



living well











# Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

## Here to help

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Cancer Focus Northern Ireland is here to help everyone affected by cancer, their families and carers. We have over 40 years' experience of supporting people with cancer and during that time we've helped men and women, with all types of cancer and, at all stages of illness.

We understand how devastating a cancer diagnosis can be. People can feel shocked, anxious, scared and alone; in need of support but not sure where or how to seek it.

Our LivingWell service provides one-to-one and group support for people with a cancer diagnosis and their family members.

It's an open and flexible programme that allows you to draw on a range of different therapies and activities that you can tailor to meet your needs at each stage in your experience of cancer.

This LivingWell brochure will let you know who we are, what we do and how we can help. We hope you find it useful.

**To book or find out more about any of the services in this brochure:**

**T:** 028 9066 3281

**E:** [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org)  
[www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)

## Information and Support Helpline

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We believe that it helps to talk – especially when it comes to concerns about cancer. We are the only local cancer charity to provide a free helpline for patients, their family members or friends, as well as members of the public – in fact anyone who may have concerns, questions or issues about any aspect of cancer.

### We're here to help you when you need:

- Information about your type of cancer

- Help to understand, or make sense of, information you have been given about your specific cancer
- Help to talk to your children about your cancer
- Support when your partner, mum, dad or close family member has cancer
- Information about what services can offer support
- Information about practical issues, such as who will take care of you or how to deal with financial concerns

- Advice for concerns about health changes or symptoms in yourself or a family member
- General information about cancer and how to reduce your risk of developing it
- Guidance to stop smoking

When you phone us your call will be answered by a nurse who has specific expertise in helping people with concerns about cancer. We will provide information and support, to best meet your needs, in a friendly and easily understood way.

### Our free helpline number is 0800 783 3339.

Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 1.00pm

Calls are free from your landline

You can also email our nurses directly at **[helpline@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:helpline@cancerfocusni.org)**

Our online community forum is also available, to hear news, discuss topics, share what you have learned through your cancer experience and make new friends.

To register follow the HealthUnlocked link on the Cancer Focus home page at **[www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)**





## Art Therapy

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Many people with cancer have found the use of art has been key to processing and resolving difficult emotions which can reduce stress, increase self esteem and improve overall wellbeing.

Art Therapy is not about skill or ability, rather it is a 3 way communication process between you, the therapist and the image or artefact/object you create. In this way it offers the opportunity for self-expression and communication and can be particularly helpful to people who find it hard to express their thoughts and feelings verbally.

The service is provided by an experienced, registered Art Therapist and is available at Cancer Focus Northern Ireland and the Macmillan Centre, Belfast City Hospital. Sessions are also provided in venues across Northern Ireland.

You can choose one to one Art Therapy or be part of a small group, whichever you prefer.

## Art Journaling

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This activity enables you to use a mixture of art and writing to create and maintain a journal or diary of your experiences on your cancer journey. This is a series of workshops over the course of a year which will then give you the skills to continue your journal at home.



## Family Support Service

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When an adult in a family is diagnosed with cancer it affects everyone. For children and young people this can be distressing, isolating and frightening. It can bring unwanted and dramatic changes to their lives and can affect their experience of school, relationships and their ongoing development.

Our Family Support Service helps families cope with the disruption to ordinary family life and minimises the long term impact on children's emotional well-being when a mum, dad or close family member has cancer.

The Family Support Worker will discuss your individual needs with you and will arrange whatever support is best for your family.

### The service offers:

- One to one support in your home or at our Service Centre in Belfast
- Phone support when you need advice or someone to talk to
- CLIMB groups (Children's Lives Include Moments of Bravery) are a six week programme for primary school aged children to help them understand cancer through the use of art,

craft and play. It helps them talk about their fears and also meet other children in the same situation. It also gives parents and carers time-out to meet.

- Family Bereavement Groups support the whole family after the loss of a loved one. This includes evenings for the whole family, family days out and children-only groups.
- Writing for the Future and Memory Work to help people with a terminal diagnosis collect ideas and items to keep in books or in memory boxes for their loved ones. We can also help families to collect memories after a loved one has died.











