiting kidney transplants. The risks of COVID-19 saw the upsetting, but necessary, halting of the transplant programme in March, with significant anguish and disappointment for many patients whose transplant had been scheduled, or those who were awaiting that all important telephone call to tell them a kidney had become available.

I am so glad that, after many weeks of worry and uncertainty, the programme has now resumed; that once more patients are receiving the cherished 'gift of life' from generous donors, or from those who have the courage to translate a tragic loss of their own into a profoundly generous act towards others.

The development of organ transplants stands as one of the great triumphs of human scientific achievement. It also stands as testament to the great spirit of human solidarity that exists here in Ireland and across the world. May I sincerely thank all those of you here today who have donated an organ to a friend or loved one, or who have made the brave decision to donate the organs of a deceased family member to a stranger in great need.

Your citizenship, compassion and care is truly something to be cherished, acknowledged and celebrated.

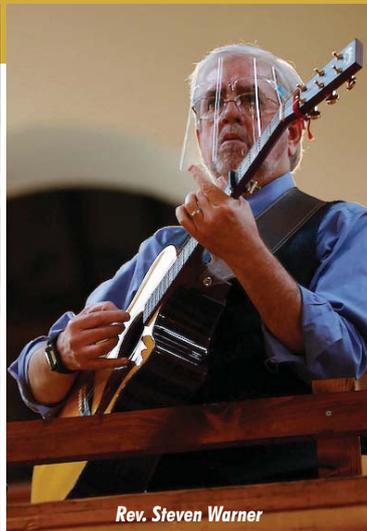
Mar focail scoir, finally, may I also extend my gratitude to the Irish Kidney Association for all they do in the support of patients suffering from kidney disease, and for the support they give to their families. It is an Association of which I am very proud to be patron, and I wish you every success as you continue with your vital work.

*Traoslaím libh. Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir, agus beir beannacht.*

\*A much smaller number die in circumstances suitable for organ donation



Mark Murphy



Rev. Steven Warner



A photo of deceased donor Michael Golding held by his grandson Tadhg Farrell, the deceased's sister Lillian Byrne and Barrack Quartermaster Sergeant Paul Gifford



Lorraine and Frank Costello

## Homily by The Most Reverend Dr Michael Jackson Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin

*St Luke 10:37: The young man answered, The one who showed him kindness. Jesus said to him, go and do as he did.*

**W**e celebrate today a 'gift of life' that moves positively and lovingly in two directions at the same time. Donor families who have selflessly and generously thought of others ahead of their own loved one whom they have lost have given life to someone urgently awaiting a vital organ. They have done this at the heart of their personal grief. The person who receives a vital organ shares the gift of life renewed with everyone he or she meets. People such as this do so by the radiant determination to live life to the full as a tribute and an honour to their donor.

Joy and sorrow, loss and restoration come together in this 'gift of life'.

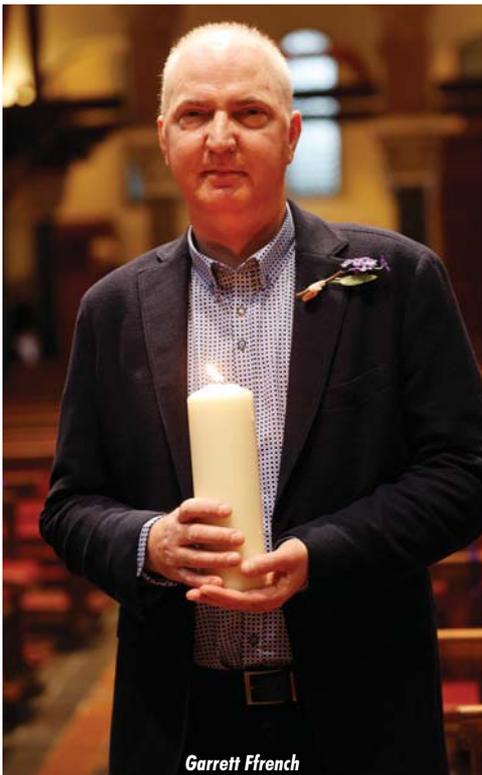
The Good Samaritan, within the Christian tradition, points us towards selfless love and life renewed. Someone on the road stops and cares without hesitating to count the cost.

People like our donor families and our recipients today are involved in this practical expression of care. They live the spirit of this parable daily.

This ancient story has a meaning today that is at the core of our gathering.

This human story is the answer to the question: But who is my neighbour?

St Luke 10.29.



Garrett French



The Finnegan family...Neil, Alan, Michelle and Cathyanne

# Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving



*Marieann Keaney, Lauren Keaney, Denis and Martin Goggin, Bernard O'g Keaney(10), Bernadette Glynn, Fr. Finbarr Treacy, Ann Keaney, Angeline Cooke, Brendan Harding, Eleanor Shanley and John Feeley.*



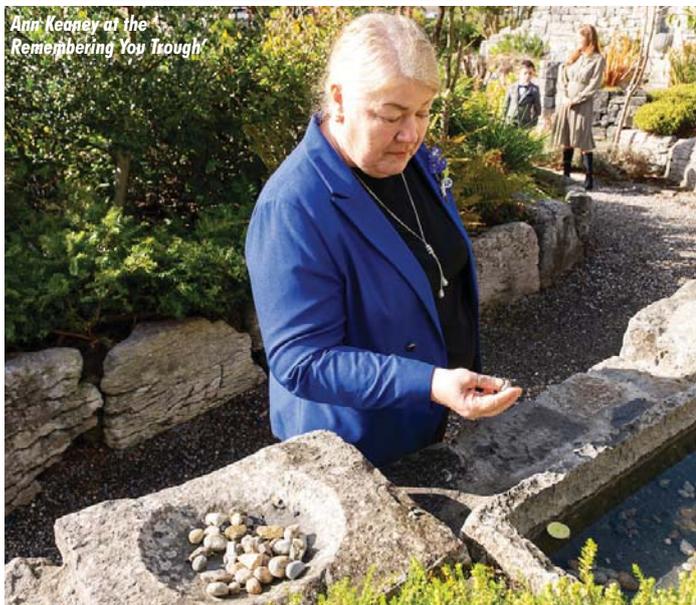
*Eleanor Shanley*



*The 'Remembering You Trough' where people can throw a small stone into, in memory of a loved one*



*Marieann Keaney at the 'Remembering You Trough'*



*Ann Keaney at the 'Remembering You Trough'*



*Bernadette Glynn*



Patrick and Regina Williams

# 8 RUNAWAY CATS

## COMPLETE 1020KM CHALLENGE IN 30 DAYS

**A** group of Kilkenny runners pledged to run 5 kilometres every day throughout November, starting on All Saints' Day, to honour the memory of the deceased father of one the group and to raise awareness about the plight of people with organ failure and funds for the Irish Kidney Association. The deceased, Patrick Williams Snr., who lived in Gowran, had been a kidney dialysis patient for seven years, before passing away three years ago on 30th October 2017.

Supporting the fundraising challenge also were the late Patrick's two teenage grandchildren, Nicole and Sarah Williams, from Freshford who committed to running a shorter

By  
**GWEN O'DONOGHUE**

2km distance on 30 consecutive days while both their parents Patrick Jnr. and Regina Williams were among the group of six adults running the 5km distance daily. Patrick Jnr. set up a Facebook fundraising page and at the time of going to print had raised over €1,250 for the IKA with an additional €150 kindly donated by his employer.

Patrick Jnr., Regina and four other men and women pounded the roads in different locations around the marble county while wearing bright yellow IKA t-shirts. They shared photos of themselves, their times, and routes on their WhatsApp group every

day until they each reached their final 150 kilometres, after 30 days. Between them they clocked up an impressive 900 kilometres while Nicole (19) and Sarah (14) clocked up an additional 120 kilometres.

Speaking ahead of the challenge, Patrick Jnr. said, "during COVID-19 restrictions, our group has been keeping in touch on our WhatsApp running group, and we like to challenge ourselves as some of us also did a similar 5km challenge throughout December last year. I am delighted they have come behind this challenge and that they are supporting me by honouring the memory of my father, whose health failed considerably in his final year before he passed away, three years ago. They are also supporting me and my family in helping us to raise funds for the IKA as well as to shine a light on the plight of people on long-term dialysis and people with other types of organ failure. Myself, Regina, Nicole and Sarah and my extended family think that this is a nice tribute to the memory of my father.

"My mother Elizabeth and my five brothers and sisters saw my father's struggles while he was on dialysis for seven years and watched his health decline. In those seven years he received hospital dialysis treatment three times weekly. First, he received his treatment in Kilkenny but in his final years as his health deteriorated, he was transferred to the renal unit in Waterford. I think he held on to life for as long as he could for the sake of my mother but especially for his eight grandchildren who adored him."

Patrick Jnr. works on a pig farm and lives in Woodview, Freshford with his wife Regina, who works as a carer for the HSE, and their two teenage daughters Nicole and Sarah.



Sarah and Nicole Williams



Catherine Walsh, Nicola Brennan, Lindsay Kavanagh. Missing from photo: Barry Hughes

# Always look on the bright side of life!

**A**lways look on the bright side of life might well be the motto through which Ann lived her life.

Looking back on her journey with dialysis and chronic kidney failure due to Glomerular Nephritis there was never a time where she said, "why me?" and bemoaned the trials which kidney failure presented to her. It was a motto and an attitude to life which served her well and which gave her a lifespan of 35 years on dialysis, being the longest survivor in Ireland currently and one of the longest survivors worldwide.

Ann had a healthy childhood and only with acute recollection could she remember an incident where, on one occasion, she obviously had a high temperature and where we now assume that she probably had a strep throat, which may have contributed to her glomerular nephritis in later life. We married in 1975 and she continued to

work as Secretary to the Managing Director of Squash Ireland until the week before she gave birth to our first child, Kate, in 1978. This was a premature birth due to toxemia, but a further pregnancy was not contraindicated, and she went on to have our second child, Shireen, in 1980. A year later it was discovered that there was protein in the urine, and this led to a biopsy which diagnosed her kidney condition. The GP at the time advised me, as her husband, that I could expect her to live for about five years.