## Counselling Service

When you, or someone close to you has cancer, it's normal to feel anxious, frightened and worried about the future. These feelings can be confusing and overwhelming. Those affected by cancer often benefit from sharing with someone who understands the effect that this has had on people's lives.

Our Counselling Service gives you time to talk, in a one to one, safe and non-judgemental environment, about what is important to you. If you want to discuss whether the service is right for you, phone our free helpline where you can talk through your circumstances with a Cancer Information Nurse.

If you decide you want to use the service, a counsellor will arrange an appointment to suit you. Sessions are usually 50-60 minutes long.

Remember, the Counselling Service is there for you and / or your family. It is a personal service that has helped many people adjust to a cancer diagnosis and move on with their lives.

We have counsellors based in Antrim, Ballymoney, Belfast, Cookstown, Craigavon, Enniskillen, Lisburn, Londonderry, Newtownards and Omagh.



## Cancer Support Groups

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Many people with cancer have benefited from sharing experiences and getting to know others in a similar situation. Our support groups meet regularly all over Northern Ireland.

Our groups are informal and aim to provide practical information and emotional support. You are welcome to bring a friend, partner

or spouse and most meetings take place during the week, lasting for around an hour and a half. There is no pressure to speak and you can come to the group as and when you wish.

We have support groups for the following cancers: breast, prostate, laryngectomy, myeloma and lymphoma.







## Zest for Life

Zest for Life is a life coaching approach to helping cancer patients move on from their cancer diagnosis and treatment and come to terms with the new 'normal' for them. It is offered as a 6 week course that focuses on raising self-esteem and confidence.

People are helped to understand and manage lasting behaviour and lifestyle changes which will have a positive impact on both their physical and mental health. The course also explores positive thinking and relaxation skills to help manage stress.

This course will help you get back your 'Zest for Life' and give you the tools to manage new feelings and experiences as you move forward.



## Beauty for Life

We know that looking the best you can is an important part of feeling better but managing daily life as well as cancer treatment can make it difficult to find the time. Our Beauty for Life service offers time out in a private environment where everyone understands the issues of living with cancer. It can merely offer relaxation at a very stressful time or help you learn how to lessen the cosmetic side effects of treatment.

You can choose to be part of a beauty workshop with others or opt for a one to one consultation. Either way, you will be treated to treatments including: facials, manicures, skin care and make-up advice.

We also offer a nail bar in the Bridgewater Suite at Belfast Trust once a week and patients in the Cancer Centre can request a bedside facial, nail treatment or hand massage.





## Writing for Life

Creative writing can take many different forms and draws on all aspects of a writer's experience and imagination for inspiration. Our writing groups aim to provide an environment of mutual support and encouragement to help each individual find and express their own voice while also offering therapeutic benefits such as relieving stress.

No previous writing experience is necessary and the groups are open to both patients and carers.

### This service includes:

#### Three Writing Workshops

- Self and Place
- Time and Place
- Self and Time

Venue - Cancer Focus NI

Duration - 3 hours

This series of workshops explores these themes through observation, experience, imagination and the senses.

Writing is mostly done individually and there are some exercises when the whole group works together to create a piece of writing.

#### Writing My Cancer Journey

- 5 Workshops

Venue - Macmillan Support and Information Centre at Belfast Trust

Duration - 3 hours

This series explores the journey or experience from life before cancer to life after treatment (or between treatments). Studies have shown that writing of this nature offers the safety to express what is thought and felt. When these thoughts are shaped into written form, it can help the writer make sense of what is happening to them.

This series is based on the work of Sharon Bray 'Writing Through Cancer'.

#### Eglantine Scribblers

This is an open creative writing group which meets regularly at Cancer Focus. Group members have all completed Writing for Life workshop and wish to continue writing together in a supportive environment.



## Walk for Life

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This service is available to anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis.

We offer bi-monthly walks in places of particular scenic beauty or cultural interest led by trained walk leaders.

Walks have included historical tours of local towns and cities, river and coastal walks and our beautiful forest parks.

Alternatively, you can join us for a six week course of short walks in your local area focused on combating fatigue and improving stamina and energy.

You are welcome to bring a friend or relative along on any walk.