Thankfully treatments have all advanced since those days and she went on to prove that you can still have a good life and survive for 35 years on dialysis. Ann's initial hospital treatment and commencement on haemodialysis was at St. Vincent's Hospital. While she was there, she got a copy of the Reader's Digest which spoke of the possibility of peritoneal dialysis, a home-



*Ann on her wedding day*

based treatment. She had her two young girls at home and her desire was to be available as much as possible to care for them. A goal she set in her mind was to get the youngest into Primary school before her then projected demise.

Ann was transferred to the Meath Hospital which was then pioneering the peritoneal approach to dialysis. We converted a bedroom to a dialysis room, and she came home. As an aside, she found it humorous to hear her youngest daughter say to her cousin as she went into this room to get something

for Ann, "Don't hold your breath. You would not like to get what she has!" In those days, the exchange of peritoneal bags had no ultraviolet cover, so the peritoneum was wide open to the elements during the exchange and consequently a very hygienic environment was desirable.

She was home and life began to return to a new normal routine. She had begun dialysis on 22nd February 1984 and all was going well. When summer was coming, she was offered a break to Butlins but on realising that it was possible to move outside



*Ann and her daughters at the Berlin Wall*

**By FRED ROUNTREE**  
**– Husband of the late Ann Rountree who was 35 years on dialysis**



*Ann holding the Denis Byrne trophy with her daughters Shireen and Kate at the Shannon Boat Rally*

our home, we decided instead to gut a caravan and convert it into a mobile sterile dialysis room. With this facility, we were able to join the Shannon Boat Rally as we had done on previous years. By using two cars we managed to move the caravan as the Rally moved. She was awarded the Denis Byrne trophy, in recognition of being the first participant to have done the Rally while on dialysis, and an article about her was placed in the Irish Times entitled 'The Bravest Woman on the River'. This proved to be a great boost to her, and she later said that cracking up laughing at the talent competition, she realised there was more to life than dialysis and that she could still enjoy herself.

The Irish Kidney Association was in its infancy in those days, but they gave us stickers etc. to put on our caravan promoting organ donation. The following St. Patrick's Day we made our own float for the parade with a vintage tractor pulling along our caravan, emblazoned with colourful slogans promoting the donor card. It was all quite good fun enjoyed by our

two daughters.

Ann was very fortunate to get a transplant in December 1985. This took place in Jervis Street Hospital with transfer to St. Mary's in the Phoenix Park for recovery. It was initially very successful but within three months it began to fail. It was not rejection but a recurrence of what occurred with her own kidney. She received a second transplant in 1989 but with the same disappointing result. She said she felt very sorry for the doctors trying to break the bad news to her, but I don't remember any tears from her. She was protecting those around her and just moving forward.

At this stage she had to face up to the fact that she would not be considered for any further transplants and that her future was with dialysis. However, she embraced this without complaint. Her life at this stage was involved with meeting all the demands that come with a young family. She took the girls to swimming, pony riding, ballet, piano lessons and facilitated many play dates while being busy in her kitchen looking after her

family. Her husband can barely boil an egg!

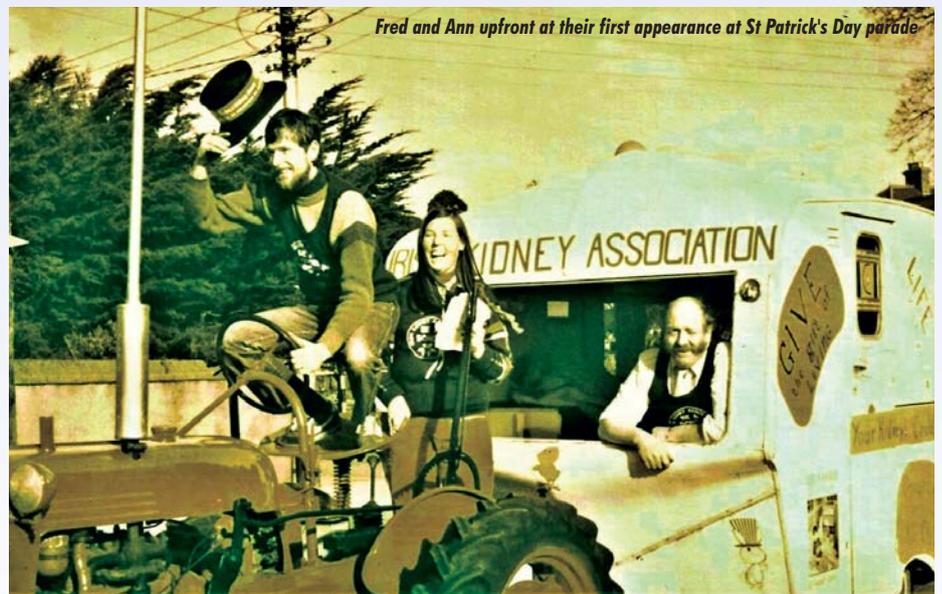
Ann had really no time to feel sorry for herself. At no stage through the 35 years did she avail of any home help and never allowed herself fall into the category of the patient.

The Wicklow branch of the IKA was formed somewhere in those early days and we met in the Wicklow hospital on a Sunday afternoon. She found this a very supportive contact and looked forward to meeting all the fellow members at each event. She became the Secretary of the branch and remained in this role over many years.

A highlight of our year was always the St Patrick's Day parade and each year we got more adventurous doing floats in Bray, Wicklow and Rathdrum. It was all such fun and a new window on life opened up through her contacts with fellow patients with kidney disease. Amongst these were Bernie and Mark Murphy, Danny Browne, Fergus Bolger, John Lynch, Bert Lynch, Andy O'Callaghan, John Byrne and many more.

Dialysis also opened many new doors for Ann. The initiative of introducing Art in Tallaght Hospital as a bit of art therapy to pass the time while on dialysis, was a very fruitful journey for her. Having never lifted a paintbrush before and indeed being reluctant to even sketch something instead passing it to me, she found that she had quite a talent for art and went on to produce many worthy pieces. It encouraged her to join a local art group which proved to be a great outlet.

Peritoneal dialysis created great flexibility and indeed she subsequently performed exchanges in quite random



*Fred and Ann upfront at their first appearance at St Patrick's Day parade*

# Always look on the bright side of life! contd...

places such as the Atlantic Drive on Achill Island. However, her peritoneum ceased to work effectively and she eventually had to revert to haemodialysis treatment in hospital but not before she had visited the Travenol/Baxter factory in Castlebar and given a talk to the staff demonstrating the effectiveness of their product as a boost to their work. She had experienced a number of instances of peritonitis, but all were treated successfully.

We had many other holidays on the Shannon while on haemodialysis. Ann would travel on her set dialysis days to Sligo or back to Dublin or on one occasion to Altnagevlin while she was boating on the River Erne.

Dialysis was not without problems. In the early days Ann's blood count would drop to as low as 4 on occasion, and she had to have transfusions every month. She was being maintained with a very low-level haemoglobin with consequent low energy levels. One of the magic developments for her was the arrival of EPO. This transformed her existence. Sadly, all the other fellow patients being transfused

with her, succumbed to Hep C. Haemodialysis also was much harder in the early days and she invariably had headaches after dialysis and quite often had to stop the car to get sick on her way home or when collecting the kids from school. She chose to drive to her hospital treatment, making it possible to do the school collection, as the alternative of sharing a taxi was not ideal and might keep her late.

The development of the bicarbonate monitor as part of dialysis was another great improvement which made dialysis less of a trial and reduced sickness. There were many challenges through the years from creating fistulas to caring for the Hickman catheter tube, which became the only option when her fistula gave up. One issue where she was again fortunate was in relation to parathyroids. She underwent three surgical procedures for this but still had excessively high readings. Around that time, a trial drug arrived and she volunteered for it not knowing if she was getting the real drug or a placebo but very quickly she realised she was on the new potion which sorted out that problem. Ann challenged life but was extremely diligent in



following medical recommendations and was expert at following her diet and restricting fluid intake.

Life was still good, and she was enjoying bringing up her two girls. She joined school fundraising committees and actively engaged with activities within her parish and community centre and over a number of years took a stall for Denmark at the International Food Fair.

As her kids were growing up, she thought a family trip to Europe might be interesting. With the enormous assistance of her nurse in Tallaght Hospital, she firstly arranged a holiday to Copenhagen. Her first dialysis was in Cardiff. Leaving there at 9pm to travel across the south of England to reach the ferry next morning in Dover. She was running a high temperature, and our car was also overheating. Any sensible person might have said 'go home' but we travelled on and got a second-hand radiator for the car, in Dover, in the morning and thankfully by then her high temperature had subsided. We drove up

through Holland and Belgium, camping as we went and getting dialysis as arranged en route. We stayed some days in Copenhagen, where Ann had been an au pair in her teens, and we came back via East Germany, the Berlin Wall having been knocked that year. She was delighted to send a postcard home from Copenhagen with the message "We arrived. Oh, ye of little faith!"

Having accomplished travel across northern Europe, she planned another holiday. I am not sure if the hospital was aware that we were staying in a tent. At any rate, with what must have involved enormous commitment and effort, they arranged about nine different locations throughout France for her dialysis. At each location we would find the hospital or facility where dialysis was available. We would then seek out a neighbouring campsite after our arrival. It all worked out satisfactorily.

We travelled through Brittany, Cognac, St. Emilion, Toulouse, Andorra, Perpignan, Marseilles, Nice, Antibes, Monaco, Mont



**Ann – 21 years on dialysis**



*Ann celebrating her 70th birthday with her family*



*Ann with her granddaughter Jessica in the christening gown she crocheted*

Blanc, Annecy, Geneva, Bruges, and Dunkirk. Although we covered almost 4,000 miles in three weeks, we felt dialysis put no barriers on our travel.

Another year we joined a cruise-in-company with three international Cruising Clubs sailing off the south coast of Ireland. On dialysis days, Ann drove off to Cork for her treatment joining us at our next destination that evening. However, one of our more amusing challenges with dialysis arose in Norway. My brother had sailed across to Stavanger in Norway and we flew out via Copenhagen to meet him there. It had been his intention to cruise up the Fjords between Stavanger and Bergen. However, despite repeated attempts, Ann was being told she could not be facilitated in Bergen. This would have rather messed up my brother's cruise of a lifetime! We left Ireland with only Stavanger as a possibility but during our flight the hostess came to us with a message that when we arrived in Copenhagen, we were to phone a certain number. How they knew we were on that flight I don't know, but apparently my brother had made representations to the Norwegian embassy who arranged to facilitate us in Bergen. It was a brilliant

experience with spectacular scenery and the sun shone like we were on the Med!

Our children were growing up. My parents came to live beside us, and Ann cared for both until they passed away. Then her mum and sister with Downs Syndrome moved in there and she cared for both of them through challenging declining years until they passed on. She was the Carer not the cared!

Both our daughters got married and each went on to give us three grandchildren – Kate had two girls and a boy and Shireen had two boys and a girl. Ann could scarcely believe she had lived to see grandchildren and that each daughter had boys and girls. Her grandchildren gave her much pleasure in those latter years. She regularly cared for them and enjoyed knitting for them and made a spectacular crocheted christening gown for them.

Ann was determined not to sit at home when her girls grew up. Having seen them rescued by the Lifeboat when sailing with their father when a strong wind developed, she decided to join the Lifeboat Ladies Guild as the fundraising committee was known at that time. She became very involved, becoming the last Chairperson of the Wicklow Ladies Guild. She then took

on the role of Souvenir Secretary running the local RNLI shop in Wicklow. Her time was spent buying in stock and she was regularly to be seen pouring through their catalogues. She very much enjoyed this activity, and it left no room for her to bemoan her own circumstances. Her contribution to the RNLI was recognised by three awards – Excellence in Volunteering, Silver Badge and Gold Badge.

Ann enjoyed hosting large parties in our home and on one occasion had a barbeque for members of the IKA Dublin East and Wicklow branch. She had over 70 people for a sit-down meal to celebrate her 60th birthday.

In latter years when our children had flown the nest, we went to the Canaries for our holidays. We went there three times each Winter from 1997. The sun and change of scenery and routine were always a welcome break. Ann did not let her Hickman catheter prevent her swimming in the warm waters there as she devised a careful method of covering it up with Tegaderm.

As usual, Ann went out to the Canaries in March 2019, arriving on a Tuesday

night but she woke up with a sore leg the following morning. It turned out to be disguised cellulitis. She was admitted to hospital there on Thursday night but sadly passed away by Sunday. She was 70 years old.

Ann had conquered kidney failure and lived a full life with it for 35 years but unfortunately cellulitis turning to sepsis was to be her downfall.

Ann always remained positive. Dialysis and sickness, though ever present, were not something she ever focused on and as a family neither did we. She had a strong faith which stood to her through the years and she leaves many great memories and an example to follow.

Ann was one in a million – a true inspiration!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the doctors and nurses and ancillary staff who cared for Ann so well through all the years. It was their committed and dedicated care that gave Ann the last 35 years. I would also add that she was lucky to live in a country which provided such a good health service at some considerable cost, but she was worth every penny of it!

# SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATION



By ROBYN BLACK



## FAKE NEWS

# How to spot misinformation online

I hate the term Fake News. But it seems that even with the end of the Trump presidency, his favourite (if often misused) phrase is not going anywhere soon; and this year has been the perfect storm for fake news to spread as we all look for information, online, about COVID-19 whilst stuck at home. First came the pandemic – swiftly followed by the infodemic.

We all received the WhatsApp message back in March. You know the one – forwarded from someone's friend whose husband's brother is a Guard and he had been told that the army would be patrolling the streets by the weekend. There was no identifiable source, but the message added fuel to the fire of fear, already

spreading through the country, as big events like St. Patrick's Day were cancelled and people began to panic buy. I like to think I know better, but when I received that message I distinctly remember the split second of fear I felt, because 'what if' it was true?

The simple truth is that the internet is full of bots, trolls and outright liars. As a famous movie quote says, "Some men just want to watch the world burn". Some people have an agenda, and some people just enjoy provoking a reaction. WhatsApp is particularly attractive for this – it has the feel of something personal and intimate; like you're getting privileged information. When the internet first came into our homes we were

warned about clicking virus pop-ups and giving out our bank details online, but now the real danger is misinformation – and we're willingly sending it on to our friends and family.

So whether you're 16 or 60, here are some tips to help you navigate whether something is true, false, or somewhere in between:

### 1. PRESS PAUSE

If you read something online and it provokes an immediate emotion (anger, fear etc.), it is time to slow down and think carefully. Emotion is the biggest tool people on the internet use to get a reaction. Always read the full story, not just the headline. Other red flags include posts

that ask you to share, photos or videos that are shared with no context or source, or if there is a headline that doesn't quite seem to match with the full story.

## 2. DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Think about what the information presented to you – ask yourself, was this created to inform, entertain or persuade? Look at the style, tone and source to judge how reliable it is.

Who has written the post? Are they qualified, or do they have a verifiable source for their claims? It takes less than two minutes to quickly search on Google and seek out a more qualified view. That being said, just because a person is 'verified' on social media or has many followers, it does not mean they are a trustworthy source. In fact, you can easily purchase thousands of fake followers! It's also important to note that so-called 'influencers' are paid to promote things online, and this can include things that aren't reliable!

## 3. CONSIDER YOURSELF

We all have biases, even if we don't like to admit them. Ask yourself, does this information challenge or match your views? We are more likely to believe information that supports our own views, even if it is unverifiable. Social media algorithms are very clever and they will deliver recommendations to you based on what you read, see and say online already – this means the

information you get can be very personalised and not reflect a fully rounded view of the situation.

## 4. TAKE IT TO THE TOP

Look at official publications like newspapers or news websites. If you can't find it anywhere like this, it is likely it is inaccurate, unreliable or dated. This is especially true if it is something that would be very newsworthy!

There are a few independent organisations that fact check claims being made online. You can turn to them as a final resort, as they may already have published findings on the post you are seeing.

Irish fact checkers include [www.thejournal.ie](http://www.thejournal.ie) and [www.factcheckni.org](http://www.factcheckni.org), or you can view a glossary of them at [www.reporterslab.org/fact-checking](http://www.reporterslab.org/fact-checking).

## 5. TO SHARE OR NOT TO SHARE?

If you have followed all these steps and still can't be sure, I would always err on the side of caution. I understand that everyone loves rumours and gossip and being 'in the know', but the damage the flow of fake news is doing is untold. Do your research, ask yourself if you really know enough to click share, and be safe in the knowledge that you are doing more than most to help with one of society's newest big issues.

## GLOSSARY

**Trolls** – People who intentionally provoke and upset others online.

**Bots** – Automated computer software. They mass-share information much faster than real people can – bot controlled social media accounts are a big problem.

**Influencers** – People with lots of social media followers who are paid to promote products, services and ideas.

**Algorithm** – A mathematical set of rules used to solve a problem. On social media, this means using data about you (your profiles and behaviours) to deliver content to you that it 'thinks' you will like.

**Verified** – This means that a social media platform has, to the best of their ability, verified that an account does belong to a celebrity, public figure, company etc. This is done in a couple of ways, including submitting photo ID and completing paperwork. On most social media platforms, this appears as a blue tick next to their name.

**Click-bait** – An article or video that has a headline or title that does not match the content. It is a way to drive up engagement, as many people will share things without reading the full story or watching the full video!

We recently hit a huge **30,000** followers on Facebook! Our Digital Media Coordinator Robyn marked the occasion with the biggest balloons available, because we think any reason to be cheerful this year should be grabbed with both hands.

In case you didn't know, we're on all the major social media platforms – follow us and say hi!



@IrishKidneyAssociation



@IrishKidneyAs



@IrishKidneyA



# WHEN CHRISTMAS DRINKING MAKES YOU FEEL BLUE

By CAROL MOORE



**A**ll the alcohol Christmas adverts are appearing on TV. Junk mail is coming in the door, with special offers on Christmas drinks.

Many people don't know that the Health Research Board found the majority of Irish people who use alcohol are drinking in a way that harms them.

Things are changing though with many people realising that, just like cannabis, alcohol is a psychoactive drug. So more and more people are beginning to drink low alcohol or alcohol-free beers.

Kidney transplant recipients are encouraged to have a healthy diet and to increase their daily fluid intake, while taking care to limit their alcohol consumption. For dialysis patients who are on a strict renal diet, with limited fluid intake, and alcohol consumption not recommended, Christmas can be a lonely time as they may be the only person, among friends and family, not drinking.

What is low alcohol and alcohol-free?

It's actually very confusing as different labelling regulations apply in different countries. In most EU countries, drinks containing up to 0.5% alcohol are classified as 'alcohol free'. While this may seem strange, when you know that ripe fruit such as bananas have a trace of alcohol it makes more sense. Drinks that contain no alcohol at all, are called 'non-alcoholic' drinks.

## ALCOHOL-FREE BEERS

Alcohol-free beers have come a long way and new beers are launching regularly. If you're under pressure to be seen drinking they might be an option. I like alcohol-free Erdinger (alkoholfrei) but it is very gassy so I can never drink more than one.

Heineken recently launched the Heineken 0.0 which has no alcohol and

I've heard good reports on this.

Also launched recently is a lager – Pure Brew from Diageo which has 0.05% volume. They claim

"In independent taste tests, over 70 per cent of people were surprised to discover that they were trying a non-alcoholic beer after tasting it."

Diageo has also launched an alcohol-free version of Guinness, called Guinness 0.0. Hopefully it will be back on the shelves soon. They recently had to recall the product due to risk of microbiological contamination.

## ALCOHOL-FREE WINES

There's an increasing range of nice alcohol-free wines now available.

From Torres Natureo White which has 0.5% ABV to Flight Sauvignon Blanc, from Brancott Estate to Selbach-Oster Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett and G.D.Vajra Moscato d'Asti 2015

## SPIRITS

Spirits tend to be much higher in alcohol and are best avoided. However, there is now an Irish version of an alcohol-free gin called Silk Tree which is getting good reviews. This is available from high-end off-licences and supermarkets.

## KNOW YOUR ALCOHOL STRENGTH

Because of the health risks, there is no safe level of drinking. Patients with end stage kidney disease will be aware of restrictions around fluid intake and are advised not to drink alcohol.