To take part, just register with us and we'll keep you up-to-date with details of all of our available walks.

## Sing for Life

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Do you enjoy singing?

Would you like to sing with a choir and make new friends?

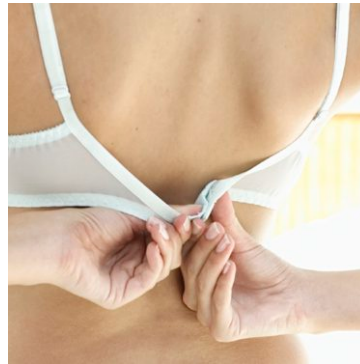
The 'Sing for Life' community choir is a joint partnership working with the Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast. Joining the choir will give you the chance to meet others living with cancer and share time together in a friendly, supportive environment. You can join even if you don't have previous musical experience and friends and family are welcome too.





## Discovery Yoga

These yoga workshops are designed to explore how the practice of yoga can help when a body's balance has been disturbed by serious illness. The various practices can help to strengthen the immune system and undo stress and tension in the body. This will be an opportunity to learn how to do simple, gentle movements mindfully, perform simple breathing exercises, explore the possibilities of meditation, and discover the bliss of relaxation. All of these yogic techniques are easy, effective and enjoyable and are presented at a level that will help those low in energy and who may be feeling physically fragile.



## Specialist Bra and Swimwear Fitting Service

After surgery and treatment for breast cancer some women feel less confident in their body and self-image. Feeling good in your clothes can make a real difference.

We provide a specialist Fitting Service to help women find the right solution in bras and swimwear for them. A wide range of products are available and our staff will help you choose the right garment, in the right size, to suit you. The service is completely free and totally private.

Our Fitting Service is provided at Cancer Focus in Belfast, Altnagelvin Hospital in Londonderry, Cancer Choices in Dungannon, LILAC in Cookstown, Cancer Connect in Enniskillen, Southern Area Hospice in Newry and in Care for Cancer, Omagh.



## Driving Service

Treatment for cancer can mean many visits to hospital for appointments: to see the Oncologist, for chemotherapy or for radiotherapy. Our Driving Service provides door to door transport for cancer patients who cannot travel independently to hospital. It currently operates in the South East, Belfast and Newtownabbey. It is specifically aimed at people who, for reasons of health, finance or personal circumstance, cannot use other forms of transport.

Eligibility for the service is agreed with hospitals on a patient to patient basis and takes into account economic, psychological or physical need. When you use the service, journeys will be pre-booked for you in advance.



## Patient Advocacy - Lobbying for a Better Future

Patients and carers who have been affected by cancer often want to find a way to help others. Cancer Focus works in partnership with them to lobby for better services in Northern Ireland.

### We need help to:

- Give the patient's perspective on the development of Cancer Focus services
- Tell the patient's story in media interviews

If you would like to become involved please contact us by telephone on **028 9066 3281** or by email at **hello@cancerfocusni.org**

You might also like to join our online forum at Health Unlocked to see latest cancer news and join discussions.

Cancer Focus also works with LiLAC (Life is for Living After Cancer) through the Better Together Partnership to deliver a range of services to Mid Ulster.





## Patient Centred Conferences / Information Days

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Cancer Focus Northern Ireland hosts a number of conferences and seminars to meet the information needs of patients, families and carers. These events are publicised on our website and in FocusOn magazine.

If you want to  
know about these  
or any new services,  
**email us at**  
**[care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org)**  
and we will keep  
you updated

Every Year  
**Cancer Focus  
Northern Ireland**  
Supports over 3,000 people  
living with cancer

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*Cancer Focus Northern Ireland  
is your local cancer champion,  
here to help you and your family  
if you have been affected by cancer.  
We'll help your community take  
positive steps to a healthier life,  
to lower their risk of cancer,  
and we are determined to bring  
a more hopeful future by funding  
ground-breaking research.*



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**To book or find out more  
about any of the services  
in this brochure:**

T: 028 9066 3281  
E: [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org)  
[www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)



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Visit us on Facebook, Twitter  
or the HealthUnlocked forum  
[www.healthunlocked.com/cancerfocusni](http://www.healthunlocked.com/cancerfocusni)