If alcohol-free drinks don't appeal, make sure to know the strength of your alcohol drink, (known as alcohol volume). This can range from 2% to 40% depending on the drink. The higher the number the more alcohol there is.

If you must drink alcohol, check what your medication leaflet states on alcohol risk.

## ALWAYS AVOID BINGE DRINKING

We Irish actually have the second highest rate of binge drinking in the world.

Binge drinking is defined by health experts, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), as six or more standard drinks in one session. This is roughly the equivalent of three or more pints of beer or six or more pub measures of spirits, or three or more of those little bottles of wines that are served in pubs. For more information see <https://www2.hse.ie/alcohol/>

**Prize Giveaway**

We have a selection of low-alcohol drinks to give away to 5 LUCKY READERS

Just answer the following question:  
Binge drinking is drinking more than 3 pints, or six pub standard spirit measures, or three or more pub standard little bottles of wine.  
TRUE or FALSE?

Text or email your answer, with your name and address to: 087-6843644 or [colin@ika.ie](mailto:colin@ika.ie)

# Woman pays tribute to nursing staff

By GWEN O'DONOGHUE



Ann and Frank Keane with Snowey



Olivia Keane

years ago when her kidneys failed and this treatment is keeping her alive now. She found it very difficult at the beginning, when she started receiving treatment, but Maria and the staff at the dialysis unit helped change her outlook through their kindness and compassion and encouraged her to think of it as just a small part of her life that didn't have to define her. She also got to meet other patients in the ward who were on the same health journey as her. Some of them are on transplant waiting lists and some others, like my mother, are not.

"So, over time, she made the decision that her three times weekly dialysis treatments were to be considered her 'work days' and now

The proud daughter of a Galway woman who has kidney failure, with little prospect of an organ transplant, paid tribute to her 'inspirational' mother's courage and the nursing staff who care for her, as she faces into her third year of long term haemodialysis treatment.

Olivia Keane said, "October 31st, 2020 marked the second anniversary of haemodialysis treatment for my mother Anne who lives in Oranmore.

Earlier that month I took part in the VHI's virtual Women's Mini Marathon, for the second year in a row, to pay tribute to my mother for her inspirational bravery and also to fundraise for the Irish Kidney Association, for their work in supporting kidney patients and their families. I also undertook the challenge, to pay tribute to the wonderful nursing staff at the

dialysis unit in Unit 7 at Merlin Park Hospital and to acknowledge the tremendous support and loving care my mother has received from them.

My family knows that my mother is in good hands with these dedicated and skilled staff. She was full of trepidation on her first day of dialysis treatment and its potential for side effects but the staff showed great empathy and assured that 'her life wasn't ending, it was just changing and that she could have a really good life with dialysis being a small part of it'."

Olivia explained, "My mother has diabetes and other health issues that would prevent her from ever being accepted onto a transplant waiting list. Her kidney function was declining, for a number of years, prior to her having to commence dialysis two

she just gets on with it and enjoys the company of other dialysis patients who have become great friends. On her 'days off' which are in between her Monday, Wednesday and Friday hospital treatments, she unwinds with my dad Frank and their treasured pet, a Bichon Frise, which they fondly call Snowey. Our family feel fortunate that the hospital is so close to where they live, as it is only a matter of a few minutes drive away. COVID-19 is a concern for all of us but for dialysis patients, who are in the very high risk group, it can be worrying. The dialysis staff have worked through the pandemic and show up for work with a smile on their face and a kind word for their patients. They have helped retain a sense of normality during times which are far away from normal and they have helped keep anxiety levels at bay. Since lockdown in March my father has been driving mam to the hospital for her dialysis treatment and now they have a great routine going. The staff at Unit 7 really do go above and beyond what is required of them and my mother and all the other patients in their care feel very fortunate to have such exceptional staff to care for them and ease the burden of their illness."

# BARBER'S DIALYZE CLOTHING

## A CUT ABOVE THE REST...

**A** Kilkenny barber proved to be a cut above the rest when he made national headlines for his ingenious start-up online clothing business which evolved from over three decades of personal experience with challenging health issues.

Just three days after being discharged from hospital following a life threatening sepsis infection, Paddy Cox (33) from Castlecomer, was rewarded with a €15,000 bursary for his business, Dialize Clothing. Paddy had undergone six surgeries in the six week period before his TV debut and making a Lazarus comeback after flatlining during one surgery. Just hours after receiving dialysis treatment, Paddy was presented with the Bank of Ireland sponsored bursary on a special RTE Late Late Show which showcased small fledgling businesses trying to take flight through the global pandemic.

Dialize Clothing is a medical brand of discreet, yet stylish clothing, for diabetics and patients undergoing dialysis, chemotherapy and all PICC and IV-line treatments.

Since his TV appearance, his business has gone from strength to strength with a huge increase in orders for his brand and some garments sold out with orders now being taken for



Rachel Flanagan, Paddy Cox



Paddy meets Ryan Tubridy on The Late Late Show

By  
**GWEN O'DONOGHUE**

delivery in January 2021.

Paddy's triumphant story comes out of adversity as he continues to receive dialysis treatment having experienced the disappointment of kidney transplant failure, two bladder augmentations, two brushes with death through sepsis, kidney stones and numerous medical procedures.

When Paddy appeared on the *Late Late Show*, he won the hearts and goodwill of the public when he described to presenter Ryan Tubridy his background story. As a barber and a dialysis patient in the high risk group for COVID-19, he suddenly found himself out of work in March and quickly turned his attention to developing his clothing business, which was inspired by his own personal experience, as he identified a solution to filling a large gap in the marketplace. He experienced difficulty in finding something suitable to wear on his treatment days.

He created a practical easy solution with comfortable yet fashionable warm clothing, designed for patients,

with discreet zipper openings allowing patients to remain fully dressed, stay warm and retain their dignity with easy access for lines and fistulas and hidden pockets for medication, urinary catheters and insulin pumps. The Dialize range also includes a treatment backpack and blanket.

Paddy's ambition was encouraged by his fiancée and new business partner Rachel Flanagan. He met Rachel, a hairdresser, from Garryowen, Co Limerick, seven years ago. Their plans to wed have been put on hold as they concentrate on growing their business.

Paddy's journey to dialysis began when he was just nine-years-old when he learned that one of his kidneys had failed and the function of the other kidney was starting to decline. His condition was carefully monitored, and he managed to stave off dialysis treatment until he was 18-years-old, but he experienced a few health setbacks in-between while attending secondary school. For three years he attended Waterford University Hospital for dialysis treatment which he underwent 3 times a week for 3 hours at a time while also honing his skill as a barber.

He was 21-years-old when he underwent a kidney transplant from a deceased organ donor, and this allowed him to continue working in Marble City. He remains grateful to his donor for giving him a decade of good health and greatly improved quality of life. Seven years ago love blossomed when he met the love of his life, his now fiancée Rachel.

When Paddy returned to dialysis three years ago Rachel had put herself forward to be an organ donor but, because of Paddy's high levels of antibodies, she could not proceed. Two of Paddy's sisters were also considered to be potential donors but following screening they were also found to be unsuitable.

Paddy remains on the transplant waiting list for a donor kidney while he juggles between fulfilling orders for his business and travelling to the dialysis centre in Kilkenny City, three times a week, for his dialysis treatment which takes over four hours each time.

Paddy said, "I am absolutely delighted with the positive response to our business since our TV appearance and the bursary will really help to develop it. It's nice to know that out of my health experience I can now offer other patients comfortable and stylish clothing which they can feel good and confident in wearing, even on non-treatment days. Of course a transplant would make my life a lot easier but until then I will continue to plan for the future with Rachel in our business and personal life."

Paddy has another project in the pipeline as he plans to launch a book called 'Dialysis to Dialize' in 2021 about his experience as a dialysis patient and it's impact on his emotional and physical well-being as well as bringing his business concept to reality.

To view the Dialize clothing range visit [www.dializeclothing.com](http://www.dializeclothing.com)

## The proof of the pudding is in the eating...

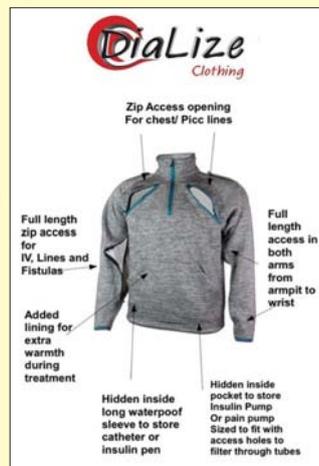
It has been exciting to see the extremely positive online reaction to Paddy and Rachel's Dialize clothing line, after recently appearing on the Late Late Show. It is proof that there is huge support for the concept and for their initiative in starting up their own business.

We are looking to put the concept to the test so that others on dialysis can make an informed decision about the product. We have bought a number of the Dialize tops and we have seven, to give away to people on dialysis, willing to become our reviewers. You will be sent a top by post, along with guidelines for the written review, that you will be required to submit in the New Year.

We are looking for honest and constructive feedback. Highlight the positives, suggest improvements - let us know what you think...

Dialysis comes with many challenges for patients and it is always encouraging to see people looking to address any of these issues. It is all the more satisfying when the initiative is coming from someone who is on dialysis and who therefore understands the challenges.

**If you are interested in becoming one of our reviewers,** either email our National Projects Manager ([colin@ika.ie](mailto:colin@ika.ie)) or send him a text message (087-6843644) with your name, postal address and size, as well as your dialysis unit. The seven lucky reviewers will be selected at random.



# Name that Christmas Song

1. Top to toe in tailbacks, oh I got red lights on the run
2. Good tidings we bring to you and your king
3. Treetops glisten and children listen to hear sleigh bells in the snow
4. Round Yon Virgin Mother and Child
5. This year to save me from tears
6. When you first took my hand on a cold Christmas Eve
7. Oh what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh
8. Toys in every store
9. It's the season of love and understanding
10. You will get a sentimental feeling when you hear voices singing, let's be jolly
11. 'Tis the season to be jolly
12. Let Earth receive her king
13. Come and behold him, born the king of angels
14. O night when Christ was born, O night divine
15. In our world of plenty, we can spread a smile of joy

Answers can be found on page: 61



# Donor family sees life from both sides now

An organ donor family from Roundstone attended the 'Circle of Life' Garden in Galway which featured as one of the locations filmed for the Irish Kidney Association's 35th Annual Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving.

Lauren Keaney's late brother Thomas became an organ donor at the age of 23 when he suffered a head injury in Perth, Australia where he had been living for over a year. His fatal injury was a result of an unprovoked one punch to the head,

By  
**GWEN O'DONOGHUE**

which happened outside a chip shop, while on a night out on December 17th, 2013. He started to make a recovery while in hospital, the Royal Hospital in Perth, but later took a bad turn and died. He passed away on 27th December 2013 with his parents at his bedside very soon after they had arrived. They had rushed over on a long flight to Australia, and then consulted with Lauren and her siblings back in Ireland, first over a phone call,

before consenting to Thomas's organs being donated. Five of his organs were donated including his heart, lungs, liver and two kidneys. Some time later the family received a letter anonymously from the recipient of one of his donated kidneys.

Lauren explained, "Our family found it very difficult to get answers around the exact circumstances around Thomas's death but our whole family travelled out for the court case, which started in May 2015, and although it was difficult to hear the circumstances around Thomas's death we were relieved to finally get some answers. The assailant was convicted and he was sent to prison but was released in May 2020. Our family is serving a life sentence as we remember the loss of Thomas every single day."

Lauren (31) is the oldest in her family and Thomas was the second oldest. Lauren has two other siblings Leeann (26) and Brian (25). They were brought up in Chicago and moved back to Roundstone in Galway after she finished high school. Lauren said that: "Thomas treated his body like a temple, he ate well and enjoyed fitness. He always acted like a big brother to us and looked out for us. We knew he would have been happy with our decision to donate his organs especially as his young cousin Bernard Óg, who lived near to us in Roundstone, had kidney failure."

Lauren now works as a healthcare assistant with Marieann Keaney, the mother of Bernard Óg Keaney (now age 10), who underwent his transplant from a deceased donor when he was six years old and just three years after his cousin Thomas died.

Lauren said: "my family knew our

*The late Thomas Keaney*





Anne with her oldest granddaughter Molly



# Marathon woman hails taxi drivers for care of her long-term dialysis mam

While some dialysis patients undergo treatment in their own home, many others can struggle to accept the grind and forced reality of having to travel to hospital at least 156 times a year for three times weekly haemodialysis treatment. Out of their plight, many patients and their families derive comfort, from the positive relationships which are built with caring nursing, medical and hospital staff and the valued friendships and shared experiences with other dialysis patients who come from all walks of life but share the commonality of organ failure. The taxi drivers, who become all too familiar with the regular dialysis routine, take on a protective and caring role which offers reassurance to families and patients alike as they become unspoken heroes.

A young Wexford woman who ran her first full marathon in October said she was 'blown away' with the support she received in raising over €5,100 in funds for the Irish Kidney Association. She took on the 42-kilometre challenge to honour the memory of her late mother who passed away, at the age of 61, on New Year's Day 2020, following ten years of dialysis treatment. She also wanted to raise awareness about patients who, like her mother and grandmother who shared the same hereditary condition, bravely embrace their fate of life-long dialysis treatment without hope of ever receiving an organ transplant.

Caitriona Graham, a native of Ballyoughter, Gorey stated on her GoFundMe fundraising page link that she was doing the marathon in memory of her late mother Anne and that, "I'm running 42.195 km for those that can't, for those who wish they could and, if I'm honest, because I think I can!"

Caitriona was inspired by her mother's resilience and how she tried to live by her mantra which she regularly stated to her five children, "life is for living, so get up

and do things when you are able.

"Our mam was a legend. She was witty, loyal and the most caring person I've ever known. And even though we miss her every single day, we are so happy to speak about her, hear stories and laugh about good times we shared with the lady we were so lucky to call mammy. Her grandchildren Molly and Sadie were her pride and joy and she lived for them. Sadly, she never got to meet her grandchild baby Orla who was born just a



Brendan, Caitriona, George, Clodagh and David



*Caitriona's younger sister Clodagh presented her mum with chocolates and pyjamas in Christmas 2018*

*Caitriona and her mum 61st birthday - 2019*

*Sadie (7 months) Molly (3)*

*Caitriona with her niece Sadie*

*'Holding Hands'*

*Caitriona and her mum proudly showing the participant medal*

few months after she passed away."

In 1986 Anne received a

participant's medal for running the Dublin Women's Mini Marathon. Caitriona explained, "For the last three years, I've ran the VHI Women's Mini Marathon on my mam's behalf. We'd fundraise together. I'd run the 10k and then we would hand over all the money collected to the IKA. The IKA provides support, help, advice and guidance to renal patients and their families. They helped me understand what was happening to my mam and assisted us as a family to improve her quality of life.

"After Christmas 2019 mam would have been getting ready to finally begin home dialysis treatment, which would mean only one trip to Waterford Regional Hospital a week instead of the normal three trips each week, which she had been doing for the previous ten years while receiving hospital haemodialysis.

"Unfortunately, this wasn't meant to be and on January 1st, 2020 our mam passed away surrounded by family.

"From a young age she suffered from high blood pressure which led to other health issues including kidney failure. I was sixteen years old when

her health really started to decline. It was difficult for us to helplessly observe.

"Then in 2010 her dialysis journey started when she joined my grandmother, Mary Fortune, on their three times weekly long journeys to Waterford Regional Hospital for dialysis treatment. They shared the same taxi for a year until sadly my grandmother passed away in September 2011, after being on dialysis for two years.

"The same taxi drivers, Willie and Dinny, continued to bring my mother for her treatment for nine more years until she also died. Wille was her most regular driver while Dinny also drove her less frequently. Both men were such a wonderful support to my mother and were like additional members of our family as they looked after her so well. Many lively conversations and friendly banter were reported to have been exchanged between them and my mum.

"Over the ten years, they spent more than eight hours every week travelling together on the journey from Gorey to Waterford which took about one hour and twenty minutes each way. In the early days, before the motorway was built, the journey was considerably longer for my mother and grandmother. Often times Willie

would stop at a shop to buy mam a treat, sometimes it would be at odds with her renal diet when he'd buy her a 99 ice cream which was 'forbidden fruit' but she really enjoyed it. Willie and Dinny would patiently help her get in and out of the taxi and they'd assist her with her wheelchair, which she needed in her final few years after suffering from two strokes.

"Our whole family owe a huge debt of gratitude to Willie and Dinny, as well as to Brenda and the whole dialysis medical and nursing team at Waterford University Hospital, for taking such good care of my mam, and to all her dialysis friends and the whole community for their kindness and compassion towards her, and also to the IKA for its valued support and advice."



*Georgina with her mum Anne, when she arrived home from New Zealand on a surprise visit in August 2019*



Seasons greetings to all Dublin North members.

### ZOOMING

We decided that if we were to have any communication with our members that Zoom is the only option.

We have had two meetings so far. The first meeting went very well; the second meeting, due to a technical glitch, started late, but was still worthwhile.

We are at present expanding the number of members we are inviting to attend and would welcome additional email addresses from anyone interested in taking part.

These meetings are important to us as our membership is the bedrock of the Association.

### SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE & THANKSGIVING

Our Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving, broadcast on RTÉ 1

## DUBLIN NORTH

By PATRICIA MACKENZIE

television and RTÉ Radio 1 Extra, on Sunday 15th November at 11am brought the donor message to over 64,000 viewers. In the wake of that our branch received considerable feedback, from people who never had occasion to attend a Service, and who found it to be a very moving and meaningful experience.

Our grateful thanks to all involved, especially IKA members and staff who did so much work.

### NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Our good wishes from the Dublin North branch go to our new CEO Carol Moore as she experiences her first Christmas with us. Carol has our full support as she works to achieve our goals in these testing times.

### REST IN PEACE

Our deepest sympathy goes to all who have suffered bereavements during this difficult period. Some have lost loved ones to COVID-19 or seen death hastened by the onset of COVID-19.

We remember you all as we pause, and light a candle this Christmas.

### THE 'GIFT OF LIFE'

A special mention of our donor families, whose 'gift of life' is unconditional and demonstrates a

generosity and openness, often absent in our world.

The 'gift of life' therefore must be commemorated in a spirit of openness and inclusiveness reflecting the spirit of the donation.

### IN HOSPITAL

Our thoughts are with those who have to spend Christmas in hospital. Some of us have had this experience and the realisation that our health is the most valuable gift of all.

It puts Christmas in perspective.

### HOSPITAL STAFF

We pay tribute to all hospital staff, who excelled in their dedication and care in this troubling year. Their devotion to duty often put at risk their own health and that of their families, in their care for others. We can only respond by taking care not to behave in a manner that would result in imposing further risk on these good people.

### CHRISTMAS WISHES

Our good wishes go, from Dublin North branch, to all fellow members and branches. May you stay safe and well as we look forward to Christmas and a healthy and hopeful New Year. Happy Christmas.

## WEXFORD

By MARIE DONLON

We would like to thank Caitriona Graham, who completed the virtual Dublin Marathon, in memory of her mother Anne and presented us with a cheque for €5,122.

Also many thanks to Patrick Curley Peak Fitness members who took on a full day of marathon distance challenges and covered a distance of over 1500kms. As a result a cheque for €4,069 was presented to the Wexford branch.



We would like to wish Lorraine Costello, Patient Support Officer, many years of happy retirement and thank her, on behalf of all the Wexford patients, for her help and support over the years.

Sr. Brenda retired recently from the dialysis unit at Waterford Regional Hospital and on behalf of all Wexford patients we wish her a long and happy retirement, and thank her for all her help and kindness.

Please continue to follow us on Facebook – Wexford IKA Branch.

We wish all our members, a very happy, safe and peaceful Christmas.

LEFT: Caitriona Graham presenting cheque for €5,122 to Liam Buttle.

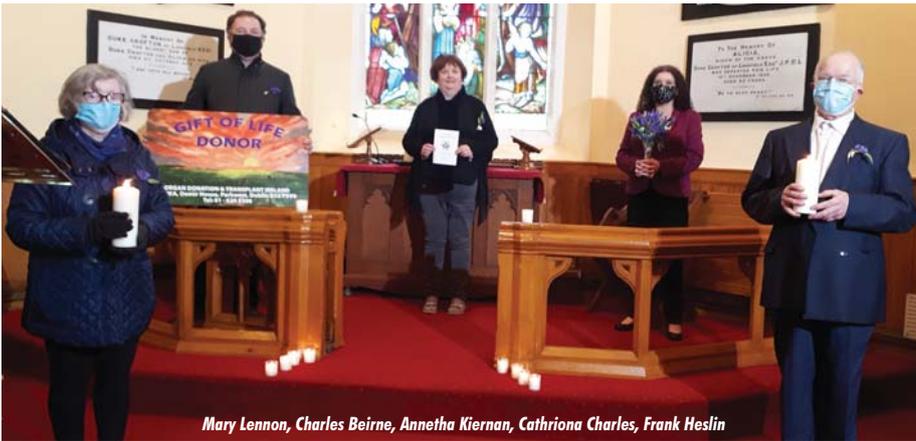
Find us on:  
**facebook**



Patrick Curley Peak Fitness presenting cheque for €4,069 to Wexford Branch Chairman Liam Buttle.

# LEITRIM

By CATHRIONA CHARLES



Mary Lennon, Charles Beirne, Annetha Kiernan, Cathriona Charles, Frank Heslin

## VIRTUAL SERVICE

The branch was delighted to be asked by Rev Linda, who usually takes part in our Annual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, to be part of a virtual Service which she is putting together for YouTube (link will be shared on our Facebook page). A small group of us met with Rev. Linda and her husband Steve, in an empty Church, where we did our gifts procession. We were delighted to have this chance to honour our donors during this strange time.

## RETIREMENT WISHES

We would like to wish Mark Murphy a long, enjoyable retirement after his many fruitful years as CEO.

We also wish Lorraine Costello a very happy retirement, she definitely deserves it after so many years of hard work as our Patient Support Officer – she will be missed.

## WELCOME

The Leitrim branch welcome our new CEO Carol Moore. We are looking forward to meeting her (virtually) and to working with her to enhance our Association.

## CHRISTMAS WISHES

We would like to wish happy Christmas to one and all. This will be a very different Christmas, but hopefully, still an enjoyable one. Stay safe everyone and best wishes for the New Year.



Find us on:  
**facebook**



Happy Christmas from Leitrim IKA

# DUBLIN SOUTH

By JOHN SEMPLE



Find us on:  
**facebook**

The branch continues to meet monthly via Zoom. Members share their experiences, whether they are on dialysis, transplanted, or caring for a patient. We are all finding the pandemic difficult and look forward to the day when we can all meet face-to-face. It was agreed at our last meeting that we should have a schedule of meetings over the next few months. Our meetings start at 7.30pm and will be held on the following dates: 13th January, 10th February, 10th March and 14th April.

We are very appreciative of the support we receive from Donor House. We love to see new members join our meetings and if you would like me to send you the link you can phone me at 086-3416864.

Our member Marguerite Sneyd continues to receive many accolades

for her book 'From Analysis to Dialysis and Beyond'. You can purchase the book by contacting Donor House who will send you a copy for €10 including post and packaging. Remember all proceeds from the books that are sold, this way, go to the IKA.

We were all delighted and very moved by the virtual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, that was broadcast on RTÉ. The whole broadcast was a great tribute to the IKA and congratulations must go to all those involved in the production.

The many dialysis patients in the branch are delighted with the new Renal Unit in Tallaght Hospital. The new facility makes life much more comfortable and easier for both patients and staff alike. Congratulations to Professor Mellotte

and all the team for this lovely spacious facility.

As we say goodbye to Mark Murphy and Lorraine Costello, we would like to thank them both for all their support to the branch and wish them an incredibly happy retirement.

We would like to welcome our new CEO, Carol Moore and sympathise with her on the recent death of her father RIP. We look forward to Carol joining one of our Zoom meetings in the next few months.

Unfortunately, we are unable to hold our annual Christmas party this year, however, we look forward to a better 2021. Happy Christmas to all our members in Dublin South and a happy, peaceful and healthy New Year.



### GREETINGS

Here we are at the closing weeks of 2020 which has certainly had its challenges, tougher for some, more than others but we are all looking forward to 2021 with renewed hope and resilience!

Don't forget, our support is always available, so feel free to call or text 087-6243367/087-9392148, email: [ikaclare@gmail.com](mailto:ikaclare@gmail.com) or message us on Clare IKA facebook page.

Also we encourage you all to keep up the fundraising initiatives. We urge anyone with any ideas to create your own online/virtual fundraisers, in order to ensure the IKA vital services can remain for those who require it. We are very grateful for any support in these trying times.



### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to IKA branch member Eoin Eustace and Michelle White who were recently married in the Cathedral of St Peter & Paul in Ennis, pictured above with Eoin's parents Val and Peggy. Peggy is also the current Clare IKA Chairperson.

## CLARE

By NORETTA CLIFFORD



The Higgins family with the 'A New Dawn' CD's.

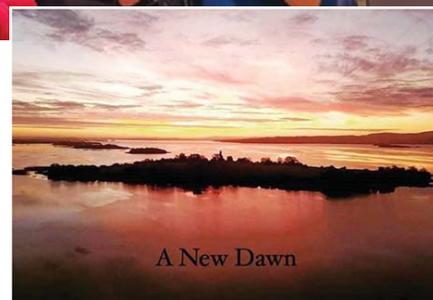
### CD FUNDRAISER

A fantastic family who have journeyed the ups and downs of illness and kidney transplantation share their emotional story, through a beautiful collection of music and poetry, in their CD 'A New Dawn'.

Aaron Higgins received a kidney transplant in January 2017, after many, many years of being ill and on dialysis. His wife Reah, was his living donor and both them and their two boys, Fionn and Stephen, are grateful every day for this life-changing event.

Reah says: "Our aim is to help maintain a particular service we received along the way, which was the Irish Kidney Association's Renal Support Centre in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin. The staff and service there were exceptional and accommodating to say the least. The Centre provides accommodation for patients and their families who are attending the renal department for a variety of reasons. Not only does it take away the added financial stress of finding somewhere to stay in Dublin, it is so practical. One can walk over to the hospital, see the team, get bloods taken or visit somebody on the ward and then return to the centre for a lie-down or to prepare food. It became a home away from home for us. More importantly it is a hive of community and chat where one receives support from those on the same or similar journey. It was often like therapy itself. Everyone there understood and empathised with each other and could validate each other's feelings – the positive and the negative."

Those of us who have been on this transplantation journey would 100% agree with Reah's sentiment.



The tracks on the CD are reflections of the emotions the Higgins family endured through their journey – love, fear, hope, sadness, acceptance, relief, joy, final tranquility and a new dawn. The CD also aspires to promote validation of all emotions and to provide hope to anyone who finds themselves on a difficult path.

COVID-19 has put a stop to public unveiling and gathering of celebration and therefore promoting the CD now is limited and restricted. You may support this wonderful fundraiser however, by contacting us through the Clare IKA Facebook page, or Reah directly on 087-4138626. CD's will cost €13 each (plus postage, if requested) with a percentage of proceeds to the IKA.

### BEST WISHES

Best wishes to IKA Patient Support Officer Lorraine Costello who has recently retired from Donor House, following 37 years' service to the Association. Thanks to Lorraine for her dedication with organising the annual IKA Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving. Peggy Eustace, Chairperson Clare branch, adds; "I found Lorraine most helpful when I served as a member of the Liturgy Committee during my time as Clare Board member. She had an in-depth knowledge of the Association, some of which she imparted to me. This is something I will always be grateful to

Lorraine for."

Cyril Kelly, the IKA Finance Manager has also retired. Cyril's great work with the Association goes back to the time of our former CEO Patricia Doherty. Peggy adds: "Many thanks to Cyril for the help and assistance he gave to me as former Clare branch Treasurer and I thank him for his assistance to our present Treasurer Gerry Moran." The branch wish them both a long, happy and healthy retirement.

### SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE & THANKSGIVING

Our branch wish to thank all those involved in the virtual Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving Service, broadcast on Sunday November 15th. It was truly special. Many of us lit candles, to honour and remember our organ donors and their families. Forever grateful.

### CLARE DONOR MEMORIAL

We are delighted to be able to share some wonderful news, also, in relation to remembrance and thanksgiving. The Clare branch Donor Memorial is now underway. The memorial, located in Ennis, will pay tribute to the donors and their families who have made the 'gift of life' possible; recipients of transplants and those waiting for a transplant.



Clare IKA Secretary Noretta Clifford, Niall Coonan, M. Fitzgibbon Contractors Ltd and Peggy Eustace, Chairperson Clare IKA at the grounds of the Donor Memorial.

The memorial grounds will encompass three themes:

**Reflection:** a place of reflection and contemplation for all those who have been touched by, or support, organ donation.

**Recognition:** where the kind and generous 'gift of life' can be recognised.

**Remembrance:** where all donors can be remembered with love. We look forward to sharing more in due course.

### SYMPATHY

We extend our sincere sympathy to our CEO, Carol Moore, on the recent death of her father.

### CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

On behalf of the branch we wish all our renal patients, transplant recipients, their families, the medical and nursing staff of the renal units, branch members and volunteers agus ár gcairde go léir san IKA, Nollaig Shona agus an bhliain nua iontach. Enjoy the festivities.

## GALWAY

### BY PEADAR Ó HICI

The members of the Galway branch wish to record our thanks to two leaders of the Irish Kidney Association who have just retired, from Donor House, after years of sterling work for the Association. Mark Murphy, who held the role of CEO and Lorraine Costello who was Patient Support Officer. Both of them played a key role in promoting the IKA and its services, both to kidney patients and recipients. We wish them a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.

Our branch was just about to start its annual activities, of fundraising, permits approved, volunteers recruited when COVID hit Ireland and we had to go into lockdown. We dared not put at risk, the lives of everyone, by taking to the streets and supermarkets fundraising. Neither were we able to hold our Annual Service of Remembrance and

Thanksgiving, which we had planned in St Nicholas Collegiate Church. That Church is an integral part of the city of Galway celebrating 700 years of continuous worship this year. The branch had decided to be part of their celebrations by holding our Remembrance Service in the Church, but as all Churches were closed it did not take place. Hopefully, we will be able to do so next year, 2021.

Kleiduccio, Libby Maloney's dog passed away in the past months. This dog accompanied Libby over many years, dressed in his IKA bib, when she took him with her when she was doing her street collection for IKA. He was well-known to all members of Galway IKA and the general public. We send our sympathy to Libby on her sad loss.

As we near Christmas the Committee would like to send

greetings to all of our members for a happy Christmas and good wishes for 2021. We hope to be able to return to our normal monthly meetings, as soon as possible, when life returns to normal.

If any of you wish to contact Eoin Madden, our Chairperson, or myself Peadar, Secretary, please feel free to ring us. You will find our numbers on the leaflet, sent out some months ago from Merlin Park Hospital, giving details as to how the Renal Department planned to function, during lockdown. They also sent you a copy of the Galway branch leaflet.

At our last branch meeting in February, the management of the Anno Santo informed us that the Hotel had been taken over by a new owner. One of the plans for the Anno was to demolish it and rebuild apartments, so that leaves the branch with no fixed abode as at present. When we relocate we will inform members.

Eoin Madden, Ph: 086 6794008  
Peadar Ó hici, Ph: 087-6536521



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Welcome to the Winter edition of *SUPPORT*. We hope our magazine will brighten your Christmas after what has been a very strange year for us all.

It was lovely to meet our new CEO, Carol Moore, virtually, before our November branch meeting via Zoom. Carol met the attending branch members and introduced herself to everyone. She answered any questions posed by members and reminded us of the importance of taking care of ourselves during this strange time. On behalf of our Chairman, Ray, and branch members 'thank you' Carol – we look forward to meeting you in person during 2021.

We would like to wish Cyril Kelly a happy and healthy retirement. Cyril will be greatly missed by all the staff and members of IKA. 'Thank you' for all your help over the years, it is greatly appreciated.

We are extremely grateful to all who have contributed to our Waterford branch, by way of fundraising and donations throughout the year. We thank you most sincerely for your support.

Congratulations to Jane Cullen on her appointment as Clinical Nurse Manager of the Renal Dialysis Unit,

# WATERFORD

By VERA FRISBY

*Frances Moynihan, with her granddaughter Aria Rose, accepts a cheque from her sister Noelle Conway, proceeds of Noelle's Virtual Dublin City Marathon.*



UHW. We send Jane every good wish in her new position. Good wishes and much gratitude are extended to all the staff at the Dialysis Unit, UHW, who continue to look after everyone so well throughout the year. Your kindness and support are much appreciated.

The Home Therapy Unit, UHW has been completely refurbished (see page 19). We would like to welcome Mary O'Grady back to the Unit, after being off on leave and send our good wishes. We would also like to extend Christmas wishes and gratitude, on behalf of all renal patients, to the staff at the Unit.

Noelle Conway from Dungarvan competed in the Dublin City Virtual Marathon on Saturday, October 24th last. Noelle raised the sum of €3,300 for our branch. 'Thank you' Noelle, everyone who supported her and everyone who sponsored the event. Your support in raising vital funds for our branch is very much appreciated.

As the festive season begins, we



remember, with great sadness, patients and members who have died during the year. May they rest in peace.

We extend Christmas greetings to Sr. Jane and all the staff at the Renal Dialysis Unit, UHW. 'Thank you' for the care and support you give all patients, throughout the year, it is greatly appreciated.

We would also like to say a big 'thank you' to all our members, their families and friends who helped and supported our branch during the year. We wish you a healthy and happy Christmas and we wish a happy and healthy Christmas to all our long-standing active branch members, some of whom are unable to join us at our Zoom meetings. You are missed and we hope to see you all in 2021.

We are continuing with our branch meetings via Zoom. Our next virtual meeting will be in January 2021. If you would like to join us for our virtual meetings, please contact Frances Moynihan, Ph: 087 2411549 or email: [francesmoynihan19@gmail.com](mailto:francesmoynihan19@gmail.com) – with your email address and/or telephone number.

For all patients, carers and those in hospital, and their families, a healthy and happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

# CARLOW By PAT MAY

On behalf of the Carlow branch I want to wish all our members a happy and healthy Christmas. To those in our branch who have been hospitalised this year or who have been ill, we wish you a speedy recovery. We remember, with sadness, two members who passed away during the year – Seamus Malone and Jacqueline Meaney. We are thinking of their families at this time.

We look forward to 2021, when we may be able to meet again, and life returning to some kind of normality.





Season's greetings to one and all. We, Sally, Sheena, Mary and Michael would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members, and their families, a very happy and safe Christmas and a very happy New Year. At this time of year we remember our members and friends who are no longer with us and keep them and their families in our thoughts.

We thank all the renal staff in our hospitals for the great care they give to all their patients throughout the year and wish them a very happy Christmas.

Hopefully 2021 will be a better year for us all and we will be able to resume our monthly meetings. While modern technology is great – you can't beat meeting in person. We miss you all. Our first Zoom meeting of 2021 will take place on Tuesday, February 2nd at 8pm.

#### MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS PAST

As we prepare for a Christmas with a difference we are looking back at some of our Christmas gatherings over the years. Unfortunately, as we are unable to plan any get-together for our members this year, we thought it would be nice to take a look back on some memories. Over the years we held a very successful and enjoyable Christmas Dinner in 2015 and Christmas lunches in 2017 and 2019.

They were always a great occasion, with plenty of good food, good company, and plenty of chat and craic. It is a great opportunity for our branch members and their families to don the glad rags and meet up with friends old and new. And, of course, there was always a special visitor for

## CORK

By MARY HURLEY/SALLY NAGLE/SHEENA McDONAGH



the children. We hope you enjoy this trip down memory lane with these photos.  
– Mary Hurley

#### ZOOM SUPPORT MEETINGS

We are continuing our very successful Zoom monthly meetings. Having these meetings via Zoom has proved very successful, and it is lovely to meet familiar faces, and to check in with everybody to share how they are all getting on.

Our November meeting was held on Tuesday November 3rd. Our guest speaker was dietitian Eileen Duff, who spoke on being prepared, food wise, in case you have to self-isolate due to COVID-19, or are unable to do a regular fresh food shop. She also spoke about the importance of maintaining a healthy diet and weight, combined with some exercise, to help in the prevention of Type 2 diabetes.

At our November meeting, we also had the honour of meeting new IKA CEO Carol Moore. Carol joined us to say 'hi', introduce herself, and let us know that she is looking forward to

working with us as the organisation moves into what is both a challenging and exciting new phase.

Hopefully, in the not too distant future, Carol will be able to visit Cork in person, and we will be able to show her around the presently undeveloped Support House, adjacent to CUH. We might even squeeze in a bit of Cork hospitality too!

Anyone who is interested in joining in our monthly zoom meetings, just contact the Branch Secretary on 086-2755754, email [secretarycork.ika@gmail.com](mailto:secretarycork.ika@gmail.com)

Our meetings will continue online for the immediate future on the first Tuesday of each month (excluding January). Hopefully, at some point, the meetings can resume in person, but it would be nice to keep up some element of online contact, since many people can't attend due to distance or illness.

– Sheena McDonagh

**We congratulate Sally Nagle on her recent transplant. You can read Sally's story in the Spring issue of SUPPORT.**



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Sligo branch Chairman Sean Fowley and Secretary Geraldine McHugh discuss the proposed new dialysis unit at the entrance to the hospital grounds.

### HSE TAKES FIRST STEPS ON ROAD TO NEW SLIGO DIALYSIS UNIT

The HSE has accepted that the renal dialysis unit at Sligo University Hospital is not fit for purpose and they are looking at the feasibility of providing a new one.

Confirmation of this came in a letter to Sligo IKA branch in response to our campaign for a new unit.

Details of the campaign and the necessity for the replacement of the renal dialysis unit were outlined in the autumn edition of *SUPPORT*.

As part of the campaign the Sligo branch secretary wrote to Health Minister Stephen Donnelly outlining the serious deficiencies of the unit.

In a letter of reply, a spokesperson for the Minister said the HSE is preparing a brief for a proposed capital submission for a new unit. They expect this will be completed late this year or early in 2021.

The letter, signed by Miriam Rooney, Private Secretary to the Minister, revealed that the HSE had explored the possibility of installing additional dialysis bays in the existing

# SLIGO

By **BRIAN McHUGH**



At the presentation of the cheque at the IKA garden Doorly Park were front Aoife McTernan with Sean Fowley and back: Josephine, Patrick and Sean McTernan

unit. "However, because of space limitations, it was deemed that this is not possible," the letter stated.

The letter continued: "At a recent HSE Hospital Capital meeting, the matter of the Dialysis Unit was discussed, and it was decided to undertake an initial scoping exercise to facilitate the presentation of a brief for a proposed capital submission seeking a new Dialysis Unit."

It said the brief would be completed by the end of 2020 or early in 2021.

The Chairman of the Sligo IKA branch, Sean Fowley said: "We see this as significant progress coming from a position where there wasn't even a mention of a new unit in the hospital's 10-year-plan."

Branch secretary Geraldine McHugh said: "This is a very positive response and we will be in contact with the Minister again in the New Year to check on progress."

### AOIFE'S 'PLAN B' RAISES €2,100

Twins Aoife and Patrick McTernan of Dromahair were looking forward to their joint 21st birthday party which was due to take place last month. But, like all such events this year it could not go ahead.

However Aoife came up with a Plan B. Through her Facebook page she invited donations for the Irish Kidney Association.

It is a charity close to her heart as her father Sean has been on dialysis at Sligo University Hospital for the past 18 months. Sean is well-known in Sligo through his business McTernan Carpets at Ballast Quay.

Aoife had been hoping to receive

around €200 but the generosity of her many friends brought in more than ten times that – a grand total of €2,100.

Aoife said: "I was amazed at the response, I wish to say a big thanks to all my friends. Hopefully we can have the party next year."

Chairman of IKA Sligo Sean Fowley thanked Aoife and Patrick and all who contributed so generously.

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year, instead of the annual Christmas party, IKA Sligo will hold a free draw for dialysis patients this month (December).

The draw will be held in the dialysis unit for all patient shifts. There will also be a draw for the staff of the unit. Thanks to Des Cosgrove of Cosgrove's Centra in Maugeraboy for a special deal on hampers for the draw.

There will be several other valuable prizes, all sourced and arranged by IKA committee member Eileen Nolan. Eileen's son James had a kidney transplant 26 years ago.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY SWIM

A sponsored New Year's Day swim will be held with funds going to IKA Sligo branch. The swim, at Lissadell beach at 2pm, is being organised by branch member and retired nurse Noreen Keane. All brave souls who wish to get 2021 off to a good start while supporting a good cause, are invited to take part. Watch out for more details on our Facebook and Twitter pages and in local media nearer to the event. The swim will be supported by a GoFundMe page.

# SLIGO

CONTD...

## TRANSPLANTS

Two Sligo dialysis patients recently received the 'gift of life' with kidney transplants.

Sligo town native Natasha Maguire is looking forward to a better life, thanks to her donor, as is another patient who recently received the vital organ.

The Sligo branch wishes both patients good health and happiness.

## GOOD WISHES

Best wishes to Bridie Nicholson after her recent surgery. Calry native Bridie is a dialysis patient in the Sligo unit.

## MEETING WITH NEW CEO

The Sligo branch recently greeted new Irish Kidney Association CEO Carol Moore in a Zoom meeting.

Carol was introduced to all Sligo members who were impressed by her enthusiasm for her new role as she outlined her vision for the organisation.

## CHRISTMAS WISHES

The Chairman of the Sligo branch, Sean Fowley, sends Christmas wishes to all renal unit patients, staff, committee members and supporters.

"We hope we can have a more active upcoming year with the return of our awareness promotion and fundraising events," he said.



**PROVISIONAL DATES FOR**  
**2021 ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK**  
**Saturday 27th March –**  
**Saturday 3rd April, 2021**

## ANSWERS TO NAME THE CHRISTMAS SONG ON PAGE 49

1. Driving Home for Christmas. 2. We Wish You a Merry Christmas. 3. White Christmas. 4. Silent Night. 5. Last Christmas. 6. Fairy Tale of New York. 7. Jingle Bells. 8. It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas. 9. Merry Christmas Everyone. 10. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree. 11. Deck the Halls. 12. Joy to the World. 13. O Come All Ye Faithful. 14. O Holy Night. 15. Do They Know It's Christmas.

# KILKENNY

By ANN O'GRADY

The Kilkenny Branch of the IKA would like to wish all our patients, carers, members and their families a very happy, peaceful Christmas and New Year. Due to the current unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic we have been unable to hold Branch meetings or organise any fundraising events. A special Christmas greeting to all our patients who received kidney transplants this year.

## CONDOLENCES

We would like to take this opportunity, to fondly remember, our recently deceased members and friends. More recently:



The late Betty Brennan

## Elizabeth (Betty) Brennan

Betty was a wonderful and caring person. She worked for many years as a Registered General Nurse in St. Luke's Hospital Kilkenny. She joined the Kilkenny branch when a family member developed renal disease. She held the role of Chairperson, IKA Kilkenny branch for many years.

Betty was a tremendous organiser and could call on her many friends for Organ Donor Awareness Week and Church Gate collections. She also cared for her late husband Billy. Our deepest sympathy to the Brennan and Tynan families – *John Lacey, Chairperson, Kilkenny Branch*

## Joan Fitzgerald

Joan was a loyal member of the Kilkenny branch attending many gatherings of the group over the years. We will miss her. Our deepest sympathy to her husband Frank and family.

## Gerry Rooney

Gerry attended many Branch meeting and fundraising events with his wife Mary. He will be sadly missed by us all. Our deepest sympathy to his wife Mary and family.

## Anna Connolly

Anna was another loyal member of the Branch. She also attended many of the group gatherings over the years.

Finally, we welcome new members and are always grateful to everyone who has contributed to the Kilkenny branch by way of fundraising or donations.

If you would like to help our Kilkenny Branch in anyway.

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 Therese Hanrahan Ph: 087-7796428

# DUBLIN EAST & WICKLOW

Hello all patients, family, carers and friends. May I start by sending condolences to the family and friends of Marie O'Meara, who sadly passed away in November, RIP. Marie was a lovely lady, who was a member for many years and always came to our Christmas lunch. She was a very well-travelled and determined person, who once climbed Croagh Patrick with a group of us from the Irish Kidney Association. She will be sadly missed.

We have, alas, no news from our Branch at this time, but hopefully we look forward to some good news of a vaccine and getting our freedom and safety back in 2021.

We welcome our new CEO Carol on board and wish her every success in her new role.

On behalf of Catherine, John and myself, we wish you all a very happy Christmas and a better New Year!

Please keep safe and keep in touch – this is your Branch and your input is always welcome, and much needed. Best wishes to all.

**BERNIE DWYER**



### THE SEAN McCAFFREY FOUNDATION

The patients and staff at the Cavan Renal Dialysis Unit were delighted to be presented with two outdoor teak benches, in honour of Sean McCaffrey, by Sean's brother Kieran McCaffrey and good friend Chris McBride.

Sean attended the renal clinic initially, and then the dialysis unit at Cavan General Hospital over a period of 7 years, until he passed away in 2017.

He had a remarkable life and a unique ability to influence all those that he met, tutored and coached. A commemorative foundation, the Sean McCaffrey Foundation, has been set up in his honour with the specific aims of youth development through the medium of soccer, animal welfare and the dialysis unit at Cavan General Hospital.

The following is Sean's biography taken from the foundation's website, [www.seanmccaffreyfoundation.com](http://www.seanmccaffreyfoundation.com)

Sean was appointed as Brian Kerr's successor as manager of the Republic of Ireland U17, U18 and U19 teams in November 2003, fulfilling a life-long dream to manage Ireland.

A talented footballer in his youth, McCaffrey (as he was called) spent time at Leicester City before returning

## LIMERICK



The Limerick Branch would like to wish all our members, families and friends a very very happy Christmas. A peaceful healthy and happy New year and looking forward to meeting up with everyone in the new year.

**MADELINE DONAGHY**

# CAVAN/MONAGHAN

By **KARL CRONIN**



*Dr. Kieran Hannan and the staff of the Renal Dialysis Unit at Cavan General Hospital, accepting two new outdoor benches from Kieran McCaffrey and Chris McBride from the Sean McCaffrey Foundation.*

to Ireland as a 20-year-old. Coaching was always of interest and he began coaching schoolboy teams in his native Monaghan, before being appointed manager of Monaghan United in 1983 when just 23 – the youngest ever manager in the League.

In 1989 McCaffrey founded Oriel Celtic, a schoolboy club in Monaghan. The club quickly developed from one team to 18 within a couple of seasons, and went on to win several European competitions, including the Holland Cup, the Dana Cup, the Italy Cup and the Marne Trophy, between U16 and U18 level. As a result of the contacts he made on his travels, McCaffrey was able to invite the youth teams of clubs like Celtic, Manchester United and Ajax to play in Monaghan. In 1999, McCaffrey joined the FAI as a Regional Development Officer. Two years later, Brian Kerr and Noel O'Reilly brought him in to coach with the Republic of Ireland underage teams.

When Kerr was appointed senior manager in 2003, McCaffrey was the obvious choice as caretaker manager and he impressed taking the U19's close to qualification for the 2003 European Championship and, after also earning good results with the current batch of U19's, he was given the chance to take over as U19 and U17 manager on a full-time basis.

His first full-time year in charge saw Ireland go agonisingly close to qualifying for the European U19 Championship Finals and that would typify how they fared for the next

couple of years.

McCaffrey has won a number of tournaments during his reign including the U17 Nordic Cup in Iceland in August 2005, the U18 Lisbon Trophy in March 2007 and the U19 La Manga tournament in April 2006. In March 2008 he guided the U17's to the European Championships.

Sean went on to manage Dundalk FC in 2012 for a brief period in the Airtricity League Premier Division. It was a difficult time for the club but current players Chris Shields and John Mountney were signed by McCaffrey and played a key role in their recent European exploits.

### CONDOLENCES

The Cavan / Monaghan branch of the IKA extend our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of the late Patsy Thornton from Glaslough, Co. Monaghan who passed away in September. Patsy was a regular attendee at our branch meetings down through the years and volunteered for all branch activities including Organ Donor Awareness Week activities and Church gate collections. Patsy will be fondly remembered, and sadly missed by all his friends in the IKA.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

### CHRISTMAS WISHES

We wish all our branch members, the healthcare staff in our renal units and all our readers a very happy and enjoyable Christmas and the very best for 2021.



# IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION CLG

(Company Limited By Guarantee)

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS PLEASE:

Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.  FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SURNAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE:        TEL: \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL:

We record this information in line with the Constitution of the IKA. You must be 18 years of age to become a member of the Association.

Please indicate if any of the following apply to you:

PRE DIALYSIS, HAEMODIALYSIS, APD, CAPD or TRANSPLANTED  YES  NO  
 Do not wish to disclose

Do you wish to receive our quarterly 'SUPPORT' magazine by Post?  YES  NO  
*Please tick 'No' if your household is already receiving it* Or Email?  YES  NO

Can we correspond with you for notices of Annual General Meeting of the Association and Annual Director's Report by Email?  YES  NO

Would you like to receive information on activities from your local IKA branch which entails us giving them the data from this form?  YES  NO

Would you like to receive information on the IKA Transplant & Dialysis Sports and Fitness which is based in Head Office?  YES  NO

By signing this form you agree to become a member of the Association and you subscribe to the Constitution of the Association (copy available on request or on the IKA website – [www.ika.ie](http://www.ika.ie))

I subscribe to (sign up and accept) the Constitution of the Irish Kidney Association CLG (Company Limited by Guarantee).

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



# IKA DIRECTORY



Irish Kidney Association CLG, Donor House, Block 43a, Parkwest, Dublin D12 P5V6

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Renal Support Centre, Beaumont Hospital, Dublin D09 Y5R3 - **SEQUESTERED**

Emergency Mobile Number: 087-4169907 | Email: [renalcentre@ika.ie](mailto:renalcentre@ika.ie)

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